

Title

Teaching Phonics and Spelling for Emergent Readers (Grades PreK-K)

Target Audience

This course is intended for pre-service and in-service teachers of PreK-K.

Prerequisites

We recommend that learners become familiar with the related content in the PBS TeacherLine course “An Introduction to Underlying Principles and Research for Effective Literacy Instruction (Grades K–8).”

Course Description

This course is designed to give educators research-based instructional activities to teach phonics and spelling to emergent readers and writers. These activities help students learn letters, letter-sound correspondences, sound-letter correspondences, high-frequency words, and word families, which in turn help them develop oral reading fluency. The topics and methods include principles which provide the foundation for the *No Child Left Behind* policies. Learners will practice assessing the performance of emergent readers and analyze students' work samples to determine their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence. Learners will design a plan of instructional activities for teaching letter-sound correspondence, high-frequency words, word recognition, and spelling based on assessment data. As a final task, learners will create a case study of an emergent speller.

Instructor/Facilitator

See instructor/facilitator sheet

Credits

To be determined by college or university

Goals

By the end of this course, learners will have an understanding of:

- Research-based components of phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, and spelling appropriate for study in PreK-K programs.
- The reciprocal relationship between efficient decoding and encoding.
- The developmental stages of spelling development for PreK-K.
- Instructional activities that increase students' foundational knowledge of phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, and spelling (e.g. letter identification, letter-sound correspondences, letter-sound patterns, high-frequency words).
- Assessment of phonological awareness and phonemic awareness as precursors of phonics and spelling development in young students.

Learner Outcomes (performance based)

Learners who have completed this course will:

- Evaluate the performance of developing readers and identify appropriate instructional goals.
- Reflect upon the interconnectedness of oral language, reading, spelling, and writing.
- Analyze students' work samples to determine the students' knowledge of letter-sound correspondence.
- Design a plan of instructional activities for teaching letter-sound correspondence, high-frequency words, word recognition, and spelling based on assessment data.
- Create assessment and instruction guides for alphabetic knowledge, letter-sound correspondence, and sound-letter correspondence, and evaluate the guides of three of peers (Alternative Projects 1, 2, and 3).
- Create a case study of an emergent speller (final project).

Outline of Content and Assignments

Learners in this course will choose to complete two rubric assignments (Alphabet Book Letter-Name Rubric Assignment and the Alphabet Letter-to-Sound Rubric) with the final project. The final project can be substituted for 2 alternative projects in the course.

This course is divided into six sessions. Learners should work through each session in order. In the sixth and final session, learners will complete their final project for the course. Learners may opt to complete two smaller alternative projects in lieu of the final project. These two alternative projects are staggered and will begin during the second week of the course.

Session 1: Language Development

Session 2: The Role of Alphabet Knowledge

Session 3: Letter-Sound Correspondence and Sound-Letter Correspondence

Session 4: Environmental Print, High-Frequency Words, and Word Families

Session 5: Using Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Spelling Assessment to Determine Best Instruction

Session 6: Final Project: A Case Study of an Emergent Speller

This course is aligned with ISTE standards, NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts, and NCTE standards. Key concepts are presented through readings, videos, interactives, journal reflections, and discussion forums with the purpose of improving content knowledge, teaching pedagogy, and enhancing student achievement. Assignments will draw upon your knowledge of classroom practice and may include interaction with students.

Session 1: Language Development

Learners will:

- Define professional goals and expectations for this course in the online journal.
- Explain prior knowledge about the ways oral language, reading, spelling, and writing are interrelated.
- Use the course readings to describe and discuss how oral language, reading, spelling, and writing are interrelated.
- Discuss the relationship between oral language and literacy development.
- Select an activity from the video or the readings to describe how a student's oral language skills can be used to teach phonics and spelling.
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Read

- "Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children"
- "Principles and Practices of Language Experience"
- "Phonics Instruction"
- "Writing and Reading"

Complete activities and assignments

- View the video, “Language Experience Story,” which illustrates the role of oral language in learning about oral components of language and shows the relationship among being able to speak, listen, read, and write.
- Complete Session 1 Self-Assessment. (not required)

Write in online journal

- Reflect on prior knowledge, course goals and course expectations.
- After viewing the “Language Experience Story” video and reading the “Phonics Instruction” and “Reading and Writing” articles, select an activity from one of these selections that can be used to explicitly teach a student that spoken words can be represented by sets of alphabet letters.

Participate in online discussion

- Get to know each other in the Virtual Café forum.
- Either defend or refute the following argument: If a student does not demonstrate much oral language when he or she comes to kindergarten, he or she will always remain behind in literacy development.

Session 2: The Role of Alphabet Knowledge

Learners will:

- Discuss and justify, using course readings, ideas for the best strategies to teach the alphabet.
- Create an activity to teach the alphabet using a pre-selected alphabet book that meets Pavonetti’s criteria.
- Predict and reflect on students’ responses to different Learning Letter activities.
- Using examples from the readings as a guide, create an assessment/instruction guide for students in the Emergent Spelling stage (Alternative Project 1).

Read

- “Teaching Content and Form through Balanced Instruction”
- “Word Study for Learners in the Emergent Stage” from *Words Their Way*.
- “An Emergent-Literacy Perspective on Reading Instruction in Kindergarten” (not required)
- “Alphabet Books—Criteria for Young Students Just Learning Their ABCs”

Complete activities and assignments

- View the video, “Learning Letters: Emphasis on Letter Identification,” in which a PreK class engages in a shared reading of an alphabet book, focusing on the formation of each letter and the sound it represents.
- Complete the assignment, Selecting Alphabet Books, to brainstorm and evaluate at least two alphabet books that are effective for teaching letter names. Choose and describe one activity that reinforces knowledge of a letter name. This activity will help you to prepare for the final project.
- Complete Session 2 Self-Assessment. (not required)
- If you choose to do the alternative projects rather than the final project, complete Alternative Project 1: Assessment and Instructional Guide for Alphabetic Knowledge.

Write in online journal

- Reflect on the way students you have taught would respond to the lessons you’ve seen in the video, “Learning Letter: Emphasis on Letter Identification.” Use insights from the readings and anecdotes from your professional experience to support your response.

Participate in online discussion

- Discuss the best methods and materials to teach the alphabet. Defend your response with readings and examples from your professional practice.



Session 3: Letter-Sound Correspondence and Sound-Letter Correspondence

Learners will:

- Discuss and justify their position on the correct order in which to teach literacy skills.
- Use the course readings to define the alphabetic principle and explain its role in emerging spelling in your online journal.
- Examine PreK-K student work samples to determine each student's knowledge of letter-sound correspondence.
- Design an activity for teaching a letter-sound correspondence.

Read

- "Developing Phonemic Awareness in Young Children"
- "Everything You Wanted to Know about Phonics (But Were Afraid to Ask)"
Stahl and his colleagues clear up many misconceptions about teaching letter-sound correspondence.
- "Words Their Way" (charts)
These charts identify behaviors that are characteristic of spelling stages.
- "Making Words: Enhancing the Invented Spelling-Decoding Instruction"
This article presents word-making activities to help students move through the stages of spelling.

Complete activities and assignments

- View the video, "Learning Letters: Emphasis on Letter and Sounds," which demonstrates how the students' knowledge of letter names is used to develop their knowledge of letter sounds by focusing on beginning sounds.
- Complete the interactive, Emergent Writing Stages, to identify the Emergent Writing stages of spelling development and to analyze characteristics of student writing that represent growth in emergent spelling.
- Complete the assignment: Selecting Alphabet Books: Part 2 to brainstorm and evaluate two books that are useful in teaching letter-sound correspondence.
- Complete Session 3 Self-Assessment. (not required)

Write in online journal

- Define the alphabetic principle and explain its role in emergent spelling. Use information about letter-sound correspondence and sound-letter correspondence from the readings, videos, and interactive to support your explanation.

Participate in online discussion

- Support or refute the following statement: The correct order to teach literacy skills is:
 1. letter names
 2. phonics
 3. reading
 4. correct spelling
 5. writing

Justify your statements by referring to the readings and examples from your professional practice.

Session 4: Environmental Print, High-Frequency Words, and Word Families

Learners will:

- Use course readings to explain and discuss the role of environmental print in developing sight-word vocabulary.



- Describe how you would teach abstract high-frequency words and their importance in your online journal.
- Create an assessment and instructional guide for the Letter Name Spelling Stage (Alternative Project 2).

Read

- “Concepts of Print, Letter Naming, and Phonemic Awareness”
- “High-Frequency Words and Fluency”
- “Reconceptualizing Spelling Development and Instruction”
- “Making and Writing Words Using Letter Patterns”

Complete activities and assignments

- View the video, “Teaching Phonological Awareness,” in which students make words by changing beginning consonants and use familiar rimes to learn letter-sound correspondence.
- Complete the activity, Environmental Print Field Trip.
- Explore the activity, High-Frequency Word Instructional Activity (not required)
- Complete Session 4 Self-Assessment. (not required)
- If you choose to do the alternative projects rather than the final project, complete Alternative Project 2: Assessment and Instructional Guide for Letter-Sound and Sound-Letter Correspondence.

Write in online journal

- Describe how you would go about teaching the words for which there are not pictures. Write about why you think some abstract words are important for PreK-K students to learn.

Participate in online discussion

- Post your summary of your environmental field trip and answer the following question: How might you use the materials observed to teach concepts such as letter-sound knowledge, sight words, and spelling?

Session 5: Using Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Spelling Assessments to Determine Best Instruction

The learners:

- Analyze students’ level of phonemic awareness using course readings in the online journal.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using informal assessments to evaluate spelling development and to plan instruction.

Read

- “Phonemic Awareness: An Important Early Step in Learning to Read”
This article presents the skills students need to develop phonemic awareness.
- “Explorations in Developmental Spelling: Foundations for Learning and Teaching Phonics, Spelling, and Vocabulary”
This article discusses the importance of observing students in order to make instructional decisions to help develop their knowledge of letters and sounds.
- “Kindergartners Talk About Print: Phonemic Awareness in Meaningful Contexts”
This article explores how the understanding of the developmental spelling stages helps educators select effective phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction for individual students.

Complete activities and assignments

- View the video “Analyzing Writing”
- Explore the interactive, Emergent Writing Activities, in which writing samples of PreK-K students help you to assess their use of phonics and spelling patterns in order to plan appropriate instruction.
- Complete Session 5 Self-Assessment. (not required)



Participate in online discussion

- Support or refute the following statement: “In order to plan effective instruction, teachers need to assess their students daily.” In your discussion, demonstrate what you know about an informal way to assess a student’s phonics knowledge. Reflect on both the advantages and disadvantages of this informal assessment and how it can be used to plan instruction for individual students.

Write in online journal

- Read student scenarios and reflect in your online journal where would you place each student on Sensenbaugh's levels.

Session 6: Final Project: A Case Study of an Emergent Speller

Learners will:

- Develop a case study for an emergent speller and create a plan of instruction by assessing the student’s development in phonics and spelling.
- Evaluate other learners’ plans of instruction and provide feedback on the discussion board.
- Evaluate the assessment and instructional guides (Alternative Projects 1 and 2) of three peers and provide feedback based on the information in this course (Optional Activity).
- Assess their learning in this course by comparing your prior knowledge and acquired knowledge in the online journal.
- Analyze the learning experience in this course by reflecting on their professional goals and expectations.

Additional reading (not required)

- “Whole-to-part Phonic Instruction: Building on What Children Know to Help Them Know More”

Complete activities and assignments

- Final Project: A Case Study of an Emergent Speller

You will develop a case study of an emergent speller by collecting three writing samples of the student, detailing a socioeconomic overview of the student, and describing in detail the course of instruction that you would provide the student. The outcome is a one-week lesson plan based on your assessment of the student’s level of development within the Emergent Spelling Stage. The assessment criteria for the final project are provided in the final project assessment rubric.

Your lesson plan should include:

- The main components of a lesson plan: objectives, methodology, materials, guided practice, independent practice, and assessment.
- Some or all of the lessons you studied in Sessions 1-5 using patterned and alphabet literature.
- An activity and implementation of the activity with a student.

Your final project includes:

- A post of your activity on the discussion board for peer review.
- Incorporation of peer feedback in your revised lesson plan
- Submission of your lesson plan and your reflection paper to your facilitator via e-mail.

- Optional Activity (not required): Peer Review of Assessment and Instructional Guides

Write in online journal

- Reflect on the following questions: What have you learned and what skills have you acquired from the course? Identify the essential ideas and strategies you gained from this course and how you plan to incorporate them into your current or future classroom.

- Reflect on the following questions: How does this learning experience compare with your goals and expectations? Were there any professional goals you were unable to achieve? Why? How do you plan to address these areas of professional development in the future?

Schedule

This course is scheduled to take approximately 30 hours to complete readings, activities, video, assignments, reflections and a final project

Requirements

Learners are expected to:

- Complete all assignments
- Maintain an online journal
- Participate at least once each week in discussion boards
- Ask for assistance when they need it

Materials (hardware, software, plug-ins)

Technical Requirements

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- E-mail

Academic Dishonesty Policy

To be inserted by university institution only

Evaluation

This course can be taken for graduate credit on a pass/fail basis, or for a letter grade and graduate credit. See graduate credit details pertaining to specific graduate credit institutions.

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