

# Reading Recovery Instruction in Phonics and Word Reading

Reading Recovery's® instructional procedures incorporate specific attention to building fast, efficient word analysis skills as a result of carefully planned, direct instruction that is tailored to each learner. Specific procedures involve multisensory and systematic techniques to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, and more complex word-analysis skills. The end goal for the student is acquisition of a literacy processing system that involves all print knowledge sources, including words and word structure, letter-sound relationships, letters, and features of letters while enabling the learner to access sentence structure, language structure, and story structure.

Reading Recovery teachers focus on developing the learner's phonics and word analysis skills daily in three main ways: instruction during isolated word activities, guided application during text reading, and reinforcement during the writing of personal messages or stories. Specific ways Reading Recovery teachers instruct students in phonics and decoding include the following:

- In early lessons, Reading Recovery teachers help students learn how to look at a word from left to right, noting each letter, in addition to recognizing all letters of the alphabet and linking sounds and letters quickly and accurately. The attention to all aspects of print is essential, early learning.
- Phonics skills are taught directly allowing the learner to apply new skills both on words in isolation and on unknown words during text reading. When students encounter a challenging word in daily reading, they are taught to decode the word using their phonics skills. The individual setting allows the teacher to help the student immediately and prevent the use of inefficient strategies, such as guessing.
- As students become more proficient with phonics, Reading Recovery teachers help students to tackle longer and more complex, multisyllabic words.
- During each daily lesson, Reading Recovery teachers introduce a new book that provides just enough challenge to allow the student to successfully apply and strengthen phonics and word solving skills while reading for meaning.
- Text reading experiences provide opportunities for the student to develop automaticity in word reading and more efficiency in using phonics skills.
- Reading Recovery students write messages daily that are completed accurately; invented spellings are not left unattended. Reading Recovery teachers support writers to hear each phoneme in a word and represent it correctly. They direct the child to add silent or difficult letters as needed.
- Reading Recovery teachers see reading and writing as reciprocal processes, meaning learning in one context (writing) supports learning in the second context (reading). For example, teachers capitalize on writing activities to teach and reinforce phonemic awareness and phonics. This includes teaching about sounds in words, how to spell irregular words, breaking words into parts, or syllables, and using familiar word parts to spell new words. New understandings about letters, sounds, and words learned in writing help the student to successfully analyze and decode words during reading.
- Each student's literacy development, including learning phonics skills, takes a unique path. Reading Recovery teachers monitor performance closely and match instruction to the learner to ensure success.

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