

Strategies for Teaching Blending

Connected Phonation (aka Continuous Blending)

- For students who tested into Step by Step but need specific help with blending, you can begin with Level 6: /s/, since it lends itself to connected phonation.
- “Connected phonation” is a decoding strategy that teaches students to stretch out *continuous sounds* to support their blending.
- In connected phonation, we are trying to avoid pauses between sounds, so that students learn to blend individual phonemes together when reading a word.
 - Continuous Sounds: all vowels, /f/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /r/, /s/, /v/, /w/, /y/, /z/
 - Stop Sounds: /b/, /k/, /d/, /g/, /h/, /j/, /p/, /t/

Connected Phonation examples:

- /mmmăăăp/, “map” instead of /m/ + /ă/ + /p/, “map”
- /sssüüünnn/, “sun” instead of /s/ + /ü/ + /n/, “sun”
- /fffllllīīp/, “flip” instead of /f/ + /l/ + /ī/ + /p/, “flip”

Read more about [connected phonation here](#).

Successive Blending

- In successive blending, students blend *as they move through the word* rather than after they have said all the sounds, or attempting to combine all the sounds at once.

Successive blending example for the word “sat”:

- /s/
- /sa/
- sat

Read more about [successive blending here](#).

Connected phonation + Successive Blending

- Connected phonation and successive blending can be used together!

Connected phonation + successive blending example:

- /sssssss/
- /ssssssssaaaaaa/
- /ssssssssaaaaaat/
- sat

Pocket Chart

- A pocket chart and other manipulatives are helpful tools when students are learning to blend! You can use a pocket chart during dictation *and* reading.
- First, model for students how you are blending.
- Then have students practice blending as you move the card(s) (use a combination of choral/group responses and call on students individually).
- If you don't have access to a pocket chart, you can also use magnetic letter tiles or [virtual letter tiles](#).