

Phonemic Awareness, Grade K

Classroom Management

Phonological and phonemic awareness are introduced using a whole-class approach for most instruction. In order to maximize this instructional time, it is particularly important for teachers to be aware of management techniques that help minimize unnecessary interruptions and keep students' attention focused. Establishing a set of predictable procedures for instruction is the primary way to engage students effectively. Students thrive on routine. For example, the predictable routines for oral blending and segmentation activities allow the students to focus their attention on what is most important—learning sounds in preparation for connecting them to letters. This also saves valuable instructional time. It is therefore important for teachers to establish and stick to routines.

- In addition to following routines, Ms. Pyburn uses some clear and simple management procedures. Think about using some of these management techniques: Develop routines or "catch phrases" that let students know what you want them to do. (For example, Ms. Pyburn uses expressions such as, "All eyes on Ms. Pyburn," and "My turn, your turn.")
- Vary the response mode for the activities—call on individual students sometimes and on the whole group or a small group at other times. This helps keep all students attentive and interested.
- Have all activities proceed at a brisk pace. Overdependence on drilling in an endeavor to achieve mastery will most certainly cause students' attention to wander. Frequent repetition and practice over time is far more valuable.
- Take note of students who may need extra help during Workshop.
- When at the board or overhead projector, be sure that all students can see what is written.
- When using manipulatives, make sure that students understand exactly what they are to do—where to place a marker, for example, and when to move it.
- Have students do something, such as give a thumbs-up/thumbs-down response or hold up the appropriate individual **Letter Card**. This tends to focus attention.