

The explicit teaching of onset and rime units to a group of grade two children improves each child's ability to read unknown words in isolation and in prose.

Abstract

Some students when learning to read do not develop effective decoding skills. Segmenting words into onset and rimes is an efficient and successful decoding strategy. Without this skill, readers have trouble decoding words in isolation and in prose.

The students in this research project did not have effective decoding skills but instead relied on distinctive visual features of words and the meaning of text when reading.

The following hypothesis was proposed and tested.

The explicit teaching of onset and rime units to a group of grade two children improves each child's ability to read unknown words in isolation and in prose.

The action research project began with the pre testing of the students to determine their needs. This was followed up with an intervention of ten lessons that taught the students how to decode words using onsets and rimes. At the completion of the intervention the students were tested again and their gains recorded.

The results confirmed the hypothesis as both students made significant gains in their phonological awareness skills and in the way they decoded words in isolation and prose.

Introduction.

“ Reading is very important for success in our society, yet as many as one in five students has difficulty learning to read.” (Denton 2000 pg 5) All schools are trying to address this problem with focused literacy teaching in the early years of schooling, however, some children are still finding reading acquisition a difficult task. Two such children have been chosen for this study. Both students are in grade two and have missed key areas in their phonological development. One child is learning English as a second language and the other child suffered hearing problems in infancy. Both now require specific intervention to improve their reading, despite a thorough and focused literacy program in the classroom.

The students in question are having trouble at the word level of J. Munro's Multiple Levels of Text Processing Model. Their difficulties are due to the fact that they have not learned to segment words into functional units and then recode them. They also have difficulties identifying letter clusters in words, converting letter clusters to sounds and blending word units back together again. The children display these problems when reading, by using partial letter data unsystematically. They both rely very heavily on the meaning of the

text and distinctive visual features when trying to decode unknown words. Student B also has a tendency to insert or delete letters from words.

These problems are causing serious difficulties for the students in their decoding, comprehension and general reading skills. According to J. Munro the two students are still at stage two of their development into orthographic readers. Therefore, they are still using ineffective and slow decoding strategies. "Using distinctive visual features is least effective" (Munro J 2000). In order to help the two students improve their reading they must receive specific teaching in identifying and recoding letter clusters into sound patterns and then progress onto reading words directly through automatic phonemic recoding and analogy.

A review of the current literature supports intervention at this stage of development for these two students.

A study by Vellutino and Scanlon into the reasons for reading disability found that "the acquisition of skill in beginning reading depends more heavily on the phonological components of language than on the semantic and syntactic components of language." (Vellutino, Scanlon 1998 pg 5) They also went on to conclude that "inadequate facility in word identification is the immediate and most central cause of reading difficulties in beginning readers." (Vellutino, Scanlon 1998 pg 6)

Phonological awareness is the conscious sensitivity to the sound structure of language. Children with strong phonological awareness can detect, match, blend, segment and manipulate speech sounds. Such facility with the sounds of spoken language enables children to learn more readily how to apply these skills to decode print." (Lane H. et al 2002)" Deficits in phonological awareness are usually associated with deficits in reading" (Lane H. et al 2002) " Early intervention can promote the development of phonological awareness and improvements in phonological awareness can and usually do result in improvements in reading. " (Lane H. et al 2002)

The intervention prescribed for the students will need to be based on phonological awareness and teach word segmentation. Teaching onset and rime is a useful phonological strategy. Current literature supports this. "Onset-rime segmentation skill is an essential component of phonological awareness." (Adams M.J.1990) "The difficulty that many children experience when progressing from syllabic analysis to phonemic analysis may arise because the intermediate step, the intra-syllabic unit, is often omitted from early reading instruction. Providing experience working with onsets and rimes may alleviate this difficulty" (Lane H. et al 2002).

The present investigation aims to extend the earlier research by examining the effect knowledge of onsets and rime units has on two grade children's reading ability.

Hypothesis.

The explicit teaching of onset and rime units to a group of grade two children improves each child's ability to read unknown words in isolation and in prose.

METHOD

Design

The study uses a case study OXO design in which the gain in decoding words in prose and isolation is measured after specific teaching of onset and rime word units. The students were identified through formal assessment. A specific intervention plan was administered and then the students were formally assessed again to discover any gains that were made.

Participants.

The participants are two grade two students from a small inner city Catholic primary school. The students were referred to me by their classroom teacher, as they were below their peers in reading and because they have specific difficulties at the word reading level. One student has had a history of reading difficulties, although in other areas of the curriculum he is quite bright. This student has repeated grade prep and had six months of Reading Recovery last year in grade one. Unfortunately, this child suffered serious hearing problems in his infancy and did not learn to speak until four years of age. The second child arrived as a new student at our school at the start of the year and past history is not known. However, we do know that she is an ESL student who arrived in Australia in 2001. She has learned English quite well but she still has difficulties with sentence structures and some grammar and vocabulary.

The students were both given the following tests as part of their formal pre-intervention testing. The Rime Units Test, the Orthographic Reading Test, The Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test and A Running Record taken on a Reading Recovery benchmarked text.

The students' ages and entry levels are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

	Student A	Student B
Age	8yrs 6mths	8yrs 9mths
Rime Units Test,	89	92
Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test	35	46
Orthographic Reading Test	26	34
Instructional Text Level	Level21	Level 21

MATERIALS

The following materials were used in the assessment tasks.

Rime Units Test J. Munro

This test is at the word reading level and requires the children to read the words as quickly and as accurately as they can. The words contain the 37 dependable rime units.

The Orthographic Reading Test. J. Munro

This requires the children to work at the word reading level. The test contains one syllable words of differing complexity. The words vary in their letter length (3-6) , their frequency in common language and in their consonant vowel make up.

Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test

This test requires the students to complete the following tasks; Syllable counting, rhyme detection, rhyme production, identification of the initial and final sound, word segmentation and blending, deletion of initial and then second phoneme and finally nonsense word reading and writing.

PM Benchmark Texts

This test is at the prose reading level and requires the students to read carefully graded texts to determine their instructional reading level.

Flashcards.

Two sets of flashcards were made for the taught words. One set was written highlighting the onset and rime and these were then cut up and used in word blending activities. The second set of flashcards was used for the reinforcement games.

Running Record Texts.

These texts were devised by the teacher and contained the two rime units from the previous day. They were written at a grade two level using the Fry Readability Procedure.

Miscellaneous.

Whiteboard, magnetic letters, notebook for students, bingo game boards, dice, word sorts and Onset Rime cubes.

PROCEDURE

The tests were administered to both students in the following order; both prior to the intervention lessons and after the teaching sessions were completed.

- Rime units Test
- Sutherland Phonological Test
- Orthographic Reading Test.
- Text Level

The teaching sessions were conducted over a three-week period with approximately three sessions taught per week. The children were withdrawn

from their class during the literacy block in the morning. Each session lasted approximately 50 minutes.

The pre testing identified the rime units that both students did not recognize or pronounce correctly and the following were chosen for teaching.

Aw, ab ing ong ate ain ail eat end amp ine ide ale ew ung une.

The following teaching schedule was followed

Day 1 Introduce the terms rime and onset and teach how words can be broken up into these two parts. Rimes taught aw and ab

Day 2 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught ing and ong.

Day 3 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught ate ain.

Day 4 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught ail eat.

Day 5 Interim word test administered. Revision of all rime units taught through reinforcement games such as bingo, snap, go fish, dice games, memory and beat the clock.

Day 6 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught end amp.

Day 7 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught ine ide.

Day 8 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught ale ew

Day 9. Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. New rimes taught ung u-e

Day 10 Running Record taken on text containing yesterdays taught rimes. Revision of all rime units taught through reinforcement games such as bingo, snap, go fish, dice games, memory and beat the clock.

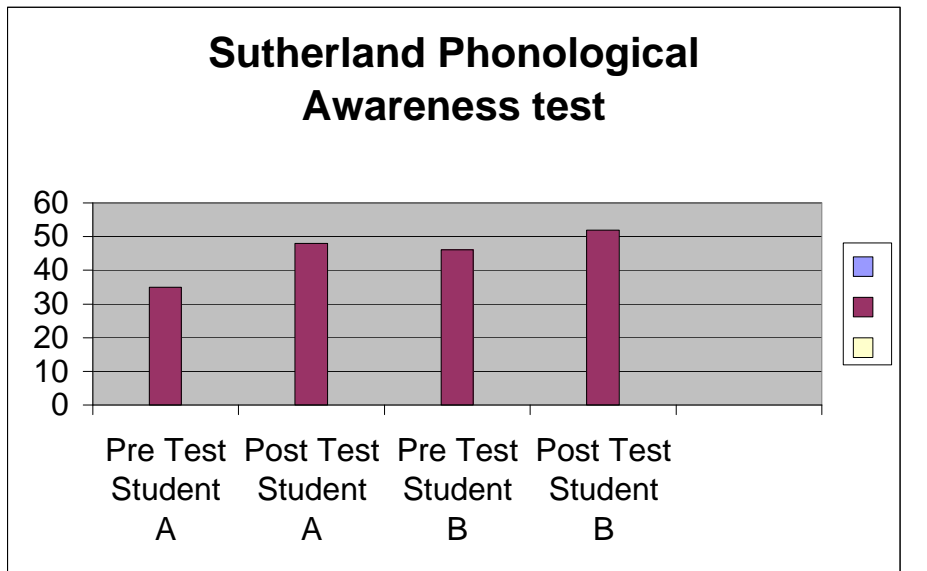
On completion of the ten teaching sessions the four pre-tests were administered again to monitor the students gains.

Each teaching session followed a similar format except for the two revision sessions. Each lesson had a revision component and in each lesson the children were expected to read words, write words, make up sentences containing words, work on text and verbalize what they had learned and how that new knowledge could help them with their literacy learning.

RESULTS

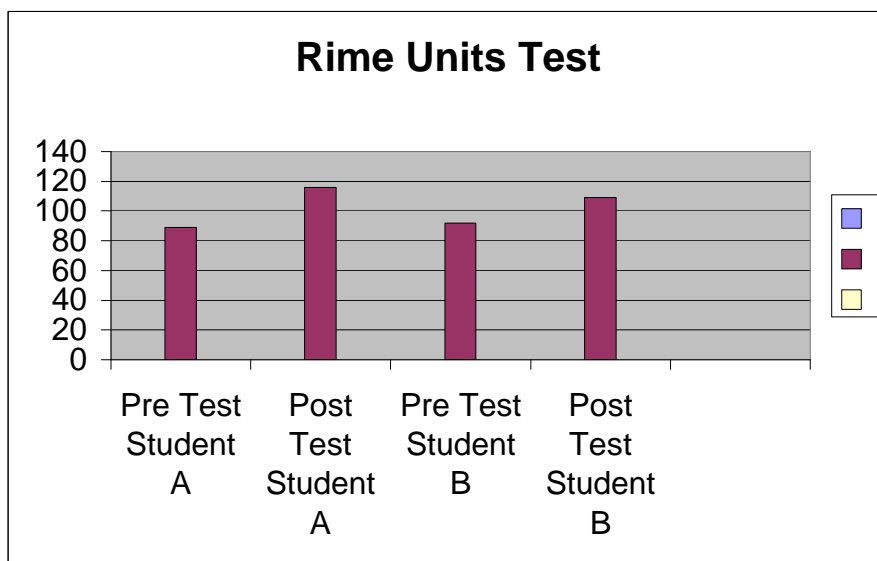
Data gathered through this action research project would suggest that both students gained in word decoding and reading skills as a direct result of the intervention. Student A, who is learning English a second language, made the biggest gains especially in her phonological knowledge. Student B, who has a history of hearing problems, made steady gains. As a result the data gathered from interim and post testing would support the hypothesis as stated.

Results in Phonological knowledge Graph A



In the pretest, Student A was actually well below one standard deviation below the mean but after her intervention she is now above the mean for a grade two student. Student B was just below the mean in his pre test but after the intervention he is now above the mean for a grade two student. (Refer to the hard copy of data.) As can be seen from the data student A made the most gains.

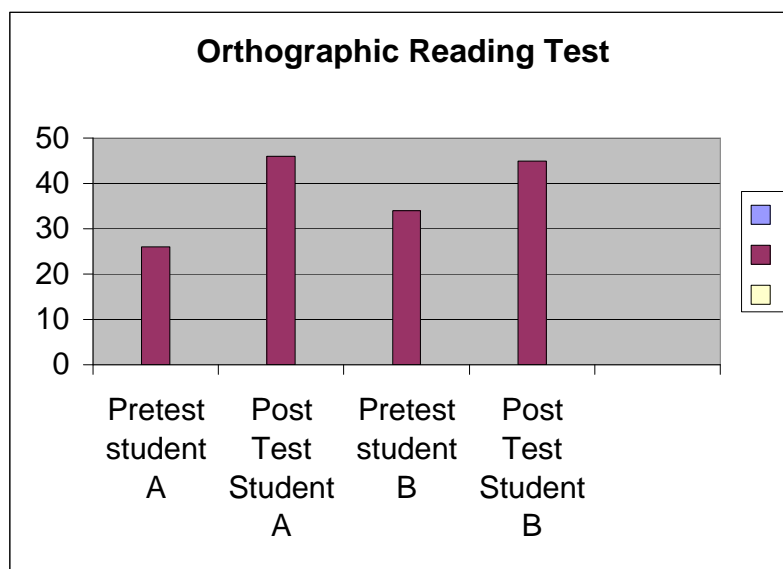
Results in Rime Units Knowledge. Graph B



Student A's rime units pre test, showed that she had many sound confusions at all levels of the test. She confused a and u sounds and a number of two letter and three letter rime units. Her post test results show a great improvement, as there were only twelve words that she was unable to read correctly. Her approach in the post-test, showed a more systematic approach to decoding ie breaking up words into onsets and rimes.

Student B's rime units pre test, showed confusions at all levels of the test. He found it very difficult to assign sounds to letter clusters instead he deleted or added letters that were not there in the original word. The post-test results showed a big improvement but some errors indicated that he did not look at the letters of the words carefully enough.

Orthographic Reading Test Results Graph C



Both students made considerable gains in orthographic reading as a result of the intervention. Once again, student A made the most gains improving 10 percentiles. Student B improved 6 percentiles. It is interesting to note Student A's big improvement in the 1:1 mapping of sounds to letters and also that Student B was only able to read one 6 letter word correctly on his pre test but in the post test he was able to read six 6 letter words correctly.

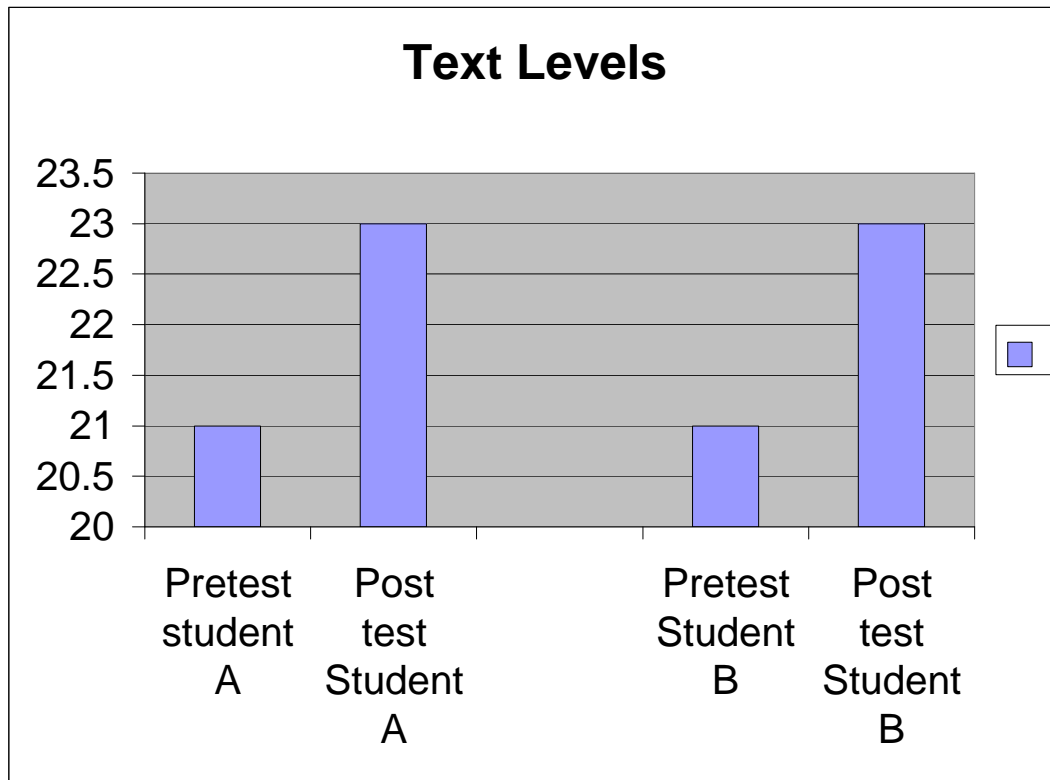
The results can be shown on the following table (Table 2)

Recording Orthographic Reading Test Results Table 2

	Student A Pretest	Student A post test	Student B Pretest	Student B post test
1:1 Mapping	0 correct	9 correct	4 correct	9 correct
(vc) regular	3 correct	4 correct	5 correct	6 correct
(vc) Irregular	3 correct	5 correct	5 correct	7 correct
(vv) regular	4 correct	7 correct	3 correct	5 correct
(vv) irregular	6 correct	8 correct	7 correct	8 correct
(vcv) regular	2 correct	7 correct	2 correct	4 correct
(cc) regular	8 correct	10 correct	8 correct	9 correct

Text Level Results Graph D

Both students increased their reading levels by 2



Interim Testing - Word Test Results.

The students were given a word test at lesson five of the program. The test was teacher devised and tested all the taught rime units up to lesson five. The results are as follows.

Student A

23 words read quickly and correctly; 1 error cab / gab; 4 self-corrections and 2 words read correctly after hesitating.

Total 29 out of 30.

Student B

25 words read correctly and automatically; two errors feeling / fling and gate, grate for crate; No self - corrections; 3 Words read correctly after hesitating.

Total 28 out of 30

These two results showed me that they had learned the rime units well that had been taught already and that two rime units per lesson were not too much for them.

Interim Testing Running Records Results

In every lesson except revision lessons, the children were given a text that contained the taught rime units for that day. The students were asked to highlight the words that contained the taught rimes and then the text was read. The following day a running record was taken on that text. The results are as follows. Acc = Accuracy S/C = Self - Corrections.

Text Title	Student A	Student B
The Hungry Cat.	Acc 96% S/c 1:3	Acc 96% S/C 1:3
The Unhappy king.	Acc 100% S/C 1:1	Acc 99% S/C Nil
Waiting At The Station.	Acc 94% S/C 1:4	Acc 100% S/C 1:1
Snail In The Garden.	Acc 98% S/C 1:3	Acc 98% S/C1:2
The Broken lamp	Acc 97% S/C 1:2	Acc 97% S/C 1:2
The Wedding .	Acc 97% S/C 1:1.5	Acc 99% S/C 1:1
Dale's New Kite.	Acc 97% S/C 1:4	Acc 97% S/C nil
The School Concert.	Acc 97% S/C 1: 4	Absent.

The results showed that all the texts were read at an Easy level with a good self - correction rate.

Discussion

The results of the testing support my hypothesis and prove that explicit teaching of onset and rime units does improve a child's ability to read unknown words in isolation and in prose.

The results of the phonological testing was very pleasing as both students made increases in their phonological awareness, particularly student A. As a result of the intervention, that taught onset and rime awareness, the children's phonological awareness increased and with it their ability to decode words in isolation and in texts. This supported Vellutino and Scanlon's assertion that "the acquisition of skill in beginning reading depends more heavily on the phonological components of language than on the semantic and syntactic components of language." (Vellutino, Scanlon 1998 pg 5) It also supports Lane's studies as she writes " Deficits in phonological awareness are usually associated with deficits in reading" (Lane H. et al 2002). " Children with strong phonological awareness can detect, match, blend, segment and manipulate speech sounds. Such facility with the sounds of spoken language enables children to learn more readily how to apply these skills to decode print." (Lane H. et al 2002).

The Results for the Rime Units and the Orthographic Reading test were also pleasing because they showed me that the children had learned to break up unknown words into onset and rime, they were able to match the correct sounds to the letter clusters and then blend the word parts back together again. As a result of this improvement in their word decoding skills, I was able to conclude that my teaching had been successful for decoding words in isolation.

To test the success of the intervention in helping the students decode words effectively in prose I had to look at the results of the text level tests and the results of the running records. Once again the results showed that both students had increased their reading accuracy by two levels and the running records showed that they had easily applied the taught onset rime unit knowledge to the prose presented in their lessons. The high self - correction rate shown in the running records indicates that the children were not just

taking a guess at the words as they had done previously, but they were applying strategies and thinking about their word decoding.

It was notable that Student A, who is learning English as a second language, made the biggest overall gains. I would suggest that, apart from her inability to use the English language correctly, she is probably a normal student who learns at a normal rate. The specific teaching of the sounds of letter clusters and individual vowel sounds really met her needs and she was able to confidently apply this knowledge to her reading. It was also pleasing to see that by the end of the lessons she beginning to decode words using analogy which shows that her reading development has improved up to stage 5. Her classroom teacher also reported that she was now showing more confidence in reading back in the classroom and was putting her hand up more regularly in classroom discussions. Overall she has gained in literacy confidence.

When viewing the results of Student B it is possible to note that he made gains but, because he had better results than student A on the pretests, his gains have not been as great. On the text reading, he did not self correct as often as student A and he still has a very strong tendency to use Distinctive Visual Features when decoding words. His visual scanning is also poor and the results show that he often deletes letters or adds letters to words he is trying to decode. My thoughts are that his early hearing problems have had a serious effect on his reading abilities and hearing problems are the hardest to overcome. However, I have some concerns over his visual scanning and perception skills. Another major reason for Student B's fewer gains is that his self - efficacy is very low and he often needed encouragement and support to attempt tasks. His common response was "I Can't ". This was not the case for Student A.

In the future, I would like to work with Student B on increasing his self efficacy and I think he will need further work in this rime onset work to help him see and decode words using segmentation and letter cluster knowledge rather than using distinctive visual features. I may follow up this intervention by suggesting that he see a behavioural optometrist to check on his visual skills. I will continue to check on student A's progress and should she need further assistance with her phonological knowledge I hope to be in the position to provide this.

The success of the short focused intervention has significant implications for the teaching practice at our school. The good results encourage me and other staff members to try this approach again to help those children who are falling below their peers in literacy skills. The ten sessions were enough to show significant results and were not a big investment in a teacher's time. A number of children could be similarly helped by repeating a similar series of lessons focused on the children's specific needs. As we have a big number of Students who are learning English as a second language in our school, it would also be useful to make sure that our teachers incorporate phonological awareness activities in their literacy programs. This type of approach is supported by Denton and Hasbrouck when they state, " Students benefit when instruction is systematic and structured. Reading skills should be

introduced in careful order and students must be given a great deal of practice and repetition in each skill “ (Denton, Hasbrouck 2000 pg 7) I believe that the intervention that was administered in this research project allowed two students to benefit from systematic instruction and many opportunities to revise and reinforce the taught skills.

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Appendix A

Interim Word Reading Test

Name Date

paw

drab

thing

fail

cheat

strong

king

stain

crate

hail

rate

gain

cab

gong

saw

fling

date

blab

plain

thaw

peat

wrong

pail

sting

gab

ring

wheat

feat

fate

nail

Appendix B

Objectives of Intervention program:

To help children

- systematically decode unknown words using Onset and rime.
- blend onsets and rimes to read words.
- identify rime units in words.
- transfer rime unit knowledge to other words.
- learn how to transfer this knowledge to improve text reading.
- articulate and reflect on this new knowledge.

The target group for the intervention program are having trouble at the Word Level of J. Munro's MLOTP model of reading. The two children are having specific difficulties with segmenting words into functional units and then converting letter clusters to sounds. This knowledge is very useful in helping readers efficiently decode words when reading text.

Intervention Format.

The intervention research project was administered to two grade two children who were having difficulties with their reading. The children were withdrawn for two testing periods and ten 50 minute lessons over a period of four weeks.

The Sequence Used for Teaching Rime Units .

Activity	Teacher	Students
Review of previous days Rime units. Running Record taken on previous day's text.	Teacher presents a variety of review activities.(See below for detail of daily sessions.) Then takes a running record of yesterday's text for both children. Unhighlighted copy.	Children alternate between the review activity and the running record.
Introduce new rime unit.	Teacher gives the sound for the new letter cluster/ rime unit and presents this new unit in a series of words.	Children think of other possible words they know containing this new rime unit. Read all new words.
Read Each word in segments.	Words presented to children on flashcards with onset and rime written in different colours.	Students read each from the flashcards then divide the cards between them. They then cut them into their onset and rime, reassemble and read in segments pointing to each letter cluster as they say it. Eg meat say m and eat.

How are words similar?	Teacher presents the words containing new rime unit on the white board. She asks How are words similar? What do all words share?	Students read words again and answer questions by stating that all words contain the same rime unit which has the same sound. They may also follow the same rule.eg silent e or two vowels together.
Visualise each word. Write the words in notebook.	Teacher asks students to visualize the rime unit on its own and then in one of the taught words. Visualize the sequence of the letters that make up the rime unit. Read words again	Students visualize rime units and read and write words in a notebook.
Transfer rime unit to other words.	Teacher presents other words and nonsense words containing the taught rime unit. Written on whiteboard	Students read other words presented by the teacher and suggest and write words of their own.
Put words into a sentence.	Teacher refers back to taught words and explains meanings should there be confusions	Students put each word into a sentence to explain the meaning of the target word.
Introduce second rime unit	Teacher introduces the second rime unit as outlined above.	
Reading of prose.	Teacher presents and orients a text at grade two level containing words with the two taught rime units.	Students read the text and then with a highlighter pen highlight the rime units found in the words of the text.
Reinforcement game.	Teacher presents rules of the game or activity used to reinforce taught rime units. (See daily details below.)	Students play game or do activity as set out by the teacher
Meta – phonemic knowledge.	Teacher explains that knowledge of the rime units and strategies taught will help their reading when they come to unknown words in text. (See daily details below.)	Children verbalise what has been taught and how this will help them in reading.

Daily Details.

Day 1

Taught rime units aw, ab

Text The Hungry Cat

Reinforcement game Onset and rime dice cubes for aw and ab throw both dice to make aw and ab words.

Meta-phonemic knowledge How breaking up words helps us read unknown words.

Day 2

Running Record The hungry Cat / **Review activity** Use yesterdays cut up cards to assemble taught words.

Rime units taught ing, ong

New Text The Unhappy King.

Reinforcement Game. Bingo using taught words containing aw ab ing and ong words.

Meta-Phonemic Knowledge How you can use what you know about words to read other words?

Day 3

Running Record The Unhappy King / **Review Activity** Word sort of ab aw ing and ong words

Rime units Taught. ate ain

NewText Waiting At The Station.

Reinforcement Game. Memory game revising all taught rime units.

Meta-phonemic knowledge. How can you use what you are learning in your reading?

Day 4

Running Record Waiting At The Station / **Review Activity** Make taught words using onset and rime cubes.

Rime Units Taught ail, eat Revise double vowel rule.

New Text Snail In The Garden.

Reinforcement Game. Beat My Time. Flashcards of all taught words are read by each child and they are timed. They compete against each other.

Meta-phonemic Knowledge What are onsets and rimes and how do we use them?

Day 5 Review and Testing.

All games used in the program are played today but they are set up to revise all the rime units taught so far.

An interim reading test administered today, that tests each child's ability to read words containing the taught rime units.

Day 6

Running Record Snail in the Garden / **Review Activity** Word sorts for ate ain ail eat ing and ong words

Rime Units Taught end and amp

New Text The broken Lamp

Reinforcement Game. Onset and rime dice cubes revising end and amp words.

Meta-phonemic Knowledge Why is it good to break up words when reading?

Day 7

Running Record The Broken Lamp / **Review Activity** Revise the five Vowel sounds.

Rime Units Taught ide ine Revise silent E Rule

New Text The Wedding

Reinforcement Game. Bingo for words taught today and yesterday.

Meta-phonemic Knowledge What have you learned about rimes?

Day 8

Running Record The Wedding / **Review Activity** Make words using yesterday's cut up words.

Rime Units Taught ale ew

New Text Dale's New Kite.

Reinforcement Game. Snap game. Snap for the same rime.

Meta-phonemic Knowledge. How can you use rime units to make new words?

Day 9

Running Record Dale's New Kite. / **Review Activity** Write yesterday's words on the white board.

Rime Units Taught ung u-e

New Text The School Concert.

Reinforcement Game. Beat Your Time

Meta-phonemic Knowledge How do you see yourselves as self teachers?

Day 10 Review

Running Record The School Concert.

Review of all taught rimes through playing a variety of games chosen from the following;

Beat Your Time.

Bingo.

Memory.

Dice Games.

Snap.

Go Fish.

Appendix C

Words Used For Teaching Rime Units

Ab cab tab jab lab slab crab grab

Aw saw raw draw law claw

Ing sing wing sting thing king bring string

Ong long wrong strong song gong

Ung sung lung stung rung hung

Amp lamp damp champ cramp tramp stamp

End lend send bend spend blend mend

Ew few new flew knew threw dew

Eat cheat treat heat meat seat wheat neat beat

Ain rain brain chain drain pain plain main

Ide side ride tide wide hide pride glide slide bride

Ate gate mate date late hate state plate

Ail mail jail fail sail nail tail snail trail

Ine wine fine line dine mine spine pine shine

Ale sale pale tale male stale whale

U – e tune June tube cube

Dependable rimes are underlined.

Appendix D

Texts

The Hungry Cat (ab, aw)

Meg the cat was hungry. Her owners had gone to work in a cab. Although she looked in every room, there was no food left out for her.

Meg saw the fish tank and said to herself, “ I will have a raw fish for my dinner”. She jumped onto the shelf. Meg carefully put her paw into the water. She tried very hard to grab a fish that was swimming by.

All of a sudden, a crab, at the bottom of the tank bit her paw with his claw. “Ouch that hurt”, said Meg pulling her paw out of the tank. “ I will just have to stay hungry”, she cried.

Readability for 100 words 10 sentences 116 syllables
Approx Grade two level.

The Unhappy King (ing, ong)

Once there was a king who had everything. He had gold and money and was very strong but something was wrong. The king was very sad.

He called for his servants. “I am feeling very sad. Please sing me a song”, he said. His servants sang many songs but the king did not smile.

“I know “, said the King ”a magic trick would make me happy”. The servants went to find a long piece of string.

“Bring it to me “, said the King. He got his magic ring and hit the piece of string – PING! It disappeared. “I am happy now “ said the King.

Readability for 100 words. 11.1 sentences 115 syllables. Approximately grade two level.

Waiting at the Station. (ain, ate)

The train was late. Sue walked through the gate onto the platform. Her brain was tired and her legs were sore. She has walked a long way to the station. It looked like it was going to rain. "Oh No" she said, "I hate it when it rains."

Sue had been given a very special plate to take to her aunt in the next state. The plate cost a lot of money and she had to be very careful with it. The main platform was full of people now but still the train did not come.

The plate was heavy and it was giving her a pain in her arm. At last the train came into sight.

Readability for 100 words : 9.3 sentences 111syllables.
Approximately Grade two level.

Dale's New Kite. (Ale , Ew)

"The toy shop is having a sale", said Mum. "We could go down and spend the money you got for your birthday".

Dale knew what he wanted to buy. He hoped the shop had one. Mum and Dale got into the car and drove to the toy shop.

"Oh look," said Mum, "you could buy that big toy whale." "Maybe you could buy a new football," said Mum again. "No," said Dale, "I want a kite." "Look, there are a few over there."

Dale picked out a big yellow kite and had just the right money. The next day, the wind was blowing so Dale went out and flew his kite. "It is a good birthday present," said Dale.

119 words. Readability for 100 words: 9.2 sentences 111 syllables.
Approximately grade two level.

Snail In The Garden (ail, eat)

One hot day, Gail went into the garden to beat the heat. It was cooler out in the garden and she sat down on a seat under a tree. Gail wished she had a pool to swim in or a boat to sail. "I wish I had a nice cool treat," she said. Just then, Gail saw a silver trail on the grass. She walked through the garden following the trail. Then up at the back fence, she saw a snail. It had a brown shell and a black body and tail. Gail wanted to pick it up but when she put her hand out, the snail went into its shell. "I hope its cool in there," said Gail to the snail.

122 Words Readability for 100 words : 8.8 sentences 113 syllables.
Approximately grade two level.

The Wedding (ide, ine)

It was a fine sunny day. The bride arrived at the Church with her Dad. He looked at her with pride because she looked so beautiful. With her Dad at her side, the bride walked through the wide Church doors. They then began to stride down the aisle to meet the groom.

Everyone was happy for the two young people who were married. They could not hide their joy.

Soon it was time for them to ride in the big black car to the wedding party.

There, they will dine on fine food and good wine. They will enjoy the party with their family and friends.

106 words. Readability for 100 words: 9.4 sentences 113 syllables.
Approximately Grade Two level.

The Broken Lamp. (end, amp)

Mum asked me to help her with the house work. She went out to do the shopping. I thought that I would do the dusting so I went to find a damp cloth. I dusted the table, the bookshelf and the piano. Then, I went to dust and clean Mum's best lamp. "She will think I'm a champ," I said to myself.

As I was cleaning the lamp, it slipped out of my hands and fell to the floor. It broke into three pieces. Mum came home while I was trying to mend it. "Oh no," said Mum, "we will have to send it away to get fixed."

The next day we carefully put the broken lamp into a box and put a stamp on it before posting it off.

"You can spend my pocket money to fix it," I said. Mum smiled and said "Thank you."

148 words Readability for 100 Words: 9.5 sentences. 112 syllables.
Approximately Grade two level.

The School Concert (ung, u-e)

Last night was the school concert. The stage was set up with ladders and coloured cubes. June had to sing a tune from the top of a ladder. June stood on the rung of the ladder and began to fill her lungs with air. All of a sudden, she heard a buzzing noise. A bee was flying around her head. June hung onto the ladder and got ready to sing her song. She had sung only a little bit of her tune when the bee stung her on the nose. June was brave and finished her song. "Next concert I will bring a tube of insect cream," she said.

112 Words. Readability for 100 words: 9.0 sentences 112 syllables.
Approximately grade two level.

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