Implementing an Explicit Phonics-Based Program K-6

Providing Students a Toolkit for Long-term Literacy Success

Kelly Gunter; *Director of School Operations*
Nicole Roberts; *Director of Literacy Curriculum & Instruction*
Pineapple Cove Classical Academy

What spelling and reading instruction looks like at our schools...

A Model Lesson

What does spelling instruction look like at your school?

Often schools offer:

- Word lists with little to no common patterns
- Little attention to rules of spelling/phonemic patterns
- Focus on spelling as memory work
- Activities with words that do not necessarily support spelling automaticity (ABC order, write words three times, etc.)
- Provide words on Monday, test on Friday, never to be seen again…

What is Explicit Phonics?

- Multi-sensory, engages all learners
  - Handwriting, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, & reading
- Writing and spelling lead to reading and thinking
  - Marked difference from most literacy programs
- 72 phonograms (phono- means "sound", -gram "what is written")
- 44 rules of spelling (yes, 44!)
- Students are active participants in the spelling and reading process.
- Provides a toolkit for students to encode, recode, and decode words.
- RULE-driven program

Silent final e

JOB 1
Silent final e lets the vowel say its name.

/c/
followed by
e, i, or y
says c²

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

/g/
followed by
e, i, or y
may say g²

Floss Rule:
We often double
f, l, and s
after a single vowel at the end of a base word.

off, fell, mess

Rules are visible in classrooms to reference as needed!

What is Explicit Phonics? (cont.)

- We do not teach words as sight words.
- We do not send spelling lists home **until** they are mastered.
- All initial instruction is whole group; small groups are pulled to reiterate what was presented in whole group.
- Explicit phonics and spelling instruction remains through sixth grade.
- Purposeful print and cursive instruction.
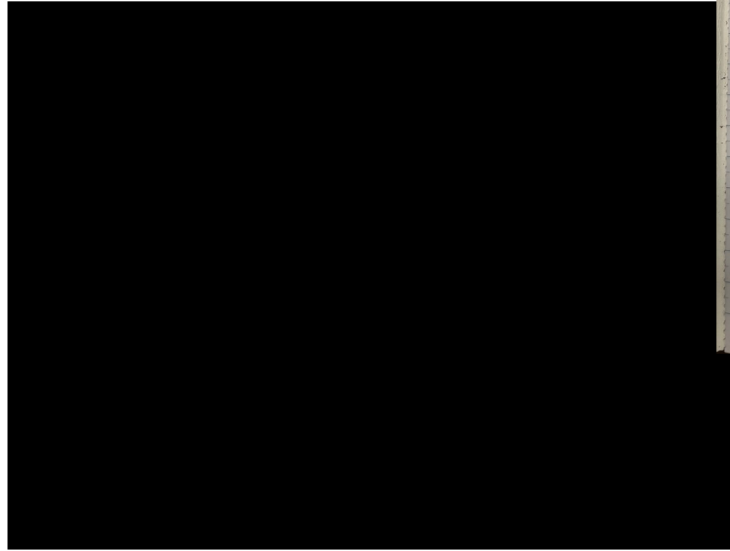- What about intervention?

Spelling Test
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Multisensory Approach: "See it, Hear it, Say it, Write it"
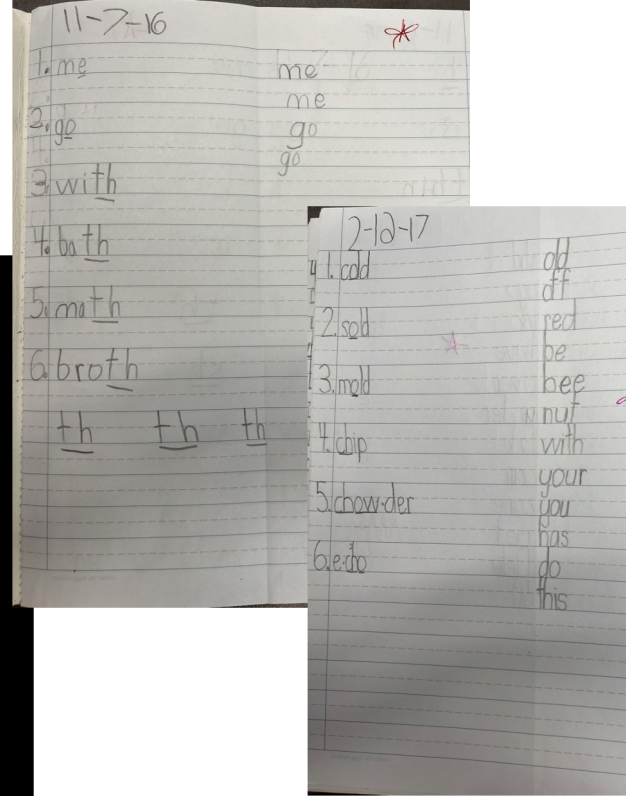

Regions of the Human Brain
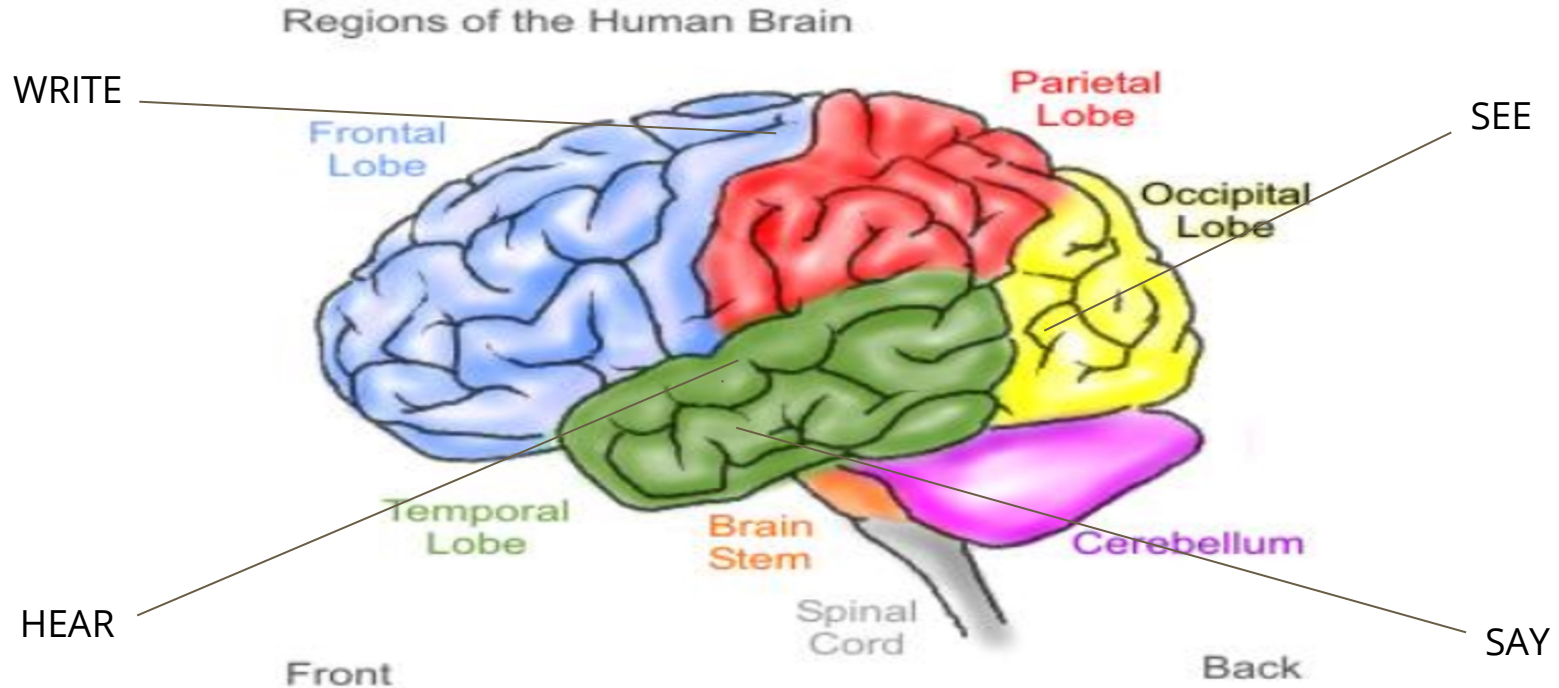
A note on handwriting...
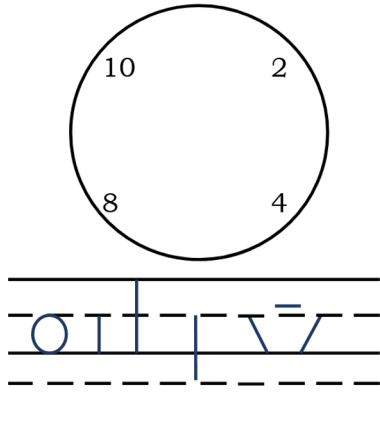
First

Next

Result

What does the data show?

2015-2016- First year school, 420 students, all new to explicit phonics

	Goal	District Avg.	PCCA Avg.
Kindergarten End of Year Running Record	4	6.16	8.7
Kindergarten End of Year High Frequency Words	55	62	79
1st Grade End of Year BELAA	70%	73%	77%
2nd Grade End of Year BELAA	70%	68%	72%

What does the data show?

2016-2017- Second year school, 500 students

	Goal	District Avg.	PCCA Avg. 2015-2016	PCA Avg. 2016-2017
Kindergarten End of Year Running Record	4	6	8.7	10.5
Kindergarten End of Year High Frequency Words	55	65	79	111
1st Grade End of Year BELAA	70%	74%	77%	81
2nd Grade End of Year BELAA	70%	69%	72%	71

What does the data show?

Currently we have three schools- two established and one in its first year.

PCCA Palm Bay (K-12)- Year 7

Grade Level	Subject	State Proficiency Score 2021-2022	District Proficiency Score 2021-2022	PCCA Proficiency Score 2021-2022	PCCA Proficiency Score 2019-2020	PCCA Proficiency Score 2018-2019	PCCA Proficiency Score 2017-2018	PCCA Proficiency Score 2016-2017	PCCA Proficiency Score 2015-2016
3rd Grade	ELA	53%	58%	65%	77%	80%	77%	84%	78%
4th Grade	ELA	57%	60%	75%	76%	68%	77%	74%	66%
5th Grade	ELA	55%	51%	66%	83%	79%	66%	70%	58%
6th Grade	ELA	52%	64%	74%	77%	53%	73%	71%	86%
7th Grade	ELA	48%	53%	56%	69%	65%	67%	71%	N/A
8th Grade	ELA	49%	52%	51%	64%	60%	90%	N/A	N/A
9th Grade	ELA	51%	55%	64%	75%	62%	N/A	N/A	N/A
10th Grade	ELA	49%	54%	61%	67%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

What does the data show?

Currently we have three schools- two established and one in its first year.

PCCA West Melbourne (K-8)- Year 4

| Grade Level	Subject	State Proficiency Score 2021-2022	District Proficiency Score 2021-2022	PCCA Proficiency Score 2021-2022 Year 4
3rd Grade	ELA	53%	58%	71%
4th Grade	ELA	57%	60%	74%
5th Grade	ELA	55%	51%	82%
6th Grade	ELA	52%	64%	61%
7th Grade	ELA	48%	53%	65%
8th Grade	ELA	49%	52%	61%

Challenges & Opportunities

- Twenty-four hours of initial teacher training to implement
- Lots of support and follow-up for new teachers
  - Modeling, co-teaching, front-loading lessons
- Must have buy-in from teachers and parents (Literacy Nights!)
- Literacy is embedded in every subject.
- Punctuated practice is a MUST.

Punctuated Practice: The goal of punctuated practice is to move the words introduced in formal spelling into a scholar's long term memory bank within the first 48 hours of being taught. There are two main memory components.

Spelling Patterns

eight weight weigh
ate, wait way
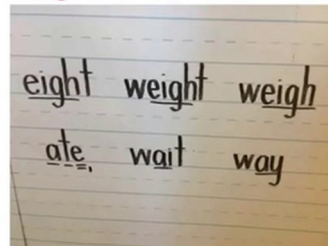
Two-Way Pronunciations

al·fu·bet

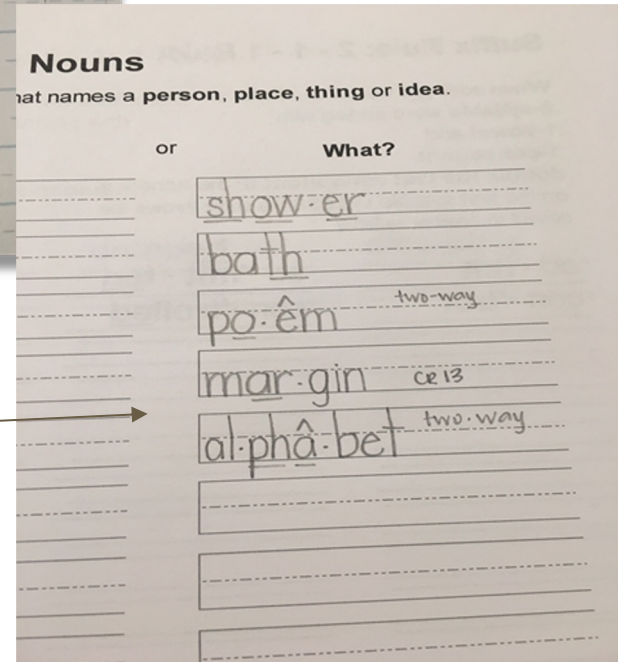al·phâ·bet
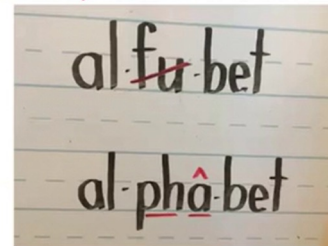
Graphic Organization!

The final component of the methodology is the use of graphic organizers as a way to collect, organize, and assimilate the information being taught in orthography.

- Kindergarten & First use Wall Charts
- First through Third use Orthography Notebooks
- Fourth through Sixth use Composition Books
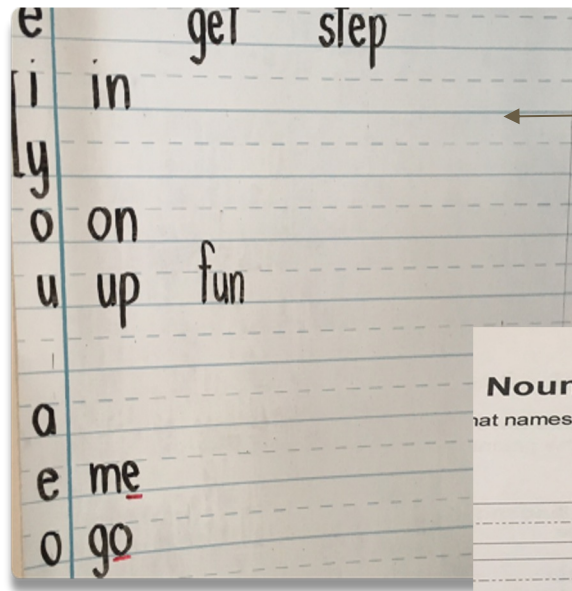
Wall Charts!

Notebooks!

Decode a Word in 4 Simple Steps:

Step 1: Circle any Prefixes or Suffixes

Step 2: Underline any Multi-Letter Phonograms

Step 3: Dot Below the Vowels

Step 4: Decode the Word!

indecipherable

Final Thoughts

By implementing explicit phonics our goal is to foster a LOVE of words in the hearts and minds of our scholars!

Scholars will not fear words that seem *indecipherable*! Instead they will reach into their *toolkit* that is well equipped with knowledge to *own* new and exciting vocabulary!