

Explicitly teaching Grade 2 children who have difficulty with reading to process orthographic information in words by recognizing and phonologically segmenting and blending letter clusters improves their ability to accurately read words in isolation and in prose.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

The following teaching sessions are designed to teach the children to read words accurately in isolation and in prose. They aim to teach some functional letter clusters and how to use these to segment and blend using onset and rime units.

The first 6 lessons followed the same steps to help students become familiar with the procedure and to establish a routine. 3 revision lessons were taken in between including one before final testing.

Lesson Procedure for lessons: 1,2,3,4,5,6, 8,9,10, 12,13:

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| Step 1 | Revision of previous lessons: Re-read words learnt from the previous lessons and/or re-read passage from the last session and children verbalize what they had learnt from this. |
| Step 2 | The teacher presents 2 or 3 new words on individual cards that have the same letter cluster pattern in them, reads them to students and explains meaning of unknown words. Eg. purse, slurp, blurt |
| Step 3 | Ask students to say what they can see is the same in each word. Match the letter cluster to its sound. Eg. u..r can make the sound ‘ur’ (as in church) |
| Step 4 | Self Script: Each student verbalizes the new learning: ‘They all have u...r and in these words the u...r makes the ‘ur’ sound.’ |
| Step 5 | Teacher models cutting 2 or 3 of the words into onset and rime. Eg. sp/urt
Students say the onset and rime units, pushing the letter clusters as they say them or holding a piece each and then blend them together. Eg. Student A holds ‘sp’ and Student B holds ‘urt’. They each say what they are holding and then blend them together to say word, ‘spurt’. The students take it in turns to hold the onset and the rime, so for the next word Student B holds the onset and Student B holds the rime.
Students run their finger underneath each blended word and read them fast. |
| Step 6 | Constructing the word using correct letter sequence: Each student makes 1 or 2 of the words with magnetic letters. |
| Step 7 | In an envelope each child receives 3 or 4 words with the same letter cluster being taught (i.e. ‘ur’). With teacher assistance they cut (segment) into onset and rime, put the pieces back together (blend) and read each word. |
| Step 8 | The students swap and read one another’s words (cut into pieces), practicing segmenting and blending. |
| Step 9 | Each student has a scrapbook and they blend and paste the words they’ve made and they read their own words and then one another’s. |
| Step 10 | At the back of their scrapbook the students list the new letter clusters they’ve learnt, written as onset and rimes, under the headings – ‘ <i>Word Beginnings</i> ’ and ‘ <i>Word Endings</i> ’. |

For Example:

Word Beginnings

ch

sp

sl

Word Endings

urch

urt

ur

- Step 11 Writing the word: Students read one or more of their words again and close their eyes and 'make a picture' of it and then write it and check it.
- Step 12 Ask students if they know of other examples of words that have this letter cluster in it. When the letter cluster is not a dependable one, the teacher gives 1 or 2 examples of words where the same letter cluster is making a different sound. A copy of all the words explored in this lesson is given to the children to paste in their scrapbook and any new examples are added to it.
- Step 13 The teacher presents a short passage invented by the teacher that includes words that have the new letter cluster taught.
- Step 14 Before reading the passage students take it in turns to find words in the passage with the taught letter cluster in it.
- Step 15 Alternatively students invent their own sentences using some of the new words taught.
- Step 16 Transferring letter cluster to prose: Students read the passage or sentences.
- Step 17 Discriminating the word type from similar words: The teacher places a few words down that include examples of words with the new letter cluster taught and words with other letter clusters and the students read them as fast and as accurately as they can.
- Step 18 **Before each child leaves they are asked to verbalize what they have learnt in this session.**

Revision Lesson Procedure for lessons 7,11,14:

- Each student reads one or two of the teacher or student invented texts from the previous lessons.
- The students read a **mixture** of word types taught so far, which are written on flashcards and placed on the table in front of them. These words are chosen at the teachers' discretion after observing the children during the previous lessons.
- Concentration Game: Using examples of a mixture of the word types taught so far the children play concentration game together. Flashcards with the words written on them are placed faced down on the table and children take it in turn to find a pair.
- Each student reads one or two of the teacher or student invented texts from the previous lessons. (These are different to the ones read at the beginning of this revision lesson)

The lesson sequence

- Lesson 1:** letter cluster – ‘ou’
Lesson 2: letter cluster – ‘ir’
Lesson 3: letter cluster – ‘ur’
Lesson 4: letter cluster – ‘aw’
Lesson 5: letter cluster – ‘ar’
Lesson 6: letter cluster – ‘ai’
Lesson 7: *revision*
Lesson 8: letter clusters – ‘ee’ & ‘ea’
Lesson 9: letter cluster – ‘ew’
Lesson 10: letter cluster – ‘oi’
Lesson 11: *revision*
Lesson 12: letter cluster – ‘a-e’ (ate; ale; ape; ake; ame)
Lesson 13: letter clusters – ‘i-e’ & ‘u-e’ (ine; ide; ite; ike; ice; ipe; ine; ive & une; ube; ute)
Lesson 14: *revision*

The following information includes, for each lesson, the letter cluster being taught, the list of words used and the prose passage or sentences used.

Lesson 1 *Letter Cluster: ‘ou’*

Teacher’s words on separate cards: ground out count lounge

Student A’s words on separate flashcards: found shout couch trout

Student B’s words on separate flashcards: sound sprout loud house

Prose Reading:

Jack got up off the couch in his lounge room. He had heard someone shouting out his name. It was very loud. When he went out through the back door of the house he found his little sister standing in the garden. She was making a funny sound and was jumping up and down. As Jack got close to her he saw what she was excited about. They had planted some seeds in the ground and they could see sprouts. They counted six of them.

Lesson 2 *Letter Cluster: ‘ir’*

Teacher’s words on separate cards: bird girl squirt shirt

Student A’s words on separate flashcards: squirm skirts firm

Student B’s words on separate flashcards: flirt twirls stir

Prose Reading:

Anne and Tom went to the park near their house with their mum and dad. Anne wore a skirt and top and Tom wore shorts and a shirt. Tom was happy to sit on the ground and play with sand and dirt. He found a stick and began to stir the dirt and sand together. This made Anne squirm. Anne met a little girl and they played together. Anne and the girl spun around in a circle making twirls with their skirts. It was hot so dad squirted them with water from his drink bottle. As they walked home they enjoyed listening to the sound of birds singing.

Lesson 3*Letter Cluster: 'ur'*

<i>Teacher's words on separate cards:</i>	slurp	burnt	hurt	
<i>Student A's words on separate flashcards:</i>	purse	spurt	turn	blurt
<i>Student B's words on separate flashcards:</i>	nurse	burst	blur	church

Prose Reading:

On the way to our school we could see a fire. As we turned the corner we saw a burst of flames coming from the church next to our school. The fire truck was there and we counted six firemen. They had some hoses and were squirting the fire with water. One fireman was sitting on the ground and he looked hurt. We thought he might have been burnt. Someone gave him a drink. He was slurping the drink through a straw. We went into school and looked at the fire through the curtains of the windows. The school nurse went out to help the hurt fireman.

Lesson 4*Letter Cluster: 'aw'*

<i>Teacher's words on separate cards:</i>	drawn	saw	fawn	
<i>Student A's words on separate flashcards:</i>	dawn	prawn	thaw	sprawl
<i>Student B's words on separate flashcards:</i>	lawn	spawn	yawn	crawl

Student invented sentences (5 each)

A spider crawled up the wall.
 I yawn when I'm feeling tired.
 I bought some prawns from the supermarket.
 I am going to draw a picture in my book.
 Fish eggs are called spawn.
 When I get home from school I am tired and I sprawl on my bed.
 The grass is very long so we have to mow the lawn.
 A baby crawled along the floor.
 When I woke up in the morning I yawned.
 I like to eat a prawn with my dinner.

Lesson 5*Letter Cluster: 'ar'*

<i>Teacher's words on separate cards:</i>	start	dark	harp
<i>Student A's words on separate flashcards:</i>	party	market	march
<i>Student B's words on separate flashcards:</i>	chart	shark	scar

Prose Reading:

At dawn I was sprawled on my bed when I looked out the window into the garden. I saw my little brother crawling on the lawn. Dad picked him up. I yawned and started to get out of bed. Mum came marching into my room and told me to get dressed. We were going to the market and then to Mark's birthday party. Dad started the car and we were on our way. In the car I made a card for Mark. I had drawn a shark on the front because Mark likes sharks. At the market we saw people marching and a lady playing a harp. We bought Mark a dartboard and a little cart.

Lesson 6*Letter Cluster: 'ai'*

Teacher's words on separate cards: aid aim snail train

Student A's words on separate flashcards: trail drain claim

Student B's words on separate flashcards: frail chain braid

Prose Reading:

Lisa is a new girl in our grade. We think she is a brain! She can do many things. Lisa likes to paint. She painted a picture of a snail in the rain. She comes from Spain and she has a braid in her hair. In Spain she went to school by train. Now she rides her bike to our school. She chains her bike to a rail near the drain outside. She likes to ride her bike but it is a strain going up the hill on the way to school. She has to get off her bike at the hill. Her aim is to ride her bike all the way to school without getting off.

Lesson 8*Letter Cluster: 'ee' & 'ea'*

Teacher's words on separate cards: seen fleet bleat

Student A's words on separate flashcards: cream wheat screen sheet

Student B's words on separate flashcards: scream treat spleen greet

Prose Reading:

On Sunday my family and I went to the beach. It was hot so we put on some sunscreen. Our friend, Ben, came up to see us and we greeted him. My family sat on the beach and Ben went in for a swim. As we sat on the beach we heard a scream. We looked up and saw Ben waving to us from the water. We had not seen him waving to us and that's why he screamed. A fleet of ships had gone by and it made big waves in the water. The waves looked great. Ben couldn't swim in the big waves. We went out to help him. When Ben was safe Mum gave us an ice-cream as a treat.

Lesson 9*Letter Cluster: 'ew'*

Teacher's words on separate cards: blew knew strewn dew

Student A's words on separate flashcards: drew grew crew new

Student B's words on separate flashcards: screw chew flew stew

Student invented sentences (3 each)

I was making a cubby house and I had to screw some screws into the wood.

The strong wind blew the trees down in the yard.

A pigeon flew into the corridor at school and ate all our lunches.

It was so cold this morning that there was dew all over the grass.

The crew on the ship were feeling very tired and seasick.

Last night we had vegetable stew for dinner.

Lesson 10*Letter Cluster: 'oi'*

Teacher's words on separate cards: boil coil foil

Student A's words on separate flashcards: broil toil spoilt

Student B's words on separate flashcards: spoil soil boiling

Prose Reading:

My family has a vegetable garden at our new house. My sister and I look after it and we don't want it to be spoilt. Mum and Dad knew we could take care of it. We built a little fence around it. My brother screwed a sign onto the fence and it read, "Emma and Rachel's Garden". The sign was made of foil and we drew a picture on it. It had coiled wire around it. On cold mornings we could see dew on our garden. Some days the wind blew the seeds away and the birds flew over wanting to eat the seeds strewn across our garden. Now we press the seeds down in to the soil. We keep our dog out of the garden because he chews on the plants. When our vegetables grew mum put them in a stew. We could smell the vegetables cooking as they boiled on the stove.

Lesson 12*Letter Cluster: 'a-e' (ate; ale; ape; ake; ame)*

Teacher's words on separate cards: flame flake crate shale ape

Student A's words on separate flashcards: shame brake plate stale grape

Student B's words on separate flashcards: frame shake state whale shape

Student invented sentences (3 each)

It is a shame that I can't go to the party. I saw a whale diving in and out of the ocean.

When we went to the country we saw grapes growing on the vines.

My family had their photo taken and we put it in a frame. The children shake all over when they dance.

I accidentally dropped the plate on the kitchen floor and it smashed.

Lesson 13*Letter Cluster: 'i-e' & 'u-e' (ine; ide; ite; ike; ice; ipe; ive & une; ube; ute)*

Teacher's words on separate cards: flute rice strive bite

Student A's words on separate flashcards: cube slide stripe bride

Student B's words on separate flashcards: tune strike spine pride

Prose Reading:

Jake and Blake went to an amusement park in Queensland. Queensland is a state of Australia. It was a beautiful, sunny day and they knew the sun would shine brightly for them. Jake and Blake liked to go on all the rides. They went on a big side and played in a tube with long stripes on it. Inside the tube there was an ape, a snake and a whale. One of the rides had a flame coming out of the top of it. When they stopped to have lunch they sat on a crate near a lake. They ate 2 slices of cake on a plate, some grapes and a chocolate flake. A drake took a bite of Jake's apple. On the way home from the park they saw a bride coming out of a church. A man was playing a tune on a flute. People were throwing rice.

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