

Developing Awareness of the Segments of Sound in Speech— SIPPS Instruction IES-WWC

By Ann H. Leon | Categories: Professional Learning, Reading Intervention and Acceleration

IES: What Works Clearinghouse Educator's Practice Guide supports the Results-Based Instruction Found in all three SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) Levels-Part 2: Develop Awareness of the Segments of Sound in Speech and How They Link to Letters.

In a previous blog post, we discussed the first recommendation in the IES/WWC Educator's Practice Guide. Here in part 2, we will examine how SIPPS instructs students explicitly and systematically in the context of the recommendation to develop awareness of the sounds in speech.

The WWC panel and staff assigned a strong level of evidence to Recommendation 2, based on positive impacts on students' knowledge of letter names, sounds, and phonology when direct and explicit instruction in phoneme awareness training was provided to students.

To effectively decode (convert from print to speech) and encode (convert from speech to print) words, students must be able to:

- Identify the individual sounds, or phonemes, that make up the words they hear in speech
- Name the letters of the alphabet as they appear in print
- Identify each letter's corresponding sound(s)

How might we implement systematic instruction that meets the developing needs of students? In SIPPS Beginning and Extension levels, the instruction progresses along the continuum described in Recommendation 2, beginning as early as possible in kindergarten. SIPPS teaches students to recognize and manipulate segments of sound in speech, following a scope and sequence of increasingly complex tasks.

SIPPS Beginning Level teaches the youngest readers (kindergarteners) to hear and isolate speech sounds in words. Oral phonological activities build students' ability to identify, blend, segment, and manipulate phonemes (the smallest units) in speech through incremental steps. No print is used in the phonological awareness activities. Instead, visual cues are used to represent speech sounds. Boxes represent words, syllables, and rimes. Blanks represent individual phonemes (sounds). The list of activities that follows shows a sequence that develops awareness of speech sounds from simple to complex, progressing from Beginning Level through SIPPS Extension Level.

- Oral Blending of Words and Syllables
- Oral Blending of Onsets and Rimes
- Oral Blending of Phonemes (starting with 2-3, later 4 or more phonemes)
- Segmentation of Words and Syllables

- Segmentation of First, Middle, and Last Sounds
- Segmentation (starting with 2-3, later 4 or more phonemes)
- Recognizing and Producing Rhyming Words
- Segmentation of Onsets and Rimes
- Manipulation: Adding Phonemes
- Manipulation: Substituting Phonemes
- Manipulation: Deleting Phonemes

The examples that follow show how phonological awareness is taught and practiced.

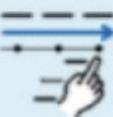
Oral Blending of Words and Syllables

Instruction <i>(using the word classroom as an example)</i>		
	Point to the left of the arrow beneath the boxes and pause.	You: "I'm going to say two small words. You blend them together."
	Sweep your finger under the first box and hold it there while you say the word (or syllable).	You: "class"
	Sweep to the second box and hold as you say the second word (or syllable). Then sweep off to the right.	You: "room"
	Point to the left of the arrow again and pause.	You: "Blend."
	Sweep your finger under the length of both boxes and off to the right.	Students: "classroom"

Oral Blending of Onsets and Rimes

Instruction (using the word sit as an example)		
	Point to the left of the arrow and pause.	<i>You:</i> "I am going to say the parts. You put them together."
	Sweep your finger to the middle of the blank and hold as you say the sound for 2 seconds. Then sweep under and past the box as you say the rime. There should be no break or pause between the initial sound (the onset) and the rime.	<i>You:</i> "/ss/it/"
	Point to the left of the arrow again and pause.	<i>You:</i> "Blend."
	Sweep under the length of the blank and the box and off to the right.	<i>Students:</i> "sit"

Oral Blending of Phonemes

Instruction (using the word man as an example)		
	Point to the left of the arrow and pause.	<i>You:</i> "I am going to say the sounds in a word. You blend them together."
	Sweep your finger under the blanks, holding under each for 2 seconds, because the sounds are continuous. Do not stop or pause between sounds.	<i>You:</i> "/mmänn/"
	Point to the left of the arrow again and pause.	<i>You:</i> "Blend."
	Sweep your finger under the length of the blanks and off to the right.	<i>Students:</i> "man"

The SIPPS routines use visual cues and continuous blending techniques to support students who might otherwise struggle with less focused methods of teaching speech sounds in words. The IES: What Works Clearinghouse Educator's Practice Guide states that explicit instruction can often remedy the phonological core deficit that may lead to decoding deficiencies in single-syllable word decoding that are often seen in dyslexia and other reading disabilities.

The next blog post in this series will address Recommendation 3: Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words. This recommendation and the SIPPS program (at all levels) empower teachers to be the most effective reading teachers for all students.