



Catching Children Before They Fail **RRST Training Package**

The **Right to Read** Project



Why **Focus** on Early Reading Acquisition?

- ▶ Intervention at the earliest stage makes the 'wait to fail' model obsolete.
- ▶ **Children's reading acquisition is:**
 - ▶ a goal of educational systems
 - ▶ of interest to researchers
 - ▶ of concern to educators
 - ▶ important to families
 - ▶ critical to the children themselves



What the **Research** Says

- ▶ The National Reading Panel Report recommended that all children receive quality instruction in the following five areas:
 - ▶ **Phonemic awareness**
 - ▶ **Phonics**
 - ▶ **Fluency**
 - ▶ **Vocabulary**
 - ▶ **Text comprehension**

Prerequisites of Reading Acquisition

- ▶ Oral language
- ▶ Phonological awareness
- ▶ Concepts about print
- ▶ Letter-sound mastery

What is **Phonological** Awareness?

Phonological awareness is an umbrella term that refers to an understanding of spoken words, and includes an awareness of rhymes, words (word boundaries), and syllables (parts of words).

Phonological awareness is an ORAL language skill, and is a pre-print ability.

Diller, D. (2007)

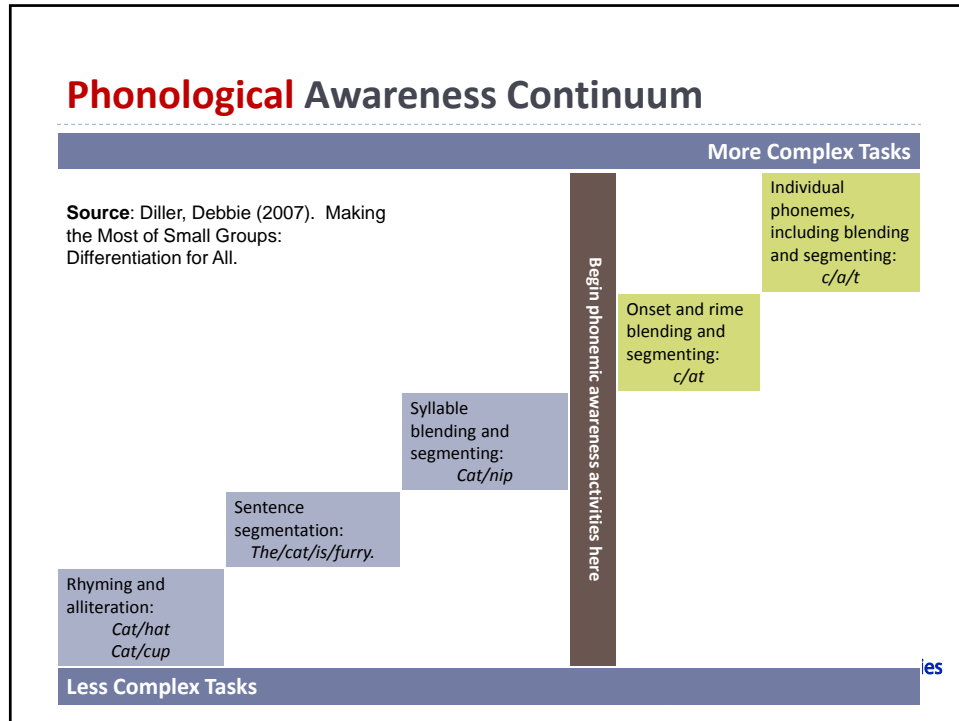
Making The Most of Small Groups: Differentiation for All.
Stenhouse Publishers.



Phonemic Awareness

- ▶ Is the ability to identify, discriminate, think about, and manipulate the phonemes (i.e., sounds) in words
 - ▶ There are 44 phonemes in the English Language
 - ▶ There are 26 graphemes in the English Language





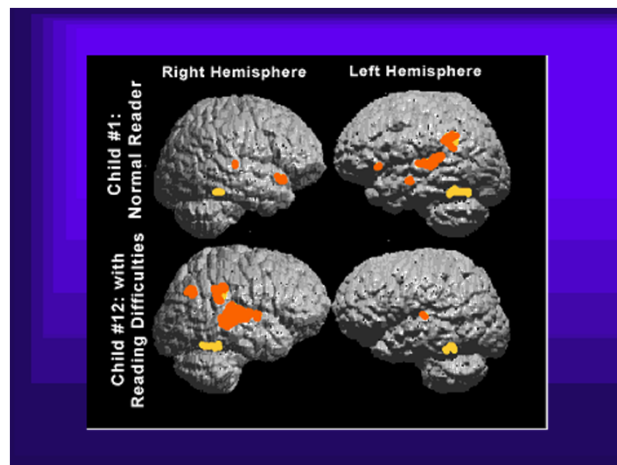
Why is **Phonological** Awareness Important?

- ▶ Research over the past 30 years indicates that PA is a powerful predictor of subsequent early reading achievement
- ▶ Children in kindergarten who have well-developed phonological awareness skills continue to become better readers and spellers
- ▶ Children with poorly developed PA continue to lag behind their peers in general reading ability including fluency and comprehension (The Matthew Effect)

Why is **Phonological** Awareness Important?

- ▶ Children who lack PA skills become further and further behind their peers academically because of their inability to develop these prerequisite skills due to:
 - ▶ **Lack of exposure to sufficient oral language based activities**
 - ▶ **Limited background experiences**
 - ▶ **An innate weakness in auditory processing skills**

Brain Images



Distinction Between Phonemic Awareness & Phonics

- ▶ **Phonemic awareness** refers to thinking about the sounds in language
 - ▶ What is the first sound in the word “bat”?
 - ▶ How many sounds are in the word “bat”?
 - ▶ /b/ /a/ /t/ What word is this?

- ▶ **Phonics** is the predictable relationship between phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters).
 - ▶ a says /a/ as in apple
 - ▶ u says /u/ as in up

What **Research** Says About...

Phonological Awareness and Reading Comprehension

- ▶ PA is critical in forming the foundation for the development of word recognition

- ▶ Fluent word recognition is essential to reading comprehension

What does **scientifically based research** tell us about phonemic awareness instruction?

▶ **Phonemic awareness can be taught and learned.**

Effective phonemic awareness instruction teaches children to notice, think about, and work with (manipulate) sounds in spoken language.

What does **scientifically based research** tell us about phonemic awareness instruction?

- Teachers can use many activities to build phonemic awareness:
 - Phoneme identification
 - Phoneme isolation
 - Phoneme categorization
 - Phoneme blending
 - Phoneme segmentation
 - Phoneme addition
 - Phoneme substitution
 - Phoneme deletion

North Vancouver School District

- ▶ **Kindergarten (1997)**
- ▶ **English** **ESL**
- ▶ 23.8% at risk 37.2% at risk

- ▶ **Grade 4 (2002)**
- ▶ **English** **ESL**
- ▶ 2.7% reading disabled 2% reading disabled

Lesaux, N. K. and Siegel, L. S. (2003).

History of **RRST**

Need for kindergarten/grade one teachers and school systems to have access to an easy-to-administer and economical screening tool that:

- ▶ focuses on the components of reading acquisition
- ▶ provides information to guide teaching practice
- ▶ identifies children at-risk for reading difficulties
- ▶ allows for measurement of student progress
- ▶ is administered by teachers

**May be used in higher grades, particularly with
English Language Learners**

History of **RRST**

- ▶ Developed in winter/spring of 2009 by a Steering Committee composed of:
 - ▶ one Special Education Professor
 - ▶ three Reading Specialists
 - ▶ one Educational Psychologist
 - ▶ one Sociologist/Researcher

**Sponsored by the
Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta**



Components of **RRST**

1. **Letter Identification**

1. "I am going to point to some letters. Tell me the name of each letter."

2. **Sound Identification**

1. "I am going to point to some letters. Tell me the sound each letter makes."

3. **Rhyme Detection**

1. "Here is a picture of a _____. Which word rhymes with _____?
_____, _____?"



Components of **RRST**

4. **Rhyme Generation**

"I'm going to say a word. I want you to say a word that rhymes with it.
You can make up a word if you want to."

Word Detection

"I'm going to say a sentence. Clap one time for each word I say."

Syllable Detection

"I'm going to say a word. Tap on the table for each word part I say."

Components of **RRST**

6. **Phoneme Detection**

"I'm going to say a word. Then, I will say each sound in the word....Now,
you say each sound in ____."

10. **Syllable Blending**

"I will say the parts of a word. You guess what the word is."

11. **Phoneme Blending**

"I will say the sounds of a word. You guess what the word is."

Components of RRST

13. Syllable Deletion

"I'm going to ask you to say a word. Then, I want you to say the word without one of its parts."

14. Phoneme Deletion

"I'm going to ask you to say a word. Then I want you to say it again without one of its sounds."

Components of RRST

16. Initial Sound Isolation

"I am going to say a word. Tell me the beginning (or first) sound in the word. What is the beginning sound in the word ____?"

17. Final Sound Isolation

"I am going to say a word. Tell me the ending (or last) sound in the word. What is the ending sound in the word ____?"

18. Medial Sound Isolation

"I am going to say a word. Tell me the middle sound in the word. What is the middle sound in the word ____?"

Components of **RRST**

7. **Word Recognition**

"I am going to show you some words. Read as many of the words as you can."

8. **Non Words**

"I am going to show you some made up words. They are not real words. I would like you to try to read as many of the made up words as you can. Let's do one together."

Spelling

"I'm going to tell you a word. I am going to say the word in a sentence. Then I will say the word one more time. Write the word down on the paper."

Components of **RRST**

OPTIONAL SUBTESTS

Expressive Vocabulary

"I am going to show you some pictures. Tell me what each picture is."

15. **Oral Cloze**

"I will read a sentence to you and there will be a word missing. Tell me a word that sounds right when I stop talking and look at you."

19. **Print Concepts**

"I am going to show you a book and ask you some questions about how to read the book."

Group Activity

In groups of threes, look at the RRST. Discuss the following:

- ▶ Was I aware of each of these reading acquisition components?
- ▶ Have I measured these components in my classroom?
- ▶ What assessment tools have I used to measure reading acquisition/growth?

Document Preparation for Testing

- ▶ Reproduce and use a separate Recording Booklet for each student every time a test is administered.
- ▶ Print and re-use one copy of the Stimulus Booklet.
- ▶ Read the Teacher Instructions thoroughly before test administration to ensure that the test is administered the way it was designed, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the RRST as a screening tool.

Administration of **RRST**

- ▶ One-on-one administration by teacher.
- ▶ Quiet setting.
- ▶ Present the script **EXACTLY** as written.
- ▶ Prompts and examples are provided.
- ▶ You may repeat instructions using the prompts.
- ▶ Exercise judgement. Discontinue subtest if student makes several consecutive errors and is clearly unable to complete the task.
- ▶ Exercise extreme caution not to add a vowel sound onto the end of a consonant, e.g. say /d/ not /duh/.

Student **Feedback**

- ▶ Examples may be used as a teaching item. Correct answers may be provided (**WITH THE EXAMPLES**) if the student responds incorrectly.
- ▶ Do not provide feedback or the correct response for the actual test items.

Scoring the **RRST**

- ▶ Score all responses as either correct or incorrect.
- ▶ Verbatim recording of correct responses may be useful for enhanced understanding of the student's strengths and weaknesses.

Presentation of Administration of **RRST**



Partner Activity

With a partner, each select one RRST component, preferably components:

- ▶ Word Detection
- ▶ Syllable Detection
- ▶ Phoneme Detection
- ▶ Rhyme Detection
- ▶ Syllable Blending
- ▶ Phoneme Blending
- ▶ Syllable Deletion
- ▶ Phoneme Deletion
- ▶ Initial Sound Isolation
- ▶ Final Sound Isolation
- ▶ Medial Sound Isolation

Partner Activity

- ▶ What is the purpose of the RRST?
- ▶ How might a school or district be able to utilize this tool?
- ▶ What benefits could be expected?
- ▶ What obstacles might be encountered?

RRST **Assessment** within a Hierarchy of Interventions

1. Implement a universal screening program
1. Utilize scientifically based intervention strategies within the classroom
2. Assure progress is monitored and differentiation of instruction occurs as needed
3. Students who continue to be at risk should be monitored in the event that a more comprehensive assessment is warranted

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