

## **Reading Development in Grades PK-2**

At the beginning of this grade span, children develop an understanding of the alphabetic principle and begin to use their knowledge of sound-spelling relationships to decode words. As students progress through the grade span, they further develop and solidify their decoding skills. They also develop additional strategies to decode words and make meaning from text. (Blevins)

### **Fluency-**

**What it is:** Fluency refers to efficient, effective word recognition skills that permit a reader to construct the meaning of a text. As students move through this grade span, fluency is manifested first in letter fluency, then word fluency, and eventually text fluency by oral reading at a rapid rate, automatically and accurately recognizing words, and phrasing correctly.

**Why is it important?** Fluent reading is a major goal of reading instruction because decoding print effortlessly allows more conscious attention to be given to making meaning from text.

**Key Milestones:** Students learn to:

- appropriately chunk words together as they grow more adept at phrasing
- move their eyes efficiently for the return sweep
- have their eyes be one to three words ahead of their voice
- read at a rate that is comparable to conversation

(Fountas and Pinnell; Blevins)

### **Comprehending Texts-**

**What it is:** Comprehending is the active process of thinking about what is read. It involves ways of thinking within text (solving words, monitoring and correcting, searching for and using information, summarizing, maintaining fluency, and adjusting to the purpose for reading and the type of text); thinking beyond the text (predicting, making connections, inferring, and synthesizing); and thinking about text (analyzing and critiquing).

**Why is it important?** Readers are always actively working to construct meaning, so comprehending is an ongoing process rather than simply the outcome or product of reading. Therefore, it is important to consider what the reader understands and what the reader thinks about what he understands. ( Fountas and Pinnell; Dorn; Blevins)

### **Vocabulary-**

**What is it?** At this grade span, students are expected to develop vocabulary using knowledge of word parts and relationships among words including action words and different words that describe similar meanings.

**Why is it important?** Vocabulary knowledge is at the heart of developing understandings of new ideas and concepts.

Words are at the foundation of learning. A large vocabulary boosts comprehending, improves achievement, enhances communication, and shapes thinking. Vocabulary plays a critical role in people's lives and future possibilities. A large vocabulary repertoire facilitates becoming an educated person to the extent that vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency in particular and school achievement in general. ( Beck, McKeown, and Kucan; Marzano; Blevins; Brand: Bromley)

**Instructional Considerations:**

- Teach words from texts that are read aloud to children or from experiences that students have. Make decisions on which words to teach by considering how generally useful is the word? Will it be of use to students in describing their own experiences?
- Look for opportunities where the ideas presented in the text materials for young readers can be characterized by more sophisticated words. Perhaps in the discussion following students reading, a character or incident from the reading could be described with a more sophisticated word whose meaning could be explained using terms known by the student. This word should also be a word students will be able to find uses for in their everyday lives. (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan)

**Alphabetics-**

**What is it?** Alphabetics is the study of letter-sound correspondences and spellings and the application of this knowledge to reading and writing. The study of alphabetics at this grade span involves both phonemic awareness (ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds-phonemes- in spoken words) and phonics (the relationship between sounds and the letter(s) that represent these sounds-spellings). (Blevins; Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, Johnston)

**Why is it important?**

- Phonemic awareness improves children's word reading and reading comprehension and helps children learn to spell. Without the insight that a word is made up of a series of discrete sounds, phonics instruction will not make sense to children.
- Understanding phonic relationships leads to understandings about the systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds thus significantly improving children's word recognition, spelling, and reading comprehension. (Blevins)

**Instructional Considerations:**

**Phonemic Awareness: Hierarchy of Key Phonemic Awareness Skills** (Literacy Links, December 2007)

- **Recognition:** Rhyme, beginning sounds, ending sounds, medial sounds
- **Production:** Rhyme, beginning sounds, ending sounds, medial sounds
- **Blending:** Syllables, onset-rime, phonemes
- **Segmenting:** Syllables, onset-rime, phonemes

**Phonics: Hierarchy of Skills** (Literacy Links, January 2008)

- **initial consonants (m, n, t, s, p)**
- **short vowels and consonants in combination (-at, -in, -ot)**
- **blends (bl, dr, st)**
- **digraphs (ch, sh, th, wh, ph)**
- **final e (a\_e, e\_e, i\_e, o\_e, u\_e)**
- **long vowels (-eat, -oak) and r-controlled vowels (-ar, -ir)**
- **variant vowels (oo, ew, au, aw) and diphthongs (ou, ow, oi, oy)**
- **silent letters and inflectional endings (kn, wr, -ed, -es)**