Phonemic Awareness and Phonics, Grade 1

EL

EL Considerations for Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Instruction

- **Phonemic awareness activities**: English Learners can benefit greatly from practice with the phonemic awareness activities. These activities will help children not only learn that words are made up of sounds, but also learn how to make the sounds of English.

- Be aware, however, that differences may exist between the sounds of English and the sounds of your English Learners' primary languages, and that some sounds in English do not appear in other languages. Before working with such sounds, you might want to preview the activities with English Learners in Workshop. Practicing the English sounds will give children the confidence they need to participate fully in the whole-class activities. As part of the practice, provide children with extra opportunities to see you model the sounds and to feel how the sounds are formed.

  Make note of the EL tips on making English sounds that occur throughout the lessons, or see the table below.

  Click here to view the chart.

- **Oral blending/segmentation:** English Learners may have some difficulty with oral blending/segmentation activities because some of the words used may not be in their oral vocabularies, and they might be distracted by trying to figure out a word's meaning. In Workshop, you may want to provide visuals or actions in order to preteach or clarify the meanings of any words that you think might distract children. You might also provide a context for the words, and allow English Learners to use them in sentences. This will have the added benefit of promoting vocabulary growth. Using the Teacher Tips on how to form unfamiliar sounds or sounds not found in certain languages, you may want to preteach or review these sounds with children.

EL considerations for teaching sound/spelling correspondences

- It is important to validate and reinforce English Learners' existing knowledge of sounds and spellings. Encourage children to tell the class how to say the names of the alphabet letters in their primary languages. As they begin to deal with the sounds of letters and spellings, allow children to demonstrate the sounds as they learn them. Children who have learned a completely different alphabet should be encouraged to show the class what that alphabet looks like.

  English Learners will probably encounter some problems as the class begins to learn sound/spelling correspondences. This is not surprising, because some sounds associated with English letters and spellings do not exist in other languages, and some sounds used in other languages do not exist in English. It will be reassuring to these children to discover that even English-speaking children have difficulty with some sound/spelling correspondences.

EL considerations for using the *Sound/Spelling Cards*

- The routine for using the *Sound/Spelling Cards* can be very beneficial to English Learners, even with sounds that are not used in their primary languages. The "see/hear/say/write" sequence provides ample reinforcement of the sound/spelling correspondences by engaging children in recognizing and producing the sound and its spelling.

  In addition, children do not have to know the English name of the picture on the card to be able to recognize the action-sound association. They simply need to remember the sound of the action. For example, in Ms. Canzone's room, children learned that when the sausages sizzled, the sound they made was /s/ /s/ /s/. Children do not need to remember the name of the card or be able to segment the initial sound in the word *sausages.*

In many languages, a single sound has only one spelling. During Workshop you might want to review the *Sound/Spelling Cards* with English-language learners until they are thoroughly familiar with English sound/spelling correspondences. Knowing the English sounds and spellings will give English-language learners the confidence they need to begin blending and to develop their reading skills. Also, throughout the day, remind children to refer to the *Sound/Spelling Cards* if they are unsure of a sound or spelling.

EL considerations for blending

- Just like native English speakers, most English Learners can understand more words than they can read. Learning to blend, therefore, can provide these children with a valuable tool that will allow them to figure out on their own any words they know but do not recognize in print. As with all children, however, it is crucial that they understand the sounds and spellings that are introduced on the *Sound/Spelling Cards*.

  In addition, English Learners will learn about basic structural elements—inflectional endings and affixes—as part of blending. During Workshop, you may want to review the meaning of inflectional endings like -*ed*, *s*, or *'s*. Often second-language learners drop these elements or do not understand the meaning that they convey.

  Using blended words in sentences and extending sentences helps support vocabulary growth and oral language development. You may want to preteach the meaning of some of the words in the blending lines. By doing this, children will be able to recognize the word after they have blended it.

  Use Workshop time to encourage English Learners to use the *Sound/Spelling Card Stories*. Encourage them to work alone or in small groups to learn and repeat the Sound/Spelling Card stories for targeted sound/spelling correspondences. This familiarity will give them practice making the sounds and increase their confidence as they blend words and develop their reading skills.

Additional EL reading

- **Books:**

  August, D., & Hakuta, K. (Eds.). (1998). Educating language-minority children. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

  Brown, H. D. (2000). Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy. New York: Longman.

  Delpit, L. D. (1996). Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom. New York: New Press.

  Websites:

  Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL). http://www.tesol.edu

  National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). http://www.nbpts.org