

Six-Step Phonics Instruction

Systematic and explicit phonics instruction follows this simple six-step plan:

Step 1: Phonemic Warm-Up

Begin the lesson with phonemic awareness activities that support the targeted sound-spelling. Activities can include oral blending, oral segmentation, substitution, and deletion.

Step 2: Teach the Sound-Spelling

Clearly and explicitly teach the target sound-spelling in isolation. Use picture cards and key words to exemplify each sound-spelling.

Step 3: Practice Blending

Use explicit instruction and practice in blending together previously introduced sound-spellings to form words. Strategies include sound-by-sound (final) blending and whole-word (successive) blending.

Step 4: Apply to Decodable Text

Have children apply the target sound-spelling to text that is mostly decodable; any nondecodable words should be previously taught as high-frequency and story words.

Step 5: Dictation and Spelling

Use sound-by-sound or whole-word dictation to help children make the phonics-spelling connection.

Step 6: Word Work

Use activities that reinforce children's knowledge of sound-spelling patterns by having them build, manipulate, and sort words.