Teaching for Two Pathways: Hearing AND Seeing

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We cannot reduce children to a pair of eyes that see, a pair of ears that listen, a vocal mechanism that emits sounds and a hand that clumsily squeezes a pencil and moves it across a sheet of paper. Behind (or beyond) the eyes, ears, vocal chords and hand lies a person who thinks and attempts to incorporate into his or her own knowledge this marvelous medium of representing and recreating language which is writing, all writing. (Ferreiro, 2003, p. 34)

This article invites you to take a fresh, mindful look at the importance and characteristics of your teaching for phonemic awareness within Reading Recovery lessons. Being mindful keeps us situated in the present, not operating through old habits. Mindfulness is created when we draw novel distinctions. It allows us to structure our perception differently and take multiple perspectives in problem solving (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000).

David (pseudonyms used throughout) regularly invented his own stories. For David, “real reading” was hard, and he had learned to avoid it. David also had difficulty hearing and recording phonemes within words. He had not yet constructed knowledge of how the sounds in words work in printed language. David dutifully tried to sound out words letter by letter when reading text, and became understandably frustrated when this strategy was not successful. He resorted, then, to using a first letter only and trying a word that would make sense. David’s Reading Recovery teacher, Mary, stated: “When David substituted porch for place, he knew it wasn’t right but didn’t know how to fix it.” This ineffective strategy blocked David’s ability to learn how to monitor, search, and self-correct. David was experiencing failure for both reading and writing. Fortunately, however, Mary taught David both to hear phonemes within words easily and independently, and how to monitor how words sound against the letters and letter clusters that he saw in the words he was reading:

What letters would you expect to see (for porch)?

What can you see in that word (place) that might help?

The monitoring, searching for information, and self-correction behavior that occurs as students link sound sequences with letter sequences in these ways supports strong, accelerated progress. David’s Reading Recovery lessons were discontinued at text level 18: “His fluency is wonderful,” Mary said. “And he has now moved up to be in the true middle of his class and the strongest reader in his group. That made him feel good!”

Why is phonemic awareness absolutely crucial to the development of a strong literacy processing system? Do you know how to tell whether each of your own Reading Recovery students is developing this awareness appropriately? Do you teach in ways that help your students link what they hear with what they see, for both reading and writing?

I recently interviewed Reading Recovery teachers shortly after one of their students’ lessons were discontinued, asking them each to describe their teaching for that child and his development of word identification strategies, phonemic awareness, and comprehension. Each teacher demonstrated a strong commitment to effective teaching that met the needs of the individual student. Teachers’ responses to my questions about phonemic awareness, however, revealed gaps and confusions. When asked to describe their student’s phonemic awareness at the beginning and end of his Reading Recovery program, along with ways in which their instruction had supported the student’s development of phonemic awareness, many teachers in the study emphasized knowing letter-sound correspondences and “looking across” a word.

The definition of phonemic awareness that is implied by this focus on letter-by-letter word solving alone, however, is not likely to lead easily to accelerated learning. If Reading Recovery students do not internalize strategies for hearing sounds within words integrated with strategies for picking up information from print, their progress is likely to be slower than necessary and may not serve to prevent further difficulties in literacy learning. Instead, during her interview with me Veronica emphasized the need for Nathan to learn how...
to link how words sound with how they look, in contrast to a focus on “knowing his sounds.”

When he started the program he really thought that lists of words go together because they look somewhat alike. He didn’t really understand the principle that they go together because they look the same, but they also sound the same. He wasn’t tying in the sound with the looking.

Veronica showed Nathan how to hear and record sounds in words and to clap words to hear the parts that he was seeing in print, while continuing to monitor and self-correct with attention to meaning and structure. As his Reading Recovery lessons were discontinued, Nathan was able to pay consistent, strong attention to a text’s meaning while taking words apart quickly and easily when necessary. He blossomed into a child who loves reading “who can pick up any book and just be a successful reader.”

In this article, then, I describe (a) the role that phonemic awareness plays in Clay’s complex theory of literacy learning, (b) explicit and strongly scaffolded teaching for hearing and recording sounds in words, and (c) teaching for an integration of two pathways (hearing and seeing) that are integral to successful literacy learning.

Learning to Hear and Use Sounds in Reading Recovery Lessons

Cognitive clarity is knowing what you are trying to do and understanding where you are going to go and why you are going there (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2002).

We must understand where we are going and why, as we teach phonemic awareness to our Reading Recovery students. Phonemic awareness is not phonics. It is not learning a sound for every letter. Nor is phonemic awareness a simple matter of drill: “What would you have if you took the /p/ off of pat?” Phonemic and phonological awareness are, however, essential aspects of a strong literacy processing system.

Phonological awareness refers to the child’s awareness of the sounds of language (such as syllables, rhyme, and phonemes) in contrast to the child’s use of language to communicate. Phonemic awareness refers specifically to awareness of phonemes within words. Although not yet able to hear and record sounds in sequence without help, Missy did demonstrate some phonemic awareness early in her lessons with me:

Teacher: The next word is will. Do you know how to write will?

Missy: /w/ /wl

Teacher: Good! Say will slowly so that you can hear all of the sounds. Listen. w – i – l.

Missy: w – i – l.

Teacher: Yes. Watch me write those sounds for you.

Missy was beginning to take ownership for her own use of phonemic analysis as a strategy for writing words. My role was to help her clarify these understandings over time and insure that she was able to recognize the solutions arrived at as useful and important for her immediate needs as a writer. Phonological and phonemic awareness play a foundational role in effective Reading Recovery teaching. This teaching, however, does not focus on activities occurring outside of the context of reading and writing tasks. Instead, we teach children how to both perceive phonemes within words and use this new way of thinking about spoken and written language when reading and writing. Our teaching for hearing and recording sounds in words is immediately useful to the young writer.

A simple view of reading (e.g., Gough & Tunmer, 1986) assumes a direct, all-encompassing link between phonemic awareness, phonics, and reading; postulating that a child with phonemic awareness is able to sound out words, leading immediately and automatically to good comprehension. Clay’s view of literacy learning, however, is based on a very different set of assumptions. Clay emphasized “fast accurate perception of language sounds (captured by the ears) and visual symbols

If Reading Recovery students do not internalize strategies for hearing sounds within words integrated with strategies for picking up information from print, their progress is likely to be slower than necessary and may not serve to prevent further difficulties in literacy learning.
Phonemic awareness is not really a matter of isolating, counting, blending, segmenting, deleting, changing, and/or adding phonemes within words. This is particularly true for failing readers and writers, who have not been able to independently link this type of decontextualized instruction to what they must think about while reading and writing.

The intent of phonemic awareness instruction in Reading Recovery is to help children link phonological and phonemic awareness to strategic activity when reading and writing continuous text. Importantly, then, hearing and recording sounds in words procedures are utilized while we are teaching children how to compose and write messages.

Young children’s development of phonemic awareness is complex and integrated rather than linear (Doyle & Forbes, 2003). As children gain phonemic awareness, they must also integrate this knowledge, step by step, within their expanding understandings for the use of letters and words in printed language. In the following example, Missy demonstrated confusion over the concept of letters versus words. Missy also, however, did not easily link her knowledge of how her known word *me* sounds and looks to the new word, *be*. My clear and direct instructional language and demonstration was specifically intended to help her sort out these confusions as easily and quickly as possible:

**Teacher:** *Be*. What do you think the word *be* would look like?

**Missy:** (writes *be*)

**Teacher:** Good. Put your finger under the word and check the sounds. Does the word *be* look right to you now?

**Missy:** *b* – *e*. Yeah. And… (writes *we*)

**Teacher:** You’re right!

Simply saying, “look across the word” to a child does not provide strong support for this complex learning. Instead, Clay’s illustrative collection of alternative prompts from *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Part Two* (2005b, pp. 202–206) is organized under such headings as “to look” and “to hear sounds and words.” It may be essential to prompt a child to look in very clear and direct ways:

- What can you see that might help?
- See this letter.
- Or, to think about sounds:
  - Can you hear this letter?
  - What sound can you hear in that word?

Our prompting during text reading and writing, then, should focus each child’s attention on integrating what they see with what they hear very directly and explicitly.

Phonemic awareness instruction in Reading Recovery lessons must teach each child how to perceive phonemes independently. The next section describes key aspects of hearing and recording sounds in words instruc-
Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words Procedures

The secret of successful instruction in hearing and recording sounds in words is to have a teacher who knows how to help a child ‘hear’ the sounds singly or in clusters, and how to ‘see’ the letter forms and recurrent patterns. The teacher guides the child to the most efficient links between letters and sounds, or clusters of letters and patterns of sound. Being able to do this will improve every aspect of learning to read and write. (Clay, 2005b, p. 81, italics original)

Deliberate teaching, from clapping syllables to advanced learning

When working in “boxes” with a child, our attention should be focused beyond getting each word written down quickly. Our Reading Recovery teaching must help each child perceive both the sounds and order of sounds within a word she is about to write.

Missy: (reading her story so far) I go on the monkey bars with….  
Teacher: Say with slowly. What can you hear?  
Missy: (writes wi in the first two boxes) w – i – th.  
Teacher: That’s the right sound. It’s T H. Watch my tongue: w – i – th. Look in the mirror and try that sound yourself. Say with.  
Missy: wi – th

Improved perception is not a matter of forcing the child’s memory for a sound-to-letter association. Accelerated progress in literacy requires our students to learn how to think about language: orient to print, search for information in print, work with the written language code, and make decisions (Clay, 2001). Developing the ability to perceive and work with sounds within words requires the child to develop central processing, using movement and language together (Clay). Learning how to say a word slowly while pushing the counters (or fingers) into boxes provides an important structure for the child’s auditory and visual perception of written language. Each child must internalize this way of perceiving sounds within words.

It is vitally important to actually use hearing and recording sounds in words procedures, then, in virtually every lesson with every child. It is only in late lessons, when the child has already demonstrated good mastery across the steps in these procedures, that boxes will be used less (but not eliminated altogether). Whenever you and your student are working together to hear and record sounds within a word, there are few good reasons to do so without the structure provided by boxes.

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point in her learning, then you may want to write that word into the story yourself:

Missy: (reading her story so far)
   She threw the juice....
   j – oo – s.

Teacher: Good. It sounds like that. Here’s what the word juice looks like (writes juice in the story).

Clay was unequivocal about the use of hearing and recording sounds in words procedures: “All Reading Recovery children should begin at the beginning of these procedures” (Clay, 2005b, p. 72). These activities change over time in several different ways (see Figure 1):

- from easy to hard;
- from hearing prominent consonants to hearing all sounds in sequence; and
- from phonology, to phonemic awareness, and then to orthography (spelling patterns).

Each new step is a crucial transition, both for the child’s focus of attention and your own instructional decisions. It is best not to wander back and forth within the steps of these procedures without specific reasons for doing so that are based on the individual child’s needs. In my own teaching, I remind myself to be clear about which step I am currently teaching to each child by writing this information into my lesson records each day. This deliberate planning focuses my attention on the decisions that I am making for each child at each point in his program, beyond a simple instructional routine.

Clapping syllables (no pictures needed) is an important first step that must not be skipped for any child. Tasks that require attention to syllables are easier than those focused on phonemes: “Hearing big chunks of sound is easier than discovering single sounds” (Clay, 2005b, p. 72). You should have evidence that the child has developed the ability to hear (not count) syllables with reasonable independence before moving on to the next step in these procedures.

Step I (with picture cards) teaches the child how to slowly articulate a word. During Step I you should observe carefully for the child’s ability not only to articulate words slowly, but also to attend to sounds...
in sequence. For many students, this is a difficult, new task. Breaking letters out of words (Section 3, Spatial Layout) begins similar instruction for movement and looking, while in Step I (Section 7, Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words) attention is given to saying and hearing (see Figure 2). The child is not required to name, write, or count sounds, or push counters yet, but should pay attention to the sounds he is articulating:

- Use a mirror to help the child to become more aware of what his lips and tongue are doing.
- Use stress to emphasise any sound you want the child to notice. (Clay, 2005b, p. 73)

During Step II (no picture cards) the child learns how to coordinate saying a word slowly with his pushing of counters into boxes, coordinating movement and language together. This is an important transition that should not be skipped or underestimated. The child’s growing control over both of these processes should support his confident and easy transition to sound boxes during writing.

In Intermediate Steps, you are using sound boxes to support the child’s solving of a word that is needed for the day’s story. Unless you need to help the child split apart two specific sounds that are difficult for him to hear separately, you now have the child point to boxes (no counters). Your questions and modeling should help the child to hear and locate additional sounds and letters over time, expanding his phonemic awareness:

- What else can you hear?
- What do you hear at the beginning/end/middle?
- What letters would you expect to see?

Your note taking on your lesson records should provide evidence that your student is able to hear a wider range of phonemes over time: initial and final consonants, some clusters of phonemes (such as /st/ or /bl/), and some vowels, for example.

Next is an important shift to hearing and recording sounds in sequence. This step must be carefully and deliberately timed for each student, with an emphasis on hearing the first sound and then the remaining sounds in sequence.

**Figure 2. Teaching How to See and Hear**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Reference</th>
<th>Focus of Attention</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaking letters out of words (p. 19)</td>
<td>Movement and Looking</td>
<td>Demonstrate with deliberate movements breaking out the letters, sliding them from first to last…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can take words apart. (p. 42)</td>
<td>Movement and Looking</td>
<td>Build a carefully chosen word deliberately from left to right, letter by letter…. If we were going to write this word we would have to make it letter by letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing and recording sounds in words, Step II (p. 73)</td>
<td>Saying and Hearing</td>
<td>Ask the child to articulate the word aloud. Ask him to say it slowly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- Missy: (writes r) And get (writes get).
- Teacher: Perfect! You started with the first letter, and heard all the rest by yourself.

Do not skip or take this step for granted: “It is critical that the child has made the transition to hearing sounds in sequence well before you want to move him to spelling boxes” (Clay, 2005b, p. 76). Your student, by now, will have participated actively in a full set of carefully designed instructional interactions with sound boxes, so that she is able to hear and record most phonemes in sequence independently, and as early in her lessons as is possible.

Advanced learning adds the dimension of spelling or orthography to the child’s way of solving words for writing. Attention is now given to common spelling and sound patterns in English, as well as to some of the unusual features of English orthography. This teaching is not focused on learning “word families.” Instead, you should help the child make more efficient links between letters and
sounds for common letter clusters and sound patterns:

Teacher: Remember, you have a box for each letter. *Spill.* Say it slowly and think about what the word looks like.

Missy: (writes *spil*)

Teacher: But there’s one more box. Look at this word (writes *will*). What else do you need for *still*?

Missy: (writes the second *l*) That’s like *all*.

This expanded attention to orthography should be a deliberate teaching decision on your part as you move into advanced learning, not just extraneous “teacher talk” about irregular spellings that occurs while the child is still learning how to hear sounds in sequence. Avoid temptation: Do not try to explain all of the possible variations in orthography that come up in words your student might use — and certainly not prior to this shift to letter boxes. Direct the child’s attention in ways that are appropriate to his current understandings, rather than offering explanation because you happen to know the linguistic structure of a particular word. It is typically not helpful, for example, to try to explain why the word *black* needs both C and K at the end. It is more helpful to ask the child to think about common spelling patterns based on his known words, and ask, “Does it look right?”

**Strong and supportive instructional scaffolding**

Learning phonemic awareness is hard work. Section 7 (Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words) does not advise us to “test” children by a withdrawal of teacher support for hearing and recording sounds in words tasks. Throughout Section 7, and for each successive transition in these procedures, Clay provided numerous examples of highly supportive teacher behavior (see Figure 3). Use this advice as you teach, even for advanced learning:

Missy: (reciting a sentence from her story) I’m learning to play my mom’s flute.

Teacher: (draws eight boxes on the practice page)

Missy: (writes *le* in the first box)

Teacher: And an A next (writes *a*). Now, say *ler – n – ing*.

Missy: *ler – n – ing*.

Teacher: What do you hear in the middle?

Missy: */n/ (writes *rning*)

We should be taking the child as fast as possible, without confusion, through “a steep learning curve of phonological analysis” (Clay, 2005b, p. 79) in a very supportive instructional context.

There are no actual boundaries within speech that clearly show where one phoneme ends and another begins. Hearing and recording sounds in words requires more than just auditory acuity. Instead, we must change children’s perception of language, demonstrating for them how particular phonemes in English function. Children should not be expected to discover hard-to-hear phonemes for themselves. *Phonemes* are the actual sounds or physical properties of speech. *Phonemes*, however, are only those sounds that we have learned to distinguish because they signal different meanings in a specific language. Learning how to segment a spoken word into phonemes is a difficult task that requires teacher demonstration. This is especially true for English language learners, who are not only learning how to hear sounds within words itself but how to distinguish those particular sounds that change meaning in English.

Acquiring phonemic awareness is also a “two-way street.” Phonemic awareness (a) provides needed sup-

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**Figure 3. Teacher Scaffolding**

| Step I (p. 73) | Slowly and deliberately articulate the word for the child. Let him hear the sounds separated but in a natural way. |
| Step II (p. 73) | Model the task for the child. Articulate the word very slowly and push the counters into the boxes, sound by sound. |
| Intermediate steps (p. 74) | There must be a lot of input from the teacher, who models correct sound analysis and prompts correct letter-sound associations, but gradually passes responsibility to the child. |
| Advanced learning (p. 78) | Help the child to fill in the letters of the word using stress or pausing on a sound in an exaggerated way so he can focus on the sound you want him to hear. |
| Working without boxes (p. 79) | Articulate the sounds in sequence several times for the child. Encourage the child to say it slowly. |

port for learning literacy, and (b) literacy learning helps develop phonemic awareness:

Having some [phonemic awareness] helps children grasp the alphabetic system and apply it to read and spell words. However, beginners commonly have trouble detecting phonemes that are buried in spoken words such as medial sounds and consonant clusters. If beginners know letter-sound correspondences, then seeing spellings of words can call attention to the presence of hard-to-detect sounds in speech, just as learning how an unfamiliar name is spelled often clarifies sounds that escaped notice when the name was spoken. (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2002, p. 124)

When you provide hard-to-hear letters for your student, rather than demanding that she hear them independently, you have made it easier for her to hear and identify those sounds:

Teacher: Okay. You know the first part of kind. Go ahead.

Missy: (writes ki in boxes) ki - nd.

Teacher: Yes. Watch me write the two sounds at the end of that word [writes nd]. Say the word slowly again. Can you hear those sounds too?

Missy: Yeah, an N too.

Mindful teaching
Like all aspects of Reading Recovery teaching, hearing and recording sounds in words procedures are very challenging. Each of us needs to deliberately attend to aspects of our own instructional behavior that we may not otherwise notice. One way to assist yourself is to evaluate your own teaching through audio or video recording. I have found the following questions to be useful as I evaluate and improve my own teaching:

- Can I find evidence in my lesson records that my student’s ability to hear and record sounds in words has been steadily improving?
- What was the focus of my teaching for that word? Did my talk and demonstration with the student have a clear and specific goal?
- Did I emphasize hearing sounds appropriately, without a lot of extraneous teacher talk on other matters?
- Did I demonstrate, rather than try to explain, when it would be helpful?

For advanced learning, did I choose a clear example of a pattern of known letters to draw the child’s attention to, and talk about it clearly?
- Was the conversation between my student and me meaningful? Did we share common goals and understandings at that point in the lesson?
- Did we arrive at a solution to the word-solving task that was recognizable to my student, or was my teaching either too easy or too advanced?

I have also found it useful to notice the level of scaffolding that I used during a particular instructional interaction with my student (see Figure 4). Did I show my student how to engage in strategic activity by direct modeling, or did I step back to

![Figure 4. Levels of Instructional Scaffolding](image-url)

- **Complete Modeling**
  - Watch. (demonstrate how to clap the syllables of the word popsicle)
- **Complete Modeling, with Verbal Explanation**
  - Watch what I do. I'll say after slowly and push the counters.
- **Assisted Modeling**
  - My turn first. b - ar - s. You say it slowly.
- **Element Identification**
  - What word do you know that could help you?
- **Teacher Prompting**
  - Go ahead. Think about what the word shade should look like.
- **Strategy Naming**
  - Good! You heard every sound by yourself.

support her own performance of the task with assisted modeling? Or, did I attempt to help her maintain her use of strategic processing by naming the strategic activity she used independently? All too often, we provide inadequate support that is not well matched to our student’s actual, in-the-moment responses. When a child is not progressing quickly through hearing and recording sounds in words procedures, it may be essential to drop back to either a previous step that may not have been learned well (or has been disorganized by new learning) and/or to more-supportive teaching.

In my evaluation of my own teaching I have found examples, unfortunately, where I talked too much about things that didn’t matter to the student’s current understandings, and provided much less scaffolding than was needed by my student:

Missy: I don’t know how to write cool.

Teacher: So do you think that would be a good word for boxes?

Because then you can listen to the sounds really well and that will make it easy. Cool. What can you hear?

Missy: (writes kol, with one box empty)

Teacher: You know what? One thing was a little bit tricky. K is the right sound but sometimes we spell that sound with a C, and then two Os. See how that works? You wouldn’t know that. I just happen to have memorized that part.

Missy’s spelling of cool as kol created unnecessary confusion! I should certainly have been able to predict her misspelling of this word and focus her attention more appropriately. My teaching would have been more effective if I had written cool myself and asked her to confirm how it looked, or referred her to a known word (such as pool, if she truly knew that word well).

Fortunately, I am also able to identify instances where I hit the mark in my own teaching, providing the scaffolding needed by my student in a clear and direct way that made sense to Missy:

Teacher: Try that word (in the boxes). Say it slowly first, pl – a – ne.

Missy: pl – ane.

Teacher: Did you hear the middle part? pl – a – ne.

Missy: Yeah! pl – a – ne.

Teacher: Go ahead.

Missy: (writes plane)

Teacher: Good! Look at these two parts (masking pl and ane). You heard both of them.

Of course, the “trick” is to ensure that you provide many more effective than ineffective instructional interactions with every student every day. This can only happen when you continually evaluate your teaching and the current responses of your student during hearing and recording sounds in words activities, invite colleague and teacher leader observation and feedback, and regularly read and reread Section 7 in Literacy Lessons Part Two (Clay, 2005b).

**Linking Sound Sequence to Letter Sequences:**

**Massive Practice in Text Reading**

1. Is the child aware of the visual form and its features?

2. Can the child hear the sound in the spoken form?

3. Has the child linked these two things? (Clay, 2005b, p. 119)

Average progress readers have already constructed useful experiences with
active and successful text reading and writing. The students we work with in Reading Recovery, however, are all struggling against a cycle of interacting deficits that has not allowed them to accumulate this necessary experience (Clay, 2001). In a simple view of reading, phonemic awareness is viewed as the quick fix against failure. Clay’s view of reading acquisition, however, assumes that children’s difficulties are very unlikely to be this simple. We must teach each aspect of Reading Recovery procedures effectively and teach each child how to integrate new strategies: “Engage readers in operating effectively at a simpler level of text reading and take them through an interacting cycle of skills expanding their effectiveness at text levels of increasing complexity” (Clay, 2001, p. 224).

The teaching described in Section 10 of Literacy Lessons Part Two (Finding and Using the Information in the Print: Developing the Brain’s Activities on Texts) is crucial to this expanding effectiveness for reading texts of increasing complexity. As we address “locating known words or letters in continuous text” (Clay, 2005b, p. 106) for example, we should be teaching the child to link how a known word sounds to how it looks. This teaching is really not about pointing to or seeing a word. It is about deciding. You are asking the child to notice important aspects of print and to think strategically:

- It looks like the first letter in your name.
- That sounds like the beginning of Jake.
- Do you think it looks like ‘went’?

[After an error on a known word] Can you hear this letter? (Clay, 2005b, p. 106)

Section 11 (Linking Sound Sequences to Letter Sequences: Massive Practice in Text Reading) does not present any specific, new teaching procedures. Instead, the Reading Recovery lesson format and teaching procedures are already superbly designed to teach children how to work with visual forms and the sounds of speech patterns together (see Figure 5). Understanding these aspects of Reading Recovery teaching should provide you with a good set of questions to ask yourself whenever a student’s progress is slower than needed and her acceleration is at risk:

- Can she hear and record sounds in words quickly and without assistance?
- Does she use this information to check the way an expected word sounds with how it should look?
- Is she able to break words apart effectively for both reading and writing?
- Can she link this expertise to her use of monitoring, searching and self-correcting behavior effectively and independently?

My own student, Missy, resisted the notion that she both could and should engage in this strategic processing until I made it easy for her to do so. As she started Reading Recovery lessons, Missy was convinced that her strategy of memorizing the oral spelling of a few words (I – N) combined with her strong memory for texts (supported by her strong vocabulary knowledge and interest in stories) was all the reading work that she needed to do. She was not oriented to print. Until she could experience how her ability to solve words for writing was related to her ability to take words apart when reading, she made slow progress. She was not oriented to print. Until she could experience how her ability to solve words for writing was related to her ability to take words apart when reading, she made slow progress. She was not oriented to print. Until she could experience how her ability to solve words for writing was related to her ability to take words apart when reading, she made slow progress.
progress through text levels. This strategy-based learning, however, caused her to become a true reader.

Our teaching must support each young learner as someone who (as described by Emilia Ferreiro in the opening quote) thinks about strategic behavior while engaging with texts — integrating new learning into her developing system for representing (that is, writing) and recreating (that is, reading) print. I urge you to remain mindful of these challenges for each and every child as you teach: Develop a strong level of awareness of your own teaching decisions during hearing and recording sounds in words, based on the overall importance of phonemic awareness and the absolute need for your students to integrate their fast perception of language sounds with their fast perception of visual symbols.

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References

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