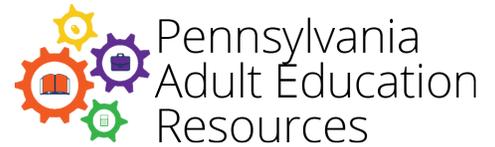


PARENT EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

Workshop Topic:

Phonics

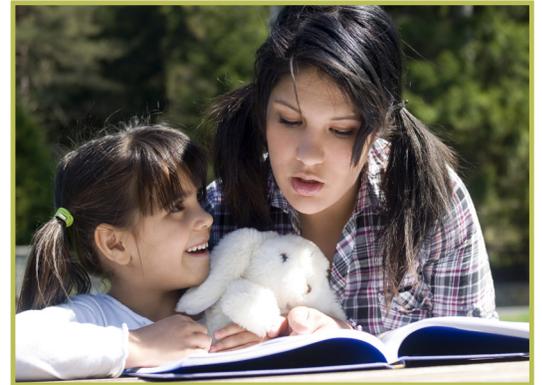
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CCRS Reading Foundational Skills Anchor 3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. (Phonics and Word Recognition)

NELP Predictors of Later Success

- **Alphabet knowledge:** knowledge of the names and sounds associated with printed letters
- **Phonological awareness:** the ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory aspects of spoken language (including the ability to distinguish or segment words, syllables, or phonemes), independent of meaning
- **Print knowledge:** a combination of elements of alphabet knowledge, concepts about print, and early decoding



Objective: At the end of this session, participants will be able to

- Define phonics
- Explain why phonics is important for reading success
- Give at least two ways to support a child in increasing phonics skills

Materials:

- Chart paper and markers
- 10 small (1-inch) paper squares, one set for each group of two participants
- Copies of *Phonics—Things I Can Do at Home With My Child* parent handout

Welcome/Ice Breaker:

Greet parents as they come in. Build rapport and break the ice.

Introduce this session with a fun song like “The Name Game.” Provide the words on a handout or post on chart paper or the SMART Board for all to see. Sing a few rounds of the song (Jack, Jack, Bo Back; Banana Fana Fo Fack; Mi My Mo Mack; Jack!) using many of the parents’ names.

Share that what you have just illustrated is one way that children learn the sounds of letters by manipulation. Today we are going to talk about more than just the sounds of language; we are going to talk about how children start to learn about the relationship between the sounds and the letters of written language.

Topic Review:

The goal of phonics instruction is to help children learn the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language. Children also need to learn that there are systematic

and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds. This is called the alphabetic principle and it contributes to a child's ability to read words.

Opening Activity:

Write the following words on the board or on chart paper: now, ate, tar, sail, sink, dish, block, five, fog, us

Then say, "Let's practice with some phonics skills as we begin the session today. I will read a sentence and you will follow the direction." After having fun with this activity, discuss how the participants could use or adapt this with their children.

1. Change one letter and get the name of an animal. [now - cow]
2. Add one letter and get a part of a fence. [ate - gate]
3. Add one letter and get something you see in the sky. [tar - star]
4. Change one letter and get something many animals have. [sail - tail]
5. Change one letter and get a color. [sink - pink]
6. Change one letter and get something you can eat. [dish - fish]
7. Change one letter and get something you use to find out the time. [block - clock]
8. Change one letter and get a place that bees live in. [five - hive]
9. Change one letter and get an animal. [fog - hog; fog - fox]
10. Add one letter and get something that can be used for travel. [us - bus]

Central Ideas and Practice (Content and Strategies):

Phonics has to do with learning about the relationship between letters of the alphabet and their sounds. The purpose of building phonics skills is to help your child be able to identify words quickly and correctly. This will help her be able to decode or "break the code" when she comes to a word she doesn't recognize when she is reading.

When we write, we use phonics to spell words in order to communicate.

When your child is reading with you and comes to a word she doesn't recognize, what do you do? Learning to read is a bit like working on a tough puzzle. Sometimes you have to try several different pieces until they make sense. When your child gets stuck on a new word, the first suggestion you might make is to suggest she "sound out" the unfamiliar word. But it may be more helpful for your child to try several different approaches when she's working out a new word.

Before suggesting anything to your child, give her enough "wait time" so that she has time to think about the new word by herself. It's important that children recognize that they can read without help—that they can figure out the puzzle on their own to become an independent reader. Wait five seconds, counting silently to yourself, before saying anything to prompt your child.

If she isn't ready to figure out the word on her own, ask her to look at the first letter of the word. Ask what sound that letter makes. Encourage her to "sound out" the word by starting with that beginning sound, then trying the sounds of the rest of the word.

When your child comes to a word that she doesn't think she can read, there may be part of the word that is familiar to her. For example, if the word is "myself," try covering up the last four letters of the word so that only the "m-y" is showing. Does she know this shorter word? Now try covering up the first two letters so that only "s-e-lf" is showing. Now ask if she can put the two parts together to form the new word—"myself."

Another way you may be able to help your child figure out an unfamiliar word is to ask, "Can you think of a word that would make sense here—one that begins with this sound?" For example, in the sentence,

The truck needed more speed to make it up the mountain, you might ask your child, “What’s a word that starts with the /m/ sound and that means something a truck would have a hard time driving up and over?” You may be able to point to a picture or ask a question about what’s happening in the story to help her figure out the word.

Encourage your child to keep trying! She may be able to skip an unknown word and come back to it after reading the whole sentence which may hold a clue about the word she doesn’t recognize. Or sometimes you may need to tell her the word and then read the sentence together so that she doesn’t lose track of the meaning of the story. Don’t spend too much time letting your child struggle with a word—and when she figures out a piece of the puzzle, congratulate her!

The term *word patterns* refers to spelling patterns that reflect rhyming sounds in words and syllables. For example, the words *bat*, *cat*, and *rat* represent the *at* pattern. The words *deal*, *heal*, and *meal* are examples of the *ea* pattern. Some people call these patterns word *families*. Another term for these patterns is *phonograms*. A *phonogram* is the part of a word or syllable that includes the vowel(s) and any following consonants. Some people call this part of the word the *rime* (Yes, that is the correct spelling!) and they call the consonant or consonant blends that come before it the *onset*. What you call it doesn’t matter; it’s an important concept and a helpful strategy.

Adding single consonants or consonant blends to common word patterns is one way to quickly build reading and spelling vocabulary as well as an easy way to practice the vowel sounds. When your child realizes that two words spelled the same at the end often rhyme, they have acquired a very useful decoding strategy. Recognizing that there are common spelling patterns in our language can be an “ah-ha moment” for a reader. Working with word patterns may help build a learner’s bank of easily identifiable words. It can also be a good way to deal with tricky vowel sounds. Learning the word pattern is a simpler approach to the vowel sounds and an effective strategy for decoding short words and syllables within longer words. A simple way to explain this to your child is to say, “These word family patterns will help you figure out words and spell words through rhyming patterns.”

Application:

A fun way to practice phonics skills is to take an interesting word and make other words from the letters. We can combine the letters in new ways and practice saying the new words—and some of the new words may be nonsense words. That is okay! It will be fun to see what we come up with. [Use a word that will be interesting to your group. For example, let’s use shoestring.]

Form groups of two and give each group 10 small (1-inch) paper squares. They should write one letter on each square. Ask the groups to put the squares together to spell the word shoestring. They should check your model on the board to be sure they have all the letters. Then encourage the team to move the letters around to make new words using those letters. One of the team members can manipulate the letters and one can write a numbered list. After a given amount of time (maybe 5 minutes) see how many words each team has come up with. For shoestring, did they make the word strong and tongs? Have fun!

Connection to Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time®:

- *Infant/Toddler Connections*

- Talk, sing, and read to your infant and toddler. Treat your child as if she is a conversationalist even though she is not yet talking. Your child can learn about how conversations work by the way you look at her attentively and use facial expressions as you talk to her.
- Phonics has to do with helping your child see the connection between letters and the sounds they make so your infant or toddler is not ready to make that connection. However, the talking, singing, and reading you do will lay the foundation for future reading! Sing! Read! Talk to your child!

- *Preschool Connections*

- Point out print wherever you go! Your child will learn about reading from the labels, signs, and other print he sees around him. This demonstrates the practical uses of written language.

- There are many ways to work on letter recognition. You can buy magnetic letters or letter tiles at the dollar store. You can make your own set of alphabet cards with index cards and markers. Have fun helping your child learn words that begin with each of the sounds. Look for pictures in magazines or advertising flyers that you can cut out to use in an alphabet book or on alphabet cards.
 - Help your child compare the shapes of letters and to see the visual differences. Playing with an alphabet puzzle is a way you can help your child notice the differences. Point out the curve of the letter s and the straight line of the letter l.
 - Choose a letter as you are walking into the grocery store. Make a game of finding things in the store that start with the sound of that letter. For example, for the sound /m/ you might find milk, marshmallows, margarine, magazines, meat, and mangoes.
 - When eating a meal, say the names of two foods that begin with the same sounds and one that doesn't. Ask your child to identify the word that does not sound the same at the beginning. Be patient as it takes time and practice to recognize the sounds. Use any opportunity to point out similar sounds as you go through the day.
 - Play *Make a Match*: Say a simple word such as ball. Have your child think of a word that starts with the same sound. This is a good game to play while waiting in line at the grocery!
 - Research has shown that children benefited from using invented spelling. So do not worry when your child tries writing on her own. This process of writing helps a child think about the letter-sound relationships, and she is learning to segment the words she wants to spell into the sounds he hears
- *Elementary Connections*
 - Phonics instruction is most effective if it begins in kindergarten or first grade. Talk with your child's teacher about how she is doing in phonics. Ask how you can help support your child's learning.
 - Cut out letters from paper, felt, magazines, or use refrigerator magnets. Have your child spell words by using letters that match the sounds he hears. Start with simple three letter words like cat, mop, or nut.
 - As your child becomes more familiar with letters and sounds, play a game with the letters by switching beginning letters ("top" to "pop") or ending letters ("top" to "tom").
 - Play *I Spy*. Have your child identify an object by listening to clues and then write the word. "I spy an object with three sounds in its name; the first sound is /b/." The child may write the correct word but if not, proceed with another clue. "I spy an object with three sounds in its name; the ending sound is /l/." If the child needs another clue, "I spy an object with 3 sounds in its name; it rhymes with *tell*."
 - Give your child the chance to use writing to apply phonics knowledge: have her write a grocery list, write a note to a family member, or write in a journal.
 - Play *Read My Mind*. This is like *I Spy* but you will use a word list, perhaps the weekly spelling list. Ask your child to number a paper 1 to 5. Select a word and provide five clues, one at a time to highlight the beginning or ending sounds, a word it rhymes with, or a word from the same word family. The child will write a guess after each clue.
 - *Middle School Connections*
 - By middle school your child should be able to decode any unfamiliar word. Remember that this does not mean she will know the meaning of the word. Have fun helping your child's vocabulary grow!
 - A fun activity that you and your child could enjoy together involves choosing a "big word" from a book you've read together. For example, let's say you've just read about elephants. Using magnetic letters or letter cards you have made, ask your child to select all the letters in the word elephant and lay them out to spell the word. Cover the first five letters of the word and ask your child to read the word that remains. Cover the first four letters and ask her to read the word that remains. Yes, it is a nonsense word, but

the important thing is to help your child practice her decoding or sounding out skills. Sounding out nonsense words supports your child's ability to connect letters and sounds. Using the letters in *elephant*, rearrange them to spell out *tan*. Ask your child to sound out the new word. Now replace the *t* in *tan* with the *p*. What does this make? Using some of the other letters from *elephant*, spell out *heel*. Ask your child what this word is. Again, change the first letter to *p*, spelling out *peel*. What does this make? The possibilities are many! You child might enjoy writing down as many words as she can using the letters in the word *elephant*. Ask her to read them aloud to you when she's finished. It is okay if she makes nonsense words—the idea is to have her practice her phonics skills.

- o Have fun with word families by writing short poems together that feature a particular word family. For instance, here are two to get you thinking!

Oh me, oh my!

The baby started to cry!

Does she need a diaper dry?

Is that the reason why?

There was a man whose name was Dan.

His brother Stan was a Beatles' fan.

They ran each morning before eating their bran

Then traveled to work in their tan van!

Wrap up/Closure:

Phonics refers to the relationship between speech and print. When we write, we use phonics to spell words in order to communicate. As your child learns about the connections between letters and the sounds they make she will be building an understanding of how language works in print. This is an important step to becoming an independent reader.

Ask parents:

“How do you plan to use the parent-child interaction strategies we learned more about today with your children this week?”

Parent Handout

Phonics—Things I Can do at Home with my Child



Have my child:

- Point to words when reading.
- Say words out loud as he writes.
- Look for letters and make the matching sounds.
- Practice spelling words as she writes them.
- Sound out words as I write them down.
- Write down new words read or heard in a story and sound them out when writing.

I can:

- Point out when my child matches a sound to a letter.
- Listen to my child read.
- Make word sort games for my child and play them with him.
- Help my child sound out “parts” of words he knows.
- Play spelling games, like “Hang man,” word puzzles, and *Scrabble* or *Upwords*.
- Have many print materials at home to read.