

CHAPTER



Sounding Out Regular Words

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Regular words are words in which each letter represents its most common sound. For example, the word *sat* is regular because the letters, *s*, *a*, and *t*, each represents its most common sound.

Regular word-reading instruction can begin when students have mastered four to six letter-sound correspondences and the auditory skills of segmenting and telescoping the easiest word types to decode (i.e., CVC words beginning with continuous sounds).

Regular word-reading instruction begins with word-list exercises in which students are taught to sound out regular VC and CVC words that begin with continuous sounds. The teacher prompts the students by pointing to the letters in a word as the students blend the sounds together to form a meaningful word. Word-list sounding out is continued for several months. Passage-reading exercises, in which the students read a story, are introduced when they can sound out simple words in lists with relative ease. Passage reading is a more difficult task for students, since they can no longer rely on the teacher to prompt them by pointing to the letters.

Scope and Sequence

The chart in Figure 8.1 summarizes the decoding-related content of daily lessons during the early weeks of instruction. Sounding out, auditory preskills, and letter-sound correspondence exercises, as well as letter copying and writing, are included in lessons.

Keep in mind that this scope and sequence chart is based on the assumption that the students begin instruction with no knowledge of these reading-related skills. Students who enter school with some knowledge of these skills will be able to progress at a more accelerated rate.

Note on the chart that the first lessons include only letter-sound correspondences, auditory skills, and letter writing. During the first lessons, students learn not only these skills, but also how to respond to the teacher's signals. Sounding out is not introduced until the students know four to six letter-sound correspondences. All initial sounding out is done with VC- and CVC-regular words that begin with continuous sounds, the easiest type of word. Also note that only a couple of words are presented in the early word-list sounding-out exercises. Students can be

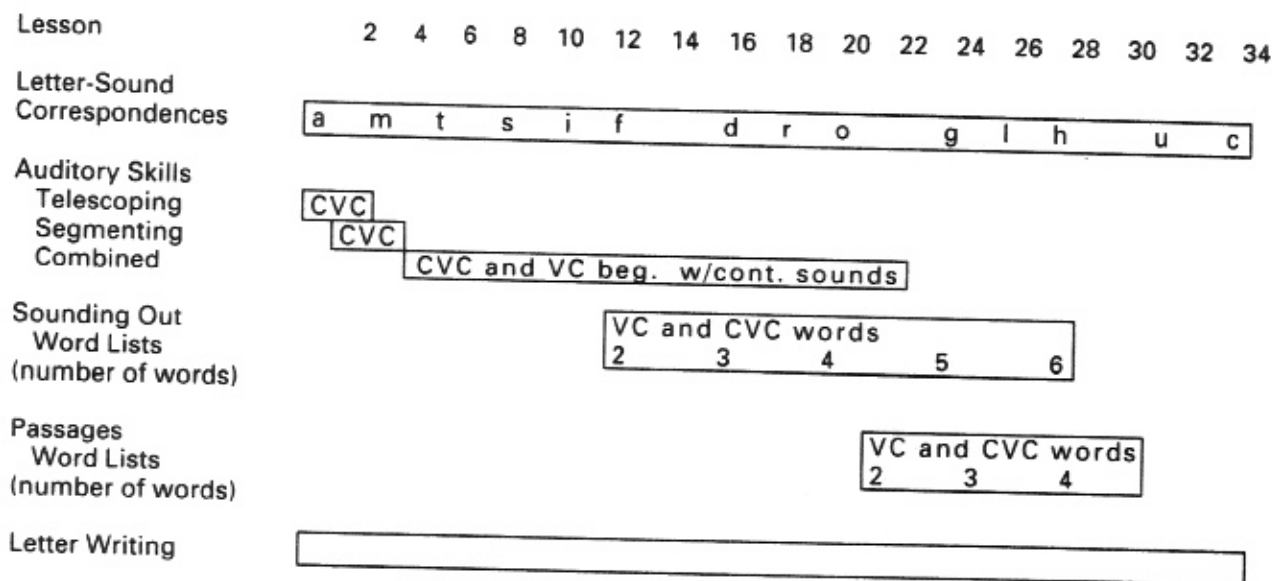


Figure 8.1 Scope and Sequence—Early Weeks of Beginning Instruction

expected to need quite a few practice trials before they are able to sound out a new word without distorting the sounds. Few words are included in the initial exercises so that a teacher can bring the students to a high level of performance on sounding out the words. A high level is reached when the students can correctly sound out each word in the task without error.

Passage reading is introduced after students have sufficient practice reading words in lists. Students will differ in the amount of practice they need on sounding out words in lists. Passage reading can be introduced when students can do a four-word, word-list exercise without making an error. On the chart we recommend that passage reading be introduced 10 days after sounding out is introduced. Remember, it is the students' performance that dictates when new skills are introduced. When a student can perform without error on a format, the teacher can introduce new skills. The chart in Figure 8.1 only shows "average" amounts of time a teacher can expect to present a skill.

Teaching Procedures

Sounding out is initially presented in *word-list* exercises in which the teacher writes the words in

lists, then prompts the students by pointing in a left-to-right progression to the letters in the words. The students say the sounds as the teacher points to the letters.

Passage reading, in which the students point to and concurrently say the sound in words, is introduced after students master the word-list exercises.

Word Lists

Word lists are the vehicles the teacher uses to introduce and provide initial practice for new word types. Word-list exercises are also used to introduce words that will appear in stories. Words can be written on a chalkboard, overhead, or on an 8½ × 11 sheet of paper. If the teacher writes the words on a sheet of paper, we recommend constructing a display made on one side with a piece of 10 × 12 cardboard and on the other with a piece of clear acetate. The acetate is fastened to the cardboard on one side and on the bottom. The teacher slips the paper on which the word list is written into the acetate container. The advantage of the container over the chalkboard is that teachers can hold the acetate container in front of them and point to the words without turning their back to the students.

Guidelines for Constructing Word Lists

- The initial word-list exercise should include only two to four words since in this initial exercise the students will be learning the mechanics of sounding out and are likely to need a good deal of repetition before they can sound out words correctly.
- The number of words in word lists should increase gradually. The number can be determined by the students' performance. A general rule is to include the number of words the student can be brought to mastery on within a 5- to 7-minute period. Mastery is reached when the students are able to respond consecutively to all the words in a list without making an error.
- Words should include only letters students have mastered in letter-sound correspondence tasks. Mastery is demonstrated when a student does not make an error on a particular sound for two consecutive lessons.
- When a new letter first appears in word-list exercises, that letter should appear in about a third to half of the words in the list.
- Word lists should be construed in an unpredictable manner. Generally the same letter should not appear in the same position for more than two words in a row. For example, a list such as *sat, mit, rut, fat* would be inappropriate since the same letter, *t*, appears in the same final position in all the words. The prob-

lem with lists such as this is that such predictability may inadvertently encourage student nonattentiveness as they anticipate rather than examine letters.

The chart in Figure 8.2 illustrates the integration of these example-selection guidelines into daily lessons. The chart shows instances presented in the letter-sound format and the word-list sounding-out format over a four-lesson period during the 6th week of instruction. The students already know about 15 letter-sound correspondences and have been sounding out words for about 3 weeks. The letter *u* is introduced in the introductory format for letter-sound correspondences in lesson 31. Previously introduced letters are reviewed in the letter-sound discrimination format. The words in the word-list exercise in lesson 31 include only letters previously mastered. Note that the letter *l* appears in three words. The letter *l* was recently introduced and receives more practice. Note also that the letter *u* does not appear in word-list exercises until lesson 34. There is a 3-day period for the students to practice the letter-sound correspondence for *u* before reading words with these letters. Remember that student performance dictates when new skills are introduced. If the students are having difficulty with *u* in the letter-sound correspondence format, words with *u* should not be presented. A final note concerns the word *fill*. Even though *fill* is technically a CVCC word, it is included as an easier word type since it includes only 3 sounds.

Figure 8.2 Integration of Example-Selection Guidelines Into Daily Lessons

Lesson	31	32	33	34
Letter-Sound Intro	u	u		c
Letter-Sound Disc	h l g a i r d f	u a i g h l t	u i r d h l a o	c r o u l h t d
Word-List Sounding Out	fill if lot lad am	ran fill it lit mom	lot mad lid if Sam	rug in lad mud mat

Teaching Procedure for Sounding Out Words in Lists

Introductory Format

The format for introducing sounding out appears in Table 8.1. The teacher introduces sounding out by demonstrating (modeling) how to sound out a word. The teacher points to each letter for about 1½ seconds and says the sounds for the respective letters, not pausing between the sounds. Note the similarity between this task and the auditory segmenting skills tasks. The students have learned in the auditory skills task to pronounce a series of sounds without pausing between each sound, and to follow a teacher's signal of when to switch from sound to sound. In the sounding-out task, the students say the sounds when teachers point to the letters. After the teacher models sounding out a word, the teacher has the students respond with him or her (lead). The purpose of responding with the students is to ensure that they hear the correct response. People who have not worked with young students usually do not realize how difficult sounding out is for them. To read a word, the student says the first sound, then, while saying the first sound, the student must examine the next letter to determine its sound. The student then says the next sound without distorting either sound. This is a diffi-

cult coordination task for young students. The teacher responds with the students since it is predictable that they will make errors at first. The teacher repeats responding with the students until they appear able to respond correctly without prompting. Then the students respond without any leading (test).

The introductory format is presented daily until the students are able to sound out the words correctly in the format with no more than two practice trials for each word.

Critical Behaviors

Signaling

An illustrated explanation of the signaling procedure for sounding out appears in Figure 8.3.

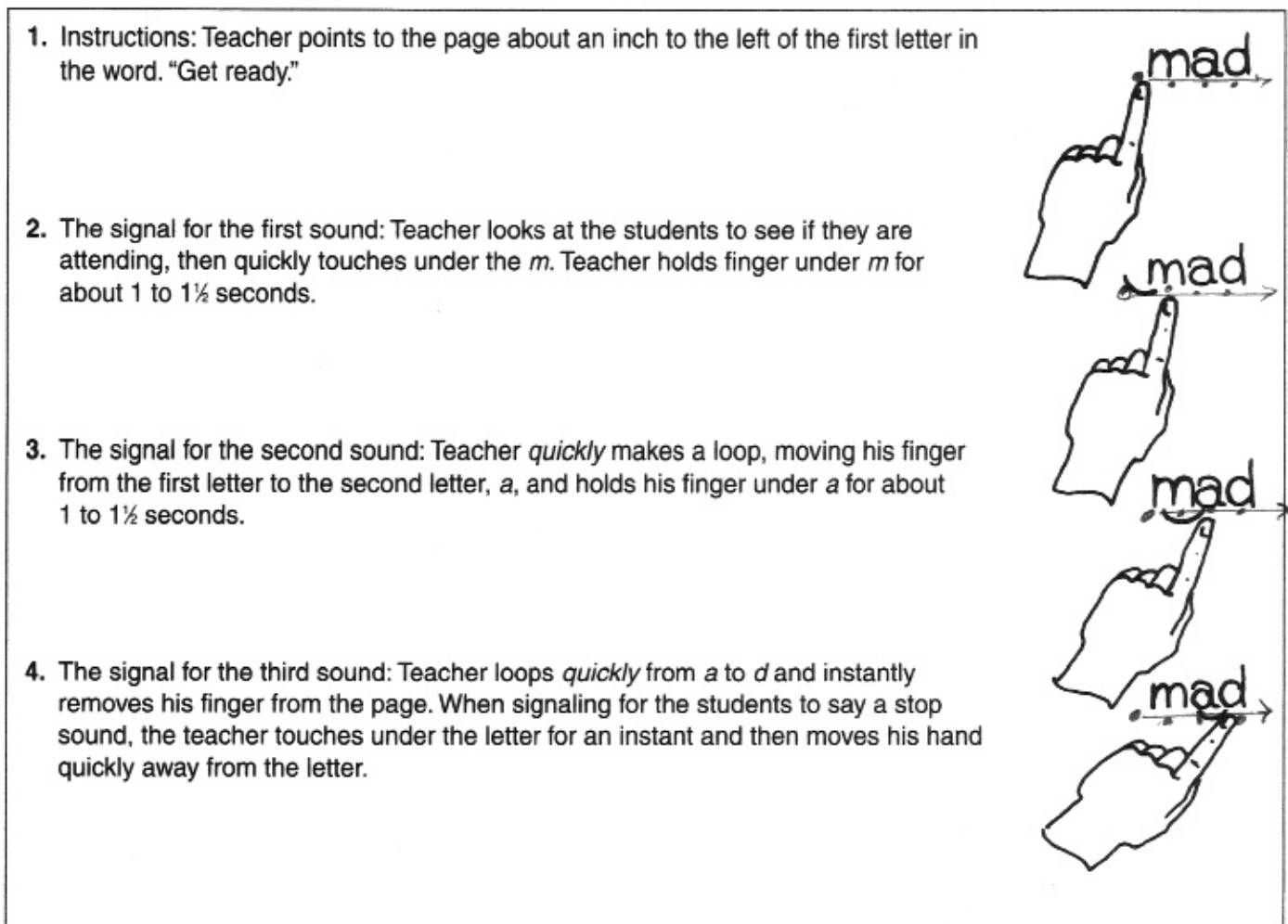
Monitoring

The teacher monitors by watching the students' eyes and mouths and by listening to their responses. To coordinate pointing to the letters while watching students is difficult. The teacher should quickly glance at the letters to determine where to point next, and then look at the students before pointing to the next letter. All these movements are done in an instant. The key is to watch the students'

Table 8.1 Introductory Format for Sounding Out Words in Lists (Illustrated With the CVC Word Type)

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Students</i>
(Teacher writes on board: am, fit.)	
1. Teacher states instructions. "Watch. When I touch a letter, I'll say its sound. I'll keep saying the sound until I touch the next letter. I won't stop between sounds."	
2. Teacher <i>models</i> sounding out the first word. "My turn to sound out this word." Teacher touches under each letter that represents a continuous sound 1 to 1½ seconds and under letters that represent stop sounds for only an instant. "Aaaamm.""	
3. Teacher <i>leads</i> students in sounding out the word. Teacher points to left of word. "Sound out this word with me. Get ready." (Signal.) Teacher touches under letters. The teacher sounds out the word with students until they respond correctly.	"Aaaamm."
4. Teacher <i>tests</i> the students on the first word. Teacher points to left of word. "Your turn. Sound out this word by yourselves. Get ready." (Signal.) Teacher touches under letters.	"Aaaamm."
5. Teacher has several students sound out the word individually. "Billy, sound it out. Get ready." (Signal.)	"Aaaamm."
6. Teacher repeats steps 2 through 5 with the word <i>fit</i> .	

Figure 8.3 Signaling Procedure



mouths when they say a new sound, since the position of their mouths provides feedback about the correctness of their responses and also informs the teacher whether students are responding.

Pacing

The teacher should point to each letter long enough for the students to say its sound and look ahead to the next letter. This will be between 1 and 1½ seconds for each continuous sound. Not pointing to a sound for a long enough time is probably the most common mistake teachers make. The importance of allowing adequate time cannot be overstated.

Students may have to sound out a word several times before they can blend the sounds without er-

ror. The pacing of these repetitions is important. For each repetition, the teacher says, "Again," points to the left of the word, and then pauses about 2 seconds before beginning the signal. Shorter pauses before beginning signaling may not give the students time to focus on the beginning of the word.

The teacher can expect more instructionally naive students to need 10 to 15 repetitions on the lead step during the first lessons when sounding out is taught. A great deal of skill is needed to give the children adequate practice and still to make the reading lesson enjoyable for the students. One way to keep lessons enjoyable is to provide a short 5 to 10-second change-up after each five or so practice trials. During the change-up, the teacher encourages the students: "You kids are working so hard.

Table 8.2 Discrimination Format—Sounding Out Words in Lists

Teacher	Students
1. Teacher states instructions. "You're going to sound out each word. After you sound out the word correctly, you'll say it fast."	
2. Teacher points to left of first word. "Sound it out. Get ready." Teacher touches under each letter (except stop sounds) for 1 to 1½ seconds. After the student sounds out the word correctly, the teacher immediately says, "What word?"	
3. Teacher repeats step 2 with remaining words written on the board.	
4. Teacher gives individual tests. Teacher calls on several students to sound out a word.	

These are really hard words and you've almost got them." When the students finally sound out all the words correctly, the teacher should act very excited and proud of the students. "You did it! I'm so proud of you. Let's clap our hands loud so everybody knows what hard workers we are."

Providing the practice students need to respond correctly to all words consecutively in the early days will result in steadily improving student performance. Not providing adequate practice will result only in minimal daily improvement.

Discrimination Format

In the discrimination format (see Table 8.2) for sounding out words in lists, the teacher tests the students on sounding out a set of words. The discrimination format replaces the introductory format when students' performance in the introductory format indicates they no longer require the teacher to lead. Specifically, after the teacher models sounding out a word in the introductory format, the students can (with generally only one or two practice trials) sound it out correctly.

Critical Behaviors

Pacing

The students should not be asked to say it "fast" (at the normal rate) until they have sounded out the word acceptably (i.e., saying each sound correctly and not pausing between sounds). The teacher should say, "Say it fast" immediately after the stu-

dents correctly sound out the word. Any pause makes translating the blended sounds into a word said at a normal rate more difficult. Likewise, in the discrimination format, the teacher should not praise after the students sounded out the word, but should hold the praise until after the students say the word at a normal rate.

Individual Turns

Remember, individual turns are given only when the students responding in unison appear to have mastered all the words. Keeping all the students in a group attentive while one student is given an individual turn is very important. The more students are attentive and actively practicing word reading, the faster they will progress.

During individual turns the teacher should tell the other students to read the words to themselves. The teacher can encourage students to read to themselves by initially using effusive praise: "Randy and Ginger are reading to themselves. They are going to be good readers because they are practicing. Let's clap for them."

Correcting Mistakes

Two common errors made during sounding out are pausing between sounds and saying a sound incorrectly. Pausing errors involve the student's stopping between sounds, which can result in the student leaving out a sound when saying the word the fast way. For example, in sounding out the CVC word

sat, a student pauses between the first and second sounds, “sss (pause) aaat.” When translating these blended sounds into a word, the student may leave off the sound preceding the pause, translating “sss (pause) aaat” into “at.”

Below is the correction procedure for pausing errors. The teacher:

1. **Models.** As soon as the teacher hears the error, she says: “Don’t stop between sounds. Listen to me sound out the word without stopping.” (Teacher points to letters and sounds out the word.)
2. **Leads by responding with the students.** “Sound it out. Get ready.” (Teacher responds with students.)
3. **Tests by having the students sound out the word themselves.** “Sound it out. Get ready.”
4. **Returns to the first word in the list and repeats all the words in the list until the students can sound out all the words consecutively without an error.** (Note: If there are more than four words in a list, the teacher simply returns to a word four words earlier in the list rather than to the beginning of the list.)
5. **Individual turns.** At the completion of the list, individual turns are given to students who missed the word.

The teacher should sometimes begin the correction procedure by praising one of the students who responded correctly. “Nice job, Randy. You didn’t stop between the sounds.”

Teachers sometimes cause pausing errors and sound errors by not pointing long enough to each letter. If the teacher moves too quickly from one letter to the next, some students will not have time to look ahead to the next letter and, consequently, will guess or pause. If students make many of these errors, the teacher should consider whether he or she is causing the error and try pointing longer. Teachers also sometimes cause student errors by not signaling clearly. Teachers should make certain their signals are not causing student errors.

Sound errors involve the student’s saying a sound that is not the most common sound of a letter. In sounding out the word *fat*, a student says the sound /f/ when the teacher points to the letter *a*.

The correction for sound errors is somewhat different. In correcting a sound error, the teacher uses a limited model, which involves first modeling and testing only the sound missed rather than the entire word. For example, if the teacher points to the letters in *sip* and the student responds “sssaaa,” the teacher immediately says “iiii.” Next, the teacher points to *i* and asks, “What sound?” The teacher then tests students on the entire word. Below is a sample sounds correction for a student who said /ă/ for *i* in sounding out the word *sit*.

1. **Limited model.** As soon as the teacher hears the sound error, the teacher says the correct sound, “/iiii/.”
2. **Tests.** The teacher tests the whole group on the missed sound, carefully monitoring individuals who originally made the error. Teacher points to *i*. “What sound?” Teacher signals by touching *i*.
3. **Tests.** The teacher tests the whole group on sounding out the word. “Sound it out. Get ready.” (Signal.)
4. The teacher returns to the first word in the list and repeats all the words until the students can correctly sound out each word in the task. (Note: If there are more than four words in the list, the teacher just goes back four words.)
5. **Individual turns.** At the completion of the list, individual turns are given to students who made errors.

A third type of error that occurs when the teacher is presenting the discrimination format involves the student saying the word incorrectly after sounding it out, usually leaving out the initial sound. For example, the student sounds out “sssaaat” and when the teacher asks “What word?” the student says “at.”

This type of error is usually a result of the student pausing between the first two sounds when

sounding out the word (e.g., *sat* is sounded out “ssss [pause] aaaat”). The steps in the correction procedure for this type of error are:

1. The teacher says the word. “That word is *sat*.”
2. The teacher models sounding out and saying the word. “My turn. Sssääät. What word?” “Sat.”
3. The teacher tests and leads if necessary. “Sound it out. Get ready. (Signal.) What word?” (Signal.)
4. The teacher returns to earlier word in list.
5. Individual turns.

Teachers should record the errors students made. Table 8.3 shows a simple recording form that can be used over a week’s time. The names of the students in a group are written in the spaces in the left column. Across from each student’s name are boxes for each day of the week. The teacher records errors the student made in the appropriate box. If a student makes an error in a letter-sound-correspondence task, the teacher writes the letter and over the letter writes the sound that the student

said. In a sounding-out task, the teacher can write the word the student was reading, then write the response the student said over it.

Precorrecting

Precorrecting is a valuable technique for minimizing errors students make in a lesson. In a sounding-out precorrection, the teacher prompts the students on a letter that has caused them difficulty in earlier lessons before having them sound out a word with that letter. For example, if the students were having difficulty with *e*, the teacher would point to *e* in the word *met* before having the students sound out the word and ask, “What sound?” The teacher would then have the students sound out the word.

A possible danger with using precorrections is in using them too much, making some students dependent on them. If precorrections are overused, the students will not try to remember difficult sounds because they expect the teacher to identify them. Teachers can avoid developing dependency by precorrecting a sound only for a few lessons. Precorrections are particularly appropriate when new,

Table 8.3 Weekly Recordkeeping Form

Weekly Recordkeeping Form					
Student	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Bill	(n) m				
Francine	(s-a-d) sid	(t) (m-i-d) d mid			
José					
Elwin	(i) e	(i) (l-i-d) e led			
Marcy					

difficult letters appear in words or when a letter that has caused students difficulty appears in a word.

Introducing New Word Types

Regular words can be classified by type according to their relative difficulty to decode. The types are listed below, according to their relative difficulty—easy to difficult:

- VC and CVC that begin with continuous sounds (e.g., *at*, *Sam*)
- CVCC that begin with continuous sounds (e.g., *runs*, *lamp*, *fist*)
- CVC that begin with stop sounds (e.g., *hot*, *cap*)
- CVCC that begin with stop sounds (e.g., *cast*, *hand*)
- CCVC in which both of the initial consonants are continuous sounds (e.g., *slap*, *frog*)
- CCVC in which one of the initial sounds is a stop sound (e.g., *crib*, *stop*)
- CCVCC words (e.g., *brand*, *clump*)
- CCCVC and CCCVCC words (e.g., *split*, *sprint*)

Sounding-out instruction begins with VC and CVC words that start with continuous sounds. Instructionally naive students may require 20 to 30 lessons of practice with this type of word before they are able to sound out a set of these words with relative ease. Teachers often underestimate the amount of practice needed by lower performing students to become proficient in sounding out words. During these first months of instruction the students will be learning many new letter-sound correspondences. Integrating all the new correspondences when sounding out words requires a great deal of practice. The amount of practice needed will vary from student to student.

The students' performance tells the teacher when the student is ready to learn a new skill. When a student can sound out a set of four CVC words beginning with continuous sounds without error on

the first trial for two consecutive days, CVCC words beginning with continuous sounds can be introduced. No special teaching procedure is required for introducing CVCC words. The teacher writes three CVCC words on the board and uses the introductory sounding-out format. This format is repeated daily until the students can sound out the three words with no more than one error during the format. Then the introductory format is dropped and CVCC words are included in the discrimination format. Half the words in the discrimination format should be CVC words while the other half should be CVCC words.

Words Beginning With Stop Sounds

CVC words beginning with stop sounds can be introduced when students master CVCC words. Remember, student performance is always the key factor that determines when something new can be introduced.

Several modifications in the teaching procedure are necessary for words that begin with a stop sound. First, the sounding-out signaling procedure has to be modified slightly. The letter for the stop sound is touched for just an instant, followed by a quick movement to the next letter, which is pointed to for slightly longer than usual, about 1½ to 2 seconds. When modeling how to sound out the word, the teacher does not pause at all between the initial stop sound and vowel. The word *can* would be modeled "caaaaannnn" with no pauses. (Note: Words beginning with the stop sound /h/ often cause students particular difficulty. When words beginning with *h* are introduced, include at least three such words in a format, such as *hit*, *hug*, and *him*, to provide massed practice.)

During the first week when words that begin with stop sounds first appear, the teacher can use a precorrection in which she has the students say the sound of the letter following the stop sound before they sound out the word. For example, before the students sound out the word *cut*, the teacher points to *u* and asks, "What sound?" If this precorrection

is used, the teacher should have the students sound out the entire word list again later without using the precorrection so that the student does not become overly dependent on the precorrection. Furthermore, the precorrection should not be used for more than one week.

CVCC words beginning with stop sounds (e.g., camp, hunt, test) can be introduced when students are able to sound out CVCC words beginning with continuous sounds and CVC words beginning with stop sounds.

Words Beginning With Blends

Words that begin with initial blends (two consecutive consonants) are introduced next. This type can be divided into words that begin with two continuous sounds (e.g., *snap, frog, sled*), and words in which one of the initial consonants is a stop sound (e.g., *stop, club, grab, spin*). There are not many regular words that begin with two continuous consonants; moreover, these words will usually not present difficulty for students. Words where one of the two initial consonants is a stop sound, such as *step* and *skin*, will require careful teaching and a great deal of practice.

In addition to providing sounding-out practice, the teacher can also present several supplementary exercises. First is the auditory-skills task in which students telescope a series of blended sounds into a word said at a normal rate. (See page 53.) This auditory exercise can be started a week or so before students begin reading words containing initial blends, then can be continued daily for about two weeks. When presenting the auditory format, the teacher includes words the students will be asked to decode within the next few days.

Precorrections can also be used when words containing blends are first introduced. The precorrection involves the teacher pointing to the letter with which students are likely to have problems. If the word contains a stop sound, the teacher points to the letter following that stop-sound letter (e.g., in *step*, the teacher would point to *e*, and in *cram*, *r*). If the word does not contain a stop sound, the teacher would point to the second consonant in the blend (e.g., the teacher would point to *l* in *flap* and *r* in *frog*).

Example Selection

Example selection criteria are very important. Word lists, in the discrimination format, should contain a mix of words from the various types introduced to the current day. About half the words should be of the most recently introduced type and half a mix of words from earlier types. The purpose of the mix is to buttress against students not attending carefully to the letters in a word. For example, if students read lists of words all having the letter *l* as the second letter, some students might become careless and often include the *ll* sound when sounding out a word.

Passage Reading

Passage reading refers to an activity where each student is given a story and expected to read the words orally. Sounding-out passage reading is significantly more difficult than word-list sounding out. In word-list exercises, the teacher points to the letters and the students say the sounds. In passage-reading exercises, the student must learn to coordinate independently moving from letter-to-letter and concurrently saying the sounds.

When to Introduce

Sounding-out passage reading can be introduced when students are able to sound out the words in a word-list task with relative ease. This level of mastery would be indicated by the students not making more than one error on a five-word sounding-out word-list task for two consecutive days.

As students progress through the beginning stage, the proportion of the lesson devoted to passage reading gradually increases until late in the beginning stage nearly two-thirds of decoding instruction revolves around passage reading.

Constructing Passages

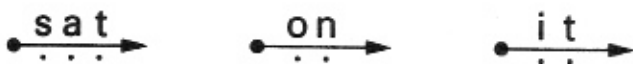
During the first weeks of passage reading, the passages students read should contain only words that have previously appeared in word-list exercises. Including previously taught words will help make the

transition from word-list reading to sounding-out passage reading easier.

Initially the passages should be very short, containing only two to four words. The teacher should expect to correct some students many times when passage reading is introduced. If the initial passages are too long, students may find passage reading too frustrating. The passage length should increase gradually. Passage-reading exercises, during the beginning stage, should be structured so that students are likely to attend to the letters in the words and nothing else. Consequently, picture cues should be avoided because some students will try to use them as an aid in decoding words. A student might look at the first letter in a word, then look at the picture to find an object whose name starts with that letter. For example, when reading the sentence “Tom had a rock,” a student might look at a picture, then begin reading “Tim had a . . .,” and then, not knowing the /o/ sound in the next word, *rock*, refer to the picture for help in figuring out the word. If the picture shows a child holding a rock, the student is likely to use the picture as a cue for decoding the word. An effective way to avoid problems with pictures is to construct pages so that pictures appear only at the end of the passage. The students see the picture only after they read the passage.

Teaching Procedures

We recommend that students respond in unison, saying each sound as they move their fingers from letter to letter. Words to be read in early passage-reading exercises should be written large enough to allow the student to place his finger under each letter. Passages to be read during the first 5 weeks should be written with an arrow under each word. The arrows would resemble these:



(A big ball appears at the beginning of each arrow; small dots appear under each letter.) Requiring students to respond in unison and to touch each letter encourages students to apply the sounding-out strategy, fosters attentiveness and maximizes the amount of

active practice students receive. Such a procedure is especially important with instructionally naive students, who tend to be very distractible. The touching procedure and unison responding also make monitoring easier, since they enable the teacher more easily to see and hear students respond. The format for sounding-out passage reading appears in Table 8.4. Note that the signaling procedure for unison responding needs to be done precisely. In a teacher-training program at the University of Oregon, numerous hours are spent in preservice, training prospective teachers to use the signaling procedure for conducting unison-response passage reading. If these procedures are not implemented correctly, they will not be productive. It would be more productive simply to call on students to read individually while other students follow along.

Critical Behaviors

Signaling

Because the students are looking at their stories and not at the teacher, the signal for unison responding must be audible. Students cannot look at the passage while simultaneously watching for the teacher's signal. The audible signal we recommend has two parts—a “get ready” and series of claps (or finger snaps). The “get ready” tells the students to prepare; the clap indicates that they are to begin the response. The critical teacher behavior in making the signal effective is a consistent 1-second pause between the “get ready” and the first clap. Consistency is necessary so that students will be able to use the “get ready” as an effective cue by expecting the clap 1 second after they hear “get ready.”

During the first days of passage reading, the students may need to sound out each word several times. To ensure that repetitions are done quickly and with little confusion, the teacher must use a clear signal for instructing the students to return to the first letter of a word. The teacher can do this by saying, “Again, back to the big ball of the arrow.” After giving this instruction several times, it can be abbreviated to “Again.” The teacher should make certain all the students are touching the ball of the arrow before signaling the group to sound out the word another time.

Table 8.4 Format for Sounding-Out Passage Reading

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Students</i>
1. "Everybody, touch the big ball for the first word."	Students touch ball of first arrow.
2. "We are going to sound out the words. When I clap, touch the first little dot and say the sound above it. Keep on saying it until I clap again, then move your finger and say the next sound. Don't stop between sounds."	
3. "Get ready." Teacher pauses 1 second then claps. After 1 to 1½ seconds, teacher claps for next sound. Then 1 to 1½ seconds later she claps for last sound. Step 3 is repeated until the students sound out the word without an error. Then the teacher asks, "What word?"	Students say sounds, pointing to the dots under the letters as they say sounds. Students say the word at a normal rate.
4. a. "Touch the big ball of the next arrow." b. "Get ready." Teacher pauses 1 second then claps. After 1 to 1½ seconds teacher claps for next sound. Then 1 to 1½ seconds later, she claps for last sound. c. After students sound out the word without any errors, the teacher asks, "What word?"	Students put finger on ball of next arrow. Students say sounds, pointing to dots under the letters as they say sounds. Students say the word at a normal rate.
5. Teacher repeats step 4 with the remaining words in the sentence.	
6. Teacher repeats steps 4 and 5 with the next sentence.	
7. Teacher gives individual turns. Several students sound out a word or two.	

Monitoring

The monitoring techniques used in sounding out passages in unison are similar to those a teacher uses in word-list exercises. As in word-list reading, the teacher watches the student's mouth and notes if the student's lip movement is appropriate for each sound. For example, if a student's lips do not come together at the end of the word *ham*, the teacher knows that the student made an error. To say the word *ham*, the lips must be pressed together for the final "mmmmm" sound. The teacher also watches the student's fingers, noting if the student is pointing to the appropriate letter.

Individual turns are also used to monitor students' performance. As a general rule, individual turns should not be given until the group has read the passage in unison with no errors. Individual turns serve as a check to see if students are actual participants in the group reading (students often become quite good at mimicking other students rather than actually reading), and to see if the teacher has provided enough practice. During individual turns, the students who are not reading should follow

along, touching the letters as the reader says the sounds. Since the teacher can hear the responses of the student who is reading, he or she watches the eyes and fingers of the other students who are following along. The students who are not reading are more likely to be inattentive. To increase the probability of students being attentive, the teacher should instruct the nonreaders to whisper the sounds as they point to them.

Correcting Mistakes

Initially some students will have difficulty following the signal for shifting from letter to letter. The teacher corrects by modeling and, if necessary, by leading (physically moving the student's finger from one letter to the next). Some students may initially require 10 to 20 repetitions before they respond to the signal by touching and saying the next letter. The teacher should use the same techniques discussed in the pacing section (see page 76) to motivate students and to keep them from getting discouraged.

Students may misidentify a sound. The correction is similar to that specified in the word-list reading section. The instant the teacher hears an error, she models the correct sound, and tests by having the students sound out the word again. As the final part of the correction, the teacher has the students return to the beginning of the sentence and reread the sentence. When the students reach the missed word again (after having returned to the beginning of the sentence), they are receiving a delayed test on that word. The purpose of rereading the sentence is to demonstrate to the students that the teacher places a great importance on reading a passage accurately.

If the students miss a sound in a word near the end of a sentence, the teacher can let the students continue reading the sentence, then say, “Let’s go back to the beginning of the sentence and read it again with no mistakes.” Again, a good deal of teacher skill is required to help students reach a high level of performance and, at the same time, keep the lesson positive and motivating for the students. A series of videos illustrating the sounding-out procedures is available from the Association for Direct Instruction (www.ADIhome.org).

Application Exercises

1. (For an aid in doing this exercise, see the word lists in Appendix A.)
 - a. Students have been taught to read CVC words that begin with continuous sounds and know the most common sounds for these letters: *f, t, l, m, d, s, r, a, i, o*. List four words that could be included in a word-reading task.
 - b. Students have been taught to read CVC words that begin with continuous and stop sounds and know the most common sounds for these letters: *f, l, m, d, t, s, r, h, i, o, a*. Assume the letter *h* has been introduced 3 days earlier. Make a list of 10 words for a word-reading task. Four of the words should include the letter *h*. Four of the words should begin with continuous sounds.
2. The teacher is presenting a word-list sounding-out format. In the following situations, specify what the teacher would do and the wording the teacher would use to correct the student’s error when it occurs.
 - a. When sounding out the word *mud*, student pauses after saying *m*.
 - b. When sounding out the word *mud* a student says /i/ when the teacher points to *u*.
3. Assume that you have taught a group of students the following skills:

The most common sound of these individual letters

a i o u b c d f g h k l m n p r s t v w

How to decode these word types: VC and CVC that begin with continuous sounds; CVC that begin with stop sounds; CVCC that end with consonant blends.

Circle each of the following words students will not be able to decode. Next to each circled word write the abbreviation for the explanation below that tells why students cannot decode the word. These are the possible explanations:

Letter (L)—The word is regular, but a letter, the students do not know appears in the word.

Word Type (WT)—The word is a type that has not been taught.

Not Regular (NR)—The word is not regular. Some letter(s) do not represent its most common sound.

jet _____	rag _____	said _____
slim _____	hot _____	stand _____
big _____	clap _____	tag _____
red _____	put _____	of _____
last _____	best _____	ramp _____
trap _____	list _____	stop _____
was _____	talk _____	sink _____
if _____	Sam _____	fit _____

4. The words in a word-reading task are *Sam, rid, mad, it, at*. Below are four sequences of examples a teacher presented to different groups. A plus (+) indicates a correct response; a minus (-) indicates an error. (1) Tell whether each sequence represents an acceptable firm up, and (2) explain what is wrong with the unacceptable sequences. Assume all errors were word-identification errors.
- Sam (-) (teacher corrects) rid (-) (teacher corrects) mad (-) (teacher corrects) if (+) at (+)
 - Sam + rid + mad + if + at +
 - Sam + rid + mad - (teacher corrects) Sam + mad - (teacher corrects) Sam + rid + mad + it +
 - Sam + rid - (teacher corrects) Sam + rid - (teacher corrects) mad + if + at + Sam + if + at +
5. Assume the students know the common sound of the following letters: *a, m, t, s, i, f, d, r, o, g, l, h, u, c, b, n*. The teacher has created two word lists that are unacceptable. Examine the word lists below. For each word list, indicate whether the list is *acceptable* or *unacceptable* and explain your answer.

<i>List A</i>	<i>List B</i>	<i>List C</i>
dug	dad	rug
run	rim	bat
hut	den	fin
fun	got	hot
hug	hug	dig

6. List these words according to their relative difficulty to sound out. Provide a brief explanation for your sequence.
lamp, stop, bet, clamp, slam, run, best
7. The students are sounding out the sentence: "Sam sat in mud." When sounding out mud, a student says "a" for *u*. Tell all the steps in the correction procedure. Tell what the teacher says and does.
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