

THE THREE DRILLS

The three drills should be done at each lesson using the phonemic elements already taught. It is a constant repetition of these sounds in the drills followed by application that results in mastery. The third drill, the blending drill, is the most important serving to promote phonemic awareness, the ability to discern the sounds in syllables/words and the order of phonemic patterns..

Flashcards

For each new sound/letter(s) introduced, make a flashcard using a 3 X 5 card and a blue felt tip pen. (Some people have difficulty with black on white.) It will become part of your card pack to be reviewed at each lesson in the drills.

VISUAL DRILL

NOTE: When a letter is between slashes, you say the sound of that letter.

The reading process goes from symbol to sound. Therefore, the symbol must be recognized first. In the visual drill, the tutor shows the flashcard of the letter. The student says the name of the letter and gives the sound. As new letters/sounds are taught, the appropriate flashcards will be added to the pack. When the pack gets larger, choose the ones you want to review each time.

Example: The student says, “D says /d/.” (As you show the flashcard)

This drill can be used for the two following purposes:

- 1) As a screening test initially to determine the letter names and sounds the student does not know. In this case use flashcards of the 26 alphabet letters asking the student for both sounds of the 5 vowel letters.
- 2) As a warm-up and review of letters/sounds taught so far at the beginning of every lesson.

Blocking in the Visual Drill (The student cannot think of the sound of the letter shown.)

If a student blocks in the visual drill, it is important to use visual clues to help him/her recall the sound. Use the following strategies in the indicated order until the student recalls the sound. If none of the first five work, you will do #6 and #7.

- 1) Give the student time.
- 2) Have student trace the letter on the flashcard.
- 3) Have student say the name of the letter.
- 4) Have the student think of a word that begins with the letter.
- 5) Supply a word visually that begins with the letter. Do this on a chalkboard, dry erase board or piece of paper.
- 6) Reteach the letter and its sound.
- 7) Return the card to the deck to be reviewed again.

AUDITORY DRILL

The auditory drill uses sound to symbol. The tutor gives the sound; the student writes all the spellings s/he has learned so far that represent that sound while repeating the sound and giving the name of the letter(s). (Make sure the S. can't see the flashcards.) Use pencil and paper, or use a sand tray for more tactile learners. (Quick tapioca in a jelly roll pan is an excellent substitute for sand.)

For example: The tutor says, “/k/”.

The student says, “/k/ is c and /k/ is k.”

While the student says this s/he writes it in the sand tray with the pointer finger of the writing hand. You can also use the chalkboard, a piece of carpet, a piece of screen, or any other creation you might think of. Preferably it should be something with texture that has a different feel. This is using kinesthetic and tactile modes giving the student another means of storing and recalling this information.

Follow this format:

T: (Tutor says the sound of the letter or phoneme. Tutor does NOT show the letter.) “/b/”

S: “/b/ is b.” (Student writes it in the sand as he says it and draws a line under it from left to right.)

T: “/k/”

S: “/k/ is c and /k/ is k.”

The tutor gives the sound. The student repeats it and writes all the letters or letter combinations s/he has learned for spelling that sound to this point. As he learns more, he will have more spellings to add. Use the Phoneme/Grapheme Chart (page B6) to record what you have taught by highlighting the spelling for the phoneme.

Blocking in the Auditory Drill (The student cannot think of the spelling for the sound given.)

If the student blocks in the auditory drill, it is important to give auditory clues. Use the following strategies in the indicated order until the student recalls the grapheme(s) for spelling given.

- 1) Give the student time.
- 2) Repeat the sound.
- 3) Student repeats the sound.
- 4) Ask for key word or word s/he knows that begins with that sound.
- 5) Teacher provides a familiar word (orally) and asks if the student knows the letter at the beginning of that word.
- 6) Reteach

BLENDING DRILL

The blending drill is the most important drill. It is the key to becoming independent in sounding out words. The student will blend individual letters into one sound unit.

- a) Make a blending board by taking a blank sheet of paper, turning it sideways and making three dots evenly spaced about 2 inches up from the bottom.

- b) Using the letters the student has had so far, put them into three piles on a blending board with the vowels in the middle. (Note: It is a great time-saver to put the cards on the blending board during the auditory drill. Place them upside down so that the student won't see them and be distracted, and then turn them over when you are ready for the blending drill.)

NOTE: THERE ARE SOME CONSONANTS THAT SHOULD BE USED ONLY IN THE BEGINNING PILE AND SOME THAT SHOULD BE USED ONLY AT THE END. FOLLOWING IS A SUGGESTED GUIDELINE.

Beginning Only: c ,f, j, k, l, qu, r, s, v, w, y, z

Middle: All vowels

Ending Only: x

Beginning or ending, but these make good ending sounds: b, d, m, n, p, t

- c) Example:

Put the letters **m a t** on the blending board.

T: "Let's see what this says." (The tutor points with the pointer finger above the letter **m** in the first position while the S. points with pointer finger of the writing hand below the **m.**)

T and S: "/m/" (Do the same thing moving to the "a" and then "t" saying, "/a/, /t/".

T and S: Together sweep pointer finger across the word saying /m/ /a/ /t/ running the sounds together to say the word.

Blocking in the Blending Drill

If a student blocks in the blending drill, use the following strategies in the indicated order until he/she recalls:

- 1) Keep your finger above the letter. This indicates to the student that he/she is incorrect. You don't need to say a word. If you do, say, "Try again."
- 2) Have the student say the name of the letter saying, "D" says /?/, " for example. Many times that is all it takes to trigger the sound. If not, do #3.
- 3) Ask the student to think of a word beginning with that letter.
- 4) Have the student write the letter in the sand tray saying, "D" says / ? /."
- 5) Reteach

If the letter is a vowel, ask questions such as, “What kind of syllable it this? What vowel sound do you find in that type of syllable?” Give any clues that you used when you originally taught the sound. It is important for the student to think through the process so that s/he will become independent at attacking words.

Source: J.C. & Howell, K.M. *Decoding/Encoding Manual: An Orton-Gillingham Approach.* The Michigan Dyslexia Institute. Permission given to use this material.