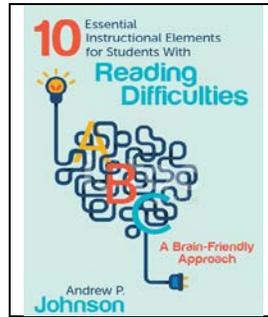


APPROACHES TO PHONICS INSTRUCTION

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SYNTHETIC AND ANALYTIC PHONICS INSTRUCTION

There are two general approaches to phonics instruction:

Synthetic approach. The *synthetic approach* to phonics instruction teaches students to identify letter/sounds first and then to synthesize or put these sounds together to create words. This is the approach taken by traditional basal programs. It is sometimes called the parts-to-whole approach. Here students first learn to a target word parts or letter-sound using direct instruction. Then students are given reading material that emphasizes the letter sound in order to reinforce it.

Analytic approach. The *analytic approach* to phonics instruction includes any strategy that teaches students to analyze the sounds within words they already know. It starts at the level of the whole word, ideally found within the context of a sentence, and then moves to the individual parts. That is, students are taught to look for common word parts or families that they recognize within words. This is sometimes referred to as the whole-to-part approach. Explicit phonics instruction is used but it is embedded within the texts students are reading to the greatest degree possible.

Two examples of strategies that reflect an analytic approach are described here:

Example #1: Mr. Hill puts the sentences in Figure 10.3 on a smart board so that his whole class can see them. Together, the class reads them out loud twice using choral reading as Mr. Hill points to each word. After reading, Mr. Hill tells the class that he is looking for words that have the ‘buh’ sound. He asks volunteers to use the pointer to find the ‘buh’ words. He then tells students that the letter /b/ makes the ‘buh’ sound. He shows them many examples on the smart board, using words and pictures of words that begin with the /b/ sound. Students practice by reading through a list of more words and pictures that also start with the /b/ sound. Later on, students create a predictable writing chart, ‘Things That Are Big’ (Figure 10.4).

Figure 10.3. Example of an analytic approach.

Billy rode to school today on the bus. He likes to play baseball. He also loves biting big apples.

Figure 10.4. Predictable writing chart.

Things That are Big

A bus is big.

A tree is big.

A cloud is big.

A school is big.

Example #2: Mrs. Tate is working individually with Bob, a 5th grade student. She asks Bob what he did over the weekend. As Bob tells her, she writes what he says on the computer. (This is called the Language Experience Approach and is described in the next). After they have finished writing, she reads it through once with Bob and then Bob reads it through until he can read it fluently. Then, she asks him to find examples of specific target words. “There’s a word that ends with the ‘st’ sound.” “There a word with a short a vowel in the second line.”

THE "CORRECT" APPROACH

So you're probably asking, "Which of these is the correct approach?" The answer: Both of them are. Both should be included, **as needed**, in any reading program. Keep in mind that we should be teaching students; not programs, methods, approaches, or scope and sequence charts. What is needed is ultimately determined by the students with whom you are working. Some students need a little more of one thing and a little less of another. Others need a little less of one thing and a little more of another. Students are not standardized products. Thus, approaches to reading instruction should be similarly un-standardized.

RELATED MINI-LECTURES

Phonics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scF1yY2P7sA>

Phonics Instruction 1: Overview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4sFb8tMQyg>

Phonics Instruction 2: Words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoWZTOf-2gg>

Phonics Instruction 3: Context

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2rg_aSICZs

Phonics Instruction 4: Instruction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhjHiMTkSDo>

Phonics Instruction 5: Systematic Instruction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJBzlkSDpM8>

Phonics Instruction 6: Types of Phonics Instruction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcL0CKY4c00>

10 Essential Elements of Reading Instruction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJVJyvKIOzM>

Reading Interventions for Word Identification

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGaypSI6szw>

Skills Lesson Plan: Elements of Effective Instruction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2twTNgE5y8>

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