

# IMPROVING SPELLING AND READING THROUGH WORD STUDY

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## The Five Blocks of Word Study

- Phonemic awareness (PA)
- Orthographic Pattern Awareness (OPA)
- Morphological awareness (MA)
- Semantic Awareness (SA)
- Mental Graphemic Representations (MGR)

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## Phonemic Awareness



- The ability to recognize that a spoken word consists of a sequence of individual sounds (phonemes)
- The ability to think about, talk about and manipulate speech sounds
  - Discrimination between sounds
  - Sound blending and segmentation

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## Orthographic Pattern Awareness



- The ability to translate language from spoken to written form (i.e., *phonics*)
  - Letter/sound correspondence (alphabetic principal)
  - Use of spelling rules and letter patterns (orthographic principal)

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

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## Clarification of Terms

- Phonological Awareness (sound system e.g. syllables, rhyme, phonemes)  
vs.
- Phonemic Awareness (smallest unit of spoken sound, e.g. mmm...)   
vs.
- Phonics (Orthographic Pattern Awareness) (e.g. relationship between the sounds we make and the letter(s) that represent those sounds) 

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## Phonemic Awareness and Spelling



- Difficulties in phonemic awareness are marked by:
  - Omissions/additions of phonemes  
e.g., “**sop**” for **stop**  
“**wet**” for **went**
  - Letter reversals, especially for liquids (l,r) and nasals (n,m,ng)  
e.g., “**flod**” for **fold**

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### Orthographic Pattern Awareness and Spelling



- Difficulties in orthographic knowledge are marked by:
  - Letter-sound confusions (e.g. “**cas**” for **catch**)
  - Non-allowable letter sequences (e.g. “**kween**” for **queen**)
  - Phonetically possible spellings that violate “rules” (e.g. “**ran**” for **rain**)
  - Violations of positional constraints (e.g. “**tchop**” for **chop**)

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### Morphological Awareness



- Knowledge of the **meaning** of the root or base word and its corresponding **meaningful** inflections and derivations (i.e., prefixes and suffixes)

<i>prefix</i>	+	<i>root/base</i>	+	<i>suffix(es)</i>
		magic	+	al ian
un	+	heal	+	th + y

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### Morphological Awareness and Spelling



- Difficulties in morphological **awareness** are marked by
  - Omission of morphemes  
e.g. “**walk**” for **walked**
- Difficulties in morphological **forms** are marked by
  - Phonetic spellings of morphemes  
e.g. “**walkt**” for **walked**  
“**musishun**” for **musician**

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## Semantic Awareness



The ability to understand that spelling affects word meanings

- Difficulties in Semantic Knowledge are marked by
  - Homophone confusions
  - e.g. **“sun”** for **son**
  - “bare”** for **bear**

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## Mental Graphemic Representations



Long term storage of clear images of words

- Difficulties in Mental Orthographic Images are marked by
  - Words read well but not spelled correctly
  - Words read or spelled differently on repeated attempts
  - Phonetic spelling of non-phonetic words and word units
  - Poor proofreading

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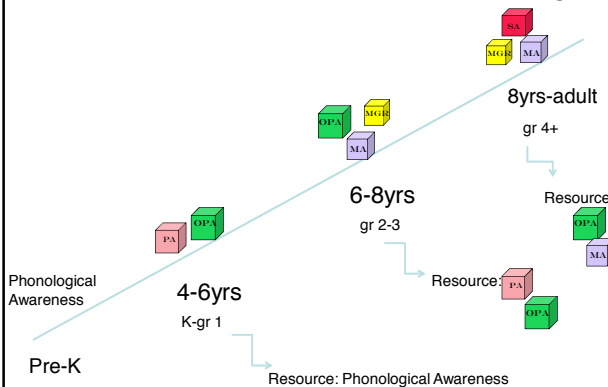
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## Developmental Course of Spelling



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Phonemic Awareness Using Tactile Awareness of how Sounds are Produced

Manner	Placement of Articulators						
	Lips	Lips/teeth	Tongue between teeth	Tongue Behind teeth	Mid roof of mouth	Back of mouth	Throat
Plosives (air explodes)							
Fricatives (continuation of air)							
Affricates (air explodes and then continues)							
Nasals (air escapes through nose)							
Glides and Liquids (vowel like sounds)							

b d f g h j k l m n p r s t v w y z  
ch sh th ng(ring) /3/(beige)

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ee i e ae a u ue ie oy ou oi

What about the vowels?

oo oo oe o aw au

ur ir er or ar

S L I D E R S

C R A Z Y R S

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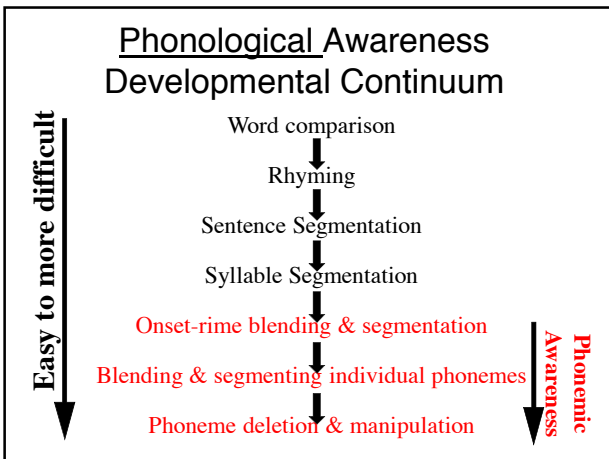
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### How to Determine the Difficulty of Phonemic Awareness Tasks

- **The size of the phonological unit**  
Easier to break words into syllables than syllables into phonemes
- **Phonemic properties of words**  
Continuant sounds such as /s/ and /m/ are easier than brief sounds such as /t/ and /p/
- **Phoneme position in words**  
Initial sounds are easier than final sounds.  
Middle sounds are most difficult

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### How to Determine the Difficulty of Phonemic Awareness Tasks

- **Number of phonemes within a syllable**  
VC (is, in, at)  
CV (no, to)  
CVC (sauce, phone, soap, tap)  
CCV (blue, flew, grey)  
VCC (ant, and, end)  
CCVC (spin, stop, plate, train, break)  
CVCC (went, land, fast, hats)  
CCVCC (spend, brand, stand)  
CCCVC (street, splash, spring)



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### Morphological Awareness

- The three sounds of <ed>

/d/                    /t/                    /id/

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### Morphological Awareness

- The three sounds of the plural ending <s>

/s/

/z/

/ɪz/

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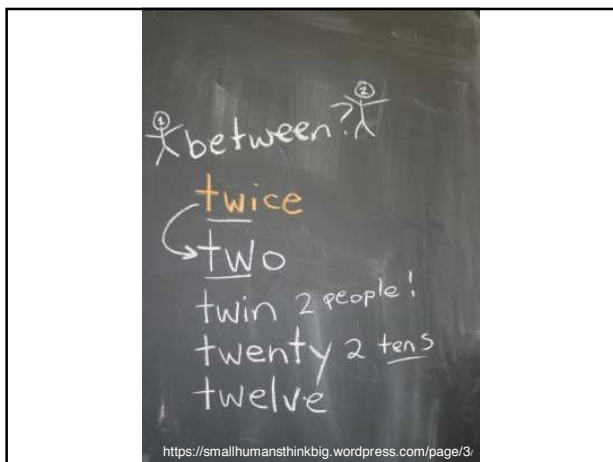
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### Take Away Messages

- Young students need to make the connection between speech sounds and print.
- English spelling is not “random” or “crazy”
- Focus on the meaning of words and not just the speech-print connection

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