

# The Word Study Continuum

## Systematic Phonics and Spelling, Grades K–3

The Word Study Continuum is the key to the minilessons. Over the course of the school year, you will use it, in concert with the Month-by-Month Planning Guide, the Lesson Selection Map, and continuous assessment, to inform your work. The Continuum comprises nine Categories of Learning your students need to develop over time; it is a comprehensive picture of linguistic knowledge. Although there are easier and more complex concepts within each category, we are not suggesting that there is a rigid sequence. Instead, we want to help children develop their abilities along a broad front, often using and learning about several different kinds of information simultaneously.

While instruction and assessment are embedded within classroom activities, both are systematic. Indeed, every aspect of the phonics minilessons is systematic, including the observation of children; collection of data on what children know about letters, sounds, and words; and the teacher's selection of lessons to fit the specific instructional needs of individual children. Teaching is efficient and systematic when lessons are carefully selected and sequenced to provide what children need to learn next.

The shaded area of the Continuum performs two important functions. First, it serves as a guide for introducing principles to children; second, it helps you understand what principles you can expect your students to fully control and when. You'll notice that the shaded areas cross grade levels. These shaded areas provide broad indicators of expected achievement; however, learning rate and time will vary with individual children as well as for different groups. In general, at grade level (the earliest period of time indicated by shading), you can begin to assess children's knowledge of a specific principle and refer to the principle during reading and writing activities. Additionally, you will select specific lessons that help them expand their knowledge of the chosen principle. At the latest time indicated by shading, take steps to ensure that children fully understand and can use the principle. You may need to increase time spent on lessons related to the principle or work with small groups of children who are still having difficulty.

Categories of Learning	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
		early	mid	late									
<b>Early Literacy Concepts</b>													
<b>Phonological Awareness (&amp; Phonemic Awareness)</b>													
<b>Letter Knowledge</b>													
<b>Letter/Sound Relationships</b>													
<b>Spelling Patterns</b>													
<b>High Frequency Words</b>													
<b>Word Meaning</b>													
<b>Word Structure</b>													
<b>Word-Solving Actions</b>													

# Early Literacy Concepts



Learning about literacy begins long before children enter school. Many children hear stories read aloud and try out writing for themselves; through such experiences, they learn some basic concepts about written language. Nearly all children begin to notice print in the environment and develop ideas about the purposes of print. The child's name, for example, is a very important word. Kindergartners and first graders are still acquiring some of these basic concepts, and they need to generalize and systematize their knowledge. In the classroom, they learn a great deal through experiences such as shared and modeled reading and shared and interactive writing. Explicit teaching can help children learn much more about these early concepts, understand their importance, and develop ways of using them in reading and writing.

## Early Literacy Concepts

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

	EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE													
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3			
		early	mid	late										
Distinguishing between print and pictures														“ We read the print to find out what the words say. ”
Understanding the purpose of print in reading														“ We look at the print to read the words in stories and other messages. ”
Understanding the purpose of print in writing														“ We write letters and words so readers will understand what we mean. ”
Recognizing one's name														“ Your name has letters in it. ” “ Your name starts with a letter that is always the same. ” “ Your name starts with a capital letter. The other letters are lowercase. ” “ Your name is always written the same way. ” “ You can find your name by looking for the first letter. ”
Using letters in one's own name to represent it or “write” a message														“ You can write the letters in your name. ” “ You can use the letters in your name along with other letters to write messages. ”
Understanding the concept of “letter”														“ A letter has a name and a shape. ”
Understanding the concept of “word”														“ A word is a group of sounds that mean something. ” “ A word in writing is a group of letters with space on either side. ”
Using left-to-right directionality of print														“ We read and write from left to right. ”
Understanding the concepts of <i>first</i> and <i>last</i> in written language														“ The first word in a sentence is on the left. ” “ The last word in a sentence is before the period or question mark. ” “ The first letter in a word is on the left. ” “ The last letter in a word is before the space. ” “ The first part of a page is at the top. ” “ The last part of a page is at the bottom. ”
Understanding that one spoken word matches one group of letters														“ We say one word for each word we see in writing. ”
Using one's name to learn about words and make connections to words														“ Your name is a word. ” “ You can connect your name with other words. ”
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3			
		early	mid	late										

# Phonological Awareness



Phonological awareness is a broad term that refers to both explicit and implicit knowledge of the sounds in language. It includes the ability to hear and identify words (word awareness), rhymes (rhyme awareness), syllables (syllable awareness), onsets and rimes (onset and rime awareness), and individual sounds (sound awareness).

Phonemic awareness is one kind of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to identify, isolate, and manipulate the individual sounds (*phonemes*) in words. Principles categorized as phonemic awareness are labeled Phonemes [PA] in this Continuum.

Phonological awareness (and phonemic awareness) is taught orally or in connection with letters, when it is called *phonics*. Phonics instruction refers to teaching children to connect letters and sounds in words. While very early experiences focus on hearing and saying sounds in the absence of letters, most of the time you will want to teach children to hear sounds in connection with letters. Many of the lessons related to this section begin with oral activity but move toward connecting the sounds to letters. You will not want to teach all of the PA principles in this Continuum. It is more effective to teach children only two or three ways to manipulate phonemes in words so that they learn how words work.

Principles related to letter/sound relationships, or phonics, are included in the Letter/Sound Relationships category of this Continuum.

## Phonological Awareness

PRINCIPLE		EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE													
		PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3			
			early	mid	late										
Words	Hearing and recognizing word boundaries	<p>“You say words when you talk.”</p> <p>“You can hear words in a sentence if you stop after each one. [I - have - a - dog.]”</p>													
	Segmenting sentences into words	<p>“You can say each word in a sentence. [I - like - to - go - shopping.]”</p>													
Rhyming Words	Hearing and saying rhyming words	<p>“Some words have end parts that sound alike. They rhyme [new, blue].”</p> <p>“You can hear the rhymes in poems and songs.”</p> <p>“You can say words and hear how they rhyme.”</p>													
	Hearing and connecting rhyming words	<p>“You can hear and connect words that rhyme [fly, high, buy, sky].”</p>													
	Hearing and generating rhyming words	<p>“You can make rhymes by thinking of words that end the same. [I can fly in the ____].”</p>													
		PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3			

# Letter Knowledge



Letter knowledge refers to what children need to learn about the graphic characters that correspond with the sounds of language. A finite set of twenty-six letters, two forms of each, is related to all of the sounds of the English language (approximately forty-four phonemes). The sounds in the language change as dialect, articulation, and other speech factors vary. Children will also encounter alternative forms of some letters—for example, **g**, **g**; **a**, **a**; **y**, **y**—and will eventually learn to recognize letters in cursive writing. Children need to learn the names and purposes of letters, as well as the particular features of each. When children can identify letters by noticing the very small differences that make them unique, they can then associate letters and letter clusters with phonemes and parts of words. Knowing the letter names is useful information that helps children talk about letters and understand what others say about them. As writers, children need to be able to use efficient directional movements when making letters.

## Letter Knowledge

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

Identifying Letters

	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
		early	mid	late									
Understanding the concept of a letter													
Distinguishing letter forms													
Producing letter names													
Categorizing letters by features													
Understanding alphabetical order													
Recognizing uppercase and lowercase letters													
Recognizing consonants and vowels													
Understanding special uses of letters													
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
		early	mid	late									

“The alphabet has twenty-six letters.”  
 “A letter has a name and a shape.”

“Letters are different from each other.”  
 “You can notice the parts of letters.”  
 “Some letters have long sticks. Some letters have short sticks.”  
 “Some letters have curves, circles, tunnels, tails, crosses, dots, slants.”

“You can look at the shape of a letter and say its name.”

“You can find parts of letters that look the same.”  
 “You can find the letters that have long sticks [short sticks, curves, circles, tunnels, tails, crosses, dots, slants].”

“The letters in the alphabet are in a special order.”

“A letter has two forms. One form is uppercase (or capital) and the other is lowercase (or small) [B, b].”  
 “Your name starts with an uppercase letter.”  
 “The other letters in your name are lowercase letters.”  
 “Some lowercase forms look like the uppercase forms [W, w] and some look different [R, r].”

“Some letters are consonants [b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z].”  
 “Some letters are vowels [a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y and w].”  
 “Every word has a vowel.”

“Your initials are the first letters of your first name and your last name.”  
 “You use capital letters to write your initials.”

# Letter/Sound Relationships



The sounds of oral language are related in both simple and complex ways to the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. Learning the connections between letters and sounds is basic to understanding written language. Children first learn simple relationships that are regular in that one phoneme is connected to one grapheme, or letter. But sounds are also connected to letter clusters, which are groups of letters that appear often together (for example, *cr, str, st, bl, fr*), in which you hear each of the associated sounds of the letters; and consonant digraphs (*sh, ch*), in which you hear only one sound. Vowels may also appear in combinations (*ea, oa*) in which you usually hear the first vowel (*ai*) or you hear a completely different sound (*ou*). Children learn to look for and recognize these letter combinations as units, which makes their word solving more efficient. It is important to remember that children will be able to hear and connect the easy-to-identify consonants and vowels early and progress to the harder-to-hear and more difficult letter/sound relationships—for example, letter clusters with two and three letters and those that have more than one sound. You will want to connect initial letter sounds to the Alphabet Linking Chart (see *Teaching Resources*). It is not necessary to teach every letter as a separate lesson. When using the children’s names to teach about words, substitute *name* for *word* when explaining the principle.

## Letter/Sound Relationships

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

Consonants

Recognizing that letters represent consonant sounds

“You can match letters and sounds in words. For example: *b* is the letter that stands for the first sound in *bear*.”

Recognizing and using beginning consonant sounds and the letters that represent them:

*s, m, t, b, f, r, n,*  
*p, d, h, c, g, j, l,*  
*k, v, w, z, qu, y, x*

“You can hear the sound at the beginning of a word.”  
“You can match letters and sounds at the beginning of a word.”  
“When you see a letter at the beginning of a word, you can make its sound.”  
“When you know the sound, you can find the letter.”  
“You can find a word by saying it and thinking about the first sound.”

Recognizing similar beginning consonant sounds and the letters that represent them

“Words can start with the same sound and letter [*box, big*].”

Recognizing and using ending consonant sounds and the letters that represent them:

*b, m, t, d, g, n,*  
*p, f, l, r, s, z, x,*  
*ss, ll, tt, ck*

“You can hear the sounds at the end of a word.”  
“You can match letters and sounds at the end of a word.”  
“When you see a letter at the end of a word, you can make its sound.”  
“When you know the sound, you can find the letter.”  
“You can find a word by saying it and thinking about the ending sound.”

Recognizing similar ending consonant sounds and the letters that represent them

“Words can end with the same sound and letter [*duck, book*].”

Recognizing and using middle consonant sounds sometimes represented by double letters:

*bb, dd, ll, mm,*  
*nn, pp, rr, tt, zz*

“You can hear consonant sounds in the middle of a word.”  
“You can match letters and sounds in the middle of a word.”  
“When you see letters in the middle of a word, you can make their sound.”  
“When you know the sound in the middle of a word, you can find the letter.”  
“Sometimes two consonant letters stand for the consonant sound in the middle of a word.”  
“You can find words by saying the word and thinking about the sound in the middle.”

PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
	early	mid	late									

# Spelling Patterns



Phonograms are spelling patterns that represent the sounds of *rimes* (last parts of words). They are sometimes called *word families*. You will not need to teach children the technical word *phonogram*, although you may want to use *pattern* or *word part*. A phonogram is the same as a rime, or ending of a word or syllable. We have included a large list of phonograms that will be useful to primary-age children in reading or writing, but you will not need to teach every phonogram separately. Once children understand that there are patterns and learn how to look for patterns, they will quickly discover more for themselves.

Another way to look at phonograms is to examine the way simple words and syllables are put together. Here we include the consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) pattern in which the vowel often has a short, or terse, sound; the consonant-vowel-consonant-silent *e* (CVC*e*) pattern in which the vowel usually has a long, or lax, sound; and the consonant-vowel-vowel-consonant (CVVC) pattern in which the vowel combination may have either one or two sounds.

Knowing spelling patterns helps children notice and use larger parts of words, thus making word solving faster and more efficient. Patterns are also helpful to children in writing words because they will quickly write down the patterns rather than laboriously work with individual sounds and letters. Finally, knowing to look for patterns and remembering them help children make the connections between words that make word solving easier. The thirty-seven most common phonograms are marked with an asterisk.

## Spelling Patterns

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

	EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE												
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
		early	mid	late									
Recognizing that words have letter patterns that are connected to sounds (phonograms are spelling patterns)	<p>“ Some words have parts (patterns) that are the same. ”</p> <p>“ You can find patterns (parts) that are the same in many words. ”</p>												
Recognizing and using the consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) pattern	<p>“ Some words have a consonant, a vowel, and then another consonant. The vowel sounds like the <i>a</i> in <i>apple</i> [<i>e</i> in <i>egg</i>, <i>i</i> in <i>igloo</i>, <i>o</i> in <i>octopus</i>, <i>u</i> in <i>umbrella</i>]. ”</p>												
Recognizing and using simple phonograms with a VC pattern (easiest): <i>-ad, -ag, -am, -an*</i> , <i>-at*</i> , <i>-ed, -en, -et, -ig, -in*</i> , <i>-it*</i> , <i>-og, -op*</i> , <i>-ot*</i> , <i>-ut</i>	<p>“ You can look at the pattern (part) you know to help you read a word. ”</p> <p>“ You can use the pattern (part) you know to help you write a word. ”</p> <p>“ You can make new words by putting a letter or letter cluster before the word part or pattern. ”</p>												
Recognizing and using more difficult phonograms with a VC pattern: <i>-ab, -ap*</i> , <i>-ar, -aw*</i> , <i>-ay*</i> , <i>-eg, -em, -ib, -ip*</i> , <i>-ix, -ob, -od, -ow (blow), -ow (cow), -ug*</i> , <i>-um, -un</i>	<p>“ You can look at the pattern (part) you know to help you read a word. ”</p> <p>“ You can use the pattern (part) you know to help you write a word. ”</p> <p>“ You can make new words by putting a letter or letter cluster before the word part or pattern. ”</p>												
Recognizing and using phonograms with a vowel-consonant-silent <i>e</i> (VC <i>e</i> ) pattern: <i>-ace, -ade, -age, -ake*</i> , <i>-ale*</i> , <i>-ame*</i> , <i>-ane, -ape, -ate*</i> , <i>-ice*</i> , <i>-ide*</i> , <i>-ike, -ile, -ime, -ine*</i> , <i>-ite, -ive, -obe, -oke*</i> , <i>-ope, -ore*</i>	<p>“ Some words have a vowel, a consonant, and a silent <i>e</i>. The vowel sound is usually the name of the vowel [<i>a</i> in <i>make</i>, <i>e</i> in <i>Pete</i>, <i>i</i> in <i>ride</i>, <i>o</i> in <i>rode</i>, <i>u</i> in <i>cute</i>]. ”</p>												
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		

\* Indicates most common phonograms.

# High Frequency Words



A core of known high frequency words is a valuable resource as children build their reading and writing processes. Young children notice words that appear frequently in the simple texts they read; eventually, their recognition of these words becomes automatic. In this way, their reading becomes more efficient, enabling them to decode words using phonics as well as attend to comprehension. These words are powerful examples that help them grasp that a word is always written the same way. They can use known high frequency words to check on the accuracy of their reading and as resources for solving other words (for example, *this* starts like *the*). In general, children learn the simpler words earlier and in the process develop efficient systems for learning words. They continuously add to the core of high frequency words they know. Lessons on high frequency words help them look more carefully at words and develop more efficient systems for word recognition.

## High Frequency Words

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late
Recognizing and using high frequency words with one or two letters	<p>“ You see some words many times when you read: <i>I, is, in, at, my, we, to, me, am, an.</i> ”</p> <p>“ Some have only one letter: <i>I</i> and <i>a.</i> ”</p> <p>“ Some have two letters: <i>am, an, as, at, be, by, do, go, he, in, is, it, me, my, of, on, or, so, to, up, us, we.</i> ”</p> <p>“ Words you see a lot are important because they help you read and write. ”</p>											
Locating and reading high frequency words in continuous text	<p>“ When you know a word, you can read it every time you see it. ”</p> <p>“ You can find a word by knowing how it looks. ”</p>											
Recognizing and using high frequency words with three or four letters	<p>“ You see some words many times when you read. ”</p> <p>“ Some have three or four letters: <i>the, and, but, she, like, come, this.</i> ”</p> <p>“ Words you see a lot are important because they help you read and write. ”</p>											
Recognizing and using high frequency words with five or more letters	<p>“ You see some words many times when you read. ”</p> <p>“ Some have five or more letters: <i>would, could, where, there, which.</i> ”</p> <p>“ Words you see a lot are important because they help you read and write. ”</p>											
	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late
PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		

# Word Meaning



Children need to know the meaning of the words they are learning to read and write. It is important for them constantly to expand their vocabulary as well as develop a more complex understanding of words they already know. Word meaning is related to the development of vocabulary—labels, concept words, synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms. Concept words such as numbers and days of the week are often used in the texts they read, and they will want to use these words in their own writing. When children learn concept words (color words are another example), they can form categories that help in retrieving them when needed. In our complex language, meaning and spelling are intricately connected.

Often you must know the meaning of the word you want to spell or read before you can spell it accurately. In addition to lists of common concept words that children are often expected to know how to read and spell, we include synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms, which may be homographs (same spelling, different meaning and sometimes different pronunciation) or homophones (same sound, different spelling). Knowing synonyms and antonyms will help children build more powerful systems for connecting and categorizing words; it will also help them comprehend texts better and write in a more interesting way. Being able to distinguish between homographs and homophones assists in comprehension and helps spellers to avoid mistakes.

## Word Meaning

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late
Recognizing and learning concept words: color names, number words, days of the week, months of the year	<p>“A color (number, day, month) has a name.”</p> <p>“Days of the week have names and are always in the same order.”</p> <p>“Months of the year have names and are always in the same order.”</p> <p>“You can read and write the names of colors (numbers, days, months).”</p> <p>“You can find the names of colors (numbers, days, months).”</p>											
Recognizing and using words that are related	<p>“Some words go together because of what they mean: <i>mother–father; sister–brother; clothing; animals; food.</i>”</p>											
Recognizing and using synonyms (words that mean about the same)	<p>“Some words mean about the same and are called synonyms: <i>begin/start, close/shut, fix/mend, earth/world, happy/glad, high/tall, jump/leap, keep/save, large/big.</i>”</p>											
Recognizing and using antonyms (words that mean the opposite)	<p>“Some words mean about the opposite and are called antonyms: <i>hot/cold, all/none, break/fix, little/big, long/short, sad/glad, stop/start.</i>”</p>											
Recognizing and using homophones (same sound, different spelling and meaning). (It is not necessary to teach children the technical term <i>homophone</i> .)	<p>“Some words sound the same but look different and have different meanings: <i>to/too/two; there/their/they’re; hare/hair; blue/blew.</i>”</p>											
Recognizing and using homographs (same spelling, different meaning and may have different pronunciation—heteronym). (It is not necessary to teach children the technical term <i>homograph</i> or <i>heteronym</i> .)	<p>“Some words look the same, have a different meaning, and may sound different: <i>bat/bat, well/well; read/read; wind/wind.</i>”</p>											
Recognizing and using words with multiple meanings (a form of homograph)	<p>“Some words are spelled the same but have more than one meaning: <i>beat, run, play.</i>”</p>											
	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late
	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		
	PRE-K											

# Word Structure



Looking at the structure of words will help children learn how words are related to each other and how they can be changed by adding letters, letter clusters, and larger word parts. Being able to recognize syllables, for example, helps children break down words into smaller units that are easier to analyze. In phonological awareness lessons, children learn to recognize word breaks and to identify the number of syllables in a word. They can build on this useful information in reading and writing.

Words often have affixes, parts added before or after a word to change its meaning. An affix can be a prefix or a suffix. The word to which affixes are added can be a *base* word or a *root* word. A base word is a complete word; a root word is a part with Greek or Latin origins (such as *phon* in *telephone*). It will not be necessary for young children to make this distinction when they are beginning to learn about simple affixes, but working with suffixes and prefixes will help children read and understand words that use them as well as use affixes accurately in writing.

Endings or word parts that are added to base words signal meaning. For example, they may signal relationships (*prettier, prettiest*) or time (*running, planted*). Principles related to word structure include understanding the meaning and structure of compound words, contractions, plurals, and possessives as well as knowing how to make and use them accurately. We have also included the simple abbreviations that children often see in the books they read and want to use in their writing.

## Word Structure

### PRINCIPLE

### EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE

PRINCIPLE	EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE											
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3	
	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late
Understanding the concept of syllable	“You can hear the syllables in words.” “You can look at the syllables to read a word.”											
Recognizing and using one or two syllables in words	“You can look at the syllables in a word to read it [ <i>horse, a-way, farm-er, morn-ing</i> ].”											
Understanding how vowels appear in syllables	“Every syllable of a word has a vowel.”											
Recognizing and using three or more syllables in words	“You can look at the syllables in a word to read it [ <i>bi-cy-cle, to-geth-er, ev-er-y, won-der-ful, li-brar-y, com-put-er, au-to-mo-bile, a-quar-i-um, un-der-wat-er</i> ].”											
Recognizing and using syllables in words with double consonants	“Divide the syllables between the consonants when a word has two consonants in the middle [ <i>run-ning, bet-ter</i> ].”											
Recognizing and using syllables ending in a vowel (open syllable)	“When a syllable ends with a vowel, the vowel sound is usually long [ <i>ho-tel</i> ].”											
Recognizing and using syllables ending in a vowel and at least one consonant (closed syllable)	“When a syllable ends with a vowel and at least one consonant, the vowel sound is usually short [ <i>lem-on</i> ].”											
Recognizing and using syllables with a vowel and silent <i>e</i>	“When a vowel and silent <i>e</i> are in a word, the pattern makes one syllable with a long vowel sound [ <i>hope-ful</i> ].”											
	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late	early	mid	late
PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3		

Syllables

# Word-Solving Actions



Word-solving actions are the strategic moves readers and writers make when they use their knowledge of the language system to solve words. These strategies are “in-the-head” actions that are invisible, although we can infer them from some overt behavior. The principles listed in this section represent children’s ability to *use* the principles in all previous sections of the Continuum.

All lessons related to the Continuum provide opportunities for children to apply principles in active ways; for example, through sorting, building, locating, reading, or writing. Lessons related to word-solving actions demonstrate to children how they can problem-solve by working on words in isolation or while reading or writing continuous text. The more children can integrate these strategies into their reading and writing systems, the more flexible they will become in solving words. The reader/writer may use knowledge of letter/sound relationships, for example, either to solve an unfamiliar word or to check that the reading is accurate. Rapid, automatic word solving is a basic component of fluency and important for comprehension because it frees children’s attention to focus on the meaning and language of the text.

## Word-Solving Actions

Using What Is Known to Solve Words

PRINCIPLE	EXPLANATION OF PRINCIPLE													
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3			
		early	mid	late										
Recognizing and locating words (names)														“ You can find your name by looking for the letters in it. ”
Making connections between names and other words														“ You can find the letters that are in your name in other words. ” “ You can connect your name with other names [ <i>Mark, Maria</i> ]. ” “ You can connect your name with other words [ <i>Mark, make</i> ]. ”
Using the letters in names to read and write words: <i>Chuck, chair</i>														“ You can connect your name with the words you want to spell or read. ”
Using known words to monitor reading and spelling														“ You can use words you know to check on your reading. ”
Using first and last names to read and write words														“ You can think of the first and last names you know to help you read and spell words [ <i>Angela, Andy</i> ]. ”
Recognizing and spelling known words quickly														“ You can read (or write) a word quickly when you know how it looks [ <i>the</i> ]. ” “ When you know how to read some words quickly, it helps you read fast. ” “ When you know how to write some words quickly, it helps you write fast. ”
Using letter/sound knowledge to monitor reading and spelling accuracy														“ You can use what you know about letters and sounds to check on your reading (and writing). ”
Using parts of known words that are like other words: <i>my/sky; tree/try; she/shut</i>														“ You can use parts of words you know to read or write new words. ”
Using what you know about a word to solve an unknown word: <i>her, mother</i>														“ You can use what you know about words to read new words. ”
	PRE-K	GRADE K			GRADE 1			GRADE 2			GRADE 3			