READING INSTRUCTION FOR NONVERBAL STUDENTS WITH AUTISM OR
SELECTIVE MUTISM

A Project

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by
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Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

READING INSTRUCTION FOR NONVERBAL STUDENTS WITH AUTISM OR SELECTIVE MUTISM

by

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Leanne E. Sudduth

The authors collaborated and shared equal responsibility in all aspects of the development of this project that reviews current research and outlines an integrated approach to teaching nonverbal students to read. As the number of nonverbal students entering public schools is steadily increasing, the need for effective tools to teach these students becomes more pressing. The primary purpose of this project is to provide teachers and reading instructors with an alternate reading instruction framework for instructing nonverbal students to read. The method of instruction being proposed for this project aims to use the principles for best practice in reading instruction as proposed by the National Reading Panel (NRP) with a combined visual-nonverbal reading approach to specifically address the learning needs of nonverbal students.

The prepared project is a 6-hour Power Point training workshop for teachers on two main approaches to teaching reading to nonverbal students, and how these approaches can be combined to maximize student success. The workshop presentation
includes detailed facilitator notes for each slide with information that should be shared with the participants, and instructions for activities. The method of instruction presented in the training workshop is developed into a ten lesson teacher’s guide. The ten lesson guide specifies how to implement a combined visual-nonverbal approach to teach letter sound correspondence, sound blending and high-frequency sight words to nonverbal students. The training presentation is designed so that it can be delivered by any reading specialist, educational specialist or school psychologist. It is expected that participants of the workshop will gain a greater understanding of how a combined visual nonverbal approach to reading instruction can be used to teach early literacy skills to nonverbal students.

________________________, Committee Chair
Catherine Christo, Ph.D.

________________________
Date
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We would like to acknowledge the kind guidance and encouragement of our advisor, Catherine Christo. We would also like to thank our supportive and loving families and friends for their patience through our long lasting journey.
SOFTWARE SPECIFICATIONS

The project appendices contain note pages within the presentation slides. The notes are provided as a guide, for use during a workshop presentation. Slides should be viewed using Microsoft® PowerPoint software.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Reading skills are perhaps one of the most critical aspects of early learning. Without the ability to read, students cannot reach their academic potential. While many instructional strategies and interventions are successful at increasing literacy in students, there is little research behind addressing the unique needs of nonverbal students. Considering that the number of nonverbal students with autism and selective mutism is increasing in schools within the United States, there is tremendous need for reading interventions that specifically address these students’ unique learning needs. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002) stated that every child needs to be given the opportunity to reach his or her academic potential. Reading interventions need to be adapted to fit a student’s specific learning needs to be effective (Joseph, 2008). Interventions need to be research based and proven to be effective (National Reading Panel, 2000). While many effective research based reading interventions exist, programs that specifically address the learning needs of nonverbal students are limited.

Background of the Problem

In recent years, vast amounts of resources have been allocated to ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn to read. As part of an agenda for education reform, President George W. Bush authorized the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002). The purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act was to recognize that it is our nation’s responsibility to ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach his or her academic
potential, and that too many children were not learning to read. The Reading First initiative was introduced as part of No Child Left Behind legislation to promote use of research-based reading instruction to children in the early grades (No Child Left Behind, 2001). In 1997, the National Reading Panel (NRP) was enlisted to assess the status of research-based knowledge, including the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read (National Reading Panel, 2000). The panel created a teacher’s guide that provided a framework for using their findings in the classroom. They identified the five areas of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. Each section suggests implications for classroom instruction with examples of how the findings can be implemented. These suggested methods tend to require the student to enunciate letter sounds and say words, which can make them difficult to use for nonverbal students (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Despite the amount of resources available for teaching reading, very little information is available that provides instructional reading strategies for children who are nonverbal. Nonverbal children are best defined as students who do not use oral language to communicate (Kasari, Tager-Flusberg, & Cooper, 2010). Many children who are nonverbal are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder or selective mutism. Communication deficits are a core symptom of Autism Spectrum Disorders, and students with selective mutism have limited talking patterns. These populations of students are becoming more common in today’s classrooms (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014).
As the number of nonverbal children with autism or selective mutism increases, knowledge of how to teach these children to read becomes increasingly important. The ability to read is a gateway to overall academic success and effective communication. For the nonverbal learner with autism or selective mutism, literacy opens the door for other related activities like writing, and writing leads to an alternate means of expression and communication. Teaching these students to read is vital in helping them communicate in their home, school and community. A review of recent literature revealed that two main approaches are currently being used to teach nonverbal students to read; The Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA) and the visual approach. The Nonverbal Reading Approach is a reading strategy based on Vygotsky’s (cited in Kozulin, 1986) theory of inner speech and self-regulation that teaches students with severe speech and physical impairments to sound out words using specific strategies (Heller, Fredrick, Tumlin & Brineman, 2002). The visual approach uses visual skills to teach sight words. This method pairs spoken words with the written words, and sometimes uses pictures (i.e., a cat) to increase comprehension (Oelwein, 1995). There is some evidence that each of these methods can be effective in teaching the skills that each method purports to teach. However, there are limits to each method. For example, the visual approach teaches all words as “sight words”, and does not provide students with the skills needed to decode, or sound out novel words. The Nonverbal Reading Approach, used to teach letter sound correspondence and sound blending, will not facilitate reading of irregular words.
Through analysis of numerous experimental studies, the National Reading Panel found that phonics instruction is effective in helping children learn to read (National Reading Panel, 2000). Phonics instruction is a method of teaching reading that emphasizes phonemic awareness (PA). Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words. PA instruction teaches students how to use this letter sound correspondence in reading and spelling. Typically, oral expression is a key component of learning and monitoring student progress in these areas. In order to be used with nonverbal students, typical PA instruction needs to be adapted to best support their achievement in reading literacy.

School psychologists have vested interest in instructional strategies for reading as it supports Response to Intervention and limits the number of children referred for assessment for special education eligibility. The ability to read is paramount to academic success and helps support learning in all academic areas. Nonverbal students often present with concomitant disorders (i.e. autism, selective mutism, physical disabilities, etc.). Considering this, teaching nonverbal students to read requires more complexity than with typical students. This requires instruction that specifically addresses challenges associated with being nonverbal, like expression and comprehension. The method of instruction being proposed for this project aims to use the principles for best practice in reading instruction as proposed by the NRP with a combined visual-nonverbal reading approach to specifically address the learning needs of nonverbal students.
**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to provide teachers with a combined visual-nonverbal approach to teaching early literacy skills to nonverbal students. The project provides a framework for teaching sight word identification, letter sound correspondence and sound blending to nonverbal students, using functional adaptations of research-based methods that meet the specific needs of nonverbal students. All students deserve to be able to access all aspects of academic education. Nonverbal students are at risk for reading failure as they cannot access reading instruction through typical methods, and cannot use typical expression to convey understanding. The visual approach has been shown to be an effective method to teach sight words (Broun, 2004), and the Nonverbal Reading Approach has shown promise as an effective way to implement phonemic awareness instruction with nonverbal students (Heller, Frederick & Diggs, 1999). The combined visual-nonverbal approach developed for the project integrates the research based practices of both approaches to provide a more holistic method for nonverbal students to gain necessary reading skills.

**Description of the Project**

Information in this project has been developed into a guide for teachers on how to integrate best practice in reading instruction with the Nonverbal Reading Approach suggested by Heller, Frederick, and Diggs (1999), and Oelwein’s visual approach to reading instruction (1995). The project also includes a Power Point presentation, with detailed directions for the facilitator, to train teachers on how to use the combined visual-nonverbal approach to teach reading to nonverbal students in their classrooms. A
provided presentation manual and lesson plan guide will allow the presentation to be delivered by any school psychologist or education specialist and implemented by teachers in the classroom. Participants of the training workshop will acquire instructional strategies for teaching nonverbal students to read that are based on, and adapted from, effective research based reading interventions. The scope of our project is limited to teaching phonemic awareness and sound blending through phonics instruction, adapted for nonverbal students using the Nonverbal Reading Approach, and sight word identification skills taught through visual methods.

The guide created for this project includes ten lesson plans, a materials section, and a resource section. The first segment of each lesson plan uses the Nonverbal Reading Approach to: review letter sounds previously taught, teach three new letter sounds, and practice sound blending skills using several focus words. Focus words have been selected to ensure they contain both new and reviewed letter sounds. The second section of each lesson plan includes a segment where ten sight words are taught using Oelwein’s visual approach. The focus words from the first segment of the lesson are also re-introduced as sight words. The ten lesson plans provide letter-sound correspondence instruction for each letter of the alphabet, but does not go on to include other phonemes, spelling rules, fluency or comprehension.

**Statement of Collaboration**

This project was developed collaboratively by Erin Moore and Leanne Sudduth, both graduate students in the School Psychology program at California State University, Sacramento. Each co-author had equal responsibility in the research, collection, and data
gathering. Subsequent titles and subtitles were divided amongst the two individuals to create a comprehensive project. All duties performed in the development of the project and training workshop were shared equally.

**Definition of Terms**

*Diagnostic Distractor Arrays:* A process of testing reading progress where a student selects a target word from a set of similar words (i.e., cat, mat, cap, dog). Typically, one word has a different beginning letter, one has a different ending letter, and one word is completely different.

*Fry’s List:* 1000 Instant words published by Dr. Edward Fry (1993), which are the most common words in the English language. The words are arranged in order of frequency of occurrence in reading materials and children's writing. The first 100 words make up about half of all written material (Fry, Kress, & Fountoukidis, 1993).

*Graphemes:* The smallest part of written language that represent a phoneme in the spelling of a word. It can be one letter (i.e., b, c, d) or several letters (i.e., ch, th, igh) (National Reading Panel, 2000).

*High Frequency Words:* Those words used with the most frequency in text being read. The first 25-50 words are virtually the same in frequency no matter what text is being considered. The primary reason frequencies vary by list is the types of text used to select words and frequencies (Ferral, 2010).

*National Reading Panel:* A national panel convened in 1997, at the request of congress, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.
No Child Left Behind Act: The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is legislation that was enacted by the Bush Administration during his first term as President in 2001. It was passed in an effort to increase federal funding for education reform and to increase accountability at all levels (National Institute for Literacy, 2006).

Nonverbal: Nonverbal children are generally defined as students who do not use oral language to communicate (Kasari, Tager-Flusberg, & Cooper, 2010).

Nonverbal Autism: A term used to describe a form of Autism Spectrum Disorder that includes the inability to use oral language for functional communication.

Nonverbal Reading Approach: The Nonverbal Reading Approach uses a systematic method of teaching decoding skills using inner speech (Heller, Frederick, & Diggs, 1999).

Oelwein’s Method: A visual method of teaching reading to disabled students developed by Patricia Oelwein in 1995, and documented in her book, *Teaching Reading to Children With Down Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Teachers*. Oelwein’s visual approach was created for students with Down Syndrome, but has also been used effectively with students with autism spectrum disorder (Broun, 2004).

Phonemes: The smallest units constituting spoken language. English consists of about 41 phonemes which are combined to form syllables and words (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Phonemic Awareness: Phonemes are the smallest units making up spoken language. English consists of about 41 phonemes. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words. A few words have only one phoneme, such as a (a) or oh (o). Most words consist of a
blend of phonemes, such as go (g-o) with two phonemes, check (ch-e-ck) with three phonemes, or stop with four phonemes (s-t-o-p). Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate these phonemes in spoken words (National Reading Panel, 2000).

**Phonological Awareness:** A broad term that includes phonemic awareness. In addition to phonemes it can involve tasks with rhyming, words, syllables, and onsets (National Reading Panel, 2000).

**Phonics:** The understanding that there is a relationship between phonemes and graphemes (National Reading Panel, 2000).

**Phonics Instruction:** Is a method of instruction that teaches the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language (National Reading Panel, 2000).

**Selective Mutism:** Individuals who have variant or limited talking patterns, a history of events prior to becoming mute, are anxious in temperament, display other characteristics concomitant with selective mutism (e.g., depression, learning problems), and have school or social incompetencies (Ford, Sladeczek, Carlson, & Kratochwill, 1998).

**Sight Words:** Those words that a student knows by sight without having to sound them out. Beginning readers have few sight words and mature readers have thousands of sight words.

**Limitations**

There is little research available regarding teaching nonverbal students to read. Also, current research does not specifically focus on the population of students being
surveyed for this study. This project was designed to provide teachers with an adapted framework for teaching nonverbal students to read. The combined visual-nonverbal reading approach being proposed is a suggested method based on research conducted for this project. There is no documentation discussing its effectiveness with nonverbal students. The scope of this project is limited to teaching nonverbal students reading strategies. The implementation and effectiveness of this guide is not included in this project and warrants additional research. Other confounding variables must also be considered. Some of these variables are: the degree to which learning in the classroom effects the acquisition of reading skill, the degree to which being a nonverbal student effects comprehension, age and grade level, and student ‘buy-in’, or level or participation, with interventions.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Interventions for Nonverbal Students

There is limited research on reading interventions for nonverbal students despite a tremendous need to provide research-based reading interventions specifically designed for these students. Children who have limited ability to use oral speech, have specific reading acquisition needs. Current approaches to teaching nonverbal students to read are overly broad and limited. Nonverbal students need to be provided with an effective intervention that specifically addresses their unique needs and helps them to acquire literacy skills.

Introduction

Currently, there is no specific definition of what it means to be nonverbal. Most simply, it refers to children over the age of 5 who have no spoken language. The age distinction is made because, before the age of 5, children with expressive communication challenges can be considered preverbal (Kasari, Tager-Flusberg, & Cooper, 2010). Nonverbal children do not represent a particular set of defining characteristics, but rather represent a highly variable population that displays a set of strengths and weaknesses across many different domains.

Population

Nonverbal children can represent children who: display little desire or motivation to communicate; present challenging behaviors; or have poor socialization, specific
language impairments, an intellectual disability, or another disability that affects their ability to speak and communicate orally (Kasari, et al., 2010). For the purpose of this project, we will focus on these two subgroups, children with autism and children who are selectively mute. Children with autism spectrum disorder and selectively mute students represent two of the most common subsets of nonverbal children. The rates of autism are continuously increasing. On March 27, 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new data on the prevalence of autism in the United States. This surveillance study identified 1 in 68 children (1 in 42 boys and 1 in 189 girls) as having autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Of that population, approximately 25% are considered nonverbal (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014).

According to the DSM-V, selective mutism affects 1 in 1000 children who are referred for mental health; however this statistic is considered an underestimate of the true population (Letamendi, et al., 2008). Often, children who are selectively mute are misdiagnosed as being on the autism spectrum because there is overlap in their symptoms, specifically in the areas of social withdrawal and lack of verbal communication (Letamendi, et al., 2008). This is important as it suggests the treatment approaches for teaching nonverbal students with autism and selective mutism are similar.

**Nonverbal Autism**

Communication deficits are a core symptom of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Research by Wan, et al. (2011) found that up to 25% of children with autism are nonverbal. That is, they lack the ability to communicate using speech sound. These students are often taught alternative means to communicate and make requests. The term
"nonverbal autism" is not a part of the diagnostic criteria. In part, that is because there is no clear line between verbal and nonverbal individuals with autism. Some people have the ability to speak, but lack the ability to use language in a meaningful way. Others can't use spoken language, but are able to communicate with written or typed language, American Sign Language, picture cards, or digital communication devices. These students are often taught to use these alternative means to communicate and make requests. Although the development of communication and social and behavioral skills is crucially important for children with ASD, so too is the acquisition of academic skills (Kasari et al., 2010). Nonverbal students need alternate ways to learn to read and demonstrate what they know in terms of printed text. There is research indicating that students with limited oral language and no prior reading ability can learn to identify printed words (Spector, 2011).

**Selective Mutism**

Ford, Sladeczek, Carlson, and Kratochwill (1998) suggested that selective mutism is phenomenologically defined as individuals who possess one or more qualities in the following areas: (a) possess limited to variant talking patterns that occur prior to identification; (b) have a history of events that have precipitated the selective mutism; (c) are anxious in temperament; (d) display other characteristics concomitant with selective mutism (depression, learning problems, adaptive functioning); and/or (e) have school and social competencies. Current research suggests that several factors contribute to individuals becoming selectively mute. Individual temperament (depression, social phobia, and anxiety) paired with unusual talking patterns can often predict the likelihood
for becoming selectively mute (Ford et al.). Interestingly, the traits commonly associated with individuals who are selectively mute appear similar to those of nonverbal children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. That is, the symptoms, though different in causation, present in a very similar pattern (Ford et al.). Individuals who are selectively mute can present like nonverbal students on the autism spectrum. Considering this, effective interventions for these two nonverbal populations can be treated similarly.

**Combined Approach to Reading Instruction**

A meta-analysis completed by the National Reading Panel showed that phonemic awareness instruction was significantly better than other forms of training in helping children acquire phonemic awareness, and enabling children to apply this skill in reading and spelling (NRP, 2000). Through emphasizing letter sounds and teaching nonverbal children to, “say it in their head”, the Nonverbal Reading Approach can be used to effectively provide phonics instruction to nonverbal children. The NRP determined that systematic phonics instruction leads to significant positive benefits for students in grades kindergarten through grade six.

Another way to read words is from memory, sometimes called sight word reading, which requires prior experience with the word, and the ability to remember the word. The NRP (2000) suggests that in order for individual words to be represented in memory, beginning readers are thought to form connections between graphemes and phonemes in the word.

The combined approach proposed through this project is a step toward that goal. The integration of systematic phonics instruction and the Nonverbal Reading Approach
offers a way for teachers to provide all the well-documented benefits of phonics instruction in an adapted way that is appropriate for nonverbal students. The lesson plans created for this project also tap into the visual strength that is demonstrated by many nonverbal students and also uses visual methods to teach irregular, “sight words”, as well as the phonetically regular, decodable words taught in the ‘phonemic awareness’ section of each lesson. The combined approach also reinforces the focus words learned through nonverbal phonics instruction, by re-teaching them using a visual approach.

Phonics instruction can be provided systematically. Systematic phonics instruction occurs when children receive explicit, systematic instruction in a set of pre-specified associations between letters and sounds (National Institute for Literacy, 2006). The National Reading Panel suggests that phonemic awareness instruction may be most effective when the instruction is explicitly focused on one or two types of phoneme manipulations and is taught in a specific sequence. The teacher guide and lesson plans created for this project focus on just two types of phoneme manipulation – letter sounds correspondence, and sound blending. According to the NRP findings, children who received training that focused on one or two phonemic awareness skills exhibited stronger phonemic awareness and stronger transfer to reading than children who were taught three of more phonemic awareness skills.

**Phonemic Awareness Instruction**

Knowledge of letter sound correspondences and phonological awareness skills are the basic building blocks of literacy learning. The National Institute for Literacy (2006) suggests that effective phonemic awareness teaches children to manipulate sounds in
spoken language. This includes building skills in phonemic isolation (recognizing individual sounds in a word), phoneme identity (recognizing the same sounds in different words), phoneme categorization (recognizing the word in a set that is the ‘odd one out’), phoneme segmentation (breaking words into separate sounds), phoneme deletion (recognizing the word that remains when a letter is removed), phoneme addition (recognizing the new word when a phoneme is added), and phoneme substitution (recognizing the word that is made when a phoneme is substituted for a new one) (National Institute for Literacy, 2006). A meta-analysis completed by the NRP showed that phonemic awareness instruction was significantly better than other forms of training in helping children acquire phonemic awareness, and enabling children to apply this skill in reading and spelling (NRP, 2000).

Phonemic awareness is proven to be an effective strategy for teaching typical learners to read through helping them understand how words come together. In typical instruction, phonemic awareness requires oral communication and expression; however the capacity for nonverbal students to communicate learned concepts is very limited in this regard. Even when the nonverbal student is not intellectually impaired, his or her ability to actually learn phonemic awareness is impaired.

**Systematic Phonics Instruction**

Systematic and explicit phonics instruction makes a more significant impact to children’s growth in reading than does non-systematic or no phonics instruction (National Institute for Literacy, 2006). Systematic instruction is a critical component of effectively teaching children to read because it is the direct teaching of a set of letter-sound
relationships in a specific sequence that helps with decoding ability. According to the National Institute for Literacy, systematic instruction significantly improves a child’s ability to recognize words and spell when taught early and is particularly beneficial to students with specialized needs. Systematic and explicit phonics instruction can be adapted to fit the needs of the student. Considering this, phonics instruction is a particularly critical component of teaching nonverbal children to read because it can be modified to fit their individual needs. Nonsystematic phonics instruction can also be a useful tool in motivating students to want to learn to read or in teaching sight words and increasing overall reading fluency; this method of phonics instruction can also be adapted to fit the individual needs of the student.

**Best Practices on Interventions for Reading Instruction**

In Best Practices in School Psychology (Fifth Edition, Volume IV, *Best Practices on Interventions for Reading Problems*, 2008), Laurice Joseph mentions that despite normal instruction some individuals have difficulty acquiring the fundamental reading skills necessary to be in a position to learn. He further states that implementing interventions for students who have reading problems should occur within a scientific process of targeting students’ needs, selecting and applying evidence-supported instruction that matches their needs, and evaluating whether or not students improved their performance at sufficient rates as a function of the instruction. The Best Practices author proposes that the three-tiered RTI model should be used to determine the level and intensity of intervention needed. Components of effective intervention should include phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, and comprehension. General and
specific research supported techniques are designed to promote critical reading skills. Interventions should meet the specific learning needs of the student. However, there has been very little research specifically addressing best practices on reading interventions for children who are nonverbal. While the process for treatment remains the same for nonverbal children and typically developing children (using the RTI model, focusing on phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, and comprehension), as mentioned above, nonverbal children require more intensive treatment for reading problems.

Students need to be put into a position to be able to learn (Joseph, 2008). Joseph contends that reading instruction for these students needs to implement a more intensive strategy, utilizing commonly used reading instruction techniques, though modified to not require oral speech.

The National Reading Panel (2000) also says that reading instruction should meet the level of development of the student, and that phonemic awareness strategies should be adapted to fit the needs of the student. NRP further suggests that phonics awareness may be the most effective strategy in teaching children to use phonemes with letter sounds and should use a combination of techniques that work for the child (i.e. teaching phonics with vocabulary or sight words for fluency).

**Why Special Instruction is Necessary**

In research conducted by Coyne et al. (2013) an experimental model of reading intervention was used wherein the delivery of supplemental beginning reading interventions was adjusted based on the student’s performance. Based on their findings, it was suggested that interventions need to be adjusted to address specific learning needs.
They also noted that almost nothing is known about the capacity for minimally verbal students to develop literacy skills (Coyne et al.). Effective and dynamic intervention is highly necessary to provide students with their best chances for learning how to read. Current research indicates that instructional modifications to curricula delivery increased growth rates in reading at faster rates than without modifications to intervention; systematically adjusting and modifying interventions is highly successful at identifying and responding to individual learning concerns (Nelson-Walker et al., 2013). This provides strong support for the current best practices for reading intervention (Joseph, 2008); that is, interventions need to continuously adapt to the needs of the student and become more intensive to address and adjust to individual problems. Considering there is so little known about the capacity for literacy skills amongst minimally verbal, or nonverbal, students, programs are needed that can continuously be modified to the needs of the student. It should be assumed that nonverbal children have far more understanding of language than often expected (Rogow, 1994). With this concept in mind, this would mean that students with autism and selective mutism may have the capacity for expressive and receptive language but lack the ability to articulate understanding. Interventions are needed that address not just learning problems but address the capacity to use expressive and receptive language.

Problems with Typical Interventions

Research-based reading interventions designed to respond to reading problems do not address, and are not designed to respond to, individual differences in learning. While the goal of current interventions is to examine the conditions that must be in place for all
children to acquire adequate reading skills, anywhere from 2% to 6% of children do not respond to intervention (Torgeson, 2000). For the typical learner, current reading interventions focus on expressive and receptive communication. Current methods of intervention use grade level curriculum to assess reading ability and comprehension. This is problematic as it assumes that all children have average verbal ability. Considering that both children with autism and selective mutism have little to no expressive verbal skill, it cannot be assumed that their general verbal ability is on par with their grade-level peers. In order for children to be able to learn to read, they need to be able to comprehend and construct meaning from written material (Torgeson, 2000).

Typical reading instruction analyzes success rates through a child’s ability to express and convey understanding. This means of expression seems inappropriate for a nonverbal child; it does not effectively provide this population of children with an appropriate method of expressing understanding.

Torgeson (2000) describes the ‘Simple View’ of reading, which entails recognizing words on a page and comprehending the words’ meanings (decoding and comprehension). A typical learner can express understanding and reading ability through decoding, through fluent reading, and by explaining word meaning (i.e. recognizing the letters ‘d’ ‘o’ ‘g’ say dog, and expressing that it makes the sounds “Duh” “Oh” “Guh”, and identifying its meaning). The nonverbal learner cannot convey understanding using this method. Torgeson goes on to suggest that research from the last decade indicates that reading difficulties are often caused primarily by weakness in the ability to process the phonological features of language as measured through phonological awareness,
verbal short term memory, speed of access to phonological information in long term memory, and speech perception. Torgeson goes on to imply that, weaknesses in the phonological processing of language cannot be ruled out as a possible reason for struggle but is not necessarily the cause for the nonverbal learner. The problem behind the nonverbal student’s reading problems might be more correlated with their lack of ability to demonstrate their understanding. Torgeson suggests that any attempt to understand the conditions that must be in place for children with the most serious disabilities or the most difficult backgrounds to acquire adequate reading skills must address two questions: What is the best method of instruction for these children? How much special instruction will they require? Learning to read is complex, and those who present reading difficulties need intensive intervention to help them acquire necessary reading skills in a timely manner so they can access academic curricula. Considering the special needs of nonverbal learners, the treatment for intervention should be specifically modified to their individual needs for best outcomes.

**Challenges Associated with Teaching Nonverbal Students to Read**

According to research by Catts, Fey, Tomblin, and Zhang (2002), learning to read presents significant challenges for nonverbal children, including poor reading outcomes. From their research, they hypothesized that intervention is needed early on; with intervention, children with language impairments could demonstrate lower initial reading achievement but accelerated growth, which would allow them to catch up to their typically learning peers over time. It was hypothesized that without intervention, these students would have lower reading achievement and slower growth rate, which would
widen the gap of achievement between them and their typically learning peers. Considering that the causation behind nonverbal impairments is varied, it is imperative to select interventions specific to the learning needs of the individual. The best predictor of reading outcomes is likely initial, or early, reading success itself. For early reading success to be possible, the intervention needs to address a broad range of concomitant factors (e.g. depression, learning problems, adaptive functioning) (Catts et al., 2002). Best practice in reading instruction for typical readers is heavily dependent on verbally sounding out letter sounds and blending sounds into words. Due to the nature of the pathology of Nonverbal learners, this methodology cannot be typically implemented. Nonverbal learners, such as children who are on the autism spectrum, or are selectively mute, need interventions that equip them with the skills necessary for learning. To achieve better learning outcomes for these students, early, intense, and specific reading intervention is necessary because it provides opportunity for accessibility to all learning environments.

**Nonverbal Reading Approach**

According to a research article by Heller et al. (2002), the Nonverbal Reading Approach (Heller, et al., 1999) to learning literacy skills is suggested as an effective approach when teaching students to decode targeted words. These decoding skills are then generalized and aid students in decoding unknown words with little instruction. The Nonverbal Reading Approach is a reading strategy that teaches students with severe speech and physical impairments to sound out words using internal speech. Full implementation of this method includes diagnostic distraction arrays, and error analysis,
in conjunction with specific adaptations and assistive technology, to promote reading skills. According to Heller et al. (2002), a diagnostic distraction array is when a target word is presented with three other similar words; one word has a vowel change, one word has an ending change, and one word is very different (i.e., if your target word is *bat*, your distractor arrays could be *bot, but, and dog*). The distraction array tests sight word identification and decoding ability. Error analysis is the process of recording student responses, analyzing incorrect responses in the distraction array, and determining any patterns in incorrect letter sounds or blends. Error analysis monitors student progress and provides information for designing interventions for any specific weaknesses in decoding ability (i.e., the student often will guess *cot* for *cat* or *hot* for *hat*). This approach can be adapted to any reading curriculum. Heller et al. contend that, because of an inability for nonverbal students to speak, they cannot sound out words for a teacher to analyze and to provide corrective feedback.

The Nonverbal Reading Approach allows accessibility to any curriculum through modifying the communication demands from the student. This method of instruction allows for teachers to analyze reading progress through nonverbal expression. In the Nonverbal Reading Approach, internal speech is taught and used to teach individual letter sounds, followed by blending individual sounds that students say silently in their head using inner speech. Inner speech is a process of thinking and speaking in thought, without the use of oral language. It is based on Lev Vygotsky’s (cited in Kozulin, 1986) theories that internal and external speech are profoundly connected. The idea is that self-talk, or inner speech, underlies the ability for external speech. Vygotsky suggested that
our inner thoughts predict our external language (Kozulin, 1986). Research suggests that students who were allowed to use this approach for acquiring literacy skills were able to make significant improvements in reading and other academic areas (Heller et al., 2002). Considering the principles behind effective explicit instruction suggested by the National Reading Panel (2000), through emphasizing letter sounds and teaching nonverbal children to “say it in their head,” the Nonverbal Reading Approach can be used to effectively provide phonics instruction, and teach phonemic awareness to nonverbal children.

It is likely that the Nonverbal Reading Approach is successful because it acknowledges that communication and expression can occur in a variety of ways. By adjusting the requirements of how to monitor progress in nonverbal children they are provided more accessibility to curriculum. Furthermore, since this approach uses a typical method of reading instruction (decoding), and because decoding is an essential aspect of learning to read fluently, it provides an effective means in which to train nonverbal students to decode using an alternative response to the oral sounding out of letter sounds and words. The Nonverbal Reading Approach uses letter sounds, and words can be manipulated internally, or silently, using the same ability to decode as orally expressed decoding (Heller et al.). Many nonverbal students have the same capacity for literacy skills as typical students but require adapted means of achieving the same goals in developing literacy skills.
Computer Based Nonverbal Reading Approach

According to research by Coleman-Martin, Heller, Cihak, and Irvine (2005), nonverbal students may need reading instruction that uses strategies that differ from typical literacy instruction. When children cannot orally articulate the steps required for phonological awareness (i.e. sounding letters and blending words), then it becomes necessary to provide alternative instruction in order for them to communicate and comprehend what is being taught to them. In their research, Coleman-Martin et al. hypothesized that computer-based instruction would be an effective method to promote word identification using the Nonverbal Reading Approach. They state that when a student does not have the ability to speak or say words aloud, teachers need to use specialized teaching instruction to build similar skills without the need for verbal reciprocation. Computer-based instruction using the Nonverbal Reading Approach is highly effective, and also gives students the opportunity to learn how to read independently (Coleman-Martin et al., 2005). This suggests that using the Nonverbal Reading Approach as a foundation to be used with other learning methods, like computer-based learning, can be a highly effective tool for nonverbal students. Students in the nonverbal population may have trouble comprehending typical instruction, and may not receive sufficient repetition to assure success and maintenance of instructional targets. Also they may have insufficient motivation to learn the reading task. Providing a method of teaching that increases the likelihood of independent learning frees up teacher time, allows for more intensive support, and increases the overall likelihood for positive outcomes (Coleman-Martin et al., 2005). Also, it should be considered that for
nonverbal students, lack of speech results in an inability to ask questions, request information, and engage in conversations about the reading material. Computer-based learning opportunities allow for more fluent reciprocal communication, which is necessary for building skills. Alternative methods for communication then, become vital tools to help nonverbal children adapt in their respective environments (Coleman-Martin et al., 2005).

**Visual Approach**

In Broun’s (2004) research on teaching students with autism spectrum disorder to read in a special education classroom, she implemented Oelwein’s (1995) methodology that had been used to teach reading to children with Down syndrome. The methodology uses mainly visual learning skills to teach literacy. Broun confirms Oelwein’s (1995) research by stating that phonemic awareness, auditory processing, and short-term memory skills are common areas of weakness amongst students with Down Syndrome. She postulates that the learning style of her students with autism is much the same; that visual skills are an area of strength. As a result, Broun implemented the method of visual-matching to teach literacy skills to her students with autism. Visual learning is the recommended style of learning for children who have autism. The idea is to teach to the student’s strength (spoken word is always presented with a visual, kinesthetic element). The methodology that Broun adapted from Oelwein’s research uses spoken words paired with a simultaneous picture or written word. A kinesthetic element is added through the pairing of letters, a picture that matches their sound, or word/sentence construction. The whole word approach is often used in this methodology because sight word recognition
results in more immediate success and unfamiliar individual words and letters can be, initially, too abstract for comprehension. Visual skills are frequently a strength for students with autism and, thus, it is easier for them to recognize whole words. Broun also states that letters and their sounds can be too abstract (letters in isolation are meaningless to them) and many children with developmental disabilities do not perceive letters as the building blocks to words and cannot necessarily blend them in a fluent manner (2004). Some children can learn phonics but are unable to apply phonics rules for fluent decoding. These students need to learn meaning and context for whole words. While this approach can be effective, it lacks a specific approach to gaining the skills necessary to decode and break down letter sounds and words. This method focuses more on memorization rather than phonics. It can be useful as a supplemental tool to other methods of learning. Oelwein (1995) suggests that learning using the visual approach should follow a specific process: (a) Acquisition/Word Recognition, (b) Fluency, (c) Transfer-recognition of word in different formats, (d) Generalization. The teacher’s guide created for this project, will focus on word recognition. Broun found that Oelwein’s approach to literacy skills for children with Down Syndrome generalized to students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and ultimately increased their ability to access many academic domains. This approach effectively teaches sight reading and memorization of words and sounds, and also helps with automaticity, but does not focus on building the essential skills needed for independent reading and problem solving.

It has been suggested that many students have difficulty with initial phonics instruction because they have no concept of the value or meaning of letters and words.
Broun (2004) suggests using a visual approach to teach approximately 20 personal words or, “Hook Words,” to students prior to introducing phonemic awareness Instruction. By teaching “Hook Words” students can be hooked into the idea of reading by connecting the visual image of a word with something that is important to them. For example, if a student is required to recognize the word, “candy,” before he gets candy, he may be more motivated to recognize the printed text that means candy. The combined visual-nonverbal approach incorporates this suggestion, by teaching personal words before introducing letter sounds and blending using the Nonverbal Reading Approach.

To help students access as much text as possible, the combined approach developed for this project will teach high frequency words as sight words. High frequency words are generally considered to be words on a list that are the words seen most often in text (Ferral, 2010). Sight words are those words that a student knows by sight without having to sound them out. Two of the most common lists of high frequency words are the Dolch 220 Word List and Fry’s List (Fry, Kress, & Fountoukidis, 1993). The first 25-50 words in frequency are virtually the same no matter what text is being considered. The primary reason frequencies vary by list is the types of text used to select words and frequencies (Ferral, 2010). The authors of this project have elected to use the first 100 words of Fry’s List. Fry’s 1000 Instant Words are the most common words in the English language. The words are arranged in order of frequency of occurrence in reading materials and in children’s writing. The first 100 word on Fry’s list make up about half of all written material (Fry, Kress, & Fountoukis, 1993).
The combined visual-nonverbal approach suggests pairing pictures with words, during the matching portion of each lesson, particularly in Phase 1 when teaching Hook Words. A visual representation of the important object or concept can increase the likelihood that the child will attend to the associated word. According to research from Slater (2002), picture symbols are suggested to be a valid strategy to use to increase reading and literacy skills in students with disabilities or impairments. The use of picture symbols is considered an effective method of adapting materials to meet students’ needs in an inclusive setting. Interventions that implement picture symbols alongside more traditional means of teaching literacy skills are far more effective than those with a singular method of instruction. Helping a student, especially one who is nonverbal, requires using a multi-faceted and complex approach to learning. Adaptations that meet a student’s strengths are vital for academic success.

**Evaluation**

Valid means of assessment are critically important for both research and practice of teaching nonverbal students to read. To measure effectiveness of various methods, it is necessary to first assess a baseline skill level, and then later assess levels of improvement. The visual approach primarily uses an informal means to assess whether or not a student is able to connect a word or letter with the sound it makes and/or its meaning. Using this approach to assess student understanding of individual words, students are asked to match words (Broun, 2004). To measure understanding of the meaning of text, Broun suggests asking students to match words, or to generate simple sentences using vocabulary words (either flashcards or print). The Nonverbal Reading
Approach uses a systematic method of assessment where diagnostic distracter arrays, error analysis, and error correction are implemented to assess student progress (Heller et al., 1999). In this approach a student is given a word choice for words learned through a visual format and is asked to identify a target word (i.e., “which one says cat”). This approach to assessment of student understanding addresses the student’s ability to decode words using learned letter sounds while also helping with accuracy. Any errors the student makes are recorded and analyzed for error response patterns, which allows teachers to target any specific problem areas. In terms of this project, this method of assessment, combined with the visual approach matching of words, is necessary to help a student work on accuracy, decoding ability, and overall fluency.

**Summary**

As the number of students entering our schools with nonverbal autism and selective mutism increases, it becomes more important to know how to best teach reading to those students who do not speak. A review of current research reveals that there are two primary approaches that can be used in conjunction with current general research-based interventions to teach reading to nonverbal students. Although there are a very small number of studies examining the effectiveness of each approach, these studies did not look at which approach is more effective for different types of nonverbal children; no research was found that analyzed instructional strategies or intervention that specifically addressed nonverbal learners. The project proposed will offer a combined visual-nonverbal reading intervention that specifically addresses the needs of our two populations, nonverbal learners with autism or selective mutism. Our project will offer a facilitator presentation for instruction for teachers to learn how to use the combined
visual-nonverbal reading intervention as well as a teacher’s guide that discusses how to teach students to read using this method.
Chapter 3
METHODS

Research

Many strategies were used when researching for this project. The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and EBSCO host databases were searched for journal articles using a variety of search terms. The key words “nonverbal student” were used with other terms, such as reading instruction, reading interventions, autism, and selective mutism. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) website was also searched for best practices in reading intervention. To provide up to date definitions of reading instruction terms (e.g., phonemic awareness, phonemic instruction, dominant language, etc.), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the National Reading Panel (NRP) under the U.S. Department of Child Development and Behavior were also researched. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were reviewed.

In addition to resources available electronically, books or manuals focused on reading instruction were used, including Thought and Language: Vygotsky in Context (Kozulin, 1986), and Putting Reading First 3rd Edition (National Institute for Literacy, 2006). The resources were read for content and categorized into groups to create an outline for the literature review. Each author was assigned particular topics of the outline to write sections of the literature review.
Development of the Presentation

The training presentation was developed to provide participants with knowledge of how to provide reading instruction and intervention to nonverbal students using a combined visual-nonverbal reading approach adapted from research based instructional strategies. The topics discussed in the literature review were integrated into the presentation to provide teachers and reading instructors a method of teaching and evaluating reading progress for students who are nonverbal. The training provides an overview of how to teach and implement the combined visual-nonverbal reading approach strategy to students. The training is designed to be presented in five hours, through the use of direct instruction and group participation. The PowerPoint presentation, handouts, and notes for presenters are located in the appendices of this project. A CD containing these materials will be provided to facilitate the presentations of the training workshops, using a computer and projector.
Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

The project, *Reading Interventions for Nonverbal Students*, resulted in the creation of one Power Point presentation intended to further educate and inform teachers, school psychologists, administrators, and other instructors on how to effectively instruct nonverbal students to read. This included an overview of the current research, paired with the creation of a combined reading approach based on the visual reading approach (Broun, 2004) and Nonverbal Reading Approach (Heller et al., 1999).

**Training Objectives**

The purpose of this project is to help provide schools and teachers with an effective specialized reading approach that specifically targets the needs of nonverbal students. The goal of the training is to adapt research based methods of specialized reading instruction to fit the needs of nonverbal students while also adhering to best practices in reading intervention. During the five hour workshop, teachers, administrators, school psychologists, and other instructors will be provided information through interactive participation, lecture, small-group practice, handouts, resources and a teaching guide.

The presenter’s manual and training (including Power Point presentation) are contained in Appendix A. The remaining documents include the teacher’s instruction guide, and can be found in Appendix B.
Interpretation

Too many children are not learning to read (NCLB, 2001). Every child should be given the opportunity to learn to read (NCLB, 2001). Individuals with special learning needs have difficulty acquiring the fundamental reading skills necessary to be able to learn using typical instruction (Joseph, 2008). Systematically adjusting and modifying interventions is highly successful at identifying and responding to individual learning concerns (Nelson-Walker et al., 2013). The Nonverbal Reading Approach acknowledges that learning can occur in a variety of ways (Heller et al., 1999). The Nonverbal Reading Approach uses typical methods of reading instruction (decoding, phonemic awareness, phonemic instruction) utilizing an alternative response expectation to oral expression (Heller et al., 1999). The visual approach emphasizes teaching to students’ strengths (Broun, 2004). This approach teaches sight reading and memorization of words and sounds, and also helps with automaticity.

It is suggested that reading instruction for nonverbal students be adapted to fit their individual learning needs. It is recommended that schools use research-based interventions and instructional strategies outlined in the visual and Nonverbal reading approaches to increase literacy in nonverbal students with autism and selective mutism. As a combined instructional strategy, the visual and Nonverbal Reading Approach closely follow best practices for reading instruction using direct and systematic instruction while also working on sight word reading, fluency, and automaticity.
Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered as a result of the findings within this project. It is recommended that teachers, administrators, school psychologists, and other related personnel (reading tutors, para-educators, etc.) attend the training in order to further their understanding of how to specifically address and teach to the learning needs of nonverbal students in reading. Through this training, it is hoped that schools will integrate the combined visual-nonverbal reading approach into their methodology for addressing the special learning needs of nonverbal students. In addition, it is recommended that the research community continue to evaluate the efficacy of using a combined visual-nonverbal reading approach. It would be beneficial to monitor the degree to which this method is successful with the nonverbal student population. In addition, further study is recommended to pinpoint the most effective reading interventions in helping nonverbal students learn to read. In addition, it may be interesting to research the short-term and long-term reading progress students achieve using the proposed method of instruction in this project. It is important to note that educators should continuously update their awareness of current trends and best practices for reading instruction for children with unique learning needs.
Appendix A
Teacher’s Guide
Introduction
About the Teacher Guide

The teacher’s guide to the combined, Nonverbal-Visual approach to reading instruction consists of ten lesson plans. The lesson plans are designed to be broken up into 30 minute sessions, presented three times per week. The lessons should be repeated three times to reinforce learning. Repetition is important for younger children to gain sustained knowledge. Through repetition students are able to experience a feeling of success when they are able to demonstrate the knowledge they have gained. Each lesson teaches three letter sounds, using the Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA) to teach focus words that include each of the focus sounds. By teaching letter sounds in this way, sound blending instruction is also a part of the process. The sounds and words are introduced in a systematic fashion, following the sequencing suggested by Light and McNaughton (2012) of Pennsylvania State University (All 26 letters of the alphabet are introduced through the 10 lessons. Each lesson also includes 10 of Dr. Edward Fry’s 1000 Instant Words (Fry, 1993). The 1st 100 words on the 1000 Instant Words list are taught in the 10 lessons provided in this guide.
**Combined Visual Non-verbal Reading Approach:**

**Phase 1: Hook Words**

Phase 1 is a preliminary component of the combined approach that teaches Hook Words to increase a child’s interest in and willingness to learn about letters and words. Hook Words are taught prior to teaching individual letter sounds and sound blending to help the student understand the value of words and to provide a meaningful context for learning letter sounds associations. Hook Words are words that are familiar to the student and have personal meaning in the student’s life. Using Hook Words to gain interest in words and letters can be especially effective for students with autism who have perseverative areas of interest.

**Phase 2: Guided Practice and Evaluation**

Phase 2 of the combined approach uses best practices in reading instruction in an adapted way to meet the needs of nonverbal students. The first section of each lesson uses the Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA) to teach letter sound correspondence and sound blending, and the second section of each lesson teaches sight words using a visual approach that was originally developed by Patricia Oelwein for students with Downs syndrome.

**Step 1:** Learn new letter sounds and focus words

Letter sound correspondences are taught through selected focus words that are simple, phonetically regular words that contain the letter sounds being taught. The focus words are taught using the Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA) developed by Heller and Diggs (1999).

**Step 2:** Learn new sight words

The sight words selected for this program are the first 100 words of Dr. Edward Fry’s 1000 Instant Words (Fry, 1993). Ten of the first 100 words are presented in each of the 10 lessons in the guide. The words are taught using the visual approach that was introduced by Patricia Oelwein (1995). The method involves a two-step process in which words are first matched using a word grid and word cards. The second step involves the student pointing to the word when it is presented orally.

**Step 3:** Review learned letter sounds and words

Lesson 10 of the Teacher’s Guide is a review of all letter sounds and repeated teaching of words that were not mastered in previous lessons.

**Step 4:** Evaluation

Evaluation should be conducted at the end of each week, after teaching three sessions of each lesson. Evaluation is conducted by reviewing each evaluation word using the Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA), then using a visual approach to demonstrate ability to correctly identify each word. First, the student sounds out each word in his head using ‘inner speech’ and points to each word.
Next, the teacher says the words out loud one by one, and asks the student to point to the target word. The student should point to the correct word that matches the word card on the word grid. Correct answers are recorded on an evaluation summary sheet.

**Step 5: Error Analysis**

The process of error analysis is implemented to fix any student errors. Student responses are recorded and analyzed to identify a lack of mastery of particular letter sounds and words. These sounds and words can then be retaught until mastery is achieved.

**Materials**
Materials List

- Shape Matching Card (Attachment A)
- Colored Shape Cards (Attachment B)
- Word Matching Grids for Each Lesson 1 – 10 (Attachments D-M)
- Blank Word Matching Grid (Attachment M)
- Word Selecting Grid (Attachment N)
- Personal (Blank) Word Cards (Attachment O)
- Word Cards for each Lesson (Attachments P-Y)
Materials:

**Shape Matching Grid and Shape Cards**

*Used in:*  
Prerequisite evaluation to ensure student has basic matching skills that are necessary for the combined visual-nonverbal approach.
**Preparation:**
Print Shape Matching Grid on white card stock
Print Sheet of Shape Cards on card stock
Laminate Matching Grid and Shape Cards (optional)
Cut out individual Shape Cards
Store in 10 x 13 Envelope Labeled *Shape Matching Activity*

**Blank Word Matching Grids:**
*Used in:* Phase 1 Personal Word Matching and Evaluation

**Preparation:**
1. Print on card stock
2. Laminate
3. Attach small piece of Velcro, or Velcro circle, to each section of the grid.

**Pre-printed Word Matching Grids:**
*Used In:* Phase 2 Step 1 – Word Matching

**Preparation:**
1. Print Word Matching Grids for each lesson on card stock.
2. Laminate.
3. Attach small piece of Velcro, or Velcro circle, to the blank sections of the grid below each printed word

**Word Selecting Grids (Blank Squares with Velcro):**
*Used In:* Phase 1 – Hook Words and Phase 2 Step 2 – Word Selecting

**Preparation:**
1. Draw four squares on oversized card stock or poster board.
2. Attach a small piece of Velcro strip or Velcro circle in the center of each square.

**Personal Word Cards:**
*Used In:* Phase 1 – Hook Words

**Preparation (2 Ways):**

**Option 1**
1. Type words onto blank word template
2. Print 2 copies of template with printed words (One for blank word grid and one for student to match)
3. Laminate printed template
4. Cut out word cards along printed lines
5. Attach small piece of Velcro strip or a Velcro circle to the back of each word card.

**Option 2**

1. Print blank word card template on card stock
2. Laminate printed templates
3. Cut out blank word cards along printed lines
4. Neatly write personal words on blank word cards with a dry erase marker.
   Use print that is as close as possible as the font used for pre-printed word cards (Calibri Body, 18 pt). Write each word two times (One for blank word grid and one for student to match).
5. Attach small piece of Velcro strip or Velcro circle to the back of each word card.
Materials:

Word Matching: Example Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the</th>
<th>of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Word Cards

Used In: Phase 2 – Combined visual-nonverbal approach guided practice and word matching and word selecting

Preparation:

1. Print 2 Copies of template of focus words and sight words for each lesson. (For Word Selecting, one word card will be attached to the Word Grid, and one will be given to the student to match)
2. Laminate printed template(s)
3. Cut out word cards along printed lines
4. Attach small piece of Velcro strip or a Velcro circle to the back of each word card.
**Word Card Boxes: (green, blue, yellow and red)**

**Used In:** Phase 1 and Phase 2 – Hook Words, focus words and sight words

**Preparation:**
1. Find four similar size boxes that are big enough to easily hold several word cards (Ex. shoe boxes, baby wipes containers, plastic storage containers)

2. Use poster paint or spray paint to paint one box yellow, one box blue, one box green and one box red. Boxes will be used as follow:
   - green box – new words for each lesson
   - blue box – correctly matched words
   - yellow box – correctly selected words
   - red box – words that need review
Prerequisite Evaluation  
Shape Matching Activity

What is the Shape Matching Activity?
Shape Matching requires the student to match basic colored shapes by placing a cut out shape onto a shape grid underneath an image of a matching shape.

Why is Shape Matching Important?
The first step in sight word instruction using Oelwein’s visual approach is word matching (Broun, 2004). In word matching, students are asked to place pre-printed word cards on a word grid underneath the matching word. The shape matching activity requires matching shapes in the same manner in which students are asked to match words using the visual approach. If a student is unable to demonstrate abilities necessary to match shapes, which are simpler than words, it is unlikely he will be able to benefit from instruction using word matching.

How is the evaluation administered?
Prior to beginning the combined approach reading intervention with nonverbal students, the student’s ability to match shapes should be evaluated. Administer this evaluation activity when the student is able to focus on the task. Shapes are presented left to right and top to bottom, to reinforce concepts of print. Use the outline below for detailed administration instructions. There is no formal scoring for this evaluation. The purpose is to determine if the student has the necessary basic skills to participate in the combined nonverbal-visual approach to reading instruction. If the student requires repeated instruction, and practice, but is eventually successful in matching shapes with only the guidance provided in the script, then the student should be able to successfully participate in the nonverbal-visual reading lessons.

Prerequisite Evaluation: Shape Matching

| Shape Matching | 1. Place the shape matching grid in front of student  
|                | 2. Give student the shape card with the red square  
|                | 3. Say: “Match it”  

| Correct Shape Match | 4. Say: “Good job matching the red square”  
| If student correctly matches the red square: | 5. Provide reinforcement (Optional)  
| | 6. Repeat with the yellow star |
If student does not correctly match the red square:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incorrect Word Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If student does not correctly match the red square:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pick up the red square card and place it where it correctly matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Say: “<strong>This is the red square</strong>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Pick up the red square card and hand it back to the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. Say:</strong> “<strong>Now you match it</strong>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Once student correctly matches the red square, repeat steps above with the yellow star, green triangle and blue circle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly match the red square, say, “<strong>Let’s try a different shape</strong>” and move on to the yellow star</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 1

**Phase 1: Hook Words**

**Personal Hook Words:**

By selecting familiar words first to teach nonverbal students, letter sounds have a more meaningful context. Select 5 sight words for each lesson that are personal to the child.

**What are personal Hook Words?**

Hook words are words that are familiar to the student and have personal meaning in the student’s life. Hook Words should be chosen according to the
child’s personal life (i.e., mom, dad, school, bus) and interests (toy, car, train, dinosaur, candy). It can be especially powerful for students on the autism spectrum to use words from their perseverative area(s) of interest.

**Why are they important?**

Hook words help the learner understand the value of words, and provide a meaningful context for learning letter sound associations. Hook Words can be particularly effective with students on the autism spectrum, who engage in repetitive word utterances, or narrow areas of interest. For example, a student who is fascinated with trains, may be more motivated to learn the word “train” than he would be to learn other words.

**How to teach them:**

Select the first 5 words through your personal knowledge of your student(s). Write each word on the lesson plan template below. Write each word on a word card (See Materials). Use the lesson plan script for Phase 1 to teach first 5 Hook Words. For Lesson B, you will review the first five Hook Words, and add the next five. Lessons A-E are shorter, preliminary lessons, that can be introduced daily for about 10-15 minutes depending on the individual student’s attention span. Continue this process until the student can consistently point to at least 15 personal words. When the student has learned 15-20 familiar words, begin Phase 2 of the combined visual-nonverbal approach.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson A</th>
<th>Lesson B</th>
<th>Lesson C</th>
<th>Lesson D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hook Words</td>
<td>Hook Words</td>
<td>Hook Words</td>
<td>Hook Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson Plan: Phase 1 – Hook Words
Prepare blank word matching grids and word cards for personal words prior to beginning lesson
Organize word cards in pairs, so you will have a word card to hand to the student that corresponds to the words attached to the blank word matching grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Word Matching** | 1. Place word matching grid with 4 personal words attached by Velcro in front of student  
|                   | 2. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: **mom**  
|                   | 3. Say: “**Match it**”  
|                   | 4. Display corresponding picture or object (optional)  
| **Correct Word Match** | 5. Say: “**Good job matching mom**”  
| If student correctly matches word: | 6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)  
|                   | 7. Remove the word from the word grid and place in blue box of correctly matched words.  
| **Incorrect Word Match** | 8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches  
| If student does not correctly match word: | 9. Ex. **mom**, Say: “**This is mom**”  
|                   | 10. Display corresponding picture or object (optional)  
|                   | 11. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student  
|                   | 12. Say: “**Now you match it**”  
| **Additional Teaching** | ➢ Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from personal wordlist  
|                   | ➢ After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “**Let’s try a different word**” and move on to next personal word in the lesson  
| **Word Selecting (15 minutes)** | 1. Attach 4 personal words to the word selecting grid  
| Words student has successfully matched (from blue box) | 2. Say: “**Point to mom**”  
| **Correct Selection** | 3. Say: “**Good job pointing to mom**”  
| If student points to the correct word | 4. Provide reinforcement (optional)  
|                   | 5. Remove that word from the word selecting grid and put in yellow box of learned words  
|                   | 6. Repeat steps above for each new
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incorrect Selection</th>
<th>personal word presented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *If student does not point to the correct word* | 7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.  
8. Say: “This is mom”  
9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid  
10. Say: “Now you point to mom” |
| Additional Teaching | ➢ Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above. |
Phase 2
Phase 2: Overview
Letter Sound Correspondences

What are they?
Letter sounds correspondences involve knowledge of the letter sounds represented by the letters of the alphabet and the letters used to represent the sounds.

Why are they important?
To learn to read words, the learner must recognize the letters in a word and associate each letter with its sound. Letter sound correspondence and phonological awareness skills are the basic building blocks of literacy learning.

How are they taught?
Each lesson in this guide teaches letter sound correspondences using the Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA) developed by Heller and Diggs (1999). Each letter sound is taught through selected focus words that are simple, phonetically regular words that contain the letter sound being taught. Each focus word is introduced by emphasizing individual letter sounds in the word, and then blending the sounds together using internal speech. That is, students are instructed to “say it in your head”, first slowly, and then quickly to hear the word in their mind.

Sound Blending

What is it?
Sound blending is the ability to build words from individual sounds by blending the sounds together in sequence. For example, the learner blends the sounds m/o/m to form the word “mom”.

Why is it important?
Sound blending is essential for reading. In order to read words, the learner must know the sounds for each of the letters, then blend these sounds together to determine the word.

How to teach it:
Follow the lesson plan (outlines/scripts) beginning in Phase 2 for teaching blending of focus words with Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA). Use focus words suggested for each lesson’s letter sounds to provide sound blending instruction using NRA methods.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Required Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Letter Sounds: a m t | • Lesson 1 word matching grid  
Focus Words: a, at, am, mat | • focus word cards  
Fry’s List Sight Words: the, of, and, to, in, you, of, that, it  
**Challenge Word**: pant |
| **2**  |                   |
| Letter Sounds: p o n | • Lesson 2 word matching grid  
Focus Words: pat, not, pan, pot, mop, top, map | • word selecting grid  
Fry’s List Sight Words: the, of, and, to, in, you, of, that, it  
**Challenge Word**: pant |
| **3**  |                   |
| Letter Sounds: c d u | • Lesson 3 word matching grid  
Focus Words: cup, cut, mud, cat, put | • word selecting grid  
Fry’s List Sight Words: at, be, this, have, from, or, one, had, by, word  
**Challenge Word**: camp |
| **4**  |                   |
| Letter Sounds: s g h | • Lesson 4 word matching grid  
Focus Words: hot, hut, hug, sun, sog | • word selecting grid  
Fry’s List Sight Words: but, not, what, all, were, we, when, your, can, said  
**Challenge Word**: hunt |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Letter Sounds</th>
<th>Focus Words</th>
<th>Fry’s List Sight Words</th>
<th>Challenge Word</th>
<th>Additional Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5      | ifb           | fan, ban, fib, fin, bin | there, use, an, each, which, she, do, how, their, if | fibs          | - Lesson 5 word matching grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - word selecting grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - focus word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - cover card  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - Fry’s List sight word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - colored boxes  |
| 6      | ler           | net, let, red, led, bed | will, up, other, about, out, many, then, them, these, so | rent           | - Lesson 6 word matching grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - word selecting grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - focus word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - cover card  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - Fry’s List sight word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - colored boxes  |
| 7      | wkh           | won, win, kin, fix, fox | some, her, would, make, like, him, into, time, has, look | Wink           | - Lesson 7 word matching grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - word selecting grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - focus word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - cover card  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - Fry’s List sight word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - colored boxes  |
| 8      | vyz           | vet, yet, zit, zen, yen | two, more, write, go, see, number, no, way, could, people | Vent           | - Lesson 8 word matching grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - word selecting grid  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - focus word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - cover card  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - Fry’s List sight word cards  
|        |               |             |                        |                | - colored boxes  |
|   | **Letter Sounds**: j q  
Focus Words: jet, jam, jab, just, quest, quit, quill  
Fry’s List Sight Words: the, of, and, to, in, you, of, that, it  
Challenge Word: queen | • Lesson 9 word matching grid  
• word selecting grid  
• focus word cards  
• cover card  
• Fry’s List sight word cards  
• colored boxes |
|---|---|
| 9 | **Letter Sounds**: all  
Review Words: mat, top, cup, hug, sun, fib, red, win, fox, kin, vet, zen, yet, jam, quill  
Fry’s List Sight Words: long, down, dye, did, get, come, made, may, part, over | • Lesson 10 word matching grid  
• Word selecting grid  
• focus word cards  
• cover card  
• Fry’s List sight word cards  
• colored boxes |

**Lesson 1: Overview**
Focus Sounds: a m t

Focus Words:
- a
- at
- am
- mat

Fry’s List Sight Words:
- the
- of
- and
- to
- in
- is
- you
- that
- it

Lesson 1: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Participation</td>
<td>1. Say: “Let’s look at some new sounds and words together”. Review focus words using word cards. Go through sounding out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Letter Sounds</td>
<td>4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say: “Say the sound of this letter in your head”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “m”. Student says “m” in his head.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Blending Slow</td>
<td>7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Say: m/a/..(uncover next letter)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Say: “a” have student say “a” in his head</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Uncover whole word, mat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Say: “t”. Student says “t” in his head.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Blending Fast</td>
<td>12. Say: “Now say it in your head all together smoothly, do not stop between sounds.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Say: “m/a/t” pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Say “Now say it in your head fast”. Say the whole word out loud.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Teaching</td>
<td>➢ Teach student other focus words which include new focus letter sounds as well as review letter sounds, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. at, am).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Matching</td>
<td>1. Place 1st word grid for Lesson 1 with 4 words in front of the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Give student 1st word card Example: the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (corresponding to a word on the template – word cards will need to be organized ahead of time to correspond with pre-printed word</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct Word Match</td>
<td>Incorrect Word Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If student correctly matches word:</td>
<td>When student does not correctly match word:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Say: “match it”</td>
<td>8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say: “Good job matching the”</td>
<td>9. Say: “This is the”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)</td>
<td>10. Pick up word card and hand it back to student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words. (When all 4 words from the first word grid have been taught, use 2nd word grid, and next 4 words – continue until all words for the lesson are taught, or until time is up)</td>
<td>11. Say: “Now you match it”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Teaching**

- Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words on the word grids for that lesson.
- After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and place the word in the red box. Continue with next word.

**Word Selecting (15 minutes)**

Words student has successfully matched (from blue box)

- Attach 4 words from the blue box of correctly matched words to the word grid
- Say: “Point to the”

**Correct Selection**

If student points to the correct word

- Say: “Good job pointing to the”
- Provide reinforcement (optional)
- Remove that word from the word grid and put in yellow box of learned words
- Repeat steps above for each new word presented

**Incorrect Selection**

If student does not point to the correct word

- Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.
- Say: “This is the”
- Place word card back onto word selecting grid
- Say: “Now you point to, the”

**Additional Teaching**

- Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.
- After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and place the word in the red box.
Lesson 2: Overview

Review Sounds: a  m  t
Focus Sounds:   p  o  n

Focus Words: *Challenge Word: pant
  ▪  pat
  ▪  not
  ▪  pan
  ▪  mop
  ▪  top
  ▪  map

Fry’s List Sight Words:
  ▪  he
  ▪  was
  ▪  for
  ▪  on
  ▪  are
  ▪  as
  ▪  with
  ▪  his
  ▪  they

Lesson 2: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Participation</td>
<td>1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Review Sounds:** m/a/t Review focus words using word cards. Go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound (m, a, t). Then say: “**Look at this word** “. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. top)

3. Say: “**Lets sound this out together**”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Letter Sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say. “<strong>Say the sound of this letter in your head</strong>”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “t”. Student says “t” in his head.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Blending Slow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Say: t/o/… (uncover next letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Say: “o” have student say “o” in his head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Uncover whole word, t/o/p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Blending Fast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Say: “<strong>Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds.</strong>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Say: t/o/p” pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Say: “<strong>Now say it in your head fast</strong>”. Say the whole word out loud.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Teach student other focus words, which include new focus letter sounds as well as review letter sounds. Make sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. map, mop).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Place focus word cards and challenge word cards in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Matching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct Word Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If student correctly matches word:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Place 1st word grid for Lesson 2 with 4 words in front of student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: “he”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Say: “match It”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say: “Correct Word Match”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. When all 4 words from the 1st word grid have been taught, use 2nd word grid and next 4 words (continue until all words for the lesson are taught – or until time is up)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words for Lesson 2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Selecting (15 minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words student has successfully matched (from blue box):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Attach 4 words from the blue box of correctly matched words to the word grid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Say: “Point to he”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Selection</th>
<th>Incorrect Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If student points to the correct word:</strong></td>
<td><strong>If student does not point to the correct word:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Say: “Good job pointing to he”’</td>
<td>7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Provide reinforcement (optional)</td>
<td>8. Ex. he, Say, “This is he”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Remove that word from the word grid and put in yellow box of learned words</td>
<td>9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Repeat steps above for each new word presented</td>
<td>10. Say: “Now you point to he”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, place word in red box, say, “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from the blue box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Lesson 3: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Active Participation** | 1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”  
2. **Review Sounds:** a, m, t, p. Review focus words using word cards. Go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound (m, p, a). Then say: **Look at this word** “. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. cup)  
3. Say: “**Let’s sound this out together**”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable). |
| **Internal Speech Letter Sounds** | 4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.  
5. Say: “**Say the sound of this letter in your head**”.  
6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “c”. Student says “c” in his head. |
| **Internal Speech Blending Slow** | 7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.  
8. Say: c/u/… (uncover next letter)  
9. Say: “**u**” have student say “u” in his head  
10. Uncover whole word, c/u/p  
11. Say: ”p”. Student says ”p” in his head. |
| **Internal Speech Blending Fast** | 12. Say: “**Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds,”**  
13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.  
14. Say: c/u/p” pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.  
15. Say: “**Now say it in your head fast**”. Say the whole word out loud. |
| **Additional Teaching** | ➢ **Teach student other focus words, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. mud, cut, cat, etc...).**  
➢ **Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above**  
➢ **Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction.** |
| **Word Matching** | 1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards) |
from previous lesson and follow steps below)
2. Place 1st word grid for Lesson 3 with 4 words in front of student
3. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template- word cards will need to be organized to correspond to word grid).
   Example: had
4. Say: “Match it”

| Correct Word Match  | 5. Say: “Good job matching had”
|---------------------|-----------------------------
| If student correctly matches word: | 6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)
|                        | 7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words

| Incorrect Word Match | 8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches
|----------------------|-----------------------------
| If student does not correctly match word: | 9. Ex. had, Say: “This is had”
|                        | 10. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student
|                        | 11. Say: “Now you match it”

| Additional Teaching | ➢ Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide
|---------------------|-----------------------------
|                    | ➢ After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from green box

| Word Selecting (15 minutes) | 1. Attach 4 words from the blue box of correctly matched words to the word grid
| Words student has successfully matched (from blue box) | 2. Say: “Point to had”

| Correct Selection | 3. Say: “Good job pointing to had”
| If student points to the correct word | 4. Provide reinforcement (optional)
| | 5. Remove that word from the word selecting grid and put in yellow box of learned words
| | 6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented

| Incorrect Selection | 7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.
| If student does not point to the correct word | 8. Say: “This is had”
| | 9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid
| | 10. Say: “Now you point to had”

| Additional Teaching | ➢ Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.

---

Lesson 4: Overview

Review Sounds: o u n c
Focus Sounds: s g h
Focus Words: *Challenge Word: hunt

- hot
- hut
- gun
- sun
- sog

Sight Words:

- but
- not
- what
- all
- were
- we
- when
- your
- can
- said

Lesson 4: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Participation</td>
<td>1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Review Sounds: o, u, n, c. Review focus words using word cards. Then go through sounding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Letter Sounds</td>
<td>4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Say: <strong>“Say the sound of this letter in your head”</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, <strong>“s”</strong>. Student says “s” in his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Blending Slow</td>
<td>7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Say: s/u/… (uncover next letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Say: <strong>“u”</strong> have student say “u” in his head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Uncover whole word, s/u/n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Say: <strong>“n”</strong>. Student says “n” in his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Blending Fast</td>
<td>12. Say: <strong>“Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds”</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Say: s/u/n” pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. Say: <strong>“Now say it in your head fast”</strong>. Say the whole word out loud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Teaching</td>
<td>➢ <strong>Teach student other focus words, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. gun, hut, got, etc...).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ <strong>Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ <strong>Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Matching</td>
<td>1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards from previous lesson and follow steps below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Place 1st word grid for Lesson 4 with 4 words in front of student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: <strong>can</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Say: <strong>“Match it”</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Correct Word Match

**If student correctly matches word:**

5. Say: **“Good job matching can”**
6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)
7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words

### Incorrect Word Match

**If student does not correctly match word:**

8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches
9. Ex. **can, Say: “This is can”**
10. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student
11. Say: **“Now you match it”**

### Additional Teaching

- Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide and Lesson 4 word grids
- After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, **“Let’s try a different word”** and pull new word from green box

### Word Selecting (15 minutes)

**Words student has successfully matched (from blue box):**

1. Attach 4 words from the green box of new Lesson 4 words to the word selecting grid
2. Ex. **can, Say: “Point to can”**

### Correct Selection

**If student points to the correct word**

3. Say: **“Good job pointing to can”**
4. Provide reinforcement (optional)
5. Remove that word from the word grid and put in yellow box of learned words
6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented

### Incorrect Selection

**If student does not point to the correct word**

7. Lift correct word card from word grid and hold it right in front of student.
8. Say: **“This is can”**
9. Place word card back onto word grid
10. Say: **“Now you point to can”**

### Additional Teaching

- Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.

---

**Lesson 5: Overview**

**Review Sounds:**

- g
- a
- n
- s
Focus Sounds: $i \ f \ b$

Focus Words:
- fan
- ban
- fib
- fin
- bin

*Challenge Word: fibs*

Sight Words:
- there
- use
- an
- each
- which
- she
- do
- how
- their
- if

---

**Lesson 5: Example Lesson for Guided Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Active Participation | 1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”  
2. **Review Sounds**: $g$, $a$, $n$, $s$. Review focus words using focus word cards. Then go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound ($i$, $f$, $b$). Then say: “**Look at this word**”. Hold up a word card for student with |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Letter Sounds</th>
<th>entire word. (ex. fib)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Say: “<strong>Lets sound this out together</strong>”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Blending Slow</td>
<td>4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Say: “<strong>Say the sound of this letter in your head</strong>”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “f”. Student says “f” in his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Speech Blending Fast</td>
<td>7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Say: f/i/… (uncover next letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Say: “i” have student say “i” in his head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Uncover whole word, f/i/b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Teaching</td>
<td>➢ <strong>Teach student other focus words, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. ban, fit, fan, etc…).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ <strong>Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ <strong>Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Matching</td>
<td>1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards from previous lesson and follow steps below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Place 1st word grid for Lesson 5 with 4 words in front of student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template) Example: <strong>there</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Say: “<strong>Match It</strong>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct Word Match</td>
<td>5. Say: “<strong>Good job matching there</strong>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If student correctly matches word:</td>
<td>7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Incorrect Word Match If student does not correctly match word: | 8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches  
9. Ex. there. Say: “This is there”  
10. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student  
11. Say: “Now you match it” |

**Additional Teaching**

- Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide  
- After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from the green box

| Word Selecting (15 minutes) Words student has successfully matched (from blue box) | 1. Attach 4 words from the blue box to the word selecting grid  
2. ex. there Say: “Point to there” |

**Correct Selection** If student points to the correct word  
| 3. Say: “Good job pointing to there”  
4. Provide reinforcement (optional)  
5. Remove that word from the word selecting grid and put in yellow box of learned words  
6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented |

**Incorrect Selection** If student does not point to the correct word  
| 7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.  
8. Say: “This is there”  
9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid  
10. Say: “Now you point to there” |

**Additional Teaching**

- Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.

Lesson 6: Overview

Review Sounds:  i  t  d  b
Focus Sounds:  l  e  r
Focus Words:  *Challenge Word: rent
  ▪ net
  ▪ let
  ▪ red
  ▪ led
  ▪ bed

Sight Words:
  ▪ will
  ▪ up
  ▪ other
  ▪ about
- out
- many
- then
- them
- these
- so

Lesson 6: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Participation</strong></td>
<td>1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Review Sounds: i, t, d, b. Review focus words using word cards. Go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound (l. e. r). Then say: “Look at this word “. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. red)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Say: “Let's sound this out together”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Internal Speech Letter Sounds** | 4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.  
|                              | 5. Say: “Say the sound of this letter in your head”.  
|                              | 6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “r”. Student says “r” in his head. |
| **Internal Speech Blending Slow** | 7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.  
|                              | 8. Say: r/e/… (uncover next letter)  
|                              | 9. Say: “e” have student say “e” in his head  
|                              | 10. Uncover whole word, r/e/d  
| **Internal Speech Blending Fast** | 12. Say: “Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds.”  
|                              | 13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the |
whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.
14. Cup. **Say: r/e/d**” pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.
15. Say: “**Now say it in your head fast**”. Say the whole word out loud.

**Additional Teaching**
- Teach student other focus words, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. led, bed, let, etc...).
- Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above
- Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction.

**Word Matching**
1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards from previous lesson and follow steps below)
2. Place 1st word grid for Lesson 6 with 4 words in front of student
3. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: will
4. Say: “**Match it**”

**Correct Word Match**
*If student correctly matches word:*
5. Say: “**Good job matching will**”
6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)
7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words

**Incorrect Word Match**
*If student does not correctly match word:*
8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches
9. Say: “**This is will**”
10. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student
11. Say: “**Now you match it**”

**Additional Teaching**
- Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide
- After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “**Let's try a different word**” and pull new word from the green box

**Word Selecting (15 minutes)**
*Words student has successfully matched (from blue box)*
1. Attach 4 words from the blue box to the word selecting grid
2. Ex. will: Say: “**Point to will**”

**Correct Selection**
*If student points to the correct word*
3. Say: “**Good job pointing to will**”
4. Provide reinforcement (optional)
5. Remove that word from the word selecting grid and put in yellow box of learned words
6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented
### Incorrect Selection
*If student does not point to the correct word*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Say: “This is will”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Place word card back onto word selecting grid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Say: “<strong>Now you point to will</strong>”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Additional Teaching

- Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.

---

**Lesson 7: Overview**

**Review Sounds:**

- i
- o
- f
- r
- l

**Focus Sounds:**

- w
- k
- x

**Focus Words:**

- *Challenge Word:* wink
  - won
  - win
  - kin
  - fix
  - fox

**Sight Words:**

- some
- her
- would
- make
- like
- him
- into
- time
- has
- look

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**Lesson 7: Example Lesson for Guided Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Active Participation** | 1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”
2. **Review Sounds**: i, o, f, r, l. Review focus words using word cards. Go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound (w, k, x). Then say: **Look at this word**. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. fix)
3. Say: “Let’s sound this out together”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable). |
| **Internal Speech Letter Sounds** | 4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.
5. Say: “Say the sound of this letter in your head”.
6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “f”. Student says “f” in his head. |
| **Internal Speech Blending Slow** | 7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.
8. Say: f/i/… (uncover next letter)
9. Say: “i” have student say “i” in his head
10. Uncover whole word, f/i/x
| **Internal Speech Blending Fast** | 12. Say: “Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds.”
13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.
14. Say: f/cks” pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.
15. Say: “Now say it in your head fast”. Say the whole word out loud. |
| **Additional Teaching** | ➢ Teach student other focus words, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. fox, win, kin, etc...).
➢ Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above
➢ Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction. |
<p>| <strong>Word Matching</strong> | 1. Review any words from the red box from the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Word Match</th>
<th>Incorrect Word Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If student correctly matches word:</strong></td>
<td><strong>If student does not correctly match word:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say: “Good job matching some”</td>
<td>8. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)</td>
<td>9. Ex. <em>some</em>, Say: “This is some”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words</td>
<td>10. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Teaching</strong></td>
<td>11. Say: “Now you match it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from green box</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Selecting (15 minutes)</th>
<th><strong>Correct Selection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words student has successfully matched (from blue box)</strong></td>
<td><strong>If student points to the correct word</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Attach 4 words from the blue box of correctly matched words to the word selecting grid</td>
<td>3. Say: “Good job pointing to some”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Say: “Point to some”</td>
<td>4. Provide reinforcement (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorrect Selection</strong></td>
<td>5. Remove that word from the word selecting grid and put in yellow box of learned words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If student does not point to the correct word</strong></td>
<td>6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.</td>
<td>8. Say: “This is some”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid</td>
<td>10. Say: “Now you point to some”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Teaching</strong></td>
<td>➢ Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson 8: Overview

Review Sounds:  e  i  w  x  k
Focus Sounds:  v  y  z
Focus Words:  *Challenge Word: vent
  - vet
  - yet
  - zit
  - zen
  - yen

Sight Words:
  - two
  - more
  - write
  - go
  - see
  - number
  - no
  - way
  - could
  - people

Lesson 8: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Participation</td>
<td>1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Review Sounds: e, i, w, x, k. Review focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
words using word cards. Go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound (v, y, z). Then say: “**Look at this word**”. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. yet)

3. Say: “**Let’s sound this out together**”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Letter Sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say: “<strong>Say the sound of this letter in your head</strong>”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says, “<strong>y</strong>”. Student says “<strong>y</strong>” in his head.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Blending Slow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Say: <strong>y/e/…</strong> (uncover next letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Say: “<strong>e</strong>” have student say “<strong>e</strong>” in his head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Uncover whole word, <strong>y/e/t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Say: ‘<strong>t</strong>’. Student says “<strong>t</strong>” in his head.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Speech Blending Fast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Say: “<strong>Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds.</strong>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Say: <strong>y/u/t</strong> pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Say: “<strong>Now say it in your head fast</strong>”. Say the whole word out loud.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Teach student other similar sound words,</strong> making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. vet, yen, zit, zen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <strong>Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Matching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards from previous lesson and follow steps below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Place 1* word matching grid for Lesson 7 in front of student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Give student 1* word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: <strong>some</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Say: “This is some”  
5. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student  
6. Say: “Match It”  

**Correct Word Match**  
*If student correctly matches word:*  
7. Say: “Good job matching some”  
8. Provide reinforcement (Optional)  
9. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words  

**Incorrect Word Match**  
*If student does not correctly match word:*  
10. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches  
11. Ex. *some*, Say: “This is some”  
12. Give the word card back to the student  
13. Say: “Now you match it”  

**Additional Teaching**  
- Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide  
- After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from green box  

**Word Selecting (15 minutes)**  
*Words student has successfully matched (from blue box):*  
1. Attach 4 words to the word grid  
2. Say: “Point to some”  

**Correct Selection**  
*If student points to the correct word:*  
3. Say: “Good job pointing to some”  
4. Provide reinforcement (optional)  
5. Remove that word from the word grid and put in yellow box of learned words  
6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented  

**Incorrect Selection**  
*If student does not point to the correct word:*  
7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.  
8. Say, “This is some”  
9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid  
10. Say: “Now you point to, some”  

**Additional Teaching**  
- Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.

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**Lesson 9: Overview**

**Review Sounds:**  
- e  
- i  
- w  
- x  
- k  

**Focus Sounds:**  
- v  
- y  
- z  

**Focus Words:**  
*Challenge Word: queen*
- jet
- jam
- jab
- just
- quest
- quit
- quill

Sight Words:
- my
- than
- first
- water
- been
- call
- who
- oil
- now
- find
Lesson 9: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Active Participation** | 1. Say: “Let’s review and learn some new sounds and words together”  
2. **Review Sounds:** a, i, u, e, b, m, s, t. Review focus words using word cards. Go through sounding out each new letter. Say the letter, then the sound (j, q). Then say: “**Look at this word** “. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. quit)  
3. Say: “**Let’s sound this out together**”. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable). |
| **Internal Speech Letter Sounds** | 4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.  
5. Say: “**Say the sound of this letter in your head**”.  
6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says ‘qu’. Student says “kweh” in his head.  
**Note:** ‘qu’ is taught as one sound. (kweh) |
| **Internal Speech Blending Slow** | 7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.  
8. Say: qu/i… (uncover next letter)  
9. Say: “**i**” have student say “i” in his head  
10. Uncover whole word, kweh/i/t  
11. Say: “**t**”. Student says “t” in his head. |
| **Internal Speech Blending Fast** | 12. Say: **“Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds.”**  
13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.  
14. Say: **kweh/i/t** pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.  
15. Say: **“Now say it in your head fast”**. Say the whole word out loud. |
| **Additional Teaching** | ➢ Teach student other focus words, making sure to note the differences in letters and sounds (i.e. quick, quest, quill, jet, just, etc…).  
➢ **Introduce challenge word, following steps 1-15 above**  
➢ Place focus words in green box with Fry’s List word cards to be used in Step 2 (Word Selecting) instruction. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Matching</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review any words from the red box from the</td>
<td>1. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards from previous lesson and follow steps below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>previous lesson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Place 1st word grid with 4 words in front of</td>
<td>2. Place 1st word grid with 4 words in front of student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to</td>
<td>3. Give student 1st word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: quit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a word on the template)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Say: “Match it”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct Word Match</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If student correctly matches word:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Say: “Good job matching quit”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide reinforcement (Optional)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Remove the word from the template board and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>place in blue box of correctly matched words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect Word Match</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If student does not correctly match word:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Pick up word card and place it where it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>correctly matches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Say: “This is quit”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Pick up word card and hand it back to the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Say: “Now you match it”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Once student correctly matches word, repeat</td>
<td>➢ Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steps 2-10 above with following words from list</td>
<td>➢ After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say: “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on Sequencing Guide</td>
<td>green box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ After 3 attempts, if a student has not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>correctly matched the word, say: “Let’s try a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different word” and pull new word from green box</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Selecting (15 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words student has successfully matched (from blue</td>
<td>1. Attach 4 words from the blue box of correctly matched words to the word selecting grid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Say: “Point to quit”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct Selection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If student points to the correct word</td>
<td>3. Say: “Good job pointing to quit”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provide reinforcement (optional)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Remove that word from the word selecting grid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and put in yellow box of learned words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Repeat steps above for each new word presented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect Selection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If student does not point to the correct word</td>
<td>7. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Say: “This is quit”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Place word card back onto word selecting grid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Say: “Now you point to quit”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Teaching</td>
<td>➢ Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson 10: Overview

Review all sounds: a m t p o n
c d u s g h i f b l
e r w k x y y z i q

Focus Words:
- mat
- top
- cup
- hug
- sun
- fib
- red
- win
- fox
- kin
- vet
- zen
- yet
- jam
- quill

Sight Words:
- long
- down
- dye
- did
- get
- come
- made
- may
- part
- over

Lesson 10: Example Lesson for Guided Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Participation</td>
<td>1. Say: “You have learned a sound for each letter of the alphabet. Let’s review some</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Review focus words using focus word cards. Go through sounding out each letter. Say the letter, then the sound (h, g). Then say, “Look at this word”. Hold up a word card for student with entire word. (ex. hug). Say, “Let’s sound this out together”.

3. Point to each letter and say the sounds aloud, have student attempt to sound out the word (approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable).

4. Show the student the first letter of the word by covering the other letters with a sticky note or piece of paper.

5. Say: “Say the sound of this letter in your head”.

6. Provide an example to the student. Teacher says ‘h’. Student says “h” in his head.

7. Show the next letter of the word by moving the covering paper and repeat steps 4 for the entire word.

8. Say: h/u… (uncover next letter)

9. Say: “u” have student say “u” in his head

10. Uncover whole word, h/u/g

11. Say: “g”, Student says “g” in his head.

12. Say: “Now say it in your head all together. Smoothly, do not stop between sounds.”

13. Point to each sound and slowly sound out the whole word as the student sounds out the word using internal speech.

14. Say: h/u/g pointing to each letter sound. Student will say the word in his head.

15. Say: “Now say it in your head fast”. Say the whole word out loud.

1. Teach student other focus words, from the red box of words that have not yet been mastered

2. Review any words from the red box from the previous lesson (Use word grid and word cards from previous lesson and follow steps below)

3. Place 1” word grid with 4 words in front of student

4. Give student 1” word card (corresponding to a word on the template), Example: hug

5. Say: “Match It”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>matches word:</strong></th>
<th>8. Remove the word from the template board and place in blue box of correctly matched words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Incorrect Word Match** | 9. Pick up word card and place it where it correctly matches  
If student does not correctly match word:  
10. Say: “This is hug”  
11. Pick up word card and hand it back to the student  
12. Say: “Now you match it” |
| **Additional Teaching** | 13. Once student correctly matches word, repeat steps 2-10 above with following words from list on Sequencing Guide  
14. After 3 attempts, if a student has not correctly matched the word, say, “Let’s try a different word” and pull new word from green box |
| **Word Selecting (15 minutes)** | 15. Attach 4 words from the blue box of correctly matched words to the word selecting grid  
16. Say: “Point to hug” |
| **Correct Selection** | 17. Say: “Good job pointing to hug”  
18. Provide reinforcement (optional)  
19. Remove that word from the word grid and put in yellow box of learned words  
20. Repeat steps above for each new word presented |
| **Incorrect Selection** | 21. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.  
22. Say: “This is hug”  
23. Place word card back onto word selecting grid  
24. Say: “Now you point to, hug”  
25. Once student correctly points to the word, repeat steps 1-6 above. |

Evaluation: Overview

What is evaluation?
Evaluation is the process of recording words that a student has learned and correcting any errors. This process involves analyzing any errors in the student’s understanding of words, letters, sounds or blends.

Why is it important?
Evaluation is a critical step in the process because it measures learning progress and teaches the student how to decode properly and fix any errors. It is ultimately what helps to build reading fluency.

How is it administered?
Using the visual approach matching grid, the teacher displays selected words for each lesson. The student sounds out each word in the head using ‘inner speech’ and points to each word. The teacher says the words out loud one by one, and then the teacher asks the student to point to a target word. The student points to the correct word than matches the correct sight word card with the same word on the matching grid. Correct answers are recorded; the process of error analysis is implemented to fix any student errors.

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Evaluation: Overview

*Conduct evaluation at the end of each week, after teaching 3 Sessions of each Lesson*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Teacher Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Select words for evaluation   | 1. Select 10 words from the lesson – Include all focus words, and a random selection of Fry’s List sight words to create a 10 Word List  
2. Type or write words onto evaluation list  
3. Organize word cards so you have two |
| **Word Selecting** | 4. Attach 4 word cards to the word selecting grid, including the 1st word on the evaluation list (Words can be a combination of evaluation words and other words from the lesson, at the teacher’s discretion)  
5. Say: “Let’s test the words you know. First, say all the words you see on the board using inner speech.” Have the student point to each word they are reviewing as he says the word in his head.  
6. Assess word identification ability for each word on the Evaluation List  
7. Ex. red Say: “Point to red” |
| **Correct Selection**  
*If student points to the correct word* | 8. Say: “Good job pointing to red”  
9. Provide reinforcement (optional)  
10. Remove that word from the word selecting grid and put in yellow box of learned words  
11. Mark “1” in the points column of the evaluation list  
12. Repeat steps above for each new personal word presented |
| **Incorrect Selection**  
*If student does not point to the correct word* | 13. Lift correct word card from word selecting grid and hold it right in front of student.  
14. Say: “This is red”  
15. Mark “0” in the points column of the Evaluation List  
16. Repeat Steps above for each word on the Evaluation List |
| **Evaluation Scoring** | 17. Total number of points in points column. Enter the total in the space provided at the bottom of the list  
18. Also record this number on the evaluation summary page |
| **Error Analysis** | 19. Analyze student’s response record and identify any errors in letter sounds or whole words. Look for any patterns in the student’s error response (i.e., confuses the ‘r’ with ‘t’, or car for cat).  
20. Review the incorrect responses with the student. Explain the error to the student and go over similar words or letter sounds. |
| Guided Practice Review | 21. Review errors in letter sounds or words using the guided practice process outlined in lessons 1 through 10 of phase 2. |

Appendix B
Presentation Slides
Reading Interventions for Nonverbal Students

By
Erin Moore
Leanne Sudduth
Welcome and Introduction

• Partner up with someone at your table, discuss how you would currently approach teaching reading to nonverbal students.

• How much time is spent each day on reading interventions for your students? Nonverbal students?

Note to presenter:
Begin by introducing yourself and the presentation topic.

Activity:
Ask participants how they currently would teach nonverbal students to read and how much time they spend each day on reading interventions with students. Allow five minutes for the discussion.
Presentation Outline

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Population
- 3. Literacy
- 4. Best practices for reading intervention
- 5. Nonverbal Approach Overview/Methodology
- 6. Visual Approach methodology
- 7. Combined Approach
  - Reasons to combine approaches
  - Integrated Lesson Plan
  - Lesson Sequencing
  - Tips for successful implementation
- 8. Additional Learning
- 9. Resources
- 10. References

Note to presenter:

Say:

Here is an outline of what we will be covering today.
Introduction

Many education professionals are faced with questions about how to teach nonverbal students to read.

- How?
- What do I use?
- What does it look like?
- What are the steps?

Note to presenter:
After the discussion, briefly talk about some of the challenges and questions teachers have about how to teach nonverbal students to read.
## Agenda

Participants will:
- Learn strategies and interventions for teaching nonverbal students to read
- Learn proper sequencing of instructional planning, implementation and student learning for the combined visual-nonverbal approach
- Observe a demonstration lesson on how to use the combined visual and non-verbal approach to learn
- Understand intervention/lesson structure, sequence, learning time, evaluation, and student mastery of standards
- Learn how student engagement, feedback, and correctives are utilized

### Note to presenter:
Briefly discuss what the presentation will be teaching participants.
Note to presenter

Activity:
Ask participants for examples of their experiences working with nonverbal students.
Have participants get into pairs.
Go around the room and give one participant in each pairing a topic to try and communicate to their partner nonverbally (i.e. ask for a homework assignment, communicate that the classroom is too loud, etc....).
When finished, ask participants to share their opinions on what it was like for them to not be able to use oral speech. Allow five minutes.
Note to presenter

Say:
Students need to be able to physically match items on a board to be able to engage in the combined nonverbal and visual learning approach. The Teacher’s Guide includes templates of materials needed for the matching assessment. (Show example)
Note to presenter

Activity:
Ask participants to share their opinions on what they think the importance of literacy is. Allow 3 minutes.
Note presenter

Say:
Phonics instruction is a very effective method of teaching phonemic awareness to children.
Systematic instruction is a methodical way of implementing phonics instruction that focuses on breaking skills like decoding and fluency into steps.
There is need to integrate these best practices with strategies that enable active participation and learning for nonverbal students.
How can we teach phonemic awareness to nonverbal Students?

*Nonverbal Reading Approach*

“The Nonverbal Reading Approach uses a systematic method of teaching decoding skills using inner speech, diagnostic distraction arrays, and error analysis (Heller, Frederick, & Diggs, 2002).”

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**
The Nonverbal Reading Approach is a research-based method that teaches phonemic awareness without requiring students to use oral expression to demonstrate understanding.
Nonverbal Reading Approach

• **Who:** Developed by Heller, Frederick, and Diggs (1999)

• **What:** A research-based method of systematic instruction and evaluation that teaches nonverbal students to read using silent decoding.

• **Why:** It can be adapted to fit multiple phonics based reading instruction programs to allow students with communication deficits to learn literacy skills.

Note to presenter

**Say:**

NRA can be adapted to fit many phonics-based reading instruction strategies. NRA was developed to specifically target students with communication deficits.
Guided Practice

- Show the student a word.
- Model the sounds of the first letter of the word. For example: cat

- Say, “This word says cat” Point to the letter ‘c’.
- Make the sound of the letter and Say, “This letter says ‘c’. Now say “c” in your head.”

- Student says “c” using inner speech.

Note to presenter

Say:
Guided practice involves teaching the student to decode words using inner speech and modeling of sounds. This is done by Demonstrating sounds to the student and asking him to repeat the sounds in his head.
The student will sound out a word by first sounding out each letter of a word, then putting it together.
Note to presenter

Say:
Let’s review the process of guided practice. (go through each step with participants)
**Guided Practice: Review**

![Diagram showing the main steps for using the Nonverbal Reading Approach to teach letter sounds and sound blending using words that contain the target, letter sounds.]

**Note to presenter**

**Say:** This diagram shows the main steps for using the Nonverbal Reading Approach to teach letter sounds and sound blending using words that contain the target, letter sounds. I will briefly review this process. Next I will demonstrate the process.
**Example: Guided Practice**

![Word Card]

**cat**

**Note to presenter**

**Say:** The first step is to introduce the word. Begin teaching each word by showing the student the word and saying: "**Look at this word**". Hold up a word card for student with entire word.

Explain that, first the teacher says the letter C. Then the teacher demonstrates the sound letter C makes for the student and asks the student to say the sound of the letter in his head.
C

Say: “‘c’ makes the sound ‘c’. Now you say ‘c’ in your head.”

Note to presenter

Say:
Next, you will say to the student: “Let's sound this out together”.
Point to each letter and say the sound aloud. Have the student attempt to sound out the word. Explain to participants that approximations, modeling with mouth, or any noise is acceptable.
Demonstrate:
Demonstrate this for participants.


Note to presenter

Say:
Next you will cover all other letters but letter a.
Then you will demonstrate the sound that letter a makes.
Ask the student to say the sound for letter a in their head using inner speech.

Demonstrate:
Demonstrate this for participants.
Note to presenter

Demonstrate:
Repeat the process of saying the letter, sounding out the letter, and explain how the teacher would ask the student to say the sound of the letter in his head.
‘c’...’a’...’t’
Say: “Now sound out each letter sound in your head using inner speech”

Note to presenter

Demonstrate:
Sound out each letter sound consecutively.
Then demonstrate how the teacher would ask the student to say each letter sound slowly, in his head, using inner speech.
Note to presenter

Demonstrate:
Say the word “cat” all together.
Demonstrate how the teacher would ask the student to say the word smoothly and quickly in his head using inner speech.
**Visual Approach**

- Based on Oelwein’s method which teaches all words as sight words
- Teaches to the visual learning style of children who have ASD. With this methodology, we teach to the child’s strength
- Originally developed for students with Downs Syndrome
- Found to be extraordinarily successful for students with autism.

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**
The visual approach was adapted from Patricia Oelwein’s book, Teaching Reading to Children with Down Syndrome: A guide for Parents and Teachers. Leslie Broun later found that this method was very effective with students with autism or Downs Syndrome.
**Visual Approach**

**Why is the visual approach useful?**

- It is effective because it uses visual learning
- Pairs spoken words with printed words
- The matching and pairing process is kinesthetic
- The student is expected to be expressive

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**
There are many benefits of using both auditory and visual processing. The visual approach encourages verbalization without pressure.
Note to presenter

Say:
There are two main steps to the visual approach to teaching sight words. First the student matches a target word to a word on the word matching grid. Then, the student points to a specific word on a grid of four words.

Activity:
Ask teachers what they use for sight words. Allow 3 minutes to discuss.
**Step 1: Matching**

- Use preprinted word grids and word cards
- Give the student one word at a time and ask him to match it to a word on the word grid

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**
Materials for using matching to teach focus words and sight words are provided in the teacher’s guide as attachments. (Show participants examples of materials)
Note to presenter

**Step 2: Selecting**

- Attach words to a word selecting grid
- Ask student to point to a selected word to demonstrate his understanding of the connection between the spoken word and printed word

**Say:**
Word selecting is used for instruction and evaluation.

**Demonstrate:**
Show participants how this is done. Show four words on a grid and demonstrate what the teacher would ask (“point to cat”).
Note to presenter

Say:
This flowchart proposes an effective method for blending the visual approach and nonverbal approach together.
Phase 1 begins with hooking students into learning using personal words which are taught as sight words through matching and selecting.
Phase 2 includes the instruction of letter sounds, blending and sight words, and evaluation.
Additional instruction targets any specific problems that may come up (such as mixing up letter sounds h and f). Review uses repetition to increase fluency and learning.
Why use a Combined Approach?

Allows students to benefit from both approaches

- The Nonverbal Reading Approach (NRA) uses strategies that are considered best practice for teaching early reading, but in a modified way
  - Teaches students to sound out words so students can learn new words independently
  - Guidelines available for instruction and assessment
  - Provides for error analysis
- The visual approach is beneficial because:
  - Can be used initially to hook students to the idea of reading and the value of words
  - Teaches to student strengths
  - Most effective way to teach irregular words

Note to presenter

Say:
The combined approach increases the desire to learn, teaches to student strengths, and provides a method for nonverbal children to sound out words without the need for oral expression.
**Combined Approach: Structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hook Words</td>
<td>Letter Sounds, Blending and Sight Words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**
Phase 1 includes teaching a few select “Hook Words”.
Hook words are words that are personal to the student and can give some students a reason to be interested in reading. Learning words that are important to the student can help students understand the value of words and letters. Pictures of things or objects connected to personal words, can emphasize the connection of words to the real world. Select words that are of high interest to the child. For students with Autism who often have preservative interests, capitalize on these interests. interests (i.e., mom, dad, dinosaurs, cars, etc.) Continue to teach sight words only until approximately 15-20 words are learned. Phase 2 includes introducing letter sounds and blending using NRA If student does not appear to be learning with the visual approach.
### Combined Approach: Materials

- Shape Matching Grid
- Shape Matching Cards
- Word Matching Grids
- Word Selecting Grid Template
- Word Cards
- Cover Card
- Evaluation List Template
- Evaluation Score Summary
- Colored Boxes (Green, Blue, Red & Yellow)

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**

Let’s go over materials now, as the lesson plans will make more sense knowing what the different items are (Have examples prepared to show participants and discuss preparation for each item on list. Point out where uses and preparation instructions for materials can be found in the Teacher’s Guide).

The templates for all word matching grids for each lesson and word cards for each lesson (as well as blanks of both) are provided as attachments in the back of the Teacher’s Guide.
Note to presenter

**Phase 1: Overview**

**Personal Hook Words**

- What are personal hook words?
- Why are they important?

- Activity: Think of 10 good hook words you could use with one of your students.

**Say:**

Hook words are words that are familiar to the student and have personal meaning in the student’s life. These words should be chosen according to the child’s personal life (i.e., mom, dad, school, bus) and interests (toy, car, train, dinosaur, candy). It can be especially powerful for students on the Autism Spectrum to use words from their area(s) of interest. Hook words help the learner understand the value of words, and provide a meaningful context for learning letter sounds associations. Select the first 5 words through your personal knowledge of your student(s). Write each word on the lesson plan template below. Write each word on a Word Card (See Materials). Use the lesson plan script for Phase 1 to teach first 5 hook words. For Lesson B, you will review the first five Hook Words, and add the next five. Lessons A-E are shorter, preliminary lessons, that can be introduced daily for about 10-15 minutes depending on the individual student’s attention span. Continue this process until student can consistently point to at least 15 personal words. When the student has learned 15-20 familiar words, begin Phase 2 of the Combined Visual-Nonverbal Approach.

**Activity:**

Ask participants to think of a student they have. Have participants write down 10 good hook words they could use with that student.
**Phase 1: Sample Lesson Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong></td>
<td>1. Plan and research the lesson goals and objectives.</td>
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<td>2. Identify the target audience.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Choose a relevant topic.</td>
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<td><strong>Hooking</strong></td>
<td>1. Engage the students' attention.</td>
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<td>2. Introduce the lesson objective.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td>1. Explain the concepts and objectives.</td>
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<td>2. Provide examples and demonstrations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Testing</strong></td>
<td>1. Evaluate student understanding.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Assess learning outcomes.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**

Here is a sample lesson plan that goes through the process of using hook words (go through each step briefly, remind participants that it is the same process you just reviewed).
Phase 2: Overview

Letter Sound Correspondences
- What are they?
- Why are they important?

Sound Blending
- What is it?
- Why is it important?

Note to Presenter

Say:
Letter sound correspondences involve knowledge of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that correspond to each letter. This is important because it helps students learn to connect a specific sound to a specific letter. Sound blending is the ability to build words from individual letter sounds. It is an essential component for reading; in order to decode words, the student must know the sounds for each of the letters, then blend the sounds together to make a whole word.
**Lesson Sequencing: Guidelines**

- Letter sound sequences should be introduced one at a time.
- Letters that occur frequently in simple words (e.g. a, m, t) are taught first.
- Letters that look similar and have similar sounds (b and d) are separated in the instructional sequence to avoid confusion.
- Short vowels are taught before long vowels.
- Lower case letters are taught first since these occur more frequently than upper case letters.

**Note to presenter**

**Say:**

Teach letter sounds that occur frequently first. To avoid confusion, similar looking or sounding letters should always be taught separately from one another. Short vowels and lower case letters are taught before long vowels because they occur more frequently.
Lesson Sequencing

Sequence of Letter Sound Introduction
- a m t p o n c d u s g h l f b l r w k x v y z j q
- 3 Letters per Lesson
- 1 Lesson per week

Fry’s 1000 Instant Words
- 1st 100 Words
- 10 Words Per Week

Note to presenter

Say:
The Teachers Guide provided for the combined approach uses an explicit sequence of letter sounds. Each lesson focuses on three letter sounds and 10 High Frequency Words from Fry’s 100 Instant Words
Lesson Sequencing Guide

Note to presenter:

Say:
Here is a lesson sequencing guide of the first four lessons. The lesson plan provides an overview of the order in which sounds are introduced.

Sample Shown: 1st 4 Lessons (go through each step in the lesson with participants). The lesson sequencing guide provides an overview of the order in which letter sounds are introduced. Ten lessons are taught at a rate of one lesson per week. All the letter sounds will be introduced through the ten lessons.

The first 100 words of Fry’s 1000 Instant Words will be introduced. Each lesson also includes review of previously learned information.
**Sample Lesson: Overview**

**Lesson 1: Overview**

- **Focus Sounds:** a m t
- **Focus Words:**
  - a
  - at
  - am
  - mat
- **Fry's List Sight Words:**
  - the
  - of
  - and
  - in
  - is
  - you
  - that
  - it

**Note to presenter:**

**Say:**

An overview like this one is provided for each Lesson in Phase 2. Challenge words begin to be introduced in lesson 2 and all other lessons. Challenge words teach letter sound combinations that can be more challenging than the CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) word that are used as focus words.
Note to the presenter

Say:

Here is sample lesson plan for phase 2 (go through each step with participants, remind participants that they went through learning the process of the lesson when we talked about the nonverbal reading approach).
Evaluate: Overview

- What is evaluation?
- Why is it important?
- How is it administered?

Note to presenter

Say:
Evaluation is the process of recording words that a student has learned and correcting any errors. This process involves analyzing any errors in the student’s understanding of words, letters, sounds or blends. This is a critical step in the process because tests learning progress and teaches the student how to decode properly and fix any errors. It is ultimately what helps to build reading fluency. Using a word matching grid, the teacher displays selected words for each lesson. The student sounds out each word in his head using ‘inner speech’ and points to each word. The teacher says the words out loud one by one, and then the teacher asks the student to point to a target word. Correct answers are recorded; the process of error analysis is implemented to fix any student errors.
Note to presenter

Say:
This graphic demonstrates the process of evaluation. Evaluation is a process that uses distracter arrays to monitor student learning. Patterns in a student’s errors are analyzed and determined by the teacher. The teacher corrects any errors in student learning through going through the process of guided practice on individual letter sounds and/or words the student has difficulty with (let participants know you will go into further detail on this in the next few slides).
Note to presenter

Say:
Evaluation is a process of recording what words a student has learned and correcting any errors. It can be a complicated process because it involves analyzing any errors in the student’s understanding of words, letter sounds, or blends. It is a critical step because it helps the student learn how to decode properly and fix any errors. Ultimately, this process is important in building their reading fluency.
**Evaluation: Distractor Array**

**Teacher**
- After the student has reviewed the four word choices, say, “Listen to the four choices again, (CHOICE 1), (CHOICE 2), (CHOICE 3), or (CHOICE 4).” Which one says [word].

**Teacher**
- Provide the student with the Word Selecting Grid with 4 words attached (evaluation word + 3 Distractors). Ask the student to point to [word].

**Student**
- Points to the requested word.

**Teacher**
- Record the student’s score on Evaluation Word List

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**Note to presenter:**

**Say:**
Be careful about accidently cue the correct choice with intonation or gesture.
Evaluation: Distracter Array

A diagnostic distractor array is when a student is given a selection of similar words to choose a designated word from.

Activity: Practice distracter arrays!

Example:

CAT  CAN  CAR LIP

A distractor array should include:

- 3 Similar words and one very different word
- One word should use a different vowel
- One word should use a different ending

Note to presenter

Say:
A diagnostic distracter array is used to test a student’s ability to correctly identify letter sounds and words. A distractor array follows specific rules (1) you must use four words (2) one has a different vowel to the target word (3) one word has a different ending to the target word (4) one word is very different from the target word.

Activity:
Have participants get into partners and practice distracter arrays. Allow five minutes for participants to practice. Check for understanding and answer any questions.
Note to presenter

Say:
Provide praise to students to reinforce correctly answered words.
When a student gets an answer wrong, immediately go through the entire process of guided practice for that word. Make sure to model the sounds of each letter for the student. The process of Error Analysis is responding to and analyzing any patterns in errors.
Note to presenter

Say:
Conduct the evaluation process at the end of each week, after teaching three sessions of each lesson. Record student responses for evaluation on the corresponding recording sheet. Use the recording sheet to analyze any patterns in errors.
Note to presenter

Say:
Phonemic awareness is by no means a comprehensive reading program. However, it is an integral component for building the skills necessary for learning to read. Other methods of learning to read can be paired with this approach to maximize learning.
References


References


References


