Praxis Teaching Reading (5205) Exam

This test measures whether or not a prospective teacher has the knowledge and skills necessary to teach reading effectively to elementary students in grades K–6. This computer-delivered test assesses your understanding of the science of reading, evidence-based instructional practices, and literacy assessment.

TutoringEZ

The following information is available at www.TutoringEZ.com. All resources provided through TutoringEZ are for the purposes of helping teachers pass their teacher certification exams. However, all resources provided through TutoringEZ should not be uploaded and shared for public use.

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Praxis Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) Exam Overview

150 minutes

90 selected-response questions, 3 constructed-response questions

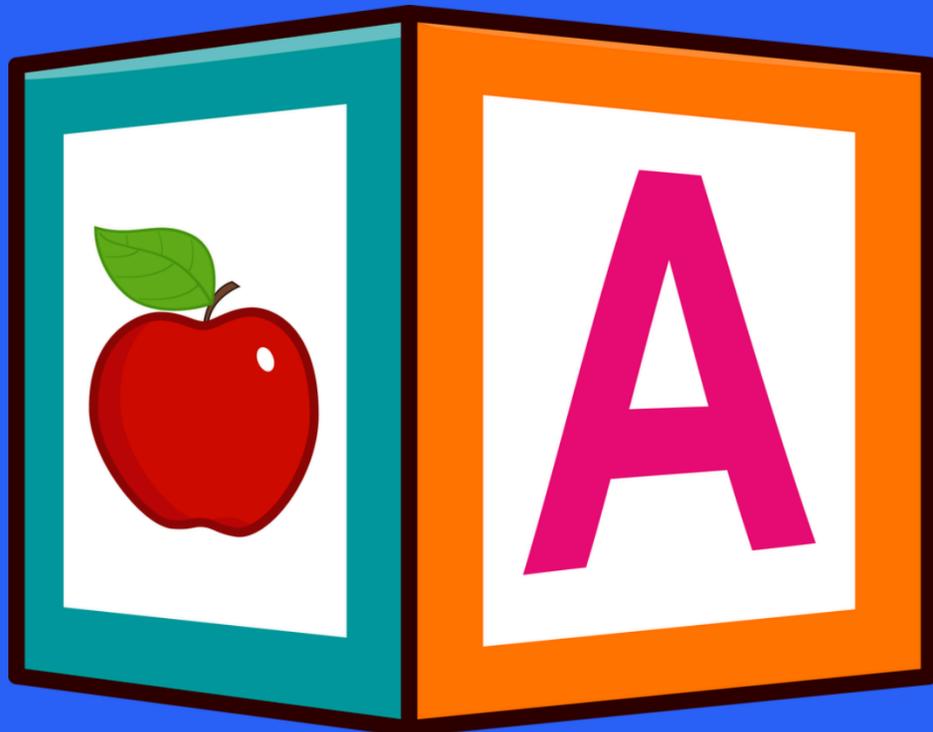Passing score varies by state (commonly 159-163)

I Phonological & Phonemic Awareness

II Phonics & Word Recognition

III Fluency

IV Vocabulary

V Comprehension

VI Writing & Reading Connections

VII Assessment & Instruction

PRAXIS TEACHING READING: ELEMENTARY

Domain I
15%

Domain II
25%

Domain III
10%

Domain IV
15%

25%

5%

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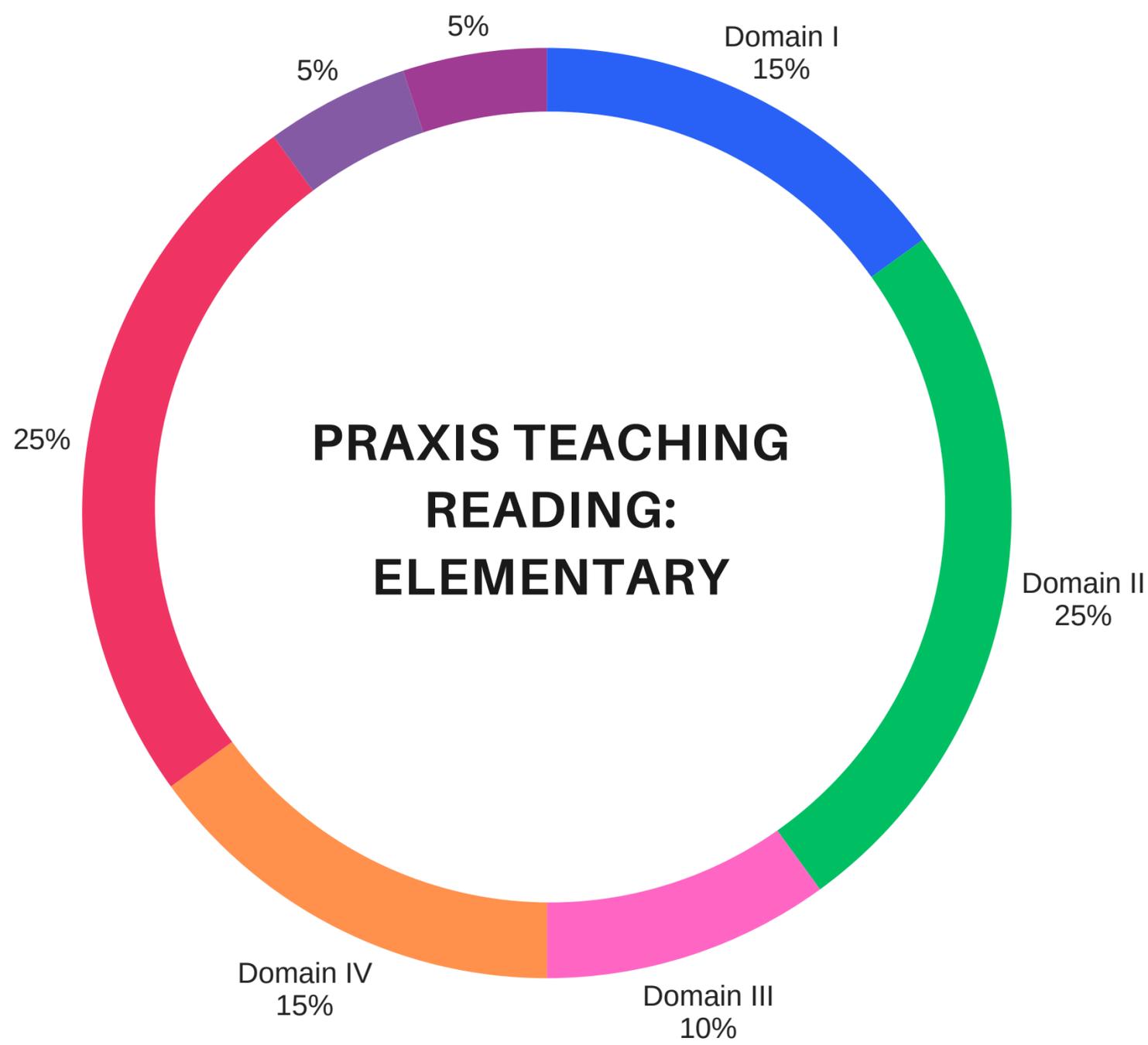
Domain I

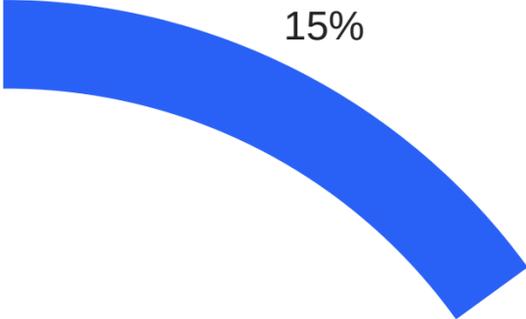# Phonological & Phonemic Awareness

Phonological & Phonemic Awareness

15%

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

DOMAIN I

Phonological Awareness

- Broad awareness of sounds in spoken language
- Ability to recognize and manipulate larger units of sound
- Skills include:
  - Rhyming (cat/hat, bell/fell)
  - Alliteration (big blue ball)
  - Syllable awareness (but-ter-fly = 3 syllables)
  - Onset-rime (c-at, fl-at)
  - Word awareness in sentences
- Develops before phonemic awareness

Phonemic Awareness

- Phoneme isolation (first sound in "cat" is /k/)
- Phoneme identification (same sound in "cat" and "cup")
- Phoneme categorization (which doesn't belong: cat, dog, can)
- Phoneme blending (/c/ /a/ /t/ = "cat")
- Phoneme segmentation ("cat" = /c/ /a/ /t/)
- Phoneme deletion ("cat" without /k/ = "at")
- Phoneme substitution (change /k/ in "cat" to /b/ = "bat")

Instructional Strategies

- Explicit and systematic instruction in developmental sequence
- Brief, engaging activities (5-15 minutes daily)
- Use of manipulatives (blocks, counters for sounds)
- Multisensory approaches (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- Songs, chants, and rhymes
- Elkonin boxes for phoneme segmentation
- Sound sorting activities
- Integration with phonics instruction (connecting sounds to letters)
- Most effective in small groups
- Can begin in preschool/kindergarten

Sample Question 1

A kindergarten teacher asks students to clap the parts in the word "elephant." This activity is developing:

A. Phonemic awareness
B. Syllable awareness
C. Phoneme segmentation
D. Onset-rime awareness

Sample Question 1

Answer: B

Clapping the syllables in words (el–e–phant = 3 claps) develops syllable awareness, which is part of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness focuses on individual phonemes, not syllables.

Sample Question 2

Which activity MOST directly teaches phoneme blending?

A. Asking students to clap syllables in words

B. Having students identify rhyming words

C. Teacher says /c/ /a/ /t/ and students say "cat"

D. Students sort pictures by beginning sounds

Sample Question 2

Answer: C

Phoneme blending is the ability to combine individual phonemes into words. When the teacher says separate sounds and students blend them together to say the whole word, this is direct phoneme blending practice.

Domain II

Phonics & Word Recognition

Phonics and Word Recognition

ALPHABETIC PRINCIPLE

PHONICS PATTERNS & RULES

WORD ANALYSIS & DECODING

DOMAIN II

Domain II
25%

Alphabetic Principle

- Understanding that letters represent sounds
- Connecting phonemes to graphemes
- Letter–sound correspondence:
  - Consonants (single sounds: /b/, /t/, /m/)
  - Consonant digraphs (two letters, one sound: sh, ch, th, wh, ph)
  - Consonant blends (two+ letters, each sound heard: bl, str, spl)
  - Short vowels (a as in "cat")
  - Long vowels (a as in "cake")
  - Vowel teams (ai, ea, oa, ue)
  - R-controlled vowels (ar, er, ir, or, ur)
  - Diphthongs (oi, oy, ou, ow)

Phonics Patterns and Rules

- CVC pattern (consonant-vowel-consonant: cat, dog, sit)
- CVCe pattern (silent e makes vowel long: cake, bike, hope)
- CVVC pattern (vowel teams: rain, boat, week)
- Syllable types:
  - Closed (short vowel: cat, rabbit)
  - Open (long vowel: me, tiger)
  - Vowel-consonant-e (make, time)
  - Vowel team (train, boat)
  - R-controlled (car, bird)
  - Consonant-le (table, purple)

Phonics Patterns and Rules

- Common rules:
  - When two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking
  - Drop the e when adding -ing (make → making)
  - Change y to i when adding -es (baby → babies)

Word Analysis and Decoding

- Systematic phonics instruction (explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships)
- Decodable texts for practice
- Blending sounds to read words
- Segmenting sounds to spell words
- Sight word instruction for high-frequency irregular words
- Multisyllabic word strategies (chunking, syllable division)

Word Analysis and Decoding

- Structural analysis:
    - Base words and root words
    - Prefixes (un–, re–, pre–, mis–)
    - Suffixes (–ed, –ing, –s, –ly, –ful)
    - Compound words (sunshine, baseball)
    - Contractions (can't, won't, I'm)
    - Inflectional endings

Sample Question 1

The word "chat" contains which phonics element?

A. Consonant blend

B. Consonant digraph

C. Vowel team

D. R-controlled vowel

Sample Question 1

Answer: B

"Ch" is a consonant digraph—two letters that represent one sound. A blend would have two distinct sounds (like "ch-r" in "chrome"), but "ch" makes only one sound /ch/.

Sample Question 2

Which word would be MOST appropriate to include in a first-grade decodable text focusing on the CVCe pattern?

A. make

B. said

C. rain

D. call

Sample Question 2

Answer: A

"Make" follows the CVCe (consonant-vowel-consonant-silent e) pattern where the silent e makes the vowel say its name. "Said" is irregular, "rain" is a vowel team pattern, and "call" has a different pattern.
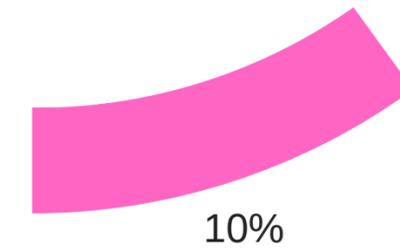
Domain III

Fluency

Fluency

FLUENCY COMPONENTS

FLUENCY ASSESSMENT

FLUENCY INSTRUCTION

DOMAIN III

10%

Fluency Components

Components of Reading Fluency
- Accuracy – Reading words correctly
- Rate/Speed – Reading at an appropriate pace (words correct per minute)
- Prosody – Reading with expression, intonation, and phrasing
  - Appropriate pausing at punctuation
  - Emphasis on important words
  - Rising/falling intonation
  - Natural phrasing

Fluency Components

Why Fluency Matters:

- Bridge between word recognition and comprehension
- Frees cognitive resources for understanding text
- Indicates automatic word recognition
- Develops through practice with appropriate texts

Fluency Assessment

- Oral reading fluency measures (words correct per minute - WCPM)
- Running records and miscue analysis
- Prosody rubrics (rating expression and phrasing)
- Grade-level benchmarks:
  - 1st grade end of year: 40-60 WCPM
  - 2nd grade end of year: 85-100 WCPM
  - 3rd grade end of year: 100-120 WCPM
  - 4th-6th grade: 120-160+ WCPM
- Progress monitoring (regular assessment of fluency growth)
- Text difficulty consideration (independent, instructional, frustration levels)

Fluency Instruction

- Repeated reading – Reading the same text multiple times
- Choral reading – Reading together as a group
- Partner reading – Students reading with peers
- Reader's theater – Performing scripts with expression
- Echo reading – Teacher reads, students repeat
- Modeling fluent reading – Teacher demonstrates
- Audio-assisted reading – Following along with recordings
- Appropriate text selection – 95%+ accuracy (instructional level)
- Phrased reading – Practicing meaningful phrases
- Poetry and songs – Natural rhythm and expression

Sample Question 1

A second-grade teacher conducts an oral reading fluency assessment and observes the following:

"The...big...dog...ran...to...the...park...and...played...with...his...ball."

The student reads 48 words correct per minute with 96% accuracy but pauses between each word with no expression. Which component of fluency is MOST in need of improvement?

A. Accuracy B. Rate C. Prosody D. Comprehension

Sample Question 1

Answer: C

The student demonstrates good accuracy (96%) and an acceptable rate for second grade (48 WCPM is within the fall/winter range). However, the word-by-word reading with no expression indicates poor prosody. Prosody includes appropriate phrasing, intonation, and expression. The teacher should focus on fluency strategies like repeated reading, Reader's Theater, and modeling fluent reading to help the student develop prosody.

Sample Question 2

A teacher wants to assess a student's prosody during oral reading. Which tool would be MOST appropriate?

A. Words correct per minute (WCPM) calculation

B. A prosody rubric evaluating expression, phrasing, and intonation

C. A phonics screening assessment

D. A comprehension question worksheet

Sample Question 2

Answer: B

Prosody cannot be measured by counting words per minute alone. A prosody rubric (such as the NAEP Oral Reading Fluency Scale or similar 4-point rubric) specifically evaluates the quality of oral reading including expression, phrasing, smoothness, and intonation. This provides a qualitative assessment of this important fluency component. WCPM measures rate but not prosody, phonics screening assesses decoding, and comprehension questions assess understanding rather than oral reading quality.
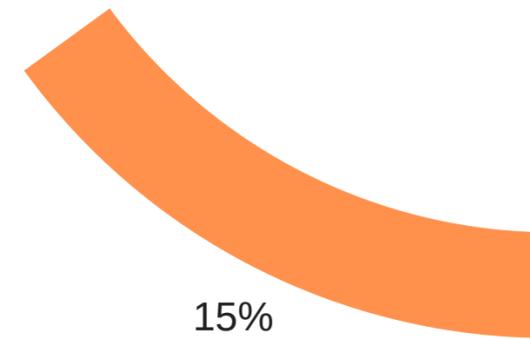
Vocabulary

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary Types

- Receptive vocabulary – Words understood when heard/read
- Expressive vocabulary – Words used in speaking/writing
- Oral vocabulary – Words in spoken language
- Reading vocabulary – Words recognized in print

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary Gap

- Students from language-rich environments may know 2-3x more words
- Impacts comprehension and academic success
- Requires explicit, systematic vocabulary instruction

Vocabulary Knowledge Levels

- No knowledge of the word
- General sense of the word
- Narrow, context-specific understanding
- Rich, deep understanding with multiple contexts

Word-Learning Strategies

- Context clues:
  - Definition clues (The protagonist, or main character...)
  - Synonym clues (The house was gigantic, enormous)
  - Antonym clues (Unlike his timid brother, he was bold)
  - Example clues (Citrus fruits like oranges, lemons...)
  - Inference from general context

Word-Learning Strategies

- Word parts (morphology):
  - Prefixes (un-, re-, pre-, dis-)
  - Suffixes (-ful, -less, -tion, -able)
  - Root words (Latin and Greek roots)
  - Compound words
- Dictionary and glossary skills
- Cognates (for Spanish speakers: familia/family)
- Word relationships (synonyms, antonyms, analogies)

Vocabulary Instruction

- Explicit instruction of high-utility academic words
- Tier 2 words (high-frequency, multiple-meaning, academic words)
- Multiple exposures (6-12+ encounters with a word)
- Rich, meaningful contexts
- Student-friendly definitions
- Word consciousness – Developing interest in words
- Wide reading – Independent reading builds vocabulary

Vocabulary Instruction

- Conversations and discussions – Oral language development
- Morphology instruction – Teaching word parts systematically
- Active engagement with words:
  - Creating semantic maps
  - Word sorts and categories
  - Vocabulary journals
  - Personal connections
  - Acting out words

Sample Question 1

Which vocabulary word is the BEST example of a Tier 2 word for elementary instruction?

A. photosynthesis

B. fortunate

C. cat

D. mitochondria

Sample Question 2

Answer: B

"Fortunate" is a Tier 2 word—high-utility, appears across contexts, not too basic, not too specialized. "Cat" is Tier 1 (basic), while "photosynthesis" and "mitochondria" are Tier 3 (domain-specific).

Sample Question 2

A third-grade teacher is planning vocabulary instruction for an upcoming science unit on ecosystems. The teacher has identified the following words from the text:

- habitat, predator, prey, ecosystem, adaption

Which approach would be MOST effective for teaching these words?

A. Provide student-friendly definitions, use the words in meaningful contexts, and engage students in multiple activities over several days

B. Teach words using semantic feature analysis and concept maps showing relationships between terms

C. Pre-teach definitions before reading, then have students identify the words during reading

D. Use explicit instruction with visual supports and have students create illustrated glossaries

Sample Question 2

Answer: A

While all options involve explicit instruction, A is most effective because it emphasizes multiple exposures over several days with varied activities—this is critical for deep word learning. Research shows students need 6-12+ meaningful encounters with words.
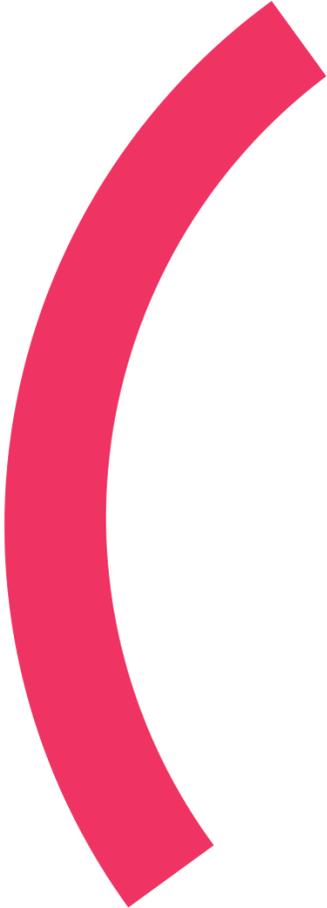
Comprehension

Comprehension

READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS
TEXT STRUCTURES
COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

25%

DOMAIN V

Reading Comprehension Skills

- Literal comprehension – Understanding what the text explicitly states
- Inferential comprehension – Reading between the lines
- Evaluative comprehension – Making judgments about text
- Critical thinking – Analyzing and questioning text

Reading Comprehension Skills

Key Skills

- Identifying main idea and supporting details
- Understanding sequence of events
- Making predictions
- Drawing conclusions
- Comparing and contrasting
- Identifying cause and effect
- Distinguishing fact from opinion
- Understanding author's purpose
- Making connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)
- Visualizing
- Questioning
- Summarizing

Text Structures

Narrative Text Structure

- Characters, setting, plot
- Problem/solution
- Beginning, middle, end
- Theme
- Story elements

Text Structures

Informational Text Structures

- Description
- Sequence/chronological order
- Compare and contrast
- Cause and effect
- Problem and solution

Text Structures

Text Features

- Headings and subheadings
- Bold and italicized words
- Captions and labels
- Diagrams, charts, graphs
- Table of contents, index, glossary
- Maps and timelines

Comprehension Strategies

Before Reading

- Activating prior knowledge
- Previewing text and text features
- Setting a purpose for reading
- Making predictions

During Reading

- Monitoring comprehension (Do I understand?)
- Visualizing
- Questioning
- Making inferences
- Making connections
- Clarifying confusing parts

Comprehension Strategies

After Reading

- Summarizing
- Retelling
- Discussing
- Reflecting
- Evaluating

Instructional Approaches

- Gradual Release of Responsibility (I do, we do, you do)
- Think-alouds – Teacher modeling
- Reciprocal teaching – Predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing
- Graphic organizers

Sample Question 1

A teacher reads aloud and stops to say, "I'm confused here. Let me reread that sentence to see if I can figure out what the author means." This is an example of:

A. Explicit vocabulary instruction

B. Think-aloud to model monitoring comprehension

C. Questioning strategy

D. Assessment of student understanding

Sample Question 1

Answer: B

The teacher is using a think-aloud to model the metacognitive strategy of monitoring comprehension—recognizing confusion and using fix-up strategies (rereading). This helps students learn to monitor their own understanding.

Sample Question 2

During a read-aloud, a first-grade teacher stops and says: "Hmm, I'm confused about why the character did that. Let me reread this page to see if I can figure it out." This instructional practice PRIMARILY supports:

A. Fluency development through modeled reading

B. Metacognitive awareness of comprehension monitoring

C. Phonemic awareness through repeated exposure to text

D. Vocabulary acquisition through context

Sample Question 2

Answer: B

The teacher is modeling metacognition—specifically, monitoring comprehension (noticing confusion) and applying a fix-up strategy (rereading). This think-aloud demonstrates the internal process good readers use.

Writing & Reading Connections

Writing and Reading Connections

WRITING SUPPORTS READING

SPELLING DEVELOPMENT

WRITING INSTRUCTION

5%

DOMAIN VI

Writing Supports Reading

- Phonemic awareness through invented spelling
- Phonics application – Encoding (spelling) reinforces decoding (reading)
- Vocabulary development – Using words in writing deepens understanding
- Comprehension – Writing about reading increases understanding
- Text structure awareness – Writing narratives/informational text helps understand them
- Fluency – Reading own writing builds confidence

Writing Supports Reading

Reading-Writing Connection Activities

- Interactive writing
- Shared writing
- Independent writing
- Writing in response to reading
- Journaling
- Note-taking

Spelling Development

Stages of Spelling Development

1. Precommunicative/Emergent – Random letters, scribbles
2. Semiphonetic/Letter Name – Some sound–letter matches (kt for cat)
3. Phonetic – Represents all sounds heard (kat for cat)
4. Transitional – Uses visual memory, patterns (caut for caught)
5. Conventional – Correct spelling of most words

Spelling Development

Spelling Instruction

- Aligned with phonics instruction
- Word sorts (sound sorts, pattern sorts, meaning sorts)
- Word study
- High-frequency word practice
- Morphology (word parts)
- Spelling generalizations and rules

Writing Instruction

Strategies

- Modeled writing – Teacher demonstrates
- Shared writing – Composing together
- Interactive writing – Shared pen
- Guided writing – Small group support
- Independent writing – Students write alone

Writing Instruction

Writing Process

- Prewriting (planning, brainstorming)
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Publishing

Supporting Beginning Writers

- Sentence frames and stems
- Word banks and word walls
- Graphic organizers
- Picture support
- Oral rehearsal before writing

Sample Question 1

A first-grade teacher observes a student writing the following during independent writing time:

"Mi dog is big. He lik to run."

This writing sample PRIMARILY indicates the student has developed:

A. Conventional spelling knowledge

B. Phonetic spelling ability and understanding of sound-symbol relationships

C. Sight word recognition but weak phonics skills

D. Awareness of sentence structure but poor spelling skills

Sample Question 1

Answer: B

The student demonstrates phonetic/phonemic spelling (Stage 3 of spelling development) by representing all sounds heard: "Mi" for "My," "lik" for "like." This shows strong phonemic awareness and developing sound–symbol correspondence.

Why other options misinterpret the evidence:
- Option C (weak phonics) is backwards—phonetic spelling actually demonstrates STRONG phonics application and sound analysis, just not yet conventional patterns
- Option D (poor spelling skills) is judgmental and inaccurate—this is developmentally appropriate invented spelling that shows phonics progress

Sample Question 2

A first-grade teacher observes a student writing the following during independent writing time:

"Mi dog is big. He lik to run."

This writing sample PRIMARILY indicates the student has developed:

A. Phonemic segmentation skills and letter-sound correspondence knowledge

B. Phonetic spelling ability and understanding of sound-symbol relationships

C. Emerging orthographic awareness with incomplete pattern knowledge

D. Adequate phonics skills but needs explicit spelling instruction

Sample Question 2

Answer: A

While B sounds correct, Option A is more precise because it identifies the SPECIFIC underlying skills: phonemic segmentation (breaking words into individual sounds) and letter–sound correspondence (matching those sounds to letters). These are the foundational skills that enable phonetic spelling.
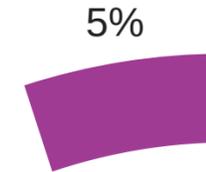
Assessment & Instruction

Assessment & Instruction

5%

TYPES OF READING ASSESSMENTS

DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION

DIFFERENTIATION & INTERVENTION

DOMAIN VII

Types of Reading Assessments

- Screening assessment: given to all students, identify students' skill level (DIBELS, AIMSweb)
- Diagnostic assessment: identify specific skill deficits (Phonemic awareness tests, phonics inventories)
- Progress monitoring: frequent assessment weekly/biweekly, track response to intervention (Running records, fluency probes)
- Outcome assessment: summative, understand what students learned after instruction (State tests, reading achievement tests)
- Informal assessment: observation, student work samples, comprehension questions, retellings, etc.

Types of Reading Assessments

Common Reading Assessments to Know
- Screening
  - DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)
  - AIMSweb
  - iReady
- Phonemic Awareness
  - Yopp-Singer Test
  - PAST (Phonological Awareness Screening Test)
- Phonics
  - Phonics screeners
  - Words Their Way spelling inventory
  - QRI (Qualitative Reading Inventory)

Types of Reading Assessments

Common Reading Assessments to Know
- Fluency
  - Oral reading fluency (ORF) measures – WCPM
  - Running records
  - DIBELS ORF
- Comprehension
  - Retelling rubrics
  - QRI passages
  - DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)

Know
- What each assessment measures
- When to use each type
- How to interpret results

Data-Driven Instruction

- Analyze assessment results to identify patterns
- Group students by similar needs
- Set instructional goals based on data
- Select appropriate interventions
- Monitor progress regularly
- Adjust instruction based on student response
- Communicate results to families and stakeholders

Differentiation & Intervention

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS):

- Tier 1 – Core instruction for all students (80-85% successful)
- Tier 2 – Supplemental intervention in small groups (10-15% need)
- Tier 3 – Intensive, individualized intervention (5% need)

Differentiation Strategies:

- Flexible grouping (skill-based, interest-based)
- Leveled texts
- Scaffolded instruction
- Modified assignments
- Additional practice and support
- Accelerated learning for advanced readers

Sample Question 1

A first-grade teacher administers a screening assessment at the beginning of the year and obtains the following data for a student:

- Letter-sound knowledge: 18/26 sounds
- Phoneme segmentation: 4/10 correct
- Nonsense word fluency: 8 correct letter sounds per minute
- Oral reading fluency: 0 words correct per minute

Based on this data, what should be the teacher's PRIMARY instructional focus?

A. Building automaticity with high-frequency sight words

B. Developing phoneme segmentation and letter-sound correspondence

C. Improving oral reading fluency through repeated reading

D. Teaching decoding strategies for CVC words

Sample Question 1

Answer: B

The data shows significant deficits in foundational skills: weak letter-sound knowledge (18/26) and very weak phoneme segmentation (4/10). These are PREREQUISITE skills for decoding. Phoneme segmentation and letter-sound correspondence must be prioritized because without these, other interventions won't work.

Sample Question 2

A second-grade teacher uses progress monitoring data to evaluate a struggling reader's response to intervention. After 8 weeks of Tier 2 phonics intervention (3 times weekly, 30 minutes), the student's oral reading fluency has increased from 28 WCPM to 32 WCPM. The spring benchmark is 85 WCPM. What is the MOST appropriate next step?

A. Continue the current Tier 2 intervention for another 8 weeks and monitor progress

B. Increase intervention intensity to Tier 3 with daily sessions and smaller group size

C. Return the student to Tier 1 core instruction only since progress is being made

D. Modify the intervention by adding a fluency component to the phonics instruction

Sample Question 2

Answer: B

The student gained only 4 words in 8 weeks (0.5 WCPM per week), which is insufficient progress. The student is 53+ words below benchmark with limited time remaining. This inadequate response to Tier 2 indicates the need for more intensive intervention (Tier 3): daily sessions, smaller group (1:1 or 1:2), longer duration.

Format and Expectations

- 3 essay questions worth 30% of total score
- Questions may ask you to:
  - Analyze student work samples
  - Identify reading skills and instructional needs
  - Recommend evidence-based instructional strategies
  - Design assessment or intervention plans
  - Explain pedagogical decisions

Each response should include:

- Be specific and detailed
- Reference evidence from provided materials
- Cite research-based practices
- Explain the rationale for recommendations
- Demonstrate knowledge of reading development

Sample Question 1

- Scenario: A second-grade teacher has a student who reads the following sentence: Text: "The dog ran after the ball."Student reads: "The dog run after the ball."

- The student reads at 45 words correct per minute with 88% accuracy on grade-level text. When asked comprehension questions, the student can retell the main events but struggles with inferential questions.

- Question: Based on this information, identify TWO areas of reading need for this student. For each area, recommend a specific instructional strategy and explain how it addresses the identified need.

Thank You

TutoringEZ