

Characteristics of Strong Phonics Instruction

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Readiness Skills

Prepare students for decoding and encoding through phonemic awareness and alphabet recognition.

Blending

Frequently model and apply this primary decoding strategy.



Word-Awareness Activities

Use conversations, word-building and word sorts, to develop an awareness of how English words work and solidify learning.

Reading Connected Text

Use controlled, decodable text at the start of reading instruction to help students develop a sense of control and comfort in reading.



Scope and Sequence

Begin with high-utility vowels and consonants so words can be formed as early as possible.

Dictation

Use a weekly dictation or guided spelling exercises to help students use and transfer their phonics skills to written words, sentences, and stories.



High-Frequency Words

Focus on irregular high-frequency words that can't be taught using standard phonics skills.

Plus... You, the Teacher

The success of all these characteristics rests on the shoulders of a highly trained teacher. In addition, a teacher's attitudes and background knowledge or phonics expertise play a crucial role in instructional success.