Strategies and Skills by Level

Summary of skill focus, word study activities, and guided writing

Level	Skill Focus	Sound Sorts	Magnetic Letters (Making Words)	Sound Boxes	Analogy Charts	Guided Writing
Pre-A	Letters, sounds, print concepts	Initial consonants	Match letters to alphabet chart. Make first name.	None	None	Interactive writing
A 1	Consonants	Initial consonants	Exchange initial consonants: cat-fat-mat-bat	2 or 3 boxes me, go, he, so can, map, hat	None	Dictated sentence 3–5 words
B 2	Consonants Short vowels (a, o)	Initial and final consonants Short a and o	Exchange initial and final consonants: can-pan-pat-mat- man	2 or 3 boxes at, on, am, hop, fan, mom, dad	None	Dictated or open-ended sentence 5–7 words
C 3/4	Short vowels (a, e, i, o, u) Hearing sounds in sequence (CVC)	Short e, i, u	Exchange initial, medial, and final letters; include all short vowels: pot-hot-hop-mop-map-cap-lap-lad-lid	3 boxes (CVC) mat, bed, did, hop, fun	None	Dictated or open-ended sentence 7–10 words
D 5/6	Digraphs (sh, ch, th) Endings (-s, -ing) Onset/rime	Initial and final digraphs	Exchange initial, medial, and final letters; include digraphs; break at onset and rime: hop-shop-chop-chip-chin-thin	3 boxes (words with digraphs) chat, then, with, ship, such, much	None	Dictated or open-ended sentences Include endings: -ing, -s,
E 7/8	Initial blends Onset/rime Endings (-ed, -er)	Initial blends	Add and delete initial clusters; break at onset and rime: cap-clap-clip-grip-grin-spin	4 boxes (initial blends, short vowels) slip, clan, step	None	2 or 3 sentences B-M-E Facts learned

Level	Skill Focus	Sound Sorts	Magnetic Letters (Making Words)	Sound Boxes	Analogy Charts	Guided Writing
F 9/10	Final blends Onset/rime	Final blends	Add and delete final clusters; break at onset and rime: went-wept-west-lest-list-limp	4 boxes final blends lamp, last, test, went, milk, jump	None	B-M-E (3 sentences) Facts learned Respond to a prompt
G 11/12	Initial and final blends Silent e	None	Silent-e feature: mat-mate- mane-man	5 boxes stink, grunt, stomp	cat make chat shake spat snake spam grape	B-M-E (4 sentences) Somebody- Wanted-But- So (SWBS) Respond to a prompt
H–I 13–16	Vowel teams ee, ar, ay, oa, or, all, ow (cow) Endings	None	Vowel patterns: cow-clown- crown-crowd Break at onset and rime: (cl-own)	None	eat day beat gray seating stayed cheater prayed	B-M-E (5 sentences) SWBS Problem- Solution Respond to a prompt
J+ 17+	Vowel teams ou, ew, ight, aw, ai, oi, ow (low) Make and break a big word	None	de-light-ful e-nor-mous	None	rain out stain about sprain shouted brainy ground hop hopping stop stopping clap clapping hug hugging	Five-Finger Retell Character analysis Main idea/ details Summary Compare/ contrast Cause-effect Question- Answer Respond to a prompt

Strategies and Skills for Pre-A						
Work With Letters and Names	Work With Sounds	Read and Discuss Books	Interactive Writing			
Learn letter names Link letters to picture concepts Learn letter sounds Visual memory for first name Visual scanning left to right Letter formation	 Foundational skills Hear syllables Hear rhyming words Hear initial consonants Link sounds to letters 	 Oral language Vocabulary Left-to-right directionality One-to-one matching Concept of letter and word Concept of first and last letter/word Attend to print Period at the end of a sentence 	 Hear sounds in words Link sounds to letters Form letters Space between words One-to-one matching 			

Strategies and Skills for Level A					
Students learn to	Picture Sorts	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Guided Writing	
 maintain one-to-one on one line of print. use meaning to predict, monitor, self-correct. read and write about 10 words. firm up letter knowledge. hear and use initial consonant sounds in reading and writing. 	Initial consonants Choose 2 (see pages 38–39; 81) Examples of pictures to sort for Dd , Hh : desk, duck, horse, hand	Change initial consonant: • go-no-so • cat-hat-mat-pat • me-he-we-be • hop-mop-top-cop • pot-lot-hot-dot • pan-man-ran-fan • map-cap-tap-gap • mad-had-sad-pad • dog-fog-log-hog	2 or 3 boxes S O me, we, he, go, no m a p map, can, dad	Dictate a sentence with 3–5 words. Examples: I like pizza. I see the turtle. My mom is nice. We can go fast.	

	Strategies and Skills for Level B					
Students learn to	Picture Sorts	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Guided Writing		
 maintain one-to-one on two lines of print. use meaning, structure, and known words to predict, monitor, and correct. cross-check meaning and first letters with prompting. read and write about 20 words. hear and use initial and final consonants. hear and use short vowels (a and o). 	Short vowels (a and o) Choose 2 (see page 82) Examples of pictures to sort for a, o: hat, cat, mop, box	Change final consonant: • rat-rag-ram-ran-rap • cat-cap-can-cab • man-mat-map-mad • hat-ham-had-has • hot-hop-hog Change initial and final consonant: • mat-map-man-pan • sat-sad-mad-had • dog-hog-hot-dot • hot-cot-cop-hop	2 or 3 boxes a t am, at, as, on, up, an C a t cap, dog, log, mat	Dictate a sentence with 5–7 words. Examples: The rat is in the cage. Look at the pig in the road. Look at the big cat. We go to the lake to swim.		

Strategies and Skills for Level C					
Students learn to	Picture Sorts	Making Words	Sc	ound Boxes	Guided Writing
 use meaning, structure, known words, and initial consonants to predict, monitor, and self-correct. cross-check meaning and first letters to solve unknown words without prompting. read and write about 30 words. hear and record CVC sounds in sequence with prompting. 	Short vowels (e, i, u) Choose 2 or 3 (see page 82) Examples of pictures to sort for e, i, u: bed, leg, pig, lip, cup, rug	Change initial, medial, and final letters: can-cap-map-mop-top sat-sad-mad-mud-bud dog-dot-hot-hop-hip ran-run-bun-bug-bag lap-lip-lid-lad-mad got-get-net-pet-peg his-hit-pit-pot-hot-hop had-hid-rid-rig-wig run-bun-bin-bit-bet	s boxe r bag hop rap job cab vet cap rid can get	sit gum big wet hop tag mob fog jog nod	Dictate a sentence with 7–10 words. Examples: Come and look at my red car. We will catch the big fish in the lake.

	Strategies and Skills for Level D					
Students learn to	Picture Sorts	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Guided Writing		
 maintain meaning while solving new words. cross-check without prompting. use known parts with prompting. attend to endings with prompting. blend the sounds in small words. reread to access meaning. read without pointing. read in short phrases. read and write about 40 words. use digraphs and short vowels. read dialogue with expression. hear and record sounds in sequence without support. retell the story with support. 	Digraphs Choose 2 or 3 (see pages 132–133) Examples of pictures to sort for sh, ch, th: ship, sheep, chick, cheese, thumb, think	Change initial, medial, or final letters. Include digraphs. Break at onset and rime. (ch-ip) • hip-chip-chop-shop-shop-ship • bat-bath-math-mash • did-dish-dash-mash-mush-much-such • hat-chat-chap-chip-ship • cat-chat-that-than-thin • map-math-bash • the-then-than-that	m a sh math shop chin this such dash chat dish chop thud such shot path hush with chip	Dictate two sentences. Examples: Ben is looking for his bear. Mom said to check the chair. The man is going to the fire. He will get the cat to come to him.		

Strategies and Skills for Level E				
Students learn to	Picture Sorts	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Guided Writing
 maintain meaning while using known parts to solve words. cover the endings to solve words. monitor with meaning, blends, and endings. read and write an increasing number of sight words. read familiar text with fluency. read new text with some phrasing. read with expression. understand simple contractions made from known words (e.g., can't, didn't, I'm, I'll, you're, we're, isn't they're, he's, she's, it's) orally segment one-syllable words at the onset and rime (st-ick). hear and write a CCVC word in sequence. 	Initial Blends Select blends that begin with the same letter. Choose 2 or 3 (see pages 132–133) Examples of pictures to sort for fl, fr: flower, flag, fruit, frog	Change initial blend, medial vowel, or final letter. Break at onset and rime. (gr-ab) • bag-brag-brat-flat-flit • lip-clip-slip-slit-spit-spot • lap-clap-slap-slam-spam • rim-trim-trip-trap-strap • stub-stab-grab-gram-glam-glum • crab-slab-grab-grub-snub • skin-skip-trip-trap-clap-clip • plum-drum-drug-snug-snag • step-stop-slop-slip-blip • win-twin-twig-swig-swim	A boxes C r a b brag clip snug clam drop spun clap drip crab flip sled flop grin sped grip plot flap skid	Prompt students to write about the story. Prompt: Write a sentence about the beginning and another about the end of the story. Use the pictures if you need help. Example: Bella did not want to share her bone. She hid her bone in the snow. Prompt: What did you learn about fireflies? Example: They have two wings and two big eyes. They light up at night.

	Strateg	ies and Skills for L	evel F	
Students learn to	Picture Sorts	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Guided Writing
 maintain meaning while using known parts and endings to solve new words. attend to the middle and end of words with prompting. use onsets and rimes to solve words with prompting. read new books with greater fluency and expression. use punctuation to read with phrasing and expression. understand more challenging contractions (e.g., couldn't, won't, we'll, we've, I've, who'll, they'll). hear and record final blends in one-syllable words. 	Final blends Choose 2 or 3 (see pages 132–133) Examples of pictures to sort: -mp camp, lamp, jump -nd band, land, sand -ng sing, bang, lung -st nest, rest, west -sk mask, tusk, desk -nk tank, bank, junk, pink, link -ft raft, gift, lift -nt ant, mint, bent -lt felt, melt, belt, bolt -lk milk, silk	Change initial letter, medial vowel, or final blend. Break at onset and rime. (s-ing) • ask-bask-bash-mash • bang-bank-band-land • camp-damp-dump-lump • gang-fang-pang-pant • fast-last-lest-left-lent • rang-sang-sank-tank • raft-rant-pant-past-pest • belt-bend-bent-best • desk-dusk-tusk-must • went-west-test-tend • lift-lint-list-last-cast • just-jest-rest-rust-runt • soft-sift-silt-hilt-hint • felt-belt-best-bent-went • milk-silk-silt-wilt	k e p t gust pink kept fang band desk lift bang film lend rung damp lung mend mist belt sang risk lump dusk mend sink land task	Prompt students to write about the story. B-M-E (3 sentences) Prompts: • Write three sentences about the story. Use your pictures if you need help. • What was the problem? How was it solved? • Write three facts about firefighters.

Strategies and Skills for Level G					
Students learn to	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Analogy Charts	Guided Writing	
 maintain meaning while solving new words using known parts, endings, and familiar rimes. read new books with greater fluency and expression. break words apart. (Discourage letter-by-letter sounding!) monitor by attending to the middle and end of words. use analogies to problemsolve during writing with prompting (e.g., If you know like, you can write hike). hear and record initial and final blends in onesyllable words. apply the silent-e rule with prompting. 	Initial and final blends cash-clash-clasp-clamp-cramp band-brand-blank-blink lush-blush-brush-crust-crest-chest pit-spit-split-split-splint-sprint think-chink-shrink-rink-risk ran-ranch-branch-brunch went-west-wept-swept-crept Silent-e rule hat-hate-mate-mat-rat-rate pal-pale-pane-pan-man-mane slid-slide-slime-dim-dime	t w i s t brand blank clank cramp crash flash grand grasp plant shaft smash stamp champ clamp clash plump skunk slump sling stump stung thump trunk trust crust grump grunt stunt blush brush crush flush munch lunch bunch crunch	Silent-e rule Easy (Rime is constant.) hot hope spot rope trot slope slot mope Harder (Rime changes, but vowel sound is constant.) cat came chat shame flag quake clam brave Hardest (Rime and vowel sounds change. Students sort words by short- and long-vowel sound.) cat cake (short) (long) slap grape twig spoke shut bride	Prompt students to write about the story. B-M-E (3–5 sentences) SWBS The lion wanted to eat the rabbit, but a deer came by, so the lion let the rabbit go. Problem-Solution What was the problem? How was it solved? Question-Answer Write questions that were answered in the book and answer the questions. Facts What did you learn from reading this book? Picture prompt Choose your favorite picture and write three sentences about it. Include details.	

Strategies and Skills for Levels H and I					
Students learn to	Making Words	Sound Boxes	Analogy Charts	Guided Writing	
 maintain meaning while quickly solving new words using a variety of strategies. read new books with greater fluency. use analogies to problemsolve during reading with the teacher's support. learn vowel patterns during reading and writing with support. ee, ar, ay, oa, or, all, ow (cow) apply the silent-e rule in writing with a little prompting. 	Silent-e rule came-same-sham-ham hop-hope-slop-shop rip-ripe-gripe-grip-grim-grime Vowel patterns day-say-stay-slay-play-pray car-cart-chart-charm-harm see-seed-week-cheek-creek-creep boat-boast-coast-coach-roach-roast for-fork-pork-porch-scorch cow-clown-crowd	5 boxes S p l i t S C r u b See examples listed for Level G. When students can write a word phonetically, including blends, sound boxes are no longer necessary.	Vowel teams ee, ar, ay, oa, or, all, ow (cow) car cow far now card plow started crowd see for tree fort sweep sport sleeping stormy boat all float tall coach stall toaster smallest To increase the challenge, include words with initial blends and endings.	Students write in response to the teacher's prompt. B-M-E (5 sentences) Track a Character's Feelings How did the character feel at the beginning, middle, and end? What events caused those feelings? In the beginning Kenny was excited to help the farmer. In the middle Kenny was sad that the pig didn't want to be petted. At the end Kenny was happy he found a stick to scratch the pig.	

Strategies and Skills for Level J						
Students learn to	Making Words	Analogy Charts	Guided Writing			
 increase reading stamina. flexibly use a variety of strategies to solve new words. read new books with fluency and expression, stopping only to problemsolve. use vowel patterns in reading and writing with support. use the silent-e feature in reading and writing with support. write two-syllable words with support. use illustrations to determine the meaning of unknown words. respond to a story in writing with decreasing support. retell a story independently. read and respond to nonfiction. 	Vowel Patterns out-ouch-pouch-pound-round rain-train-strain-sprain-brain-brainy snow-show-shown-grown-growth night-right-fright-flight-slight-slightly oil-coil-coin-join-joint-point-pointy few-flew-blew-brew-crew-chew-chewy saw-law-claw-draw-squaw-squawk	Wowel teams ew, ou, ight, aw, oi, ai, ow Gradually increase the difficulty of the task by using words with digraph blends, prefixes, and suffixes. Out snow pout know sprout known about blowing found unknown night oil bright soil lightly moist mighty unspoiled new saw flew claw threw thaw chewed drawn unscrew crawling	Students write in response to the teacher's prompt. Five-Finger Retell SWBS-Then Victor wanted to fly his kite, but it was too small so he built his own kite. THEN Victor wanted to fly his new kite, but it lifted him to the top of the roof so his dad had to get him down. Problem-solution Character's actions (B-M-E) Write facts about a nonfiction topic Important event: Find the picture that shows the most important event in the story. Write about it.			

Strategies and Skills for Levels K and Higher		
Students learn to Making Words	Analogy Charts	Guided Writing
stamina. • flexibly use a variety of strategies to solve new words. • read new books with fluency and expression, stopping only to problemsolve. • use vowel patterns in reading and writing. • use the silent-e feature in reading and writing. • write words with two and three syllables. • attend to prefixes and suffixes in reading and writing. • use vocabulary strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words with prompting. • respond to a story in writing with decreasing support. • use more complex	Continue to teach vowel teams students need to learn e drop Drop the silent e when adding a suffix that begins with a vowel. (-ed, -ing) like	Students write in response to the teacher's prompt. Connect the written response to the comprehension focus for the lesson. Compare/contrast Cause-effect Character motivation Chapter summaries Character traits/ evidence Write facts about a nonfiction text using text features (glossary, index, illustrations, diagrams, etc.) Reflections and wonderings Opinion/evidence Argument/evidence Describe author's point of view Compare/contrast characters, events, ideas from two texts