

What Teachers Should Know

- Definition of phonemic awareness (PA).
- The relation of phonemic awareness to early reading skills.
- The developmental continuum of phonemic awareness skills.
- Which phonemic awareness skills are more important and when they should be taught.
- Features of phonemes and tasks that influence task difficulty.
- Terminology (phoneme, PA, continuous sound, onset-rime, segmentation).
- Components and definition of alphabetic principle.
- The relation of phonemic awareness & decoding.
- The critical stages in learning to decode words.
- Features that influence the difficulty of word recognition.
- Critical differences between regular and irregular words.
- Terminology (alphabetic principle, orthography, grapheme, phonological recoding)

What is Each Grade Level's Responsibility?

K-1: Print Concepts and Phonemic Awareness (Standard 1)

K-1: Phonological Awareness (Standard 2)

K-5: Phonics and Word Recognition (Standard 3)

K-5: Fluency (Standard 4)

The Foundational Skills Kit has been created by ISBE ELA Content Specialists and located at www.ilwritingmatters.org Select Foundational Skills on the left menu for research based resources.

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Defining the Foundational Skills for K-5: Sharing Common Language

Ensuring College and Career for K-5



For more information and to read the research this guide was based on, please visit: <http://reading.uoregon.edu/>

Defining the Terms: The Literacy Foundation

Print Concepts: In a nutshell, it means print has meaning, specifically that:

- Print can be used for different purposes
- There is a relationship between print and speech
- There is a difference between letters and words
- That words are separated by spaces
- There is a difference between words and sentences
- Punctuation marks signal the end of a sentence
- Books have parts such as a front and back cover, title page, and spine
- Stories have a beginning, middle, and end
- Text is read from left to right and from top to bottom

Phonemic Awareness: Considered as part of phonological awareness,

phonemic awareness is an auditory process and DOES NOT involve print or phonics. It is:

- The ability to hear and manipulate the sounds in spoken words and the understanding that spoken words and syllables are made up of sequences of speech sounds
- Essential to learning to read in an alphabetic writing system, because letters represent sounds or phonemes. Without phonemic awareness, phonics makes little sense.
- Fundamental to mapping speech to print. If a child cannot hear that "man" and "moon" begin with the same sound or cannot blend the sounds /rrrruuunnn/ into the word "run", (s)he may have great difficulty connecting sounds with their written symbols or blending sounds to make a word.
- Essential to learning to read in an alphabetic writing system.
- A strong predictor of children who experience early reading success.

Phonological Awareness: This is defined as the ability to hear and manipulate the sound structure of language. This is an encompassing term that involves working with the sounds of language at the word, syllable, and phoneme level.

Phonemes are a speech sound. It is the smallest unit of language and has no inherent meaning. Students should be able to segment and manipulate sounds prior to applying them to phonics instruction later. The chart below shows the skills involved with phonological awareness instruction:

Sentence	The sun shone brightly.
Word	sun
Syllable	sun, sun-shine, sun-ny
Onset-Rime	s-un, s-unshine, s-unny
Phoneme	s-u-n

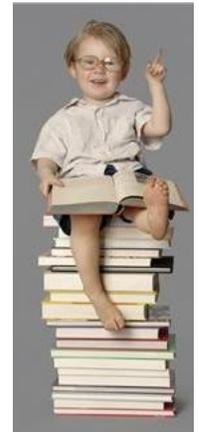
The Alphabetic Principle and

Phonics: In order for students to succeed at phonics mastery, three definitions are required to provide guidance as it relates to the complexity of instruction for beginning readers.

- The alphabetic principle is the understanding that words are made up of letters and letters represent sounds. If a child understands these letter-sound associations, (s)he is on the way to reading and writing words.
- Phonics is the instructional method that focuses on these letter-sound associations. In order to be able to apply phonics, a student will use phonological recoding.
- Phonological Recoding requires readers to use systematic relationships between letters and phonemes (letter-sound correspondence) to retrieve the pronunciation of an unknown printed string or to spell words.

Fluency: In order for students to be fluent, an automatic response should be evident when reading words and phrases so that students' cognition is focused on comprehension. The following are necessary for fluency mastery:

- **Letter-sound correspondences:** comprised initially of individual letter sounds and progresses to more complex letter combinations.
- **Word reading:** comprised initially of reading simple CVC words and progresses to compound words, multisyllabic words, and sight words.
- **Decoding and Word Recognition:** applies advanced phonic elements (digraphs and diphthongs), special vowel spellings, and word endings to read words.



Fluency is not an end in itself but a critical gateway to comprehension. Fluent reading frees resources to process meaning.

- Children who are automatic with the code:
- Identify letter-sound correspondences accurately and quickly.
 - Identify familiar spelling patterns to increase decoding efficiency.
 - Apply maximum resources to the difficult task of blending together isolated phonemes to make words.
 - Apply knowledge of the alphabetic code to identify words in isolation and connected text fluently.