

Common Core State Standards**Phonological Awareness**

RF.K.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- a. Recognize and produce rhyming words.
- c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words.

Craft and Structure

RL.2.4. Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

Alliteration:

Work with one set of four pictures in a row at a time. Point and say *can, castle, cow, carrot*. Ask students what they notice (they all start with the same sound, or alliteration). Point to the *c*'s in each word to confirm their beginning sound. Say the words again and add *penguin*, pointing out that *penguin* just doesn't belong with the sounds that *can, castle, cow, carrot* make (hard *c*). You may remind students that *c* makes two sounds, hard and soft. Try *sun, sink, desk, six*, with students saying the words aloud. Which one of these things just doesn't belong? (*desk*).

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain that good readers start out knowing how to hear and make rhymes. Rhymes are the words that sound the same at the end, so they have a fun, sing-songy sound. "That fat cat sat on my mat!" That is why rhymes are used in poetry and music so often.

One of These Things Just Doesn't Belong**Rhyming:**

Work with one set of three pictures in a row at a time. Point and say *fan, man, van*. Ask students what they notice (rhymes). Repeat and add *duck*, pointing out that *duck* doesn't belong with the sounds that *fan, man, van* make (point to the rime—*an* in all the words). Try *bat, pig, cat*, with students saying the words aloud. Which one of these things just doesn't belong? (*pig*). Continue through all the sets.

Alliterative Sentences

Read the first sentence aloud. Invite students to join you in reading it again, listening for like sounds (*l*). Point out the *l*'s as you read. Invite students to read the remaining sentences with you, listening for the like sounds and pointing them out. Encourage students to add more words to the sentences and make up some of their own. Tell students that good readers and writers use alliteration in their creative writing and poetry.

Common Core State Standards

Print Concepts

RF.K.1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

- d. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Phonological Awareness

RF.K.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- d. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words.

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.K.3.a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.

- b. Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.

Conventions of Standard English

L.1.1.a. Print all upper- and lowercase letters.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that good readers and writers know their ABC's well—they know the letter names, their sounds, and their special features. Good readers and writers know how to quickly find a letter on a chart or word wall, whether it is in the beginning, middle, or end of the alphabet (point to these places on the bottom colored ABC line).

Sing Along

Teach the letter names first. Have students sing the “ABC Song” while taking turns pointing to all the letters (pointing is important, especially through the letters *l, m, n, o, p*).

Shapes and Sounds

Talk about the shape of each letter, and have students “air write” it, with big, sweeping arm movements. You might make this chart to show students that letters may be small, tall, or fall.

Some letters are small: a c e i m n o r s u v w x z

Some letters are tall: b d f h k l t

Some letters fall: g j p q y

Next, address the sound(s) each letter makes, pointing out that the vowels and the letters *c, g, x,* and *y* can make more than one sound.

ABC Hunt

Give the sound or word, and students find, point, and say the letter. “I’m thinking of a letter that sounds like /b/. Find it!” (b). “Zebra starts with what letter?” (z). “And what is its sound?” (/z/).

First and Last Sounds

Use just one row per question, so students are able to search easily.

First Sound: “Find the letter and picture that starts like *ant*” (a apple), “*cap*” (c cow), etc.

Last Sound: Row 1: “Which picture ends with /g/?” (dog).

Row 2: “Which words end with /t/?” (goat, hat, jet).

Write the Letter

Students write the letter (air write, dry erase board, or paper) for the sound you say. /a/ = a, /s/ = s, c, /f/ = f, etc.

Beginning, Middle, or End?

Use the color-coded line along the bottom for students to locate the letters.

“Find b. Is it in the beginning, middle, or end of the alphabet?” (beginning). With repeated practice, students will become quicker at locating letters.

Common Core State Standards

Print Concepts

RF.K.1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

- d. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Phonological Awareness

RF.K.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

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- b. Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.

Conventions of Standard English

L.1.1.a. Print all upper- and lowercase letters.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that good readers and writers know their ABC's well—they know their special features for reading and writing the letters. Spend time teaching letter formation, using magnetic letters and terms such as *tall* (uppercase and b, d, f, h, k, l, t), *short* (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z), *stick* (a, b, d, e, f, h, i, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, z), *circular or round* (a, b, c, d, e, g, o, p, q, s, u, w), *hump* (h, m, n), and *hanging or falling* (g, j, p, q, y).

Focus on Formation

Use one line of the lowercase alphabet at a time for this activity.

- “I’m looking for a letter with a stick and a circle.” (a, b, d)
- “I’m looking for tall letters.” (j, k, l)
- “I’m looking for hanging (or falling) letters.” (y)
- “I’m looking for letters with humps.” (m, n)

Rainbow Write

Have students write a letter with a color marker, saying the letter and its formation (h=stick, hump) as they write it. Repeat in different colors, directly over the first version, until they can write the letter fluently.

Uppercase and Lowercase Shapes and Sounds Review

Begin with uppercase letters. Over a period of time, talk about the shape of each letter and have students “air write” it. Next, address the sound(s) each letter makes. Do the same for the lowercase letters.

ABC Search

Give the sound, and have students find the letter. “I’m thinking of a letter that sounds like /h/. Find it!” (h). “What letters say /s/?” (s and c). “I need the letter for /p/.” (p) “Lion starts with what letter?” (l).

Formative Assessment on Alphabet Fluency

Have students name each letter you randomly point to. Record any incorrectly named letters and hesitations.

b & d Don’t Confuse Me!

Show students the bedposts and point out that the word *bed* is spelled with *b* and *d* right where they should be! So, if they can recall the word *bed* and the *bed* picture, they will not confuse the letters *b* and *d*. Also describe how to kinesthetically solve *b* & *d* confusion using hands. Our hands form *b* and *d* in the correct order—the order in which we read, left to right. Say “a, b...” (put up your left hand as shown when you say *b*) “...c, d (put up your right hand as shown when you say *d*) and you’ll see that our hands put the letters in the proper order and shape!” Other Common Reversals: n/u, p/d, h/n.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Put b’s and d’s to Bed Poster (#154824)

Common Core State Standards

Phonological Awareness

RF.1.2.b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends.

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.1.3.a. Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs.

Introduction and Demonstration

Invite students to look at the chart to discover the special letter combinations shown (two- and three-letter beginnings for words, grouped by color). Explain they will see these common letter combinations in their reading and they will use them in their writing. Point out that the digraphs—th, sh, ch, wh—and ph (not listed), make *just one sound with two letters*, and that the blends have as many sounds as they have letters. Tell students that good readers and writers learn to quickly recognize these combined letters as chunks of sound so they do not have to sound out each letter one-by-one.

Match It!

Work in one colored set of boxes at a time. Say a word beginning with a blend or digraph on the chart and have students match your word to its representation on the chart. For example, “crowd.” (Student points to and says crab) “Thumb.” (Student points to and says thorn.)

Blend In!

Say random words from the lists and have students tell you each word’s blend or digraph. (For example, “Glue” *gl*.)

br	cr	dr	fr	gr	pr	tr
bread	crab	drum	frame	grass	prize	truck
brush	crown	drive	fridge	grapes	present	train
bride	crib	drill	free	grill	pretzel	trouble
bridge	cracker	drip	frozen	groceries	price	trunk
bracelet	crayon	dress	fry	green	prince	trap

bl	cl	fl	gl	pl	sl
blank	clock	flag	glue	plug	slide
blink	claw	flower	glove	plum	sleeve
block	clip	fly	glass	plane	sled
blanket	clothes	flake	globe	plus	slipper
black	clap	flip	glasses	plate	slime

sc	sk	sm	sn	sp	st	sw
scooter	skate	small	snore	spill	stop	swim
scarf	skip	smoke	snail	spell	stem	sweep
scout	skeleton	smell	snap	spin	star	sweater
scale	ski	smile	snow	sponge	stick	swan
score	skunk	smock	snack	spoon	sting	switch

scr	spr	str	shr	spl	thr
scratch	sprinkle	strict	shriek	splash	thread
screw	spring	string	shrink	splinter	throw
screech	spread	stripe	shrimp	splendid	thrill

qu	tw
quick	twine
quilt	twig
quiet	tweet

ch	sh	th	wh
chase	share	thick	what
chore	ship	thin	where
chin	shine	that	why

Common Core State Standards**Phonics and Word Recognition**

RF.K.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.

- b.** Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.

RF.2.3.a. Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words.

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain that vowels are the letters in the alphabet that make words happen, that without vowels, we can't spell words. Vowels are very special, so they are often seen in red print at school. Vowels make at least two sounds, while, most other letters make just one sound. It is important in decoding words that we know which sounds to try when reading a word. Refer to the two charts. Explain that one shows short vowels and the other shows long vowels. Point out and read each letter and picture, exaggerating the vowel sound in each word. You might address short *a*, then long *a*, giving examples of those types of words and soliciting words from students. Also explain that *y* is sometimes a vowel and usually has a long *i* or long *e* sound at the end of a word.

Short or Long?

Work with one row at a time. Top row: "Which picture has the /e/ sound (provide the sound)?" (net). "Which picture sounds like /u/?" (sun). Second row: "Which picture starts like /a/?" (ant). Third row: "Which picture has the long e sound?" (three). Continue until mastery. (Short-vowel words: net, sun, bag, inch, sock, ant. Long-vowel words: slide, key, glue, nose, ape, three.)

Try a Different Vowel Sound

Write this sentence on the board: *We can pet the nice dog.* Track and read it aloud, using the wrong vowel sound in *pet* and discuss how the sentence makes no sense. Tell students that when this happens, they can try a different vowel sound to read the word correctly. Ask students for the other sound *e* can make (/e/). Reread using the short *e* sound, and discuss that since the sentence now makes sense, the short vowel sound must be correct.

Change it!

Say a word and have students repeat the word but use the other vowel sound (bat, bait, sight, sit, etc). Talk about any nonsense words that result. (Words: can, cane; bed, bead; bit, bite; mom, mome; tub, tube; ate, at; eat, et; I'm, im; oak, ock; cute, cut.)

Common Core State Standards

Phonological Awareness

RF.K.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.
- d. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words. (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.)
- e. Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.

RF.1.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends.
- c. Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words.
- d. Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes).

Introduction and Demonstration

Use one set of three pictures at a time in your phoneme instruction. Long- and short-vowel sounds, all consonants (including soft and hard c and g and two x sounds), and basic blends are exemplified. Demonstrate how to hold up a finger for each of the letter sounds you hear. Exaggerate your mouth movements to encourage students to “get their mouth ready” when making letter sounds.

Sound Sensations

Phoneme Isolation/Identity

What is the first sound in (say picture word)?
What is the last sound in (say picture word)?

What is the vowel sound in (say picture word)?

Which picture starts with /j/? (giraffe).

Which picture starts with the long o sound? (oval)

Which picture starts the same as quilt? (queen).

Phoneme Categorization (without chart)

What word does not belong? saw/light/ski (light); big/bug/nap (nap); man/car/map (car); sip/tip/bun (bun); name/pig/game (pig).

Phoneme Blending

Blend these sounds to make words: /w/ /e/ /b/ (web); /sh/ /ar/ /k/ (shark); /p/ /i/ (pie); /t/ /e/ /n/ (ten); /j/ /e/ /p/ (jeep).

Phoneme Segmenting

What are the sounds in these words? ice (/i/ /s/); cage (/k/ /a/ /j/); thorn /th/ /or/ /n/; rope /r/ /o/ /p/; gum /g/ /u/ /m/.

Where is the /k/ sound in king? (at the beginning); where is the /b/ sound in web? (at the end).

Phoneme Deletion (without chart)

Say clap without /c/ (lap). Say tray without /t/ (ray). Say broom without /b/ (room). Say inch without /ch/ (in).

Phoneme Addition (without chart)

What word do you have if you add /sh/ to out? (shout). If you add /t/ to the end of ten? (tent).

Phoneme Substitution (without chart)

Say fish. Change /f/ to /d/ (dish). Say moon. Change /n/ to /d/ (mood).

Common Core State Standards

Phonological Awareness

RF.K-1.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- d.** Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words. (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.)

RF.1.2.b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds including consonant blends.

- c.** Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds in spoken single-syllable words.
- d.** Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds.

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain to students that we can use boxes to hold the place of sounds in words. This helps us to hear the sounds in words so that we can spell the words. For now, we will just listen for and count the sounds. You may choose to lay this page down so students can push chips or pennies into the boxes. (Later, when students are ready to spell, have them write the letters in the boxes.) Each box holds just one sound, and sometimes a box holds two letters that make one sound, as in *moon* (/oo/) and *chin* (/ch/).

Begin with *up*. Hold up a finger for each of the two sounds as you say them: /u/ /p/, and then point to the boxes, in order from left to right, as you make each sound: /u/ /p/. (You might draw the boxes and write in the letters *u* and *p* on a whiteboard for students to see the letter-sound process.) Note that silent *e* may go in or just outside the last box.

Sound Count

Invite students to choose a picture from the picture box and count its sounds, deciding in which set of boxes that word fits. Encourage students to use their fingers and the boxes to track and point to distinguish the number of sounds in words and to check their work. Invite students to say their own favorite words and count the sounds they hear in them.

Answer Key:

- bee (2)
- chain (3)
- lamp (4)
- desk (4)
- web (3)
- tape (3)
- shirt (3)
- rug (3)
- fish (3)
- bus (3)
- bird (3)
- train (4)

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

EZread™ Sound Box Kit (#303324)

Common Core State Standards**Phonics and Word Recognition**

RF.K-2.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.

Fluency

RF.1-2.4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

- a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.
- b. Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
- c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Name that Strategy!

It is important that students talk about the strategy(ies) that they try. So, as they read silently at the small-group table, invite them to share the important decisions they make as they try to figure out an unfamiliar word. They will enjoy hearing from their peers that everyone sometimes encounters tricky words.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Stuck On A Word Fans (#305748)

Introduction and Demonstration

Thoroughly explain each strategy, emphasizing that as good readers, we want to work smarter, not harder, when we get stuck on a tricky word. Remind them that when we put all our energy into sounding out letter-by-letter, we can sometimes forget what we were even reading about! Most times, when we are stuck, our mind can come up with a sensible word to try out. That is much easier than letter-by-letter sounding out. Provide examples from authentic text as necessary to demonstrate the use of each strategy. Facilitate a discussion about which strategies students are already using and may wish to share with their peers. Many students will find they use all the strategies at some point, and some students may find themselves favoring one or two strategies over the others.

Common Core State Standards**Craft & Structure**

RI.K.5. Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.

6. Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.

RI.1.5. Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students you realize that they all know what books are, and that they probably have been handling books for years. Tell them that good readers know all about the special parts of books and how to properly handle books. Ask students to recall seeing a book that they could tell was not cared for properly or was just plain worn out from years of use. Ask students why we have books, or why we read (for fun, to learn, for bedtime, for information, to read better, to read to someone, to share). Explain that books are treasures to be shared and cared for so that they will last.

You might share your favorite book and tell about your history with it. Talk about how you turn pages carefully from the top corner with clean hands and how you rest the book carefully on your lap or a clean surface so that it remains in good condition. Talk about how we don't throw books or stuff them hurriedly into backpacks and damage them. Discuss collections at school, at home, at Grandma's, and at the doctor's office. Talk about how you keep books and literature in your car just in case you're stuck somewhere and need to fill your time. Instill the joy of reading and pride of ownership with your students.

Not Just Books! Discussion

Ask students to name other materials we read (e.g., instructions, recipes, street signs, magazines, pamphlets, travel brochures, lists, postcards, notes, messages, texts, maps, menus, food wrappers, labels, poems, songs, t-shirts, invitations, computer games, homework).

Every Trick in the Book

You might provide students with a piece of literature or informational text so that they can make connections to it as you go through each graphic. As you point and describe the features here, have students point to their book's counterpart. Then invite students to share other parts of books that are not shown here (e.g., title page, index, subheadings, ISBN, graphs and charts, copyright).

Formative Assessment and Questions to Consider

1. What is the writer of a book called? (author)
2. Who illustrates a book? (illustrator)
3. What tells me the page on which a chapter or part of a book begins? (table of contents)
4. What do headings do for readers? (tell the topic for that part)
5. How can I learn what a word means? (go to the glossary at the back of the book)
6. Where is the title on a book? (the cover and the title page)
7. What is the spine? (the part of the book that usually shows on a shelf—it holds the book together)
8. What might I find on the spine? (title and author)
9. What might I find on the front cover? (title, author, illustrator, and illustration)
10. What is the illustrator's job? (to show readers what the characters, setting, and events look like)
11. What is the author's job? (to write the story or information)
12. Where are words listed alphabetically? (in the glossary)
13. Where are page numbers listed? (table of contents)
14. How can an illustrator affect a story? (pictures show us characters, setting, and mood)
15. Where are definitions of unfamiliar words? (in the glossary)

Common Core State Standards**Print Concepts**

RF.K.1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

- a. Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.

Your Turn!

Provide students with a book of their own and invite them to begin whisper reading it. Walk about, kneeling next to each reader to listen, and praise his or her book handling and good reading.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students you realize that they already have a good idea about how books work, and that today they will have a chance to show you that they know how to move around in a book to read it. For ready readers, you might provide a book to hold and emulate what you demonstrate. For beginners, simply use this page, demonstrating on the left, pointedly tracking with your index finger, and inviting the student to practice reading on the right-hand page. Good readers know to start at the top of a page and move from left to right, reading down the page. Good readers also use picture clues to help them solve tricky words. Explain to students that it's now their turn to read. Have them read the page with the pears on it.

Common Core State Standards**Print Concepts**

- RF.K.1.b.** Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.
- c.** Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.
- RF.1.1** Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- a.** Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation).

Phonics and Word Recognition

- RF.K.3.** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.
- RF.K.3.a.** Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or many of the most-frequent sounds for each consonant.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that today they are going to learn what all good readers learn right after they learn their ABC's—all about the differences between letters, words, and sentences (point to each area on the page).

Begin with Their Name

Tell students that they all know what letter their name starts with (confirm by having students tell their letter). Do they know how many letters are in their name? Use a student's name for an example, writing and counting the letters together. Have all the students figure out how many letters are in their own name. Note that when you wrote the name, you put all the letters close together so they made a word, or name. If you did not put them close together, they would just be letters, not a name, or a word. Ask who has the shortest name, and who has the longest name.

Show the Chart**Letters to Words**

Pointing to the *Letters Box*, explain that letters are single parts from the alphabet that are put together to make words. Letters on their own do not make words (except for two special letters that students will find out about shortly). Pointing to the *Words Box*, ask students to describe what makes up a word (a string of letters). Invite students to find two special words that can also be called letters (*a* and *I*). The letters from the *Letter Box* make the words you see. Ask students to locate the letters from the *Letter Box* that were used to make the words in the *Words Box*. How many letters are in the words? What other words can you make with these letters? (*red, bed, bad, dab, mad, met, gas, grid, more, made, game, same, dear*)

Words to Sentences

Share with students that you are sure they figured out that words put together make sentences. Invite them to read the words from the *Word Box* that were used here to make these sentences (point to the sentences). I know these are sentences because of several things: 1. There is a capital letter at the beginning; 2. There are spaces between the words, and the words make sense together; and 3. There is an ending punctuation mark that tells me how to use my voice and to stop. How many words are in the sentence(s)? (Hop, clap, or tap to count words.) Let's change the punctuation to ! and ? and read both aloud. Discuss how the meaning and expression change with punctuation.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Spaceman Kit with Student and Teacher Size (#151988)

Common Core State Standards**Print Concepts**

RF.K.1.b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.

c. Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.

RF.1.1 Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

a. Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation).

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.K.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.

RF.K.3.a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or many of the most-frequent sounds for each consonant.

Sentence Sleuths (explain that a sleuth is a detective)

These are all sentences (pointing to bottom box). How do we know they are sentences? (They begin with a capital letter, they are made up of a string of words that make sense with spaces between the words, and they have an ending punctuation mark.) Let's read the sentences one at a time and count the words, so that if we were writing, we would know how many words we need to write. Invite students to tap, finger count, or clap the words. What is our shortest sentence? (Look out!)

On Your Own

Ask students to make up their own sentences, share them aloud, and tell how many words are in the sentences. You may write their sentences to verify their word count. Who has the longest sentence? Who has the shortest sentence?

Introduction and Demonstration

Now let's see how you do on your own finding letters and words! Remember that we need a vowel (a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y) to make a word.

Look and Count**Letters**

Take a good look at this box (pointing to top box). Let's all count the letters, not words, that we see and then tell how many we think there are in the first row (7). Give time to look and count, suggesting holding up a finger for each one they find. Did anyone notice a letter that could also be counted as a word? (l and a). Invite students to share their counts and their thoughts (perhaps someone noticed that the letter b sounds like the word be, but in order for it to be a word, it needs a vowel—e.)

Words

Repeat this activity for word counting, noting again that l and a are both words and letters. Lowercase i is not a word, as the word l is always uppercase.

Common Core State Standards

Fluency

RF.K.4. Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.

RF.1-2.4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

- a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.
- b. Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.1.10. With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.

RL.2.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Introduction and Demonstration

The Importance of Just-Right-Book Choice

Remind students that the best way to become a better reader is to read. During independent reading time, students need to read books at their independent level. Time spent during independent-reading time on books that are too hard or too easy will not grow reading muscles the way just-right or independent-level books do. Matching children with books that they enjoy encourages a lifelong love of reading, and when those books they enjoy during independent-reading time are at the correct independent reading level, students will also learn from their reading. This perfect combination of enjoyment and learning creates a solid foundation for a wonderfully literate life. It is important to teach students that everyone's reading behaviors are unique and should matter only to them as they develop as readers. Another important point to instill is that for everyone, even for teachers, some text is too challenging. However, all readers can grow in capabilities and commit to new reading challenges.

Model Just-Right Book Choice

Using a think-aloud, model shopping for just-right books. To prove your point, exaggerate your reading speed in too-easy books and your stammering in too-hard books. Use the verbiage from this page so that when students refer to it later, your thinking is visually anchored. As you shop through a book basket that holds a variety of genres, topics, and levels, think aloud about why one book is just too easy and you wouldn't be doing much thinking (refer to the picture of the reader who can practically read the book upside down because it's so easy). You may speed read through it for humor. Choose another book and test it with the Five Finger Rule (see next column). Pretend that it really is on your just-right level, but you just aren't interested in that topic and it wouldn't hold your attention. Pick yet another (a large medical book, for example) that doesn't meet the Five Finger Rule, and you have to admit that you "don't have a clue about what you just read." Finally, pick a book from the basket that is on a topic that you love. Show that when tested, it turns out to be a just-right book for you! Place that book in your individual book basket.

Just-Right Mini-lessons

Present a series of mini-lessons that extol the value of picking books that make students feel strong as readers. Steer discussion to reflect the verbiage from this page so that later reference affirms that thought process. Remind students that it is also necessary to pick books that will hold their interest and encourage them to choose both fiction and nonfiction titles to exercise all of their reading muscles. This page conveys the feelings students have when they are reading just-right, too-easy, and too-hard books. When we teach students to be aware of their feelings about a book that is too hard, too easy, or just right, we empower them to make informed choices for themselves as readers. This empowerment is both liberating and productive for students as they begin to take ownership of their literate lives. The switchover from being told what to read to choosing what to read is a milestone for readers, especially struggling readers.

The Five-Finger Rule, A Great Strategy

The Five-Finger Rule is a simple test any reader can do to determine if text is too easy, just right, or too hard. Parents also appreciate learning this quick, easy trick. Model how to test a book with the Five-Finger Rule: Open to any page, make a fist, and as you read a paragraph (or a page or two, depending on student level) put up a finger for each error you make (or for each difficult or unknown word). At the end of the short, sampled reading, if no or only one finger is up, the book is too easy; two or three fingers up means it is just right; and four or five fingers up indicates the book is too hard at this time. Encourage students to use this strategy each time they consider a book for independent reading.

A Book Pass

1. Gather as many books as you have students, making sure the books span a wide range of levels.
2. Provide each student with five to eight small sticky notes and a pencil.
3. Put this key on the board for reference: E=too easy; H=too hard; JR= just right.
4. Place a book in front of each child, and explain they will each use the Five-Finger Rule and whisper read or silently read from each book that comes to them, decide its difficulty, mark their sticky note according to the difficulty key, and stick it to the inside back cover. Then they pass the book to the student on their right.
5. After about 15 minutes, or after each student has had a chance to test five books, ask them to look inside the back cover of the book they currently hold. Facilitate discussion around everyone's findings that most books earned different ratings. The point is that for one student a book may be too easy, while it is just right or too hard for another—that we are all at different places in our reading development. What matters is that we select books that support our own progress.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

JUST RIGHT! Too Easy Too Hard Book Banner (#305058)

Common Core State Standards

Key Ideas and Details

RL.2.2. Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

Craft & Structure

RL.K.5. Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).

RL.1.5. Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.2.9. Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story (e.g., Cinderella stories) by different authors or from different cultures.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RL.1.10. With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.

RL.2.10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Introduction and Demonstration

There are two main types of reading material: fiction and nonfiction. Under those two main types, there are specific categories called genres. A genre is a type of text that is recognized by its pattern or structure, and books within a genre share characteristics of plot, tone, mood, settings, characters, and themes. Each piece of text has a purpose (why it is written) and an audience (who it is written for). Showing students books from a variety of genres you have read together will give them a good springboard to identify the genres on this page. Depending on students' readiness, you may begin by sorting familiar books or passages into the broad categories of fiction and nonfiction before exploring the more specific genres.

Genres and Reasons

Begin by going through the genres on this page that you have read together, discussing the definitions and encouraging students to name any titles they believe fit that description.

Book Pass

Collect at least three books per student and begin a book pass, having students glance at each cover and decide which genre (or simply fiction vs. nonfiction) it is. They may write their guess on sticky notes inside the back covers and then compare answers at the end of the book pass.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Genres and Reasons Literacy Center (#305288)

Reading Genres 10-in-1 Poster Set (#148245)

_____’s Reading Log		
Title	Author	Genre

Common Core State Standards

Phonological Awareness

RF.K.2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.

Phonics & Word Recognition

RF.1.3.d. Use knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word.

- e. Decode two-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables.

RF.2.3.c. Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels.

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain that syllables are the parts or chunks of words that we not only *hear* when we break up a word, but that we also *feel*, because our jaw drops when we say that part of the word! Try it! Say *baby* and exaggerate your jaw drop, holding your hand just under your chin to feel it, so that students can clearly see your example. Invite students to say the word with you, then try several more words, counting the syllables, or jaw drops (or clapping). Explain that hearing syllables helps us to spell, write, and correctly divide words when we run out of room on a line. Each syllable must have a vowel, and your jaw will drop for each vowel you read (point to the red vowels). Note that silent *e* is the exception in *game*.

Open and Closed Syllable Types

For ready readers, explain that two common types of syllables are *open* and *closed*. You might show students the examples to see if they can determine the rules on their own: Open syllables end with a long vowel; and closed syllables end with a consonant. Go through each word, feeling jaw drops or clapping to count the syllables. (All the words have two syllables.)

Syllable Count

How many syllables are in each word in the Word Bank?

Is the first syllable open or closed?

- apple (2, closed)
- clapping (2, closed)
- okay (2, open)
- tablet (2, closed)
- oval (2, open)
- dentist (2, closed)
- music (2, open)
- media (3, open)
- teacher (2, closed)
- snack (1, closed)
- reading (2, closed)
- even (2, open)

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Graph the Syllables Literacy Center (#304319)

Common Core State Standards**Conventions of Standard English**

L.K.2.d. Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.

L.1.2.d. Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words.

e. Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions.

L.3.2.f. Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.K.3.d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

RF.1.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.

b. Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words.

Same and Different

Select a word family to study. Ask students to describe similarities (rime or ending chunk) and differences (onsets or beginning letters) they see.

Rhyme Time

Select a word family to study. Invite students to come up with more rhymes for that family.

Find the Family

Go back to Page 1 and have students name the pictures aloud, searching for rhymes. Students may tell the word family that a pair of rhymes shares and write the words, circling the rimes.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Go 4 It! Word Families (#305735)

Word Family Pocket Chart™ (#154182)

Slide and Learn™ Word Families (#302344)

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that good readers and writers look for patterns, such as word families, to be able to read and write words more easily. They learn to quickly recognize these word families as chunks of sound so they do not have to sound out each letter one-by-one. Pointing to the *cake* sample, tell students, "If I can spell *cake* (pointing), then I can spell *make*. And here are a bunch of words I know I can read if I can read *cake*!" Ask students to tell you why that is (they all share the rime or ending chunk *-ake*). Students may offer that they hear rhymes, which is another way to tell if you are reading a word family. Invite students to think of even more *-ake* words.

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Common Core State Standards**Phonics and Word Recognition**

RF.K.3.b. Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.

RF1.3.c. Know final -e and common vowel team conventions for representing long vowel sounds.

RF2.3.b. Know spelling sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams.

RF.2.3.e. Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences.

Conventions of Standard English

L.2.2.d. Generalize learned spelling patterns when writing words (e.g., cage → badge; boy → boil).

Introduction and Demonstration

Remind students of their short- and long-vowel study and of how vowels can make more than one sound. Today they are going to see and learn about other ways that determine vowel sounds in words. Tell students that even though vowels can be tricky, good readers and writers can handle them by knowing what vowels look like and sound like in their different forms. Encourage students by reminding them that the more they read and see these vowel combinations, the easier it will be to read and write them. Explain that there are several ways that vowels can change their sounds, as shown on this page. Sometimes vowels work in pairs or teams to make a long sound (point to Vowel Teams Box). Sometimes vowels are “bossed” around by *r*, which changes their usual vowel sound (point to R-Controlled Vowels Box). And sometimes, vowels work with another letter to form a gliding vowel sound, or diphthong (point to Diphthong Box).

Long Vowel Teams

Show students each of the five vowels’ boxes and the vowel teams within them. Talk about how amazing it is that the long-vowel sound can be made in so many different ways. Read a few words together, then ask students to generate more words that use that vowel team.

R-Controlled Vowels

The letter *r* following a vowel affects the sound the vowel makes. When a word is divided into syllables, the vowel plus the *r* are usually in the same syllable. Read a few words together, and ask students to generate more words that have an *r*-controlled vowel.

Diphthongs or Gliding Vowels

A diphthong is a vowel in which there is a noticeable sound change within the same syllable; your mouth makes two moves when you say a diphthong. This process of moving from one vowel sound to another is called *gliding*, thus, another name for diphthong is *gliding vowel*. Read a few words together, and ask students to generate more words that have gliding vowels.

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Baseball Vowel Digraphs Literacy Center (#304586)

Common Core State Standards

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.K.3.b. Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.

RF1.3.c. Know final -e and common vowel team conventions for representing long vowel sounds.

Introduction and Demonstration

The silent *e* has special powers: It can be seen but not heard, and it can make the vowel before it say its own name, changing it from a short vowel to a long vowel. You might model practicing the powers of silent *e* by pretending to be silent *e*, commanding the prior vowel to say its name. For example: *Plan*. (Pointing to the *a*) Say your name! /a/, Yes! So plan now says plane!

Practice the powers of Silent e

Invite students to try the next words, “bossing” the vowel to say its name and making a new long-vowel word. Ask students to come up with more silent *e* words they encounter during their reading and writing.

More Words for Practice

at/ate	man/mane
bit/bite	rid/ride
dim/dime	rob/robe
fin/fine	mat/mate
cop/cope	rip/ripe
cut/cute	rod/rode
grip/gripe	shin/shine
dud/dude	slop/slope
fat/fate	sit/site
hid/hide	past/paste
hop/hope	slid/slide
hug/huge	slim/slime
glad/glade	rag/rage
lob/lobe	spin/spine
pin/pine	rat/rate
mop/mope	strip/stripe
tub/tube	twin/twine
hat/hate	scrap/scrape
not/note	tap/tape
mad/made	van/vane
quit/quite	

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

The Magic E Wand and Card Set (#305736)

Common Core State Standards

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF1.3.f. Read words with inflectional endings.

Conventions of Standard English

L.K.1.c. Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., *dog, dogs; wish, wishes*).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.K.4.b. Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., *-ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less*) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.

L.1.4.c. Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., *look*) and their inflectional forms (e.g., *looks, looked, looking*).

Introduction and Demonstration

These little endings, *-s, -es, -ed,* and *-ing,* change the number and tense, but not the meaning of a word. Demonstrate this using play. Go through each box, noting the changes and pronunciations of each new word. Note that *-ed* makes three different sounds, /t/ as in *capped,* /ed/ as in *painted,* and /d/ as in *lined.* Invite students to complete the blanks and generate more words that take on these endings.

Double the Consonant

Talk through the Double the Consonant Box, explaining the rule for adding inflectional suffixes: When a suffix (or ending) that starts with a vowel (*ed, ing, er*) is added to a base word containing a short vowel followed by a single consonant, double the final consonant (*hop=hopping*). Have students complete the unfinished words in the box (*skipped, skipping, hopped, hopping*).

Double The Consonant Sort

Make a **word sort** for students to discover this rule on their own. Create two header cards for sorts: *No Double* and *Double.* Then write each word from the Word Bank on its own card for students to sort. (Double: *run; snap; win; jog.* No Double: *rest; spill, rake; read; guess; walk; dress; share; like; sleep; wait*)

Drop the e

Explain that when we add a suffix beginning with a vowel to a word that ends with *e,* we usually drop the *e* (for example, *-ed, -ing, -er.*) Have students complete the unfinished words (*caring, taped, taping*).

We're Ready to Add Endings!

Have students complete the word bank orally and in writing. You might have students write endings to the words one at a time on a dry erase board and then show their work simultaneously, checking each other. You may choose to target the ending or have students add all the endings they can to each word. Discuss the sounds *ed* makes on different words, too. Also discuss irregular past-tense words: *wins/won, runs/ran, reads/read, sleeps/slept.*

Answer Key

word	s or es	ed	ing
rest	rests	rested /ed/	resting
read	reads	read	reading
like	likes	liked /t/	liking
jump	jumps	jumped	jumping
win	wins	won	winning
run	runs	ran	running
guess	guesses	guessed /t/	guessing
snap	snaps	snapped /t/	snapping
jog	jogs	jogged /d/	jogging
smell	smells	smelled	smelling
spill	spills	spilled /d/	spilling
walk	walks	walked /t/	walking
sleep	sleeps	slept	sleeping
wait	waits	waited /ed/	waiting
dress	dresses	dressed /t/	dressing

Common Core State Standards**Conventions of Standard English**

L.2.2.c. Use an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives.

Contractions Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that this lesson is all about shortcuts. Begin by saying, “I am/I’m, it is/it’s, you are/you’re.” Listen to students’ explanation of what you are doing. Show them this page about contractions, noting the contraction in the title (I’m). Explain that it’s simple to make contractions—that all you do is start with two words, and put an apostrophe to mark the spot where you took out a letter! Show students any contraction that they will likely grasp, and point to the letter that you would remove to make the contraction.

Fill In the Blank

Go through the contractions aloud, noting the words that remain the same, and invite students to complete the blanks. Encourage students to generate more contractions from these families.

Silent Letters Introduction and Demonstration

Read the header, and ask students to describe what this is about (silent letters). Go through the yellow list of silent letters and example words, noting and pointing to the silent letters in each.

Silent Search

It’s time to search for silent letters in words. Read aloud the words below the yellow headers, listening carefully for each sound. Have students pinpoint the silent letter in each word and name it (comb, have, listen, wrong, who, knee, know, thumb, name, whistle, wrist, lamb, talk, fasten, two).

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Slide and Learn™ Contractions (#154261)

Common Core State Standards**Vocabulary Acquisition & Use**

L.2.4.d. Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).

L.K.2.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on [K-2] reading and content.

- a. Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing duck is a bird and learning the verb to duck).

Compound Words Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that sometimes word study is just plain fun! Today they will see and read a variety of unusual and interesting words (pointing): compound words; homophones; and homographs. We will begin with compound words (pointing to *backpack* on the children.) When we take two words and put them together to form a new word, that new word is a compound word. Let's read a few. Invite students to complete the blanks.

More Compound Words!

Next, have students generate more compound words of their own. For fun, have students invent new compound words.

Homophones Introduction and Demonstration

Ask students to figure out why there is a cell phone on this word (homophones are words that *sound* the same but have different meanings, and *phone* refers to sound). Go through the list aloud, discussing the meaning of the words.

More Homophones!

Next, invite students to generate more homophones. Examples: their/there/they're; knot/not; blew/blue; read/red; knight/night; write/right; sight/site; chord/cord; rap/wrap; sell/cell; real/reel; deer/dear; see/sea; tee/tea; sun/son; ate/eight; hair/hare; mail/male; so/sew; waist/waste; hear/here; fourth/forth; groan/grown.

Homographs Introduction and Demonstration

Ask students to figure out why there is a pencil on this word (homographs are words that are spelled the same but have different meanings, and the pencil is to remind them that *graph* means to write). Go through the list aloud, discussing the meaning of the words. Have students use the homographs in sentences to show they understand the different meanings.

More Homographs!

Next, invite students to generate more homographs. (Examples: back, ball, bank, bar, bark, base, bear, beat, bill, block, board, bow, calf, case, cast, change, coat, court, cricket, cross, duck, felt, fit, foot, hand, hide, iron, jam, jump, kid, lap, leaves, left, lie, lock, mail, match, nail, note, organ, page, patient, play, post, ring, rock, roll, sack, season, sign, spell, spring, star, stick, top, train, watch, wave, wind.)

Common Core State Standards

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.2.3.d. Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

LK.4.b. Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., -ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain that prefixes and suffixes are small word parts that can be added to the beginnings and endings to words to form new words. Knowing prefixes and suffixes helps us to quickly learn and read more words. You might share these helpful reminders for students to remember which part is a prefix and a suffix: *Pre* means before, so prefix is the part that comes at the beginning of the word; and *P* comes before *S* in the alphabet, so prefix comes first in a word. Point to *un* and go through the example, showing students how easy it is to make many words using prefixes and suffixes. Talk about how some words can have both a prefix and a suffix, making a longer word, such as *disagreeing*. Continue through the chart, asking students to call out more words they know with these affixes.

Let's Make Words!

Have students use affixes with the words in the word bank to say and/or write all the new words they can.

Answer Key

correct: incorrect, corrected, correcting, corrects, correctly, correction

like: dislike, likes, likely, liked, liking, like(able), unlike, disliking, disliked

kind: unkind, kindly, kinder

play: replay, plays, player, playing, playful

read: reread, misread, reads, reading, reader, rereading, misreading

regular: regularly, irregular, irregularly

respect: disrespect, respects, respected, respecting, respectful

safe: unsafe, safer, safest, safely, safe(ty)

view: review, preview, views, viewed, viewing, viewer

wash: rewash, prewash, washes, washed, washing, washer, wash(able), rewashing, prewashing

wish: wishes, wished, wishing, wisher, wishful

write: prewrite, rewrite, writes, writer, prewriting, rewriting, writing

20 Most Common Affixes

with percentage of occurrence in printed English

Prefixes			
prefix	meaning	key word	percentage
un-	not	unfriendly	26%
re-	again	return	14%
in-, im-, il-, ir	not	injustice, impossible	11%
dis-	not, opposite of	disagree	7%
en-, -em	cause to	encode, embrace	4%
in-, -im	in	infield	4%
non-	not	nonsense	4%
fore-	before	forecast	3%
inter-	between	interact	3%
mis-	wrongly	misfire	3%
over-	over	overlook	3%
pre-	before	prefix	3%
sub-	under	submarine	3%
de-	opposite	defrost	2%
trans-	across	transport	2%
anti-	against	antifreeze	1%
mid-	middle	midway	1%
semi-	half	semicircle	1%
super-	above	superstar	1%
under-	under	undersea	1%

Suffixes			
suffix	meaning	key word	percentage
-s, -es	plurals	boys	31%
-ed	past-tense verbs	wanted	20%
-ing	verb form /present participle	playing	14%
-ly	characteristic of	friendly	7%
-er, -or	person connected with	teacher	4%
-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	act, process	action	4%
-ible, -able	can be done	likeable	2%
-al, -ial	having characteristics of	personal	1%
-y	characterized by	happy	1%
-ness	state of, condition of	happiness	1%
-ity, -ty	state of	activity	1%
-ment	action or process	enjoyment	1%
-ic	having characteristics of	comic	1%
-ous, -eous, -ious	possessing the qualities of	serious	1%
-en	made of	enliven	1%
-er	comparative	bigger	1%
-ive, -ative, -itive	adjective form of a noun	attentive	1%
-ful	full of	sorrowful	1%
-less	without	hopeless	1%
-est	comparative	biggest	1%

All teaching guides can be found online.

Common Core State Standards

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.K.5. With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- b.** Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).

L.1.5. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- d.** Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings.

L.2.5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- a.** Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).
- b.** Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).

Introduction and Demonstration

Go through the chart, pointing out the *s* in *synonym* as a helpful reminder that synonym means “same.” Students may notice the “identical twins” on the synonyms side and the “opposite children” on the antonyms side. Read aloud the words, then invite students to fill in the blanks. Encourage students to offer their own synonyms and antonyms. Let students know that you will be listening for and looking for interesting synonyms in both their conversations and their writing.

Make a List

Begin with two synonyms such as *pretty* and *beautiful* and invite students to call out more words with the same or similar meaning (*gorgeous, lovely, adorable, cute*). You might use index cards to record students’ words and keep them in the writing center for reference as students try to avoid using overused words (*snoozers, see opposite*).

No More Snoozers!

Said, pretty, nice...these are all snoozers, or words that are so boring we fall asleep reading them! Tell students that in order to be more precise and interesting in our writing and speaking, it is important to avoid using snoozers. Have students generate words to replace these snoozers:

said	friend
pretty	eat
nice	good
big	happy
small	sad
hot	great
cold	delicious

Make a Linear Array with Words

This challenge helps students understand degrees of meaning. Sometimes the differences in word meanings are nuanced, such as in the difference between *content* and *happy*. Placing these words on a linear array creates an important dialogue for vocabulary development. Introduce arrays by placing words in order according to what comes first, in the middle, and last in terms of time, size, physical positioning, etc. For example:

minutes	hours	days
morning	afternoon	night
child	mother	grandmother
white	beige	brown

Then practice placing words in an order that represents an increase or decrease in intensity of meaning,

content	glad	thrilled
sleepy	tired	exhausted
frustrated	angry	furious
damp	wet	soaked

Related Really Good Stuff® Products

Snoozers Activity Journal: Wake Up Your Vocabulary (#305603)
 ARRAYnge It!™ Pre-K (#305030)

Common Core State Standards**Conventions of Standard English**

L.1.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

a. Capitalize dates and names of people.

L.2.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

a. Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that you realize they already know about using capital letters for their names and at the beginnings of sentences. Ask them if they know any other reasons that we use capital letters. Go through the chart to show them all the reasons and examples.

Fix-Ups

Go through the first three sentences together, noting all the capitals and the reasons they are used, referring to the chart for affirmation. Next, have students find the errors where a capital should have been used. Have students talk through the reasons or complete the sentences correctly in writing. Point out that words like *mom*, *dad*, and *grandma* are capitalized only when they are used in place of a name, and not when simply referring to a person. (For example, “Mom,” but “my mom.”)

Answers

On Sunday Grandpa read “Hop On Pop” to Sam and me.

Aunt Jane took us to the Hess Public Library after we ate at Pretzel Palace.

For Thanksgiving we visited our grandparents in Ohio.

Common Core State Standards

Conventions of Standard English

L.K.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- b. Recognize and name end punctuation.

L.1.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- a. Capitalize dates and names of people.
- b. Use end punctuation for sentences.
- c. Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.

L.2.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- a. Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names.
- b. Use commas in greetings and closings of letters.
- c. Use an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives.

L.1.1.b. Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.

Introduction and Demonstration

Tell students that good readers and writers know that punctuation can help us understand text, just like road signs help us drive on streets safely. Tell them that punctuation not only tells us when to slow down or stop, it also tells us how and when to change our voice. Read through the first row of three common end marks, exaggerating your expression to match the punctuation (period: a statement with a flat voice; question mark: a question using a raised voice at the end; exclamation point: excitement with umph and volume.) Discuss how question words, such as who, what, where, when, why, and how require a question mark. Invite students to try the sentences aloud with you.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Tell students they are going to try these eight sentences using different end marks, so their expressions will change like an actor's. Students read each sentence, first naming the punctuation mark they wish to use, and then reading it, using appropriate expression. Discuss how more than one punctuation mark may work, depending on the situation.

The Other Marks

Commas: Commas are used in lists, dates, and before people's names when addressing them. The example, "Let's eat Grandma!" is very different from "Let's eat, Grandma!" and you might have some fun talking about how commas can save lives (Grandma's, in this case).

Apostrophes: Plural possessives can be tricky, so direct students to isolate the word they need to work with and put the apostrophe right after the entire word they are referring to. In the first sentence, it is *Ann*. It is just *Ann* (not several *Anns*), so the apostrophe goes right after *Ann*. In the second sentence, it is *dogs*, (both *dogs*, not just one *dog*), so the apostrophe goes right after *dogs*. One exception to the rule for possessive is the word *its*—it never gets an apostrophe. So, the word *it's* always means *it is*. Apostrophes are also used to build contractions. They mark the place where a letter has been omitted.

Quotation Marks: These always work in pairs to mark the beginning and the ending of something someone says or a title. Think of the pair of marks as hands or arms hugging what is being said. Model this using outstretched arms and hands.

Punctuation Police

Invite students to be observant in their reading and writing, as well as in reading the room, for correct punctuation. Encourage discussion and recording of faulty punctuation.

Common Core State Standards**Conventions of Standard English**

L.2.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

b. Use commas in greetings and closings of letters.

Introduction and Demonstration

Ask students if they write thank-you notes when they receive gifts. Ask them about other times they have written or received a letter. Ask students how they would feel if someone didn't sign the letter or if there was no date. Would it matter? Explain that it is important when writing to someone to include all the important parts, so that the message is clear and well-received. Walk through the sample letter together, noting all its parts and where they go.

Letter Match Up

Next, have students look at the letter on the right and match its parts to the template on the left. Encourage students to verbalize each part so they become fluent and internalize the language of the letter.

Let's Write!

Have students pair up and write a letter to a classmate (if there is an uneven number, include yourself). They can write about a memory or something they like about that person. Tell students you will look for all the parts of a friendly letter, as well as for correct punctuation. Provide time for students to exchange their letters and enjoy reading them.

Pen Pals In Class

Encourage students to find a pen pal in your class or a neighboring class. Some topics for letters: Favorite name, animal, place, color, food, sport, book, music, activity, memory; a time I was proud, scared, embarrassed, the best, shy, or lost; if I were a teacher, principal, sports hero, celebrity, character, or animal; I wish.

Pen Pals Around the World

For students interested in world-wide pen pals, e-PALS at epals.com is a well-established organization linking classrooms around the world.

Common Core State Standards

Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.K-2.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.

RF.K.3.c. Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does).

RF.1.3.g. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

RF.2.3.f. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

Practice with a few flashcards at a time. Enjoyable repetitive activities help students to learn sight words quickly.

10 Ways to Learn My Word

1. Say the word (auditory)
2. Stretch the word (segmenting)
3. See the word (visualize)
4. Clap the word (kinesthetic, rhythmic)
5. Compare the word (analogy)
6. Draw the word (visual/spatial)
7. Sing the word (musical)
8. Make the word (artistic)
9. Write the word, rainbow write (kinesthetic)
10. Use the word (application/meaning)

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain that sight words are the words that appear most often in reading and writing, so it is very important that we recognize them at a glance, without having to sound them out. (Many of them cannot be sounded out.) When we aren't fluent in our sight words, our reading becomes too slow for understanding and we feel frustrated when we try to read and write.

Progress Monitor

Use this grid to periodically assess student progress and fluency in sight words.

Student _____		Date _____							
Easy 25		Pre-Primer		Primer					
substitution		substitution	substitution	substitution	substitution				
1	a	1	a	27	play	1	all	27	out
2	at	2	and	28	red	2	am	28	please
3	an	3	away	29	run	3	are	29	pretty
4	and	4	big	30	said	4	at	30	ran
5	am	5	blue	31	see	5	ate	31	ride
6	can	6	can	32	the	6	be	32	saw
7	do	7	come	33	three	7	black	33	say
8	go	8	down	34	to	8	brown	34	she
9	he	9	find	35	two	9	but	35	so
10	in	10	for	36	up	10	came	36	soon
11	l	11	funny	37	we	11	did	37	that
12	is	12	go	38	where	12	do	38	there
13	it	13	help	39	yellow	13	eat	39	they
14	like	14	here	40	you	14	four	40	this
15	me	15	l			15	get	41	too
16	my	16	in			16	good	42	under
17	no	17	is			17	have	43	want
18	see	18	it			18	he	44	was
19	so	19	jump			19	into	45	well
20	the	20	little			20	like	46	went
21	to	21	look			21	must	47	what
22	up	22	make			22	new	48	white
23	we	23	me			23	no	49	who
24	you	24	my			24	now	50	will
25	student name	25	not			25	on	51	with
		26	one			26	our	52	yes

Common Core State Standards
Phonics and Word Recognition

RF.K.2.3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words.

RF.K.3.c. Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., *the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does*).

RF.1.3.g. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

RF.2.3.f. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

Introduction and Demonstration

Explain that sight words are the words that appear most often in reading and writing. It is very important to recognize them at a glance, without having to sound them out. (Many of them cannot be sounded out.) When we aren't fluent in our sight words, our reading and writing become too slow for understanding, causing frustration. Practice with a few flashcards at a time. Enjoyable repetitive activities can help students to learn sight words quickly.

See Page 28 for 10 Ways to Learn Sight Words

Progress Monitor

Use this grid to periodically assess student progress and fluency in sight words.

Student _____		Date _____		1st 100 Fry Sight Words	
substitution	substitution	substitution	substitution	substitution	substitution
1 the	26 or	51 will	76 number		
2 of	27 one	52 up	77 no		
3 and	28 had	53 other	78 way		
4 a	29 by	54 about	79 could		
5 to	30 word	55 out	80 people		
6 in	31 but	56 many	81 my		
7 is	32 not	57 then	82 than		
8 you	33 what	58 them	83 first		
9 that	34 all	59 these	84 water		
10 it	35 were	60 so	85 been		
11 he	36 we	61 some	86 call		
12 was	37 when	62 her	87 who		
13 for	38 your	63 would	88 am		
14 on	39 can	64 make	89 its		
15 are	40 said	65 like	90 now		
16 as	41 there	66 him	91 find		
17 with	42 use	67 into	92 long		
18 his	43 an	68 time	93 down		
19 they	44 each	69 has	94 day		
20 I	45 which	70 look	95 did		
21 at	46 she	71 two	96 get		
22 be	47 do	72 more	97 come		
23 this	48 how	73 write	98 made		
24 have	49 their	74 go	99 may		
25 from	50 if	75 see	100 part		

All teaching guides can be found online.