Principles of Effective Teaching of Reading, Spelling, and Writing

Effective teachers of reading and writing draw on many resources. They raise students’ ability to interpret and generate sound-spellings, syllables, morphemes, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and various genres of text.
They also balance skill instruction with daily writing and reading that is purposeful and engaging, no matter what the skill level of the learner. Children in middle and upper grades who have poor reading skills can be brought up to grade level with appropriate instruction, although the time and effort involved are considerably greater than that required to teach younger children. Analyses of dozens of research studies have consistently supported these findings:

- Direct teaching of phonological skills, sound–symbol correspondence (phonics), fluent word recognition and text reading, vocabulary, text comprehension, and literature appreciation is necessary from when children begin school until they become proficient readers and writers.

- Phoneme awareness instruction, when linked to systematic decoding and spelling instruction, is a key to preventing reading failure in children who come to school without these prerequisite skills.

- It is better to teach the code system of written English systematically and explicitly than it is to teach it randomly, indirectly, or incidentally. The units for instruction (sound, syllable, morpheme, word) should vary according to students' reading and spelling skill.

- The most effective programs include daily exposure to a variety of texts and incentives for children to read independently and with others. Practices that build reading fluency include short practice drills in component skills, repeated readings of text, alternate reading with a partner, simultaneous oral reading of easy material, and daily independent reading.

- Vocabulary is best taught with a variety of complementary methods designed to explore the relationships among words and the relationships among word structure, origin, and meaning. Close reading of text for topic-specific content is the most important activity for building comprehension.

- Key comprehension strategies include summarizing, clarifying, questioning, and visualizing; these should be modeled explicitly by the teacher and practiced overtly if students are not comprehending well or if they approach reading comprehension passively.

- Effective teachers encourage frequent prose writing to enable deeper understanding of what is read.

To master all of these teaching principles and apply them well takes most of us a long time. At least we can proceed with the confidence that there is a solid body of evidence about what works, for whom, and why. It is beneficial to teach children about language structure. Teaching students about language can be engaging, active, and enjoyable. Knowing about phonemes, syllables, morphemes, and the spelling system enables children to read words accurately and quickly. Knowing how language works enables children to learn words, interpret sentences, and write fluently. If we teach children this content, then it means that we, the educators, must know it well. Just as a physician must study anatomy to understand physical functioning, we must know the linguistic frameworks for literacy instruction.
The major systems of language, with the exception of pragmatics and discourse, are treated in this book. Within- and end-of-chapter exercises are included in this book and in the accompanying *Speech to Print* workbook. Among the appendixes is an answer key and a glossary of terms highlighted in bold in the text. Deeper discussion of pragmatics, discourse structure, social uses of language, and language acquisition is left for other writers to tackle.

The surveys of language knowledge at the end of this chapter can be used by the reader for self-assessment or as a pretest in a course of study.
Brief Survey of Language Knowledge

Phoneme Counting
Count the number of speech sounds or phonemes that you perceive in each of the following spoken words. Remember, the number of speech sounds may not be equivalent to the number of letters. For example, the word spoke has four phonemes: /s/, /p/, /o/, and /k/. Write the number of phonemes in the blank to the right of each word.

thrill _____ ring _____ shook _____
does _____ fix _____ wrinkle _____
sawed _____ quack _____ know _____

Syllable Counting
Count the number of syllables that you perceive in each of the following words. For example, the word higher has two syllables, the word threat has one, and the word physician has three.

cats _____ capital _____ shirt _____
spoil _____ decidedly _____ banana _____
recreational _____ lawyer _____ walked _____

Phoneme Matching
Read the first word in each line and note the sound that is represented by the underlined letter or letter cluster. Then, select the word or words on the line that contain the same sound. Underline the words you select.

1. push    although    sugar    duty    pump
2. weigh    pie    height    raid    friend
3. does    miss    nose    votes    rice
4. intend    this    whistle    baked    batch
5. ring    sink    handle    signal    pinpoint

Recognition of Sound–Symbol Correspondence
Find in the following words the letters and letter combinations that correspond to each speech sound in the word. For example, the word stress has five phonemes, each of which is represented by a letter or letter group: /s/ /t/ /r/ /e/ /ss/. Now try these:

best    fresh    scratch
though    laughed    middle
chirp    quaint
Definitions and Concepts

Write a definition or explanation of the following:

1. Vowel sound (vowel phoneme)

2. Consonant digraph

3. Prefix

4. Inflectional (grammatical) morpheme

5. Why is phoneme awareness important?

6. How is decoding skill related to reading fluency and comprehension?
Comprehensive Survey of Language Knowledge

1. From the list below, find an example of each of the following (answer will be a word or part of a word):
- Inflected verb ____________________________
- Compound noun ___________________________
- Bound root _______________________________
- Derivational suffix __________________________
- Greek combining form __________________________
  - peaches
  - incredible
  - slowed
  - although
  - shameful
  - doughnut
  - bicycle
  - neuropsychology
  - sandpaper
  - vanish

2. For each word on the left, determine the number of syllables and the number of morphemes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Syllable</th>
<th>Morphemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bookworm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unicorn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elephant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>believed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incredible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>telegram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. A closed syllable is one that __________________________
   An open syllable is one that __________________________

4. How many speech sounds are in the following words?
   - sigh _____
   - thrown _____
   - scratch _____
   - ice _____
   - sung _____
   - poison _____
   - mix _____
   - shrink _____
   - know _____
5. What is the third speech sound in each of the following words?
   - Joyful _____ should _____ talk _____
   - Tinker _____ rouge _____ shower _____
   - Square _____ start _____
   - Protect _____ patchwork _____

6. Underline the schwa vowels:
   - Telephone addenda along precious imposition unless

7. Underline the consonant blends:
   - Knight climb wreck napkin squished springy first

8. Underline the consonant digraphs:
   - Spherical church numb shrink thought whether

9. When is ck used in spelling?

10. What letters signal that a c is pronounced /s/?

11. List all of the ways you know to spell “long a.”

12. List all of the ways you know to spell the consonant sound /t/.

13. When adding a suffix to a word ending with silent e, what is the spelling rule?

14. How can you recognize an English word that came from Greek?
### Brief Survey of Language Knowledge

#### Phoneme Counting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Phonemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thrill</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sawed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ring</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fix</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shook</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wrinkle</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Syllable Counting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cats</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spoil</td>
<td>1 or 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recreational</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capital</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decidedly</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shirt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banana</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lawyer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walked</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phoneme Matching
1. sugar
2. raid
3. nose
4. baked
5. sink

Recognition of Sound–Symbol Correspondence
b / e / s / t f / r / e / sh s / c / r / a / tch
th / ough l / au / gh / ed m / i / dd / le
ch / ir / p q / u / ai / n / t

Definitions and Concepts
1. A vowel sound is an open speech sound that is the nucleus of a syllable.
2. A consonant digraph is a two-letter combination corresponding to one unique sound.
3. A prefix is a Latin bound morpheme (meaningful part), added before a root, that changes the meaning of the whole word.
4. An inflectional morpheme is a grammatical ending added to a verb, adjective, or noun that changes the number, degree, or tense of the word but does not change the meaning or part of speech of the word.
5. Phoneme awareness is one (but not the only) necessary skill in learning to read an alphabetic writing system.
6. The ability to decode words accurately will not of itself support good reading. In addition to decoding, one needs to read words fluently so that attention can be relegated to comprehension, and one needs to know the meaning of the words and phrases.

Comprehensive Survey of Language Knowledge
1. Inflected verb slowed
   Compound noun sandpaper
   Bound root cred (Latin), cyc (Latin, Greek), psych (Greek)
   Derivational suffix ful, ible
   Greek combining form neuro + psych + ology

2. Syllable Morphemes
   bookworm 2 2
   unicorn 3 2
   elephant 3 1
   believed 2 3
3. A closed syllable is one that contains a short vowel and ends in one or more consonants.
   An open syllable is one that contains a long vowel sound spelled with one vowel letter that ends the syllable.

4. How many speech sounds are in the following words?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Speech Sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sigh</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thrown</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scratch</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sung</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poison</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mix</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shrink</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. (Both International Phonetic Alphabet and phonic symbols are shown, respectively.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Phonetic Symbol(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>joyful</td>
<td>/j//u/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should</td>
<td>/ʃ//ə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talk</td>
<td>/t//k/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tinker</td>
<td>/t//ɪ//ŋk/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rouge</td>
<td>/r//u/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shower</td>
<td>/ʃ//j/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>square</td>
<td>/s// 있게/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td>/st//ar/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protect</td>
<td>/pr//kt//ık/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patchwork</td>
<td>/p//치//워크/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. telephone | addenda | along
   precious | imposition | unless

7. knight | climb | wreck | napkin
   squished | springy | first

8. spherical | church | numb
   shrink | thought | whether

9. The spelling ck is used when a /k/ sound follows a stressed, short (lax) vowel.

10. e, i, or y following the c

11. o, oa, ow, oe, o-consonant-e, ough

12. f, ff, gh, ph

13. Drop the e if the suffix begins with a vowel; keep the e if the suffix begins with a consonant.

14. It might have ph for /θ/, ch for /tʃ/, or y for /i/ or /ɪ/ spelling; it is likely to be constructed from two or more combining forms; and it is likely to be a mythological (myth), a scientific (chlorophyll), or a mathematical (dyscalculia) term.

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<td>Comm. Services</td>
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</table>

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