

## Four Blocks - Working With Words



Dr. Dottie Hall  
Wake Forest University  
halldp@wfu.edu

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## Three Ways to Teach Phonics

- Synthetic Phonics-sound it out, most commercial phonics
- Analytic Phonics-rules, most basal programs
- Decoding by Analogy-brain based, using what you know to figure out what you don't know

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## What We Know About How We Read Words

- Look at almost all the words and letters
- Recognize most words immediately and automatically
- Accurately and quickly pronounce new phonetically regular words
- Use spelling and morphological patterns to decode

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## Goals

- Learn to read and spell high-frequency words
- Learn patterns used to decode and spell lots of other words
- Transfer word knowledge to their own reading and writing

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## Working With Words (30 minutes)

- Word Wall (10 minutes)-teacher introduces 5 word wall words per week
- Decoding/Spelling Activity (20 minutes)-teacher guides activities to help children learn spelling patterns

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## Word Walls

- Each week, the teacher selects five words and adds them to a wall or bulletin board in the room
- Grows as the year progresses
- Placed on the wall alphabetically by first letter
- Confusing words are placed on different colored paper

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## “Doing” a Word Wall

- Adding words gradually
- Making words very accessible
- Being selective and “stingy” about what words go on the wall
- Practicing words by chanting and writing them
- Doing a variety of review activities
- Making sure that Word Wall words are spelled correctly in any writing students so

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## On-the –Back Word Wall Activities

- On-the-back endings-helps children learn to spell word wall words which need an ending
- On-the-back rhymes-helps children see how some word wall words can help them spell lots of other words that rhyme
- On-the-back cross checking-decide which word makes sense in each sentence
- Be a mind reader-teacher thinks of a word on the wall and then gives five clues about that word, by the fifth clue everyone should guess the word

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## Word Wall Variations

- First Grade-begins by adding the names of the children, one per day, high-frequency words added 5 per week, words that appear frequently in guided reading
- Second Grade-word selection based on what the teacher observes in children’s writing, high frequency words particularly those misspelled in rough draft writing, most second graders can read these words but not spell them, blends, digraphs, soft/hard c and g, most common vowel sounds, contractions, homophones

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## Word Wall Variations

- Third Grade-check first draft writing for high-frequency words that are misspelled, most frequently misspelled words, commonly confused homophones, contractions, compound words, hard/soft sound of c and g, common endings, suffixes with common spelling changes, common prefixes

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## How Word Wall is Multilevel

- Some children are learning to spell the words
- Other children are learning to spell the words
- On the back activities help advanced children extend their decoding and spelling
- Everyone practices handwriting

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## Phonics and Spelling Activities 20-25 minutes

- Teaching phonics is a lot easier than teaching children to use the phonics they know
- When taught in isolation children often learn what letters makes what sounds but are unable to quickly apply this knowledge
- The logic is in the pattern, not in simple "vowel rules"
- Psychologists tell us that are brains separate unknown words into their onsets and the rimes
- To be good decoders and spellers, children need to learn to quickly separate words into these parts, think of sounds associated with the patterns, and recombine the sounds

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## Rounding Up the Rhymes

- Read the book and mark the pages containing rhymes
- Reread the book and round up the rhymes-reread marked pages, as students identify the rhyming words write them on the chart paper (8-10 sets)
- Observe spelling patterns and identifying rhymes to keep/discard-keep words that have the same spelling pattern
- Using spelling patterns for transfer-use these rhyming words to read/write other words
- Mad minute-(optional)

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## How Rounding Up the Rhymes is Multilevel

- There are multiple things to be learned
- Teacher interacts with students based on each child's instructional level
- All students experience success

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## Making Words

- Children are given six to eight letters which will form a secret word
- Begin by making small words
- Build to longer words
- Ends with secret word that can be made with all the letters
- Sort words according to various patterns
- Transfer patterns by using the words sorted to read and spell words with similar patterns

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## How Making Words is Multilevel

- Begins with short, easy words and progresses to medium size and big words
- Challenge word (secret word)
- Allows all children to manipulate letters
- Patterns
- Transfer

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## Guess the Covered Word

- Cross checking strategy that combines both context clues and word analysis skills to decode unknown words
- What makes sense?
- How long is the word?
- How does the word begin? What are the other letters in the word?

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## Guess the Covered Word

- Teacher writes four or five sentences on the board
- Covering a word in each sentence with two sticky notes-one covering the onset, all the consonants prior to the first vowel, and the other sticky note covering the rest of the word
- Children read the sentence, then make several guesses
- Teacher takes off the first sticky note
- Guesses which don't begin with the letters are erased and new guesses which both fit the meaning and the beginning letter
- Reveal the whole word

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## How Guess the Covered Word is Multilevel

- Review for beginning letter sounds
- Learning how to use meaning
- Use all letters in the word
- Word length

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## Using Words You Know

- Pick three or four words your students know which have many rhyming words spelled the same way
- Use chart paper, make three columns and head them with the key words, each student does the same on a sheet of paper
- Show them several known words and they write them in the correct column
- Say unknown words, students write them under the word with which it rhymes

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## How Using Words You know is Multilevel

- Provide students with practice in rhyming words
- Recognize spelling pattern and rhyme are connected
- Use words they know to decode/spell new words

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## Reading/Writing Rhymes

- Teacher chooses the spelling pattern
- Distribute "onset" or beginning letter cards
- Write spelling pattern ten times on chart paper
- Children combine the spelling pattern and their beginning letter(s) cards to come up with a list of rhyming words, which the teacher writes on the chart paper
- Write silly sentences using the words

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## How Using Reading/Writing Rhymes is Multilevel

- All beginning letters, digraphs, blends are reviewed
- Learn there are often two spelling patterns for long vowel patterns
- Develop visual checking system
- Helps them learn to decode and spell longer words and allows them to write more interesting rhymes

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## Resources

- *The Teacher's Guide to the Four Blocks* by Patricia M. Cunningham, Dorothy P. Hall and Cheryl Sigmon
- *Reading and Writing Simple Rhymes* by Patricia M. Cunningham and Dorothy P. Hall
- *Rounding Up the Rhymes* by, DeLinda Youngblood and Eve Hayes

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