

Developmentally Appropriate Sequence of Expectations & Strategies for Kindergartners

I. Hearing individual Sounds (phonemes) in spoken word:

- a. Rhyme: While not essential for “sounding out” in beginning writing, rhyme is essential for seeing patterns later in reading and spelling (“at”; “cat”; “rat”). Also, easier to hear rhyme (bigger chunk) over individual phonemes.
- b. Phonemic Awareness: If child can’t hear individual sounds in spoken words, **teach sound matching and sound isolation activities** (see Phonemic Awareness Activities in Appendix A, in Arlene’s book, especially “**The Name Song Strategy**”)
- c. When child can hear phonemes, ask “What do you hear?” They will hear:
 - (1) Beginning consonant or prominent consonant sounds first (need not hear every sound in word---see Payton’s conference Session I)
 - (2) Hear long vowel sounds next
 - (3) Cannot hear short vowels until 2nd half of first gradeWhen children consistently use, but confuse short vowels in their printed words, it is time to teach short vowels in word families (see p. 325-329).

II. Visual Scanning:

- a. Once children can **hear** some sounds, they will try to represent them. At first it may appear as scribbling, but soon it becomes conventional letters. They need their **ABC strips affixed to bottom of desks to guide them (through 2nd grade)**. **Teach “ABC Song Strategy”**.
- b. Do **NOT** expect them to choose right letter for sound; this is condition of **approximation**. I never correct a letter choice, but I will help them get the formation of their choice right. (See Trent’s conference in Session I).
- c. They can print either upper case or lower case letter---as they become more familiar with print, they begin to use both on their own.

III. Concepts of Print—the concepts below are abstract and take some time to develop:

- a. Directionality---Once children can hear individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words, they can try to choose an appropriate letter for the sound(s). “**Draw Lines Strategy**” for the words they say they want to write (See Payton’s Conference Session I).
- b. Concept of Word---When children consistently use beginning and ending consonants in their writing, they have a concept of word. (See Ryan’s conference Session II, “**Draw Lines Strategy**” useful.) This is also a time you can teach digraphs and word families.
- c. *Writing with invented spelling is our best predictor of reading ability (Clay’s Dictation Test p. 255-256 in *Helping Children Become Readers Through Writing*).