

# ***Assessing Primary Readers***

## **Seminar 2 Teacher's Packet**

A KET professional development workshop for educators approved for Professional Development Training by the Kentucky Department of Education.

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# ***Assessing Primary Readers***

## **Seminar 2**

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### **Overview of the Seminar**

**Targeted Audience:** primary teachers

Host Ellen McIntyre welcomes back teacher/presenters Felicia Cumings and Melissa Sutherland for Seminar 2. The focus of the program is application: how do teachers use the information they gather through assessment to determine what their students need and which lessons will best meet those needs.

The seminar includes several videotaped segments from Melissa's and Felicia's classrooms, including print concept lessons, picture walk, independent reading, and phonological lessons. The panel also discusses management issues including organization of time and ways to provide productive activities for students not engaged in individual and small group literacy lessons.

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#### **About This Teacher Packet**

This packet includes an agenda for the program, brief biographies of the host and presenter, and specific materials related to seminar content. You'll find more details in the table of contents on page 4.

#### **Seminar Format**

This 90-minute program was recorded in the KET distance learning studio. Any materials or information needed for participation in the seminar is provided in the videotape and/or included in the teacher packet.

## **Professional Development Credit**

**Stage of Participant Development:** Practice/Application

**The Kentucky Department of Education has approved all KET Star Channels Seminars for professional development credit if schools or districts choose to include them in their professional development plans. Districts or schools may choose to include preparation and/or follow-up time as part of professional development. For example, if a teacher participates in one 90-minute program and spends an additional 30 minutes in related activities, he or she could be awarded a total of two hours professional development credit.**

**Individual teachers who wish to use these videotapes for professional development credit should check with their school professional development chair or with their district professional development coordinator.**

**Professional development can also be used to satisfy requirements for the fifth year program. Contact your local university or the Division of Teacher Education and Certification at 502-564-4606 for more information.**

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### **Materials Needed for Participation in the Seminar**

- Pencil or pen
- Paper
- Copy of this packet
- Copy of Seminar 1 packet

# Seminar Agenda

<b>Welcome and introduction</b>	Dr. Ellen McIntyre, Host
<b>Key features of good reading strategies</b>	
<b>Using assessment to determine and meet students' instructional needs</b>	
<b>Videotaped segment: Using the morning message to model good reading strategies</b>	Felicia Cumings, Presenter
<b>Videotaped segment: Print concepts lesson</b>	Melissa Sutherland, Presenter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Book introduction</b></li><li>• <b>Read aloud/discussion</b></li><li>• <b>Echo reading</b></li><li>• <b>Choral reading</b></li><li>• <b>Turn taking</b></li><li>• <b>Independent/partner reading</b></li><li>• <b>Word focus</b></li></ul>	
<b>Videotaped segment: Picture walk and independent reading</b>	Felicia Cumings
<b>Videotaped segments: Phonological skills</b> Sutherland	Felicia Cumings and Melissa Sutherland
<b>Choosing phonological skills lessons based on student assessments</b>	Panel (Ellen McIntyre, Felicia Cumings, and Melissa Sutherland)
<b>Management issues</b>	
<b>If . . . then scenarios linking assessment data to lessons</b>	Ellen McIntyre
<b>Concluding remarks</b>	Ellen McIntyre

# Reading Strategies

Ellen McIntyre

October 1999

This booklet is about reading strategies. You know, of course, that there is much more to literacy instruction than what is in this booklet. You must know how to organize instruction, focus on the processes of reading and writing, and respond to students' needs. However, you must also have a repertoire of reading strategies that will enable you to match students' developmental levels with instruction. This booklet provides such strategies.

There are three things to consider when you teach reading strategies to children:

1) comprehension, 2) fluency, and 3) word analysis (including phonics).

## Comprehension Considerations

### Selecting Books

Choosing the right book to use in each session is key to the success of the session and the students' achievement. Books that are too difficult for the group to read may be good books to read aloud *to* the group, if the children are interested in them. If you are working with emergent readers (those not reading in the conventional sense yet), *predictable* books are wonderful too. A predictable book is one children can read "from memory" soon after you have read it to them. If the children can read a little bit, try starting with *easy* "*I-Can-Read*" books, like the Dr. Seuss books, to see how far they can go. Always bring more than one book to be sure you are choosing one the children enjoy. When the children have progressed beyond these books, they may be ready for picture books and beginning novels.

### Read Aloud

Struggling readers are often children who have not been read to during their pre-school years. Children who are not read to regularly do not learn the structures of stories, the vocabulary, and book language necessary for successful reading. They also very often do not know the pleasure reading can bring. What we can do is make up for some of this lost time by reading books children cannot read independently aloud to them throughout the school day and with the rest of the class. The most important thing to remember about this is to choose books the children adore! Hilariously funny books are always appreciated.

### Building Background Knowledge

Talking about the book or story can be one of the most important strategies for helping the child comprehend. Keep this introduction short. Use words the child will encounter in the story. Draw attention to the title, author, dedication, and pictures. Allow the child to look through the entire book before reading it. Ask questions such as: "What do you think this book might be about? Why do you think that?" Summarize the story or predict what you think the story might be about. After reading the book, discuss whether your predictions were close.

If you are reading non-fiction texts, invite the children to share all they know about the topic. If they know little, do something to help them build background knowledge (show pictures, talk, etc.) that only takes a few minutes.

### **Discussion/Instructional Conversation**

Every time a new book is introduced, the teacher and children should engage in meaningful conversation about the book. Discussion supports readers' thinking and strategies. It helps them learn to love books, and it increases their vocabulary. When discussing a book with the group, ask questions that have no right answer or are "open-ended." Sample questions might include:

- Do you like this book? Why? Why not?
- What did you like about this story?
- You know what this makes me think of? It makes me think . . . (teacher finishes)
- What does this story make you think about?
- Do you know anyone like \_\_\_\_\_ (character in the book)?
- What was your favorite part?
- Was there anything confusing about this book?
- If you were going to tell your teacher (mother, brother, etc.) about this book, what would you say?

Never use the discussion as a time to "test" the children. If the children did not comprehend the story, then we must choose an easier book to read.

For true "Instructional Conversation" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1993) the teacher should not contribute to the discussion any more than any one given child. The teacher should work toward getting the children to do the talking (and therefore the thinking). This helps children *construct* understanding and learn what reading can do.

### **Imaging**

Teach the children that good readers make pictures in their heads about the story as they read. (Surprisingly, many don't know this.) You may even tell a story to the children and ask them what pictures they have in their heads as you tell it. You will probably need to model how to talk about the pictures that form in your head as you read. For instance, say you are reading Dr. Seuss's *The Cat in the Hat*. You might read the first page ("The sun did not shine. It was too wet to play. So we sat in the house all that cold, cold wet day.") and then say, "Now, when I read that page, I see a very rainy day. No kids are outside playing. My soccer game was canceled. There was nothing to do. It was kind of chilly in the house because of all the rain. We were really bored, had nothing to do. My mom kept nagging us." Showing your own thinking helps the children know that this is just what they should be doing as they read. Have them try this after reading a page or even after just one sentence, especially if you suspect they aren't sure what is going on. You might take turns "imaging" on alternate pages. It's a lot of mental work and you should acknowledge this to the children!

## **Retelling**

Having students retell stories is not only an excellent check of comprehension but it actually teaches children how to better comprehend the next time they read. After the students have read a paragraph, page, or story, ask one to “Tell me what you just read,” or “Retell this story as if you were telling it to someone who has not read it.”

## **Student-Created Questions**

Before the students begin reading a story or book, tell them they will be acting as the “teacher” and asking *you* questions. They will read with extra concentration as they think of appropriate questions. Plus, like retelling, student-created questions help students better comprehend the next story they read.

## **SQ3R**

This technique is often used when reading nonfiction. First have students *Survey* the entire text—skimming the text, reading captions, looking at pictures and graphs, etc. Next have them create *Questions* from each section of the text. They could turn section headings into questions, for instance. Then have them *Read* the text, answering the questions they posed. Then have them *Recite* what they’ve read and make notes of important concepts. Finally, have them *Review* the entire text to find relationships among sections and recall main points.

## **QAR**

There are four types of Question-Answer Relationships (QAR). Teach children to identify the kinds of questions texts pose. *Right There* questions have answers explicitly stated in the text. (Where did Jimmy find the missing Jewel?) *Think and Search* questions require a conclusion to be drawn. Students must link statements from more than one place in the text. (How did Jimmy feel?) *The Author and You* questions link prior knowledge with inference from the story. (What is it like to be caught in a lie?) *On Your Own* questions evaluate. (Which character do you find the most interesting?)

## **Reciprocal Teaching** (Palinscar, 1986)

The teacher and students take turns leading a dialogue concerning each segment of text.

- Step 1: Teacher introduces passage.
- Step 2: Teacher assigns a student to either act as teacher or student.
- Step 3: Students read the passage silently.
- Step 4: The “teacher” (may be a child) summarizes the content (“A summary is a shortened version without all the details.”), discusses and clarifies difficulties (“Is there something you don’t understand?”), asks a question that a teacher or test might ask of that segment (“What question do you think a teacher might ask?”), and makes a prediction about future content (“What do you think might happen next?”).
- Step 5: Students take turns playing “teacher.” They discuss the book as naturally as possible.
- Step 6: Give specific feedback (“You asked that question well. It was very clear what information you wanted.”)

### **Summarization**

Have children begin by identifying the *three* most important ideas in the passage and ask them to *justify* their decisions. They can do this in partners.

Have partners share with the group, and then lead the group in deciding the most important ideas.

### **Making Connections**

Teach children to become *metacognitive* about the kinds of connections they make as they read. They might make “text to self” connections (connecting what they read to something in their lives), “text to text” connections (connecting what they read to another text they’ve read or heard read), and “text to world” connections (connecting what they read to what they know about the world (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997).

### **Text Structures**

Teach students that texts are structured differently, and they should have different expectations about different kinds of texts when they read. Show them how fiction, poetry, and nonfiction differ. Show them how nonfiction texts can be descriptions, problem-solutions, chronologies, comparison/contrasts, cause/effects, or directions. Share examples of each.

### **Story Structure**

Students need to know there is a typical structure to stories as well, often called a “story grammar.” It includes setting, characters, episode, consequence, and reaction. One way to teach this is to share the cover of a new book and ask questions about each of the above areas. Have students write their responses to the questions on the left side of the page. Then read the story aloud, and have students write the actual answers on the right side of the page. Examples of questions might include:

*Setting:* Where will this story take place?

*Characters:* Who is in the story?

*Episode:* What will happen? How will \_\_\_\_\_ (name of character) feel about what happens?

*Consequence:* What does \_\_\_\_\_ (name of character) do next?

*Reaction:* What did \_\_\_\_\_ (name of character) learn from this?  
What did readers learn?

### **Fluency Considerations**

The following strategies can all be done using the same book. For instance, after reading aloud (described above), you may want to have the children echo read, chorally read, take turns, and do partner reading (described below) with you before reading the book independently. I know this means that the children “read” one book five times in one sitting, but children usually enjoy this, and it is exactly what helps them learn to read.

### **Echo Reading**

Echo reading is when the teacher reads a line of text and then the children repeat the exact same line of text. The teacher points to the words and reads slowly but fluently so it makes sense. For

instance, the teacher reads “Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?” and the children point to the same text and echo, “Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?”.

### **Neurological Impress** (Scorre, 1988)

This is actually choral reading, but the teacher lowers and raises his or her voice when the children’s voices get stronger and weaker. For instance, on a page the children seem to know well, the teacher can back off and quiet his or her voice. On a page the children do not know well, the teacher’s voice can get stronger. It’s a good idea to tell the children what you are doing when raising and lowering your voice. Otherwise they might get confused or even begin to raise and lower their voices because they think they are supposed to do that.

### **Choral Reading**

Choral reading is when the teacher and children read together or when just a group of children read together. This usually happens after the book has been read aloud and discussed and after the children have participated in echo reading and neurological impress (above). This can be a wonderfully fun activity as children learn to “perform” for others.

### **Turn Taking**

After doing some echo and choral reading, you can read a book again, taking turns with the children reading pages. If a child isn’t strong yet, you might read the longer, more difficult pages while that child reads the short, more predictable pages.

### **Repeated Reading**

Children like and need to read and reread the same books over and over. You may find yourself reading the same books aloud and that’s fine if the children want to. The children should reread the books at their “instructional” level. (To find out what level books the child should read, see the print packet for Seminar 1.) You should always begin a session with one of the books the child has practiced with during the previous session. Some books may last several sessions, others only two or three.

### **Readers’ Theater** (Martinez et al., 1991)

Readers’ theater is a way to interpret a story using the written text. Unlike drama, in which the body motion portrays a great deal of meaning, readers’ theater is dependent on the ability of the reader’s voice to capture the listener. The readers practice using the rate, intonation, and emphasis on meaning that will make the text come alive. Children read parts individually or chorally (every child has a role), and they read it at a rate that sounds like oral speech.

### **Independent Reading**

After the children have heard the book read aloud, have echo and chorally read it, and even participated in turn-taking, they are ready to read it on their own. When you ask them to do this, have them read the book silently to themselves first, so they can review the words. Then have them read the book aloud. The children will read the text from memory, which is to be expected. The next two strategies will help children move from memory reading to recognizing words.

### **Pointing to Words**

When you read aloud to and with emergent readers, you should point to the words as you read,

deliberately touching each word as you say it. This helps the children understand that for every word we read there is a corresponding written word. Many emergent readers will be unable to do this, so you may need to help children by placing your hand over theirs as they read. Witches' fingers help motivate children to point! (Witches' fingers are long, green plastic "fingers" that fit over the tip of a finger and are sold around Halloween at craft stores.)

### **Word Focus**

When the children have read the book independently, it is time to go back to the text and see if the children can locate words. It is also time to focus on phonics (described in this manual). For instance, you might say, "Charles, point to the word *see*, just the word *see*." Charles might have to count out the words as reads from memory, whispering "Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?". Or he might recognize the word after so many repeated readings. Do this with several words.

You might focus on beginning sounds when helping the child identify the words. For instance, you might say, "Find the word *what*. It begins with a /w/ sound, and we know that /w/ means there is a *w*. Where is the word *what*?" When the child locates it, you might ask, "And what sound does *what* end with? /whattt/." Keep this kind of word focus to only about 5 to 7 minutes of any session unless the child really seems to enjoy it and is benefiting from it.

### **Beginning Readers**

Reading aloud, echo reading, choral reading, and turn taking (described above) can be used with the beginning reader as well. However, more of the beginning readers' time should be spent reading silently. The most important thing to remember when scaffolding a beginning reader is that we must help the reader continually make sense of the text—to comprehend. This is sometimes difficult to do because struggling readers often trudge through text at a painfully slow pace! It is often apparent that the readers are not making sense of the text. Our job is to select texts the children can comprehend with our help.

### **Silent Reading**

Before children are ever asked to read aloud, they should be asked to read the book silently first. If you ask a child to read aloud the first time they are introduced to a book, the child will focus only on the pronunciation and not on the meaning. Often this is what teaches children that reading doesn't make sense and is only about struggling to figure out the words! So, before having the children read aloud, you might suggest, "Read the book to yourself first. If you come to words you don't know, just do the best you can. We'll read it aloud after that."

Some children may feel self-conscious if you sit and watch them reading silently, so you may have to get up and get a drink of water or read something yourself. Of course, at times you will want to observe the child reading silently to see if she is actually reading! So at times, you may have to pretend you are reading something else.

### **Figuring Out Words**

All readers come to words they don't know as they read. What we want to do is teach children to use strategies that good readers use when this happens. The following are a few:

1. They skip the word temporarily, read to the end of the sentence, and then guess what the word means based on the meaning of the entire book they are reading. Then they reread that same sentence.
2. They think about the syntax or grammar of the sentence and ask themselves, “What would make sense here?”
3. They look hard at the word and ask themselves, “Is there a part of this word I know? What does it look like? What does it sound like?” They may use their finger to cover part of the word.
4. They try to sound out the word in an attempt to identify it. They can read the sentence again, inserting the beginning sound of the unknown word.
5. They ask someone what the word is.
6. If none of the above works, they skip the word and continue reading.

Good readers often use the first four strategies simultaneously. The way to teach a child how to do this is to model it in front of the child. For instance, say the sentence is:

“My friend got a new dog.”

The child reads “my” and stops because he doesn’t know the next word. You might say, “Try reading to the end of the sentence and see if you can figure out the word.” The child does, and guesses “neighbor” because the story is about the neighborhood. Then you say, “That would make sense in the sentence, but look more closely at the word. Look how it begins.” The child responds, “My *father* got a new dog?” to which you might respond, “Look at the end of the word too. Look how it is spelled and use your sounds.” Finally, the child might say “friend.”

Here are questions and prompts that can help you assist the reader in figuring out words:

- Does that make sense?
- Is that the way we talk?
- Look at the picture.
- Try skipping the word for now and read to the end of the sentence.
- Can you make a guess?
- Can you cover up part of the word? Can you find the little word in the big word?
- Can you sound it out?

### **Running Starts**

Teach children that when they begin to stumble as they read, they can back up and take another running start. Teach them that mistakes are natural when we read aloud. Sometimes children think that reading is merely “getting through” all the words. We must teach them that reading is a sense-making activity.

## Basal Readers

Basal readers are collections of stories teachers sometimes use to teach reading. The vocabulary is controlled so that the stories are not too difficult for beginning readers. The stories get progressively more difficult with each reading. Typically the stories are not as interesting as good children's literature but sometimes kids really like reading from these series. If the children enjoy them, you may choose to teach for a time using a basal reader. Or you may encourage the children to take the basal home to read each evening while at school you read literature.

## Word Study Strategies

Often struggling readers can comprehend well when they listen to stories, but have difficulty with phonics and word recognition when it comes to reading on their own. These same children have difficulty with spelling. We recommend that you spend some part of every session (up to 15 minutes) on word study strategies. The ones listed below are fun and beneficial.

### Phonemic Awareness

Emergent readers often do not yet have phonemic awareness—the knowledge that our language is made up of distinct sounds and the ability to take words apart and put them back together again. This is important for learning to read. If you are working with an emergent reader, you may try some of these activities.

Phonemic word play. Practice the following:

- Phonemic deletion (“What word would be left if the /k/ sound were taken away from *cat*?”)
- Word-to-word matching (“Do *pen* and *pipe* begin with the same sound?”)
- Blending (“What word would you have if you put these sounds together? /s/, /a/, /t/?”)
- Sound isolation (“What is the first sound in *rose*?”)
- Phoneme segmentation (“What sounds do you hear in the word *hot*?”)
- Phoneme counting (“How many sounds do you hear in the word *cake*?”)
- Deleting phonemes (“What sound do you hear in *meat* that is missing in *eat*?”)
- Odd word out (“What word starts with a different sound: *bag, nine, beach, bike*?”)
- Sound-to-word matching (“Is there a /k/ in *bike*?”)

Nursery rhymes. Reading aloud nursery rhymes, poems, chants, raps, or Dr. Seuss books is one of the best ways to help children develop phonemic awareness. After reading one aloud a couple of times, read only parts of it and allow the children to finish your sentences. For instance, you might say, “There was an old woman who lived in a shoe./She had so many children she didn't know what to \_\_\_\_\_.” (The child says “do.”) “She gave them some broth without any bread and spanked them all soundly and put them to \_\_\_\_\_.” (The child says “bed.”)

Songs. Some songs are great for helping kids “segment” phonemes (such as “Bo-wo-wones” and “I Like to Eat Apples”). Enjoy the songs many times before drawing the kids’ attention to the sound breaks. Eventually you can use song texts to teach kids to read.

Counting words. Have children use counters in a cup (M&M’s dropped in a Dixie cup or raisins laid on a plate are fun) to count words as you say them aloud. This helps the child understand that words are separated by spaces (not something they know naturally!).

Clapping syllables. help the children see that names like Pat and Sam are one-clap names while Joseph and Mary are two-clap names, and La Vonda and Maria are three-clap names. This will help them in their early spelling and decoding efforts.

### **Word Recognition**

These activities help children associate the sounds with the print.

Names. Use the children’s names and their friends’ and family members’ names to build phonic knowledge. For example, if a child’s name is Marcus, show him other names that begin like Marcus (especially names of people in the group or those he knows) like Mike, Melissa, Maria, and Mom. Have him see that his name ends with an *s* and that other names that begin or end with that same sound, such as Sam, Nicholas, Steven, and Charles. You might even show names that have *s*’s in the middle of them like Larissa, Jessie, and Jasmine. Children usually like working with the names of people they know.

Rhyming books and tongue twisters. When you read books that rhyme, point out how the words are spelled similarly. When you read tongue twisters, point out how the words begin with the same sound and sometimes the same letters. Some children like to write or make up their own tongue twisters. Encourage this! You may want to model it using one of the children’s names.

Making Words (Cunningham and Cunningham, 1993). This is an activity in which children are given some letters that they use to make words. They gradually build from making two-letter words to a six- or seven-letter word using all the letters they are given. The Making Words article in the October, 1992 issue of *The Reading Teacher* gives lists of letters that make up the words to use for easy planning.

High Frequency Words (Cunningham and Allington, 1995). During each session, spend a few minutes on the list of high frequency words below. You may play a guessing game with the children to see if they can find the word you are thinking of. You might say:

- It’s in the first column.
- It has four letters in it.
- It begins with a *c*.
- It has a silent *e* at the end.
- It finishes the sentence: “I want you to \_\_\_\_\_ here.”

## High Frequency Words

about	did	how	our	they're
after	do	I	out	thing
again	don't	in	over	this
all	down	is	people	to
am	eat	it	play	too
and	favorite	like	pretty	two
are	for	little	ride	up
at	friend	look	said	us
be	from	made	saw	very
because	fun	make	school	want
before	get	many	see	was
best	girl	me	she	we
big	give	more	sister	went
black	go	my	some	were
boy	good	new	talk	what
brother	had	nice	teacher	when
but	has	night	tell	where
can	have	know	that	who
can't	he	not	the	why
car	her	of	their	will
children	here	off	them	with
come	him	old	then	won't
could	his	on	there	you
day	house	other	they	your

# Key Features of Good Reading Instruction

## Organization of Time

- Student choice
- Time to read
- Many types of literature available
- Direction for text selection
- Regular monitoring/scaffolding
- Simultaneous, joint productive activity

## Assessment-Based Instruction

- Continual assessment
- Formal and informal assessments
- Careful record keeping
- Regular analysis
- Small group lessons based on assessment analysis
- Instruction in small groups
- Guided silent reading
- Explicit instruction on strategies and skills
- “Transfer” instruction for strategies and skills
- Print concept lessons (“Big Book” lesson)
- Comprehension, fluency, and phonics strategies

# Assessment-Based Instruction

## Assessment

*If your students . . .*

Have not had much exposure to books.

Have not had much experience with paper and pens.

Cannot yet “track” print.

Do not have a sense of words.

Do not know many words.

Cannot hear sounds in words.

Can hear sounds in words, but do not know sound/symbol relationships.

Know letters/sounds but can’t decode.

Read slowly, laboriously.

Do not choose to read.

Read, but don’t comprehend.

## Lesson

*Then you might . . .*

Read to them!

Let them write, draw, scribble.

Point to words as you read.

Do word games (counting words).

Echo and choral read, use pointers, allow children to copy, talk about words.

Do some phonemic awareness strategies, allow them to spell inventively.

Teach letter sounds in context, allow them to spell inventively, use matching and blending games, etc.

Model decoding, work with syllable games.

Do fluency strategies (echo reading, turn-taking, choral reading, neurological impress). Also, conduct guided reading lessons.

Use more fluency strategies but with books the children want and need to read—find out more about their interests. Also, conduct guided reading lessons.

Explicitly teach comprehension strategies. Have students use strategies during guided reading experiences. Allow reader response activities after reading. Encourage much talk about books.

## **Key Comprehension Strategies**

- Selecting excellent books
- Reading aloud
- Building background knowledge
- Instructional conversation
- Imaging
- Retelling
- Student-created questions
- SQ3R
- QAR
- Reciprocal teaching
- Summarization
- Making connections
- Teaching text structures

## **Key Fluency Strategies**

- Echo reading
- Neurological impress
- Choral reading
- Turn taking
- Repeated readings
- Readers' theater
- Independent reading
- Silent reading
- Strategies for word deciphering
- Choosing text level

### **Important Reminders**

- Teach in the children's zones of proximal development.
- Make reading a joy.
- Encourage home reading.

## **Key Phonemic/Phonics Strategies**

- Phonemic word play
- Nursery rhymes
- Songs
- Counting words
- Clapping syllables
- Using familiar names
- Rhyming books
- Tongue twisters
- Making words
- Word games