

**What do you remember about
how you were taught to read?**

**Do you think everyone here would have the same
memories about how they were taught to read?**

**Was the method of reading used to teach you
how to read successful for you?**

**Did you turn out to be the type of reader
you would like to be?**

**Was the reading method used
to teach you how to read
successful for all other students
with whom you were in school?**

**What if there were just two methods
for teaching people how to read?**

**Would some people learn to read
in either approach?**

**Would some people learn to read
in the first approach,
but would have struggled
in the second approach?**

**Would some people learn to read
in the second approach,
but would have struggled
in the first approach?**

**Would some people have struggled
in either approach?**

**Would some people have struggled
because of the approaches?**

**Would some have struggled
because of factors other than the approaches?**

What is phonemic awareness?

“There is no single definition of phonemic awareness.”

“Phonemic awareness is typically described as an insight about oral language and in particular about the segmentation of sounds that are used in speech communication.”

“Phonemic awareness is characterized in terms of the facility of the language learner to manipulate the sounds of oral speech.”

“To be precise, phonemic awareness refers to an understanding about the smallest units of sound that make up the speech stream: phonemes.”

*Phonemic Awareness and the Teaching of Reading:
A Position Statement from the Board of Directors of the
International Reading Association
1998*

**A child that can tell that the word “dog”
has three sounds
and those sounds are /d/ /o/ /g/
and can manipulate those sounds
(for example, change the first sound /d/ to //
and what would you get?)
demonstrates a high degree
of phonemic awareness.**

**Remember knowing that the word “dog”
is spelled with three letters
and those letters are “d” “o” and “g”
is different from phonemic awareness.
Those abilities relate to the understanding
of the alphabetic principle.**

**Furthermore
knowing that the letter “d”
is making the sound /d/
in the word “dog”
is also different from phonemic awareness.
That ability reflects phonics knowledge
which builds on phonemic awareness
and understanding the alphabetic principle.**

**“Research suggests that
different children may need
different amounts and forms
of phonemic awareness
instruction and experiences.**

**The research findings
related to phonemic awareness
suggest that although it might be necessary
it is certainly not sufficient
for producing good readers.**

**One thing is certain:
We can not give so much attention
to phonemic-awareness instruction
that other important aspects
of a balanced literacy curriculum
are left out or abandoned.”**

*Phonemic Awareness and the Teaching of Reading:
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Suggestions for Good Reading Instruction Leading to the Development of Phonemic Awareness and Success in Learning

- 1. Print-rich environment
within which students interact**
- 2. Language activities that focus
on both the form and the content
of spoken and written language**
- 3. Explicit explanations in support
of students' discovery of the
alphabetic principle.**
- 4. Opportunities to practice
reading and writing for real reasons
in a variety of contexts to promote
fluency and independence**

*Phonemic Awareness and the Teaching of Reading:
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1998*

Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
(Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Adams, Bowman, Foorman, Fowler, Goldenberg,
Kameenui, Olson, Labov, Palinscar, Perfetti, Scarborough,
Shaywitz, Stanovich, Strickland, Stringfield, Sulzby

Beginning Reading Programs

Using reading to obtain meaning from print

**The sublexical structure of spoken words
(phonemic and morphological awareness)**

**The nature of the orthographic system
(letters and their predictable sequences)**

Frequent opportunities to read

Opportunities to write

Beyond

**Having an established working understanding
of how sounds are represented alphabetically**

**Sufficient practice in reading to achieve fluency with different
kinds of texts written for different purposes**

**Control over procedures for monitoring comprehension and
repairing misunderstandings**

Four key components

Mechanics of Reading

Comprehension

Writing

Motivation

“Our recommendations extend to all children. Of course we are most worried about children at high risk of developing reading difficulties learning to read. However there is little evidence that children experiencing difficulties learning to read, even those with identifiable learning disabilities need radically different sorts of supports than children at low risk, although they may need much more intensive support.”

Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
(Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children

(Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Observation #1

“...even prior to formal reading instruction the performance of kindergartners on tests of phonological awareness is a strong predictor of their future reading achievement

Observation #2

Taken together ...studies indicate that training in phonological awareness, particularly in associate with instruction in letter-sound relationships, makes a contribution to assisting at risk children in learning to read.

The effects of training, although quite consistent, are only moderate in strength, and have so far not been shown to extend to comprehension.

Typically a majority of the trained children narrow the gap between themselves and initially more advanced students in phonological awareness and word reading skills but few are brought completely up to speed through training and few fail to show any gains at all.”

**Phonological awareness in kindergarten
appears to have a tendency to be
a more successful predictor of future superior reading,
than of future reading problems.**

Strong PA → Good Reader

**Weak PA → Good Reader,
OK Reader, or a
Not-so-good reader**

**“In sum, despite the theoretical importance
of phonological awareness for learning to read,
its predictive power is somewhat muted,
because at about the time of onset of schooling,
so many children who will go on to become
normally achieving readers
have not yet attained much, if any, appreciation
of the phonological structure of oral language,
making them nearly indistinguishable in this regard
from children who will indeed
encounter reading difficulties down the road.”**

—James Gee—

***“Reading and the New Literacy Studies:
Reframing the National Academy of Sciences Report on Reading”***

- 1) Test of early phonological awareness (or lack of it) do not fruitfully select those students who will later have problems in learning to read. (Many of those with weak phonological sensitivity will go on to become adequate readers.)**

- 2) Interventions based on stressing phonological awareness and phonics do not enhance comprehension.**

- 3) Phonological awareness and overt phonics instruction does initially help at risk students. It does not bring them up to par with more advantaged students and they tend to eventually fall back fueling a fourth grade or later slump.**

If children in (certain) schools fall further behind regardless of “their initial reading skill level,” how is increasing their initial reading skills levels through more and better phonological awareness training and phonics going to speak to the problem?”

—James Gee—

*“Reading and the New Literacy Studies:
Reframing the National Academy of Sciences Report on Reading”*

**On average,
phonological awareness ($r=.46$)
has been about as strong
a predictor of future reading
as memory for sentences and stories,
confrontation naming,
and general language measures.**

**What is most striking about the results of the...
studies is the power of early preschool language
to predict reading three to five years later.**

—James Gee—

*“Reading and the New Literacy Studies:
Reframing the National Academy of Sciences Report on Reading”*

Early Language Abilities

**receptive and expressive vocabulary
recall and comprehend sentences and stories
engage in verbal interactions**

Caused by...

**“family, community, and school language environments
in which children interact intensively with adults
and more advanced peers and experience cognitively
challenging talk and texts on sustained topics
and in different genres of oral and written language.”**

**“...performance on phonological awareness tasks
by preschoolers was highly correlated with
general language ability.**

**Moreover it was measures
of semantic and syntactic skills,
rather than speech discrimination
and articulation that predicted
phonological awareness differences.”**

**So what would this report have looked like
if early language abilities and not early phonological awareness
had been the driving force behind it?**

—James Gee—

***“Reading and the New Literacy Studies:
Reframing the National Academy of Sciences Report on Reading”***

What is really missing?

**“Specific verbal abilities
tied to school practices
and school-based knowledge”**

**“...children who know,
and especially can use,
more words tied to forms of language
that schools use
(and other areas of life
that recruit academic language)
...enhance their early school success.”**

**“...the more you already know
about school itself,
and, in particular
about school-based language
and school practices,
before you go to school,
the better you do in school.”**

—James Gee—

*“Reading and the New Literacy Studies:
Reframing the National Academy of Sciences Report on Reading”*

**Correlations
do not mean causation,
and thus one cannot
without further evidence
(which we do not have)
argue from
the correlation between
early phonological awareness
and later success
in learning to read
that the former
causes the latter.**

—James Gee—

*“Reading and the New Literacy Studies:
Reframing the National Academy of Sciences Report on Reading”*

“Although context and pictures can be used as a tool to monitor word recognition, children should not be taught to use them to substitute for information provided by the letters in the word.”

Preventing Reading Difficulties

Yes, reading is more fluent and facile when you rely on orthographic information, however...

Young readers...

read slowly and deliberately initially

word identification and comprehension monitoring run together

Why deny students the opportunity to use what seems so readily available – the context provided by pictures, texts, and prior knowledge? Seems counterintuitive, if not unfair.

—David Pearson—

Essay Book Reviews: A Historically Based Review of
Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children Reading Research Quarterly
1999

WHY WOULD THEY CONCLUDE THIS?

#1 Finding for young children based on adult learners.

**Careful attention to reading acquisition
not deep inferences from adult processes
are required to settle the issue**

#2 Fails to account for all research available

**Privileges eye movement research
over
miscue analysis research**

**Even the best readers encounter problematic texts
with words and ideas that are difficult and unfamiliar
that adults are forced to abandon an automatic processing mode
and enter a conscious control mode of text processing,
where everything moves deliberately, strategically, and slowly.**

**There was no attempt to reconcile
seemingly competing findings from different bodies and literature
(instead one was privileged over the other.)**

—David Pearson—

**Essay Book Reviews: A Historically Based Review of
Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children Reading Research Quarterly
1999**

Understanding Phonics Instruction

1. Good phonics instruction should develop the alphabetic principle

“letters may stand for specific sounds”

2. Good phonics instruction should develop phonological awareness

“awareness of sounds in spoken words”

3. Good phonics instruction should provide a thorough grounding in the letters.

“letter recognition”

4. Good phonics instruction should not teach rules, need not use worksheets, should not dominate instruction, and does not have to be boring.

5. Good phonics instruction provides sufficient practice in reading words

reading words in isolation
reading words in stories
(a mixture of books containing patterns
taught in phonics lessons
and books ranging more widely in vocabulary.)
writing words
(dictated and invented)

6. Good phonics instruction leads to automatic word recognition

fluency

7. Good phonics instruction is one part of reading instruction

“Although phonics instruction
is an extremely important part
of beginning reading,
it is only one part.”

“Good reading instruction contains a balance of activities.”

from

Everything You Wanted to Know About Phonics
(But Were Afraid to Ask)
Reading Research Quarterly
Stahl, Duffy-Heister, Stahl, 1998

The batsmen were merciless against the bowlers. The bowlers placed their men in slips and covers but to no avail. The batsmen hit one four after another along with an occasional six. Not once did a ball look like it would hit their stumps or be caught.

How would you say these words...

**jight
dight
pight
vight
zight?**

You have just decoded by use of analogy...

**You can recognize a pattern you know
and manipulate the onset & rime
to decode a new word**

**rime = -ight
like in
bright, fight, light, might,
night, right, sight, tight**

**“l” x 3
“g” x 3
“h” x 2
“t” x 2
= 36 possibilities**

“ight”

**Are there 36 different ways to pronounce
“ight” ?**

Is it easier to blend

/m/ + /i/ + /t/

or

/m/ + /it/ ?

But it’s more than just decoding...

What is this real word

“sook” ?

What does it mean?

Overselling Phonics

Richard Allington
Reading Today
August/September 1997

Unscientific Assertion #1

No one teaches phonics.

Unscientific Assertion #2

There is a phomemic awareness crisis.

Unscientific Assertion #3

Direct, systematic and sequential phonics is the way to go.

Unscientific Assertion #4

Decodable texts are important.

Unscientific Assertion #5

There is a sucker born every minute.

SHOW ME THE RESEARCH!

“It should be noted however that all the research groups cited here have found that even with intensive and informed instruction, a number of children are resistant to the treatments given. This consistent finding points out the stability of severe deficits in phonological processing skills, as well as the need to examine the ways in which additional child characteristics (such as home and family background, demographic variable, and linguistics and dialectical characteristics) interact with specific treatment methods and approaches.”

—Reid Lyons & Vintita Chhabra—
Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
Research Reviews
1996

**The Role of Phonics in Reading Instruction:
A Position Statement of the
International Reading Association**

1. The teaching of phonics is an important aspect of beginning reading instruction.
2. Classroom teachers in the primary grades do value and do teach phonics as part of their reading programs.
3. Phonics instruction, to be effective in promoting independence in reading, must be embedded in the context of a total reading/language arts program.