

*Explicitly teaching the use of dependable rime units to a group of grade one children who have reading difficulties, improves their ability to accurately decode words in isolation and in reading prose.*

## **TEACHING STRATEGIES**

The explicit teaching of onset and rime units to three grade one children improves their ability to recognise and use letter cluster patterns in prose and in isolation. As children provide a list of words with the rime unit discussion takes place as to whether the word is real or a pseudo word. Children are taught to recognise which are real.

Teaching procedure for onset and rimes. 40 minutes.

1. Rime unit is introduced by the teacher. For example, these letters together say “aw”. Can you think of any words you know that have that sound in them?
2. Children help teacher to compile a list of words containing that rime.
3. Teacher writes the words on a chart while children begin to use magnetic letters to make the words.
4. Teacher then makes and breaks words changing the onset and children call out the words.
5. Children write the list of words into their exercise book.
6. Together with the teacher, some sentences are produced that contain a few of the rime unit words, eg, raw, paw, jaw. The dog moved the raw meat with its paw and ate it with its strong jaw.
7. Children play with dice game. Two die. One with the rime unit, the other with a selection of onsets. A commercial game such as Clusters or Chunks can be used also. Snap, Memory and Go Fish can be played or Climb The Ladder.
8. A second rime unit is introduced in the same way and steps one to eight followed again.
9. Using the white boards and magnetic letters, the rime units are placed on the board. Children will choose the correct onset to add to the rime, as I read the prose texts. Concentrate on one of the rime units in the text first, then do the other, then combine the whole lot. Children really enjoyed this activity and found it quite challenging.
10. At the end of the session, the children are given a text that contains a mixture of the rime unit words that have been used throughout the session. They read through the text with the teacher and highlight the rime unit words they have learnt today.
11. Flashcards are shown with the words all muddled and children read through them.
12. At the commencement of the next days session each child has a running record taken on the text from the previous day. The other children can sort the flashcards into rime units or play with the Chunks game.

## Materials

Materials used include the following.

Assessment Tools for pre and post testing:

- Clay Letter Identification –Upper and lower case letter name and sound.
- PM Bench mark texts
- Burt Word Test.
- Orthographic Word Test (Munro)
- Rime unit test (Munro)

Teacher devised short texts containing targeted rime unit words (Appendix 3). I focused more on the childrens' recognition of the rime unit words rather than on how well they went in the running record generally.

I also used 88 flashcards with rime unit words as an extra post-test activity.

Teaching Session Requirements:

- Teacher prepared passages of prose containing targeted rime units.
- Extra copies of prose for recording purposes.
- Magnetic letters.
- Teacher made flipbooks containing targeted rime units.
- White boards and markers for children.
- Prepared flashcards containing rimes.
- Student exercise books.
- Prepared games: Climb the Ladder. Recognising Rime Unit game (teacher devised). Dice game. One die having onsets on all sides and the other die having the rime. Card games. Concentration /Snap/Fish. Commercial game CHUNKS.

The flashcards used, were of the words that the children came up with during the lessons that contained the suggested rime units. The flashcards were used for an extra post- test activity. The words were shown to the children individually during post-testing in a mixed order. The following words were used during this assessment.

- “ell” – bell Nell fell tell sell dell well spell swell smell shell
- “ail” - hail tail bail mail sail fail Gail
- “ick”- Mick Rick Nick lick tick sick wick thick chick flick slick
- “eat” – feat meat neat heat beat pleat wheat bleat
- “ake” – make take wake fake cake bake hake sake lake stake flake brake  
shake baked
- “aw” – raw paw saw law flaw draw claw thaw straw
- “ine” –dine line wine vine swine spine
- “ug” – mug jug hug dug rug tug lug bug chug thug slug Grug plug shrug
- “est” – best test zest west rest lest vest chest

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