

Dear Families, Caregivers, and After School Providers,

In K-2, students are engaged in learning the fundamentals of reading that is called structured phonics using the EL Education Reading Foundations Skills Block curriculum.

What is Structured Phonics?

Structured phonics teaches the letters, sounds, **phonological awareness skills***, and **spelling patterns*** of English in a logical and research-based sequence. ¹

What are the microphases?

The Reading Foundations Skills Block places students into phases of reading development, developed by Dr. Linnea Ehri, a leading expert in the science of reading. Schools administered a benchmark assessment at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to place students into a reading phase. Classroom teachers will provide learning opportunities to meet the needs of students based on their phase.

Pre-Alphabetic	Partial Alphabetic	Full Alphabetic	Consolidated Alphabetic
Students are not yet understanding how <i>letters</i> and <i>groups of letters</i> that often appear together represent the sounds of spoken language. Students may recognize some letters (e.g., letters in their own name) and environmental print (e.g., “Stop” on stop sign).	Students are <i>partially</i> understanding how <i>letters</i> and <i>groups of letters</i> that often appear together represent the sounds of spoken language Students are beginning to read and spell CVC* and VC* words, but frequently confuse vowels and vowel sounds.	Students are <i>fully</i> understanding <i>letters</i> and <i>groups of letters</i> that often appear together and represent the sounds of spoken language Students are able to read and spell all regularly spelled, one-syllable words and some words with multiple syllables.	Students are using knowledge of syllable types to read and spell words with multiple syllables.

*Note: Descriptions and examples are provided for bold-faced words in the glossary.

Where should my child be at this time of the year?

This chart indicates the microphase students are working in at each benchmark period.

	Beginning of the Year (Fall)	Middle of the Year (Winter)	End of the Year (Spring)
Kindergarten	Pre-Alphabetic Late	Partial Alphabetic Middle	Partial Alphabetic Late
First Grade	Partial Alphabetic Late	Full Alphabetic Early	Full Alphabetic Late
Second Grade	Full Alphabetic Late	Consolidated Alphabetic Middle	Full Mastery of Consolidated Alphabetic Late

¹ The Skills Block is closely aligned with the Orton Gillingham sequence of teaching spelling patterns and skills, with some exceptions based on design decisions and alignment with state standards.

What are the skills for each microphase?

Below are the skills that students should practice and master in each microphase. When using this chart, teachers should determine which of the skills students are able to do in each microphase. If students are not yet able to master the skills in the respective microphases, students and teachers can make goals toward these skills to increase proficiency so that they continue to progress through the microphases accordingly.

	Early	Middle	Late
PreAlphabetic	- Name writing - Identify letters in name - Identify syllables (or beats) in words - Identify rhyming words - Identify <u>spoken</u> words with the same initial sounds - Understand concepts about print (e.g., reading from left to right, top to bottom)	- Name writing - Identify letters in name - Identify syllables (or beats) in words - Identify rhyming words - Identify <u>spoken</u> words with the same initial sounds - Identify <u>spoken</u> words with the same final sound - Understand concepts about print (e.g., reading from left to right, top to bottom)	- Identify letter names and letter sounds (A, T, H, P, N, C, M, R, V, S, G, I, L, D, F, K, Y, X, Q, U, B, O, W, J, E, Z) - Identify syllables (or beats) in <u>spoken</u> words - Identify and produce rhyming <u>spoken</u> words - Understand concepts about print (e.g., reading from left to right, top to bottom)
Partial Alphabetic	- Read and spell CVC* and VC* words - Identify sounds for digraphs* -ch, th, sh - Identify and compare short vowel sounds in <u>spoken</u> words	- Read and spell CVC* words - Read and spell CVCC* words - Compare long and short vowels in <u>spoken</u> words - Read and spell words with double consonants (ff, ll, ss, zz)	- Read and spell words with initial blends (e.g., bl-, cl-, gl-, pl-, sl-, sp-, spl-) - Read and spell words with ending blends (e.g., -lt, -ft, -nd, -nk, -ng, -nt, -ed /id/) - Read and spell short /e/ words with 3 and 4 sounds - Read and spell words with -y as long /i/
Full Alphabetic	- Read and spell words with closed syllables, open-syllables, and CVCe syllables. - Read and spell compound words - Read and spell rabbit words (i.e., muffin, other double consonants)	- Read and spell two-syllable words with suffixes -ing, -s, -ed (i.e., taking, bites) - Read and spell one- and two-syllable words with r-controlled vowels (i.e. cart, mark) - Read and spell one-syllable words with vowel teams (ea, oa, ai, ay, ow, ie, igh)	- Read and spell two-syllable closed, open, CVCe, r-controlled, and vowel teams words - Read and spell vowel patterns by applying spelling generalizations: (ay vs. ai, ee vs. ea vs. y, igh vs. ie, oa vs. ow)
Consolidated Alphabetic	- Read and spell one-syllable words with vowel teams (e.g., oi, oy, ou, ow, oo, ui, ue, ew, tion, sion) - Read and spell words with "is" contraction (e.g., "she's") - Read and spell words with double letters when adding a suffix (e.g., run → running) - Read and spell words with ending patterns -old, ost, ind, ild, sion, tion - Read and spell words with "-ed" as /id/, /ed/, and /t/	- Read and spell consonant -le syllable type words (e.g., giggle) - Read and spell words with "not" contraction (e.g., "don't") - Read and spell words with other ending patterns (ch vs. tch, dge vs. ge, able vs. ible, c vs. ck vs. ic) - Read and spell one-syllable words with vowel teams (eu and ei, aw and au)	- Read and spell words with affixes - Read and spell words with contractions - are (e.g., we're) - Read and spell words with schwa* (amaze) and homophones - Compare, read, and spell words with endings that sound the same: -ic vs. ck, cal vs. cle, ous vs. us - Understand and apply the "y to i" spelling rule when making a word plural (e.g., cherry → cherries)

*Note: Descriptions and examples are provided for bold-faced words in the glossary.

How can I best support my child at home?

<u>Pre Alphabetic and Partial Alphabetic</u>	<i>Letters</i> • Write all letters on index cards and practice the following: ◦ Read/say the letter ◦ Write the letter on a separate sheet of paper ◦ Hear the letter sound in a spoken word ◦ Say a word with that sound at the beginning/middle/end (and possibly draw a picture of the word or words) <i>Rhyming with spoken words</i> • Say a word and ask the student to say another word that rhymes with that word • Say two words and ask the student if the words rhyme or not <i>Syllable Identification with spoken words</i> • Say a 1, 2, or 3 syllable word and ask the student to clap out the beats/syllables in the word <i>Spelling and Reading with words in print</i> • Write CVC words on index cards. Ask the student to sort by the middle sound (e.g., all the short “a” words like “cat” and “mat” vs. all the short “e” words like “bed” and “red”) • Say a CVC word and ask the student segment the sounds and then blend back together (e.g., say “cat”; student says “/c/- /a/- /t/, then “cat”). • Say a CVC word slowly and ask the student to write the letter for each sound to spell the word
<u>Full Alphabetic</u>	• Write 12 or more example words (e.g, CVC words if student is working on this) on index cards ◦ Student sorts words by spelling pattern then reads to a partner ◦ Student comes up with additional words to go in each category when finished (orally and/or in writing). ◦ Student builds words with letter tiles, letter magnets, modeling clay or other material, then read to a partner ◦ Student practices reading, writing (in a notebook, on loose paper, or on a whiteboard), then reading the words again ◦ Student uses crayons to color-code words by spelling pattern then read to a partner ◦ Student uses words in a sentence (orally and/or in writing) ◦ Student writes or says silly sentences using the words ◦ Student adds suffixes to base words (e.g, make-- makes)
<u>Consolidated Alphabetic</u>	• Write 12 or more example words (e.g, CVCe words if student is working on this) on index cards ◦ Student sorts words by spelling pattern then reads to a partner ◦ Student comes up with additional words to go in each category when finished (orally and/or in writing). ◦ Student builds words with letter tiles, letter magnets, modeling clay or other material, then read to a partner ◦ Student practices reading, writing (in a notebook, on loose paper, or on a whiteboard), then reading the words again ◦ Student uses crayons to color-code words by spelling pattern then read to a partner ◦ Student uses words in a sentence (orally and/or in writing) ◦ Student writes or says silly sentences using the words ◦ Student adds suffixes to base words (e.g, make-- makes) ◦ Ask student how a suffix or prefix changes the meaning of a word

Glossary

Word/ Term	Description	Examples
Word Types		
VC	Vowel-consonant	at, am, at, an, it, in, if, on, up, us,
CVC	Consonant-vowel-consonant	cat, mat, tap, lap, lip, tin, tip, pin, pop, mop, rot, pot, run, fun, mut, rut, bun, bet, red, pet, ten
CCVC	Consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant	shop, trip, chat, that, flat, ship, grip, plop, crop, slam, slip, shut, this
CVCC	consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant	bash, with, last, rich, raft, rash, wisp, lost, loft, best, rust, bust, fuss
CVCe	consonant-vowel-consonant- silent “e”	dive, hope, cure, lake, cave, hive, dove, rave, like, poke, rake, make
Consonant-le	ends with a consonant followed by -le	battle, middle, giggle, wiggle, gaggle, fiddle, rattle, little, bottle
Terms		
schwa	contains a vowel that sounds more like “uh” instead of its more common sound	<u>a</u> maze, kitten, China <u>u</u> ,
blend	Put together (blend) the individual sounds of a word, usually after segmenting the sounds (see definition below)	After segmenting the spoken word “map” into individual sounds (/m/- /a/- /p/), blend them back together to say the word: “map”
digraph	Two letters used to represent one sound.	“Sh” in the word “ship” or “ea” in the word “cheap”
Phonological awareness	The ability to recognize that spoken words are made up of units of sound (e.g, sounds, syllables)	Syllable identification is a form of phonological awareness because the reader is able to hear and identify the number of syllables, or beats, s/he hears in a spoken word
segment	Break a spoken word into individual sounds	Break the word “map” into individual sounds: /m/- /a/- /p/
spelling pattern	Letter combination within a word that represent the same sound in each word on which it occurs	“ea” (as in “beach”, “reach”, “beat”); “oy” as in “boy”, “toy”, and “ahoy”