



The Speech Sound Set

The Manual – Part 3

USING THE SPEECH SOUND SET FOR LITERACY PROGRAMMING

This manual covers how to use The Speech Sound Set © as part of literacy programming (for reading and spelling);

1) in the first year of formal literacy-learning, p.3-9 (using the School Set 1)

2) for more advanced literacy-learning p.10-14(using the School Set 2)

It provides a systematic and explicit framework for addressing phonemic awareness and phonics and supports the current recommendations of the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (December 2005). ¹

By no means is the Speech Sound Set© the sole resource that should be used for literacy programming. Good literacy programming, for both initial instruction and remedial programming, should address:

- *letter recognition (**The Speech Sound Set** ✓)
- *phonemic awareness, phonological knowledge (**The Speech Sound Set** ✓)
- * morphology (**The Speech Sound Set** ✓) * letter-sound rules (**The Speech Sound Set** ✓) *whole-word recognition *comprehension *fluency

Some schools use the School Set 1© to spark an interest in sounds and letters with students in their first year at school. Others find that the more advanced letter-links (particularly for vowels) in School Set 2 are invaluable, especially in spelling programs for older students.

Keep in mind, that the Speech Sound Set© is a **resource package** and can be used as the primary resource for sound-based word study sessions, or can be used as an adjunct to current school programs. The resource is really SO VERSATILE!

There is now a “strong body of scientific evidence that children are greatly assisted in learning to become proficient readers if their reading tuition **is grounded in direct, explicit and systematic phonics instruction** (Coltheart, 2005). ² This is exactly what the Speech Sound Set offers!

Yes! There's an app!

There's an app that uses the Speech Sound Set© characters. Explore and contrast 22 consonant sounds in sound and word activities (production and listening).

See "**SPEECH SOUNDS FOR KIDS**" in the iTunes store.

There's a free “lite” version to check out first!

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Phonemic awareness is the awareness that words are made up of individual speech sounds (phonemes) and it also involves the ability to “manipulate” (or play around with) these individual sounds. This might begin with thinking about the first sound of a word, and later it may involve breaking a word into its all of its constituent sounds (segmenting) Other phonemic awareness tasks include:

- *recognising that two words begin with the same sound (“nose, knee”).
- *joining two, three or more given sounds to make a word (blending).
- *thinking what would remain if the first sound was removed from a word (take /d/ from “duck”)
- *generating a list of words that have the same medial vowel sound (“hug, hut, bun, cut, flood”).

Some students are unable to complete phonemic awareness tasks because they are confused by the concept of what constitutes an individual sound. They might attempt to segment the word “plate” as “play - /t/” or they might say the first sound of the word “apple” is “app”. The Speech Sound Set © explicitly teaches about each sound, so students know what they are meant to be thinking and talking about!

Phonemic awareness is NOT to do with letters, but it allows the “code” of reading and writing to be cracked because individual sounds can be linked on to letters (and vice versa).

The National Reading Panel (USA) ³ found that students who learnt to read through specific instruction in phonemic awareness improved their reading skills more than those who learnt without attention to phonemic awareness.

PHONICS

Phonics is the explicit teaching of reading and spelling via letter-sound correspondences. It involves decoding (translating letters into sounds for reading) and encoding (translating sounds into letters for spelling). For phonics to make sense, a student must have phonemic awareness. Otherwise they will not be able to “map” sounds on to letters or letters on to sounds.

Phonics also relies upon a knowledge of sound-letter links (phoneme- grapheme correspondence) and vice versa. These are referred to as LETTER OPTIONS in the Speech Sound Set © School Set 2.

As with the Speech Sound Set © explicit phonics teaching should begin with learning the most common correspondences (eg. that the sound/n/ goes with the letter **n**) before more advanced Letter Options are explored (eg. that /n/ can also go with the letters **kn** or **gn**).

Types of PHONICS instruction.

There are several different phonics methods used for reading but with the more systematic and explicit methods, the greater benefits are seen with students.

Analytic Phonics – Reader learns a word first by sight, and THEN recognises the sounds by breaking the word into its parts.

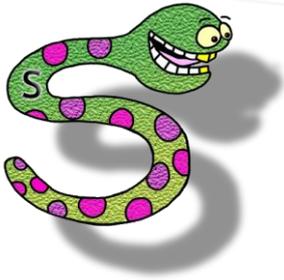
Analogy Phonics – The reader learns new words by comparing them to other whole words they already know. (Eg. Reader knows how to read CAT, so they are shown how to read BAT). Families of words (using “rime”) are used a lot with this method.

Embedded Phonics – This method relies on incidental teaching, assuming that students will ‘crack the code’.

Synthetic Phonics – Reading and spelling are taught simultaneously. Students receive direct instruction converting letters into sounds and vice versa. These programs usually start with explicitly learning letter-sound links and then building them into words or breaking down whole words into parts. This approach relies heavily on a strong knowledge of letter-sound correspondence.

THE SPEECH SOUND SET CAN BE USED IN THIS APPROACH

Phonics Through Spelling – This method focuses on a student breaking a word into its sounds and then linking each sound to letters. Through spelling, students learn to “crack the code” for reading. **THE SPEECH SOUND SET CAN BE USED IN THIS APPROACH**



Starting Out - School Set 1

The initial stage of this program introduces students to 24 sounds (19 consonant phonemes and 5 short vowel phonemes). Students learn how each sound can link to a letter and also how they relate to words. It covers the **sound-based components** of an early literacy program.

In the first year of schooling, the Sound Buddies introduced are linked only to **their most common Letter Option (grapheme)**. (That is, Sammy Snake is NOT linked to the letter **c** in the initial stages).

It is recommended that the first Sound Buddies introduced are those that link to the following letters: **s a t p i n**. The reason that the letters are not introduced in alphabetical order is because *these letters above* can be used to spell many short, common words enabling teachers to demonstrate the encoding and decoding of many easy words. This helps students “crack the code”.

After the letters above, the order is arbitrary! (Although a free Scope and Sequence can be found online under the FREE tab of the Pelican Talk website).

The Speech Sound Set © programming should begin after students have completed the broader phonological awareness tasks of “syllable awareness” and “rhyme awareness”. For more information on phonological awareness see the **FREE STUFF** and **FREE ARTICLES** pages of www.pelicanstalk.com

GOALS FOR EARLY SOUND-BASED LITERACY SESSIONS:

1. Students will develop an awareness of individual sounds and their features with particular attention to sound pairs and shared features. Multisensory learning will be employed. **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** Exploring sound features in depth enables a student to identify sounds correctly for spelling and distinguish them from others, thus preventing errors.
2. Students will learn the sound that most commonly goes with each letter of the alphabet (but teaching will not go by the order of the letters in the alphabet). **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** Learning to automatically recognize a letter and match it to its sound (and vice versa) is a skill that is vital in early reading and spelling. If students are struggling with this, the process of blending sounds to make words becomes laborious.
3. Students will be able to segment words into sounds and blend sounds into words.* **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** This underpins “sounding out” and is a crucial stage of early literacy learning.

* This is a goal that will be reached after students have mastered first sound identification and final sound identification.

What to Do - Session 1 (20 mins)

The script below is an **example only** of how a SOUND AWARENESS session can be delivered. **This is the same as the script for the preschool session, but more emphasis is put on letter recognition, letter formation and written words.** For more details about preparing for the session, see Manual Two. In addition to the preparation outlined in Manual Two, you will also need to print **LETTER FLASHCARDS – BASIC**.

Feel free to incorporate your own ideas. This example will use MUNCHING MAMA.

Remember in these manuals, say the sound when it is written between slashes /m/ and the letter name when it is written in bold **m**.

INTRODUCING A SOUND AND LETTER

Teacher puts a large picture of Munching Mama on display on the interactive whiteboard. She also writes a large lowercase **m** on a poster on the wall. On the top of this poster she has stuck a print out of Munching Mama. She writes two words starting with a lowercase **m** and one name starting with a capital **M** (eg. me, munching, Mike).



She says: Today I am going to tell you all about a friend of mine. She is going to teach you about a special sound... so we better get our ears ready for listening (teacher touches ears)... and we better get our eyes ready too (points to eyes) because looking can help us listen!

(Teacher pulls the large picture of Munching Mama from the 'Sound Bag' and shows the picture to the students. Glancing at the Sound Story printed beside her, the teacher starts to tell the children all about Munching Mama, using the Sound Story as a guide)..

This is Munching Mama. Munching Mama loves eating cookies and when she does, she puts her lips together and makes a loud sound... and the sound comes out of her nose! Her sound is /m/. (The teacher does the Hand Sound as she says /m/.) Can everyone say Munching Mama's sound? Let's put our lips together and say /m/ (does Hand Sound again). Come on everyone, let's do this with out hands too (does the Hand Sound and makes the sound - All the students copy).

NOTE: IF A STUDENT CAN'T SAY A PARTICULAR SOUND, YOU CAN TRY TO HELP THEM USING THE SSS TIPS AT THE BOTTOM LEFT OF THE SOUND STORY. THE SOUND MAY BE TOO HARD FOR YOUNG STUDENTS IF THE SOUND IS LISTED AS A LATE SOUND ON THE DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE IN THE INCREASING YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF SOUNDS FOLDER. ACKNOWLEDGE TO STUDENTS THAT THE SOUND IS TRICKY TO MAKE. THERE IS NO HARM IN TRYING .

The words "munching" and "mama" both start with the sound /m/. Can you hear it at the start? /m/...munching .../m/...Mama. (Does Hand Sound as the /m/ is said for each word). Who wants to look in the mirror and say Munching Mama's sound? Watch how your lips go together. (Passes mirror to three students). Do you think you could make Munching Mama's sound with your lips open? Let's try! (Everyone tries). Remember how I said that Munching Mama's sound comes out her nose? What would happen if we closed off our nose? Who wants to try? (A student volunteers and they block their nostrils). Wow! You can't make it with your nostrils closed! Munching Mama's sound can also be quite long. Let's all see how long we can make it for.... (Everyone says /m/ for as long as they can). Do you think it's a voice-on or a voice-off sound?

NOTE: SEEING THIS IS THE FIRST SOUND TO BE INTRODUCED, YOU CANNOT YET REFER TO THE COMPARE OR PAIR SOUNDS THAT APPEAR IN SOME SOUND STORIES (AT THE BOTTOM). CONTRASTING IS IMPORTANT WHEN SEVERAL SOUNDS HAVE BEEN EXPLORED.

THE LETTER LINK

Teacher refers to the picture again and says: Munching Mama has a letter on her top. Can anyone see a letter? That's right – there's the letter and this letter is called **m** (em). If we want to write the sound /m/, we can use the letter **m**. (Teacher writes the lowercase letter on a whiteboard.) What do you think that letter looks like? I sometimes think it looks like two mountains... and guess what? "Mountain" starts with /m/. (Teacher discusses with students what they think the letter **m** looks like).

Let's all try and write a big **m** in the air. You go down then over a mountain and over another mountain. (Teacher traces an **m** so it is the right way for students watching. She does it again, as she says the sound /m/.)

Teacher says: You can also write the letter **m** like this (writes capital). This is called the capital letter and we use it at the start of people's names and at the start of sentences.

(Teacher takes 20 mixed LETTER FLASHCARDS, making sure she includes the lowercase and capital **m** letters in various fonts. She adds some similar-looking letters such as **w** and **n** also. She displays six at a time, making sure they are all facing the right way up).

Teacher says: Who can find the letter **m** that makes our special sound /m/? (Students take turns to find all the letters).

IF STUDENTS CONFUSE SIMILAR-LOOKING LETTERS, ACKNOWLEDGE WHY THEY HAVE MADE THE ERROR Eg. GOOD TRY! THIS LETTER IS ACTUALLY **w BUT IT LOOKS JUST LIKE AN UPSIDE-DOWN **M**. I ALWAYS THINK OF THE LETTER **M** AND THE MOUNTAINS...*

(Teacher refers to the Munching Mama poster)

Teacher says: When I see a word starting with the letter **m**, I get my mouth ready to say /m/. This word says "me", this one says "munching" and this one starts with a capital letter – it's someone's name... "Mike."!

SOME NOTES ON LETTER LINKS:

**MANY STUDENTS WILL BE MORE FAMILIAR WITH CAPITAL LETTERS AT SCHOOL ENTRY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO START STUDENTS RECOGNISING LOWERCASE LETTERS AS THESE WILL MAKE UP THE MAJORITY OF THE TEXT THAT THEY ARE EXPOSED TO.*

** WITH REGARD TO WRITING, LETTER FORMATION IS A MOTOR ACTIVITY BECOMES AUTOMATED WITH PRACTICE. BE SURE TO MODEL CORRECT LETTER FORMATION EXPLICITLY SO THAT STUDENTS CAN SET DOWN GOOD MOTOR PATTERNS.*

**IT IS NOT VITAL FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN LETTER NAMES. IN FACT, SOUNDING-OUT REQUIRES NO KNOWLEDGE OF LETTER NAMES AT ALL! FOR SOME STUDENTS LEARNING THE LETTER NAME IS AN EXTRA STEP THAT IS TOO DIFFICULT. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE STUDENT SHOULD 1) FOCUS ON RECOGNISING A LETTER AND SAYING ITS SOUND QUICKLY AND 2) WRITING A LETTER THAT MATCHES A SOUND AUTOMATICALLY AND LEGIBLY.*

READ MORE ABOUT SOUND LETTER LINKS AT: www.pelicanstalk.com (FREE)

THE SONG

Teacher says: There's a song that we can sing about Munching Mama. I'll teach it to you. (Teacher sings song and does Hand Sound as the action every time she says the sound... At the end, after singing "and her letter name is m", she points to the letter on her top and then writes m on a whiteboard. As she writes it, she says /m/). Another song and resource that works in nicely with this program is THE SINGING ALPHABET from LOVE AND REILLY. For Munching Mama, you would show the MUNCHING MONKEYS card and sing the song as directed in the program. It is a good way to show word/sound/letter relationships.

LISTENING - SOUNDS

Teacher says: I wonder who is good at listening for Munching Mama's sound? Try listening for it, but remember it can also help to look at what my mouth is doing. Looking can help with listening!

(She lays three flashcards/ photocards on the mat in front of students; Munching Mama, Sammy Snake and Tapping Tessa then holds up a special stick/wand.)

Here I have three Sound Buddies. You know Munching Mama... and this is Sammy Snake and this is Tapping Tessa. You'll meet them another day. This here is my magic Sound Wand!

I wonder who would like to listen for our special sounds? (Student puts hand up). Ok Jed, you can. Now remember, we are listening for Munching Mama's sound. When you hear her sound /m/ tap her picture with the Sound Wand. Listen carefully – and you might want to watch my mouth too. I might try and trick you. (Teacher says a range sounds saying /m/ a few times throughout...): /d/ /s/ /m/ /h/ /m/ /t/ /n/ /m/ and so on.

NOTE: IF THE STUDENT TAPS MUNCHING MAMA WHEN ANOTHER SOUND HAS BEEN HEARD, TRY AND GIVE APPROPRIATE FEEDBACK. EG. "/N/ SOUNDS A BIT LIKE MUNCHING MAMA'S SOUND – BUT I DON'T PUT MY LIPS TOGETHER FOR THAT SOUND – LOOK .../N/... /M/"

LISTENING - WORDS

Teacher says: Now everyone look at Munching Mama's picture one last time and then lie down and close your eyes because it's Word Time! See if you can think of Munching Mama in your head when you listen to these words. Can you think of her big lips and the sound coming out of her nose and that letter m written on her top? Now let's all be quiet and listen... (Play the FOCUSED AUDITORY STIMULATION mp3).

NOTE: IF YOU CANNOT EASILY ACCESS AN MP3 PLAYER, YOU CAN SAY A LIST OF /M/ WORDS YOURSELF. LISTEN TO THE AUDIO FOR IDEAS. SAY: MUNCHING MAMA SAYS /M/. LISTEN CAREFULLY TO ALL OF THESE WORDS THAT START WITH MUNCHING MAMA'S SOUND. ARE YOU READY? /M/ (THEN SAY 15 WORDS SLOWLY AND CLEARLY STARTING WITH THE SOUND).

PASS THE WORD BOX.

Teacher: Now you know all about Munching Mama's sound /m/. Here is a special WORD BOX full of pictures. Everything inside starts with Munching Mama's sound. Let's pass it round and take turns to pull out a card. (Teacher shows box with Munching Mama on the lid and the picture cards inside and offers it to a student. Each student pulls out a card and names the picture. The teacher writes each word on the MUNCHING MAMA poster drawing attention to the letter m at the start.).

STUDENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DO THE HAND SOUND AS THEY SAY THEIR WORD.

GENERATING - WORDS

Teacher turns to Munching Mama poster and says: Now I am going to think of some more words starting with Munching Mama's sound /m/. I better get my pen ready to write the letter **m**... and I'll get my mouth ready to say /m/.... Magic. (The teacher writes "magic" and as she write the letter **m**, she says /m/. She then shows the word and drags her finger under the letters saying "magic". If possible, a quick drawing to represent the word is also beneficial. Students are then offered a chance to think of a word.

NOTE: IF STUDENTS HAVE TROUBLE GENERATING WORDS STARTING WITH /M/: THEY CAN BE DIRECTED BACK TO THE "WORD BOX" FILLED WITH PICTURES STARTING WITH /M/. THEY SIMPLY NAME THE PICTURE. OR THE TEACHER CAN GIVE A PROMPT SUCH AS THE "'SQUEAK SQUEAK' SAID THE LITTLE _____".

STUDENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DO THE HAND SOUND AS THEY SAY THEIR WORD.

DEMONSTRATION OF SEGMENTING

FOR THIS ACTIVITY THE TEACHER REQUIRES THREE GLASS PEBBLES.

Teacher says: I have some special stones here. I call them Sound Stones. I am going to show you how words are made of sounds! (Show holds up her palm with three stones and says...)

Teacher says: This is the word "mop" ...listen to the sounds /m/.../o/.../p/... (As she says each sound, she drops a stone into her other hand). Mop! I'll do it again and see if you can hear Munching Mama's sound at the start. Are you ready? Mop.... /m/ /o/ /p/.



(She then turns and writes the word on the whiteboard as she says /m/ /o/ /p/.)

Teacher says: Who can see Munching Mama's letter?

Teacher says: I've now got another word. The word is "hum". (The above activity is repeated and the teacher comments how Munching Mama's sound is at the end.

IN THE INITIAL STAGES, LOTS OF DEMONSTRATION SHOULD TAKE PLACE, SO STUDENTS GRASP THE IDEA OF SEGMENTING. USE ONLY THREE-SOUND REGULAR WORDS THAT START OR END IN THE TARGET SOUND. LISTS ARE AVAILABLE FROM PELICAN TALK. PLEASE EMAIL WITH YOUR LICENCE NUMBER AND LISTS WILL BE SENT TO YOU.

SEGMENTING IS A VITAL SKILL FOR EARLY SPELLING. I FIND THE SOUND STONES MAKE THE ACTIVITY FUN AND HELP ENGAGE STUDENTS IN THE TASK. IN TIME, WHEN STUDENTS ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE ACTIVITY, THE WORD CAN BE SEGMENTED AND THE SOUNDS "DROPPED" INTO A STUDENT'S HAND WHO THEN SEGMENTS THE WORD BACK TO THE TEACHER, SAYING THE SOUND.

DEMONSTRATION OF BLENDING **BLENDING IS THE REVERSE OF ABOVE.**

(Teacher shows the students a three-letter regular written word that starts with **m**. The word should be non-cursive. It should reflect the text presented in reading).

Teacher says: Here's a word. Listen and I'll say the sounds that go with these letters. See if you can join the sounds and make a word. (The teacher says each sound as she drags her finger under each letter).

THE COLOUR-IN

Teacher says: Today I have a colour-in of Munching Mama for everyone. You might like to say her sound as you colour her in and you might even try tracing over her letter or copying her letter. You might even think of some words that start with her sound /m/ and draw some pictures around her. Mitch, you can get the first colour-in today because your name starts with our special sound... /m/ Mitch.

What to Do - Session 2 and Beyond! (20 mins)

INTRODUCING THE NEXT SOUND AND LETTER

In subsequent sessions, more Sound Buddies are introduced. Usually this occurs at a rate of one per session, however some users introduce *two* Sound Buddies per session.

It is always important to revise previously studied sounds/Sound Buddies in each session too. Do this by:

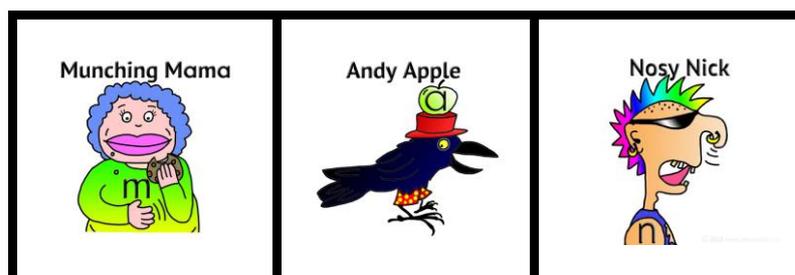
1. Including them in the singing of the song,
2. Including them in the Listening – Sounds task,
3. Including their letter flashcards in the Letter Link activities.

Another Fun Activity

MAKING WORDS WITH SOUND BUDDIES

When further Sound Buddies have been explored (for example, **satpin then md**), many regular decodable words can be generated: **mat sit dip tip pat tap sap pan man pin din tin pit dam and mad nip dim**

Using three Sound Buddy flashcards (or by displaying three images on an interactive whiteboard) “make” one of the above words. See if students can blend the sounds to make a word and then write the matching letters. (“mat” is presented below).



Transfer of Learning

THE ALPHABET CHARTS

There is a Victorian cursive version and a regular font. If you require other fonts, please email.

Teacher says: Here are some charts that show the alphabet. I am going to put these on your tables and also give you one to take home. You might like to look for Munching Mama, practise writing her letter and say her sound.

NOTES: SOME SCHOOL LAMINATE THE CURSIVE ALPHABET CHART AND HAVE IT AS A REFERENCE ON TABLES FOR WRITING SESSIONS. IF NEEDED, STUDENTS CAN LOOK FOR THE SOUND BUDDY AND COPY THE CORRESPONDING LETTER IN WRITING TASKS.

THERE IS A "SEND-HOME LETTER" FOR CAREGIVERS ON THE CD-ROM. THIS IS USEFUL SO THAT STUDENTS CAN BE SUPPORTED IN THEIR NEW LEARNING AT HOME.

READING AND WRITING

Make reference to the Sound Buddies and their sounds by using Hand Sounds during spelling tasks or reading tasks. This is a nice non-intrusive way of linking sound knowledge to other tasks. *For example, a student might say "How to I spell motor?" The teacher could say "Let's see if you can write the first letter yourself? Have a listen for the sound at the start... (She says "motor" and does Hand Sound for Munching Mama).*

Some students can get too fixed on Sound Buddies' names. For example, a student is looking at a word "met" and the teacher says "Can you tell me the first sound?" The student says "It's Munching Mama!". In this case, the teacher should say "When we are reading words, we need to say our Sound Buddy's sound; /m/."

A beneficial activity for students is to touch each letter on the alphabet chart and say each sound, only referring to the Sound Buddy if they get stuck (but not saying their name.) Swift and automatic production is the goal!

Advanced Learning - School Set 2

The following pages cover the programming for students who have mastered the most common sound-letter links (and letter-sound link) for School Set 1 Sound Buddies. It is not until this stage of the program that students are introduced to the **whole set of vowel phonemes**. This is because the vast range of Letter Options that link to the vowel sounds can be confusing for young learners.

Students are ready to tackle this stage when they:

- have a good understanding of School Set 1's Sound Buddies*, each sound's features and all of the Hand Sounds.
- can see a letter and say the sound that commonly goes with it
- can hear a sound and write the letter that commonly goes with it
- can segment a three-sound regular words into its constituent sounds
- can blend three sounds to make a word

*For all of the above, students should be able to complete these tasks MOST of the time for MOST sounds.

GOALS FOR ADVANCED LITERACY SESSIONS:

1. Students will learn about 15 more vowel (and diphthong) phonemes using Sound Buddies. **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? To this point of the program, students have only learnt about a small number of vowel sounds. An awareness of ALL sounds is needed for good spelling.**
2. Students will learn about the various Letter Options for each of the 44 phonemes. They will understand rules and patterns that may be associated with these Letter Options. **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? There are many rules and patterns associated with learning correct sound-letter and letter-sound links. Explicit teaching of these is highly beneficial for students, particularly those who have poor visual memory for reading and spelling.**
3. Students will become familiar with a range of learning strategies (using analogy, use of rimes, suffixes and prefixes, visual grouping of words that share Letter Options, spelling rules and so on). **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? Learning is enhanced when a variety of learning strategies are employed.**

What to Prepare

1. Choose a **Sound Buddy** to explore. There is no set order at this point.

Have a picture of the Sound Buddy to display (either large A4 picture or a JPEG image displayed on an interactive whiteboard).

2. If you choose to explore a **sound that has been previously unexplored (that is, one of the 15 vowel sounds not covered in School Set 1)**, you will need to have the **Sound Story** as a reference so that you can quickly introduce the sound and explore its features. Vowels generally have less sound features than consonant sounds, so will take less time to discuss. The term “vowel sound” should be used with students as it is an important concept for literacy.

WHAT IS A VOWEL SOUND? Vowel sounds are made with an open vocal tract, meaning there is no contact between the articulators that may interrupt the flow of air. Vowel sounds can be difficult for some students to distinguish between. This is because there are less oral/tactile cues (eg. no teeth touching lips, or tongues moving to the palate) and because many vowel sounds share similar features (all are “voice-on” sounds, all are oral). To learn more about the features of vowel sounds, see **Features – Consonants and Vowels** in the **INCREASING YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF SOUNDS** folder.

Note: Only the first five short vowel sounds (the “starter vowels”) have letters that appear in their Sound Buddy’s illustration. This is because there are *so many* Letter Options that correspond with most of the other vowel sounds.

3. Revise the corresponding **Hand Sound** (see **HAND SOUNDS** folder) .

4. For the chosen Sound Buddy, print out the corresponding page from the **LETTER OPTIONS** booklet and photocopy for each student. Alternatively, provide each student with the entire **LETTER OPTIONS** booklet that in time, they will work through.

5. Print out and display the corresponding **SPELLING EXAMPLES** page. If possible, print as A3 and display as a poster where students can easily view.

6. Read and familiarise yourself with the corresponding section in the **MAKING SENSE OF SPELLING** guide. If the guide does not make sense to you, read the **Making Sense of Spelling – How to Use the Guides** document. This document will provide you with all the information required for your sound-letter study session.

7. Print and photocopy the corresponding **Circle-a-Sound** activity page for each student.

8. Have available as a reference the corresponding **Word List** page.

9. Make a set of flashcards: **Letter Flashcards – Consonants**, **Letter Flashcards – Vowels**, and **Sound Buddy Flashcards – Consonants** (if you have the Complete Set) and **Sound Buddy Flashcards – Vowels**.

What to Do

Following is a “script” that is an example of an ADVANCED SOUND SESSION. Note that it does not need to be followed strictly... For the purpose of demonstration, the Sound Buddy Easy Cheesy will be used...

INTRODUCING A SOUND AND ITS LETTER OPTIONS

(The teacher puts a large picture of Easy Cheesy on display on the interactive whiteboard. She refers to the Sound Story and then tells the story in her own words to the students). She says: Easy Cheesy loves eating cheese. She smiles whenever she finds some and squeaks in glee. She says, “/ee/”. Let’s all say Easy Cheesy’s sound.../ee/. (As she does this, she does the Hand Sound). She continues by saying: Be careful not to confuse Easy Cheesy’s sound with Itchy Iggy’s sound. Itchy Iggy’s sound is almost the same, but it’s shorter. Let’s say them both /i/ (does Hand Sound), /ee/ (does Hand Sound)...

*The words “easy” and “eat” both start with the sound /ee/. (She writes these on the board and circles the letters **ea**). Can you hear it at the start? /ee/...easy .../ee/...eat. The sound /ee/ is also in the middle of the words “cheese” and “squeak” and at the end of the word “glee” (She writes these on the board and circles the letters **ee** and **ea**). There are lots of ways to spell Easy Cheesy’s sound...*

*(The teacher then instructs the class to look at their Letter Options page. She also displays this page on the interactive whiteboard. She refers to the **Making Sense of Spelling** section for Easy Cheesy’s sound and explains about the various patterns and rules. Together with the students, she carries out some of the tasks.)*

THE LETTER OPTIONS BOOKLET

Each page of the **Letter Options Booklet** depicts the Letter Options (graphemes) for a Sound Buddy. Generally speaking, the larger the box, the more common the grapheme. In some boxes, there are quick tips to help the user understand when that particular Letter Option is used. For example “Ender” means that the Letter Option can occur at the end of a syllable or at the end of a word (**e** for Easy Cheesy’s sound in words like “me, be, region”). “1st Syllable Ender” means that the Letter Option can occur at the end of a syllable, but *not* at the end of a word (**a** for Aimee Chaser’s sound can be used at the end of the 1st syllable as in “table” but not at the end of a word. Instead **ay** is used as in “table”). The “Double-it Rule” means that a double letter occurs when certain suffixes are added to a single letter that makes the sound (eg. big ⇒ bigger). (See the **Making Sense of Spelling** guides for further information. This guide will largely direct the teaching for this stage of sound-based learning).

Note: Not all Letter Options are depicted on each page. Words using more unusual Letter Options (eg. **ie** in “believe” on Easy Cheesy’s page) can be written on the page *outside* the boxes.

The Letter Options Booklet can be used in the following manner:

*Words are written in the corresponding boxes when they are studied during the sound session (many examples are provided for teaching purposes in the **Word Lists**).

*Words are transferred to the corresponding boxes when they arise in general reading or writing tasks. In particular, this is recommended for words that commonly arise in a student’s writing or text.

(Cont ... ⇨)

- *A teacher may choose to correct a student's written work while focusing on recently studied sounds. Receiving the corrections, the student transfers the words to the **Letter Options booklet**.
- *A paragraph may be given to the students and the words containing the target sound identified and transferred to the **Letter Options Booklet**. One paragraph that can be used is the **Sound Story** for the Sound Buddy.
- *To enhance the visual memory of Letter options students can highlight, underline or circle the letters within each word.
- *The **Letter Options Booklet** can be an expanding resource for students. As more sounds are studied, more pages are added. The booklet should be a working document.

THE LETTER FLASHCARDS

*The **Letter Flashcards** in the School Set 2 can be used to match to the Sound Buddy flashcards. At this advanced level, students develop an understanding that one Letter Option might be matched with more than one Sound Buddy. For example, the **OW** card could be matched with Ouch Howie or with Overboard Rose. Showing the cards to students and discussing the Sound Buddy that would go with the card is a great way to explicitly teach Letter Options and develop a visual awareness of letter patterns.

SPELLING EXAMPLES

- *The **Spelling Examples** in the School Set 2 can be used as a visual reference for the positioning and patterns for certain Letter Options. This strategy is known as "analogy phonics". Comparing novel words and their spelling patterns to known words can be an extremely beneficial strategy for some learners. 4
- *Common words are listed for each Letter Option, the latter which appears in red. Where the Letter Option is part of a suffix or prefix, these are underlined and should be discussed in the teaching.
- *The Spelling Examples charts can be used as follows: A teacher looks at a student's spelling. They have spelt "damage" as "damige". The teacher says "That's a great try but look at Itchy Iggy's chart and see how the word "village" is spelt."
- *When giving spelling lists to learn, show the Spelling Examples chart for the target sound and comment which of the spelling words are similar to each of the examples.

CIRCLE-A-SOUND ACTIVITIES

This worksheet can be printed out for each student. It should be done upon the completion of studying a sound and its Letter Options. It reinforces visual recognition of graphemes.

The student is required to circle the letters within each word that make the target sound. To make the activity more fun, a **TRICK WORD** is included on each page that does **not** contain the focus sound. Some students enjoy having a race to find it. (For example, on the Easy Cheesy page, the word "head" appears. This, of course, does not contain the focus sound, so is identified as the **TRICK WORD**). As an additional activity, the words in the Circle-a-Sound booklets can be read to students. Students write each word in the corresponding box in the **Letter Options** booklet.

WORD LISTS

This **Word Lists** for each sound are arranged by their Letter Option. Many teachers like to give a weekly spelling tests so these can be used to generate “spelling lists” for the test. The **Word Lists** allow for spelling lists to be adapted to the needs of students who are functioning at different levels of spelling. Although the whole class may be studying the same sound, some students may be challenged by words containing more unusual Letter Options.

Keep in mind that students learn best when the patterns and rules are explored for each word and discussed explicitly. Words to be learnt for a spelling test should be entered into the corresponding boxes on the **Letter Options** page for reinforcement.

REFERENCES

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2. Coltheart, M. (005) Quality teaching and the ‘literacy debate’, *Professional Educator*, Vol, 1, p. 5.
3. National Reading Panel; Teaching Children to Read, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000.
4. Kirkbride,S., & Wright, B.C. (2002) The role of analogy use in improving early spelling performance. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 19, 4, 91-102