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**A COMPARISON OF TWO READING PROGRAMS;
SPIRE AND SCOTT FORESMAN**

by

Amanda Cox

**An independent study submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Science in Speech and Hearing

Emphasis in Education of the Hearing Impaired

**Washington University
Department of Speech and Hearing**

May 24, 2002

**Approved by: Barbara Lanfer, M.A.Ed., and Jo Ellen Epstein, M.A.Ed., Independent
Study Advisors**

A COMPARISON OF TWO READING PROGRAMS:

S.P.I.R.E. AND SCOTT FORESMAN

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JoEllen Epstein, MAEd, CED, and Barbara Lanfer, MAEd, CED,
Independent Study Advisors

Abstract

Purpose: This study looked at specific components included in teaching phonemic awareness and phonics to young children, such as blending, print awareness, spelling, segmenting, decoding, and sound/syllable association. The two reading programs assessed were the Scott Foresman 2000 Reading series and the S.P.I.R.E. (Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence). The participants were ten teachers from Central Institute for the Deaf, Kirk Day School, and St. Christopher School. Five participants from Central Institute for the Deaf used the Scott Foresman reading series with two teachers at Level K, one at first grade, and two at third grade. The other five participants from Kirk Day School and St. Christopher School used the S.P.I.R.E. program with one teacher at each level: first, second, third, fourth, and fifth grade.

Method: The participants were given surveys to complete weekly for the months of January and February 2002, for a total of eight surveys per teacher. The surveys contained nine questions that allowed teachers to rate several aspects of their program, such as: ease of materials, time spent on phonics and phonemic awareness, skills taught each week, percentage mastery of skills, areas of difficulty for the children, and general comments. Responses were summarized for each survey question and graphed to show overall results for areas such as: skills most commonly selected as goals for teaching, time spent on phonics and phonemic awareness each week, and mastery of concepts taught.

Results: Research of the current literature in reading and phonics combined with answers from the surveys resulted in an evaluation of the effectiveness of each program. Neither of these programs was specifically developed for hearing-impaired children; therefore,

the teachers at Central Institute for the Deaf had to make many modifications and use alternate strategies to teach phonics and reading from a series developed for normal hearing children. The teachers at Kirk and St. Christopher had normal hearing students, all of which had learning disabilities. These students were recognized as being 'at-risk' for reading and writing, and were pulled out each day for small group work using the S.P.I.R.E. curriculum.

Discussion: The results suggested that an average of 19 minutes per day was spent on phonics and an average of 11 minutes per day was spent on phonemic awareness for both programs. The skills most commonly selected for goals each week were: decoding, phonemic awareness, spelling, and print awareness. The skills worked on least included: inflected endings, r-vowels, and digraphs. Mastery consisted of three levels: 0-40% (skill not present), 40-80% (skill emerging), and 80-100% (skill mastered). Most teachers rated their children as having 'emerged' in the skill areas selected for the week. Very few concepts were rated as having been 'mastered.' Overall, teachers rated ease of materials as being average to very easy for both programs. Additional time was often needed to re-teach concepts and teachers adjusted their teaching strategies in many ways to compensate for children who had trouble with certain skills. Areas that were most difficult for the children using S.P.I.R.E. included: unclear worksheets and pictures, comprehension (oral and written), remembering and applying rules, definitions/vocabulary, sentence writing, spelling, and identifying vowels in words. For children at Central Institute for the Deaf using Scott Foresman, areas of difficulty included: hearing the sounds in words, segmenting/differentiating the sounds in words,

decoding unfamiliar words, blending, identifying number of syllables in a word,
vocabulary/definitions, and rhyming.

Summary of Literature

It has long been established that learning to read and write is difficult for many deaf children. Literature supports the theory that deaf children experience difficulty with syntactic structure, not due to lack of comprehension, but because of their inability to identify words in print through phonological recoding (Schirmer, 2000). Phonological awareness is important for reading development in both hearing and hearing-impaired children. Deaf children typically have literacy difficulties due to the fact that their phonological skills lag behind those of hearing children and may develop in different ways (Goswami, 2000).

The main difference between deaf and hearing children in learning to read is that hearing children are able to use their audition to assist them in developing sound-letter correspondence. By the time they start school, the majority have acquired almost all the sounds of English and are able to use this phonological knowledge to 'sound-out' words they wish to spell. In the same way, they can attack new words in reading using their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence to give them at least the initial sound of a word, which may help them to guess the whole word, using this knowledge plus context. All these factors will assist in approaching reading and writing, and are frequently referred to as 'bottom up' skills. It follows that the same criteria that hearing children need to achieve literacy also need to be met in deaf children, such as: a solid language base, the ability to use that language base for purposes of literacy, a wide general knowledge both of the world and of books and stories, and effective word-attack skills which will serve for reading and writing (Watson, 1999).

Longitudinal research shows that children need to learn pre-reading skills or concepts about letters, words, and stories before they can successfully learn to read (Mason, 1980, Mason & Allen, 1986). A landmark study done on 1,664 students enrolled in special education programs found that the average deaf student gained one-third of a grade equivalent change each school year. Therefore, 'mathematically, many deaf students graduate from high school with a fourth grade reading level' (Wolk & Allen, 1984). The low English reading achievement level of deaf students has been well documented elsewhere in the research and scholarly literature (Paul & Quigley, 1994).

Why is it so difficult for many deaf children to learn to read? The explanation becomes complicated, as many different factors are taken into account in assessing the reading programs of deaf children. These include: home language (ASL or spoken English), school language (ASL, total communication, oral, auditory-oral), hearing status of the parents, type of education program (auditory-oral, oral, TC, or ASL), and type of school (private, self-contained, public). At some level, all of these factors affect deaf children's success in learning to read. Despite general agreement about the extent of the problem, there is no such agreement about the underlying *causes* of reading difficulty among the deaf population. Various factors proposed have included: vocabulary, syntactic ability, knowledge of discourse rules, phonological processing skills, and memory (Harris & Beech, 1998). The authors also found that success in learning to read was also significantly correlated with oral skills and language comprehension. The presence of a strong relationship between implicit phonological awareness and oral ability suggests that these skills overlap and that children with intelligible speech also have good implicit phonological awareness. Good oral skills provide an advantage both

in the early stages of learning to read English and later on when phonemic encoding develops (Harris & Beech, 1998).

A study done by Goswami (2000) investigated the phonological skills of deaf children (mean age 11 years) and showed that deaf children's syllable awareness can be equivalent to that of their hearing peers of the same chronological age. Deaf children's ability to phonologically recode nonsense words in this study suggested that they could draw on phonemic skills in certain conditions.

The importance of my study and how it relates to deaf children's reading difficulties is two-fold. First, even though the research tends to group children (both deaf and hearing) into homogenous categories, we must all realize that deaf children may become successful readers by more than one route. It is important that the teaching of reading take this into and work to develop individual strengths. Second, teachers should always be evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching and the programs they implement. This study was a way to allow teachers to reflect upon their lessons on a weekly basis, evaluate the children's mastery, and comment on what went well and what was more difficult for them to teach. If positive steps can be taken to remedy any situations in classrooms where deaf children are having difficulty reading, then an opportunity lies therein to develop other strategies which have been identified as being facilitative in the promotion of literacy skills.

S.P.I.R.E.

Introduction/Background

S.P.I.R.E. stands for Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence and is based on the Orton-Gillingham (O-G) approach. This theoretical approach is

significant because it is the first multi-sensory structured language approach developed for reading, spelling, and writing instruction. It utilizes information from visual, auditory, and kinesthetic pathways of learning and is used on both children and adults of all ages, often in small groups. The O-G approach has become the foundation of many other approaches, such as: The Slingerland Method, Project Read, The Spaulding Method, Alphabetic Phonics, The Herman Method, and the Wilson Method (McIntyre & Pickering, 1995).

The goal of any multi-sensory structural language program is to develop a students' independent ability to read, write, and understand the language studied (Clarke-Edmands, 1999). In teaching reading, S.P.I.R.E. offers children structured, sequential, multi-sensory teaching based upon the constant use of association of all the following: how a letter or words looks, how it sounds, how the speech organs feel when producing it, and how the hand feels in writing it. Children learn the rules of the English language, including syllable patterns, roots, prefixes and suffixes. Each lesson includes three components: 1) a review of the consonant and vowel patterns taught previously, 2) a drill to practice blending sounds together, and 3) introduction of a new consonant or vowel to be studied in the lesson. Along with these components, practice is emphasized in spelling and reading new words or phrases and reading from a book with words that are appropriate for that level. The philosophy underlying the foundation of S.P.I.R.E. is: "the idea is that if a child can't learn the way we teach, we must teach the way the child learns" (Clarke-Edmands, 1999).

S.P.I.R.E. is best utilized with those students who have low-average to superior cognitive abilities and are explicit learners, meaning they are able to make abstract generalizations once the information is presented in a concrete manner.

Author Expertise

The author of the program, Sheila Clarke-Edmands, has worked continuously with children for over thirty years. She first developed the materials in 1978 and used them in her own resource room and in several other school systems in Maine. After serving as a state-wide consultant for several years, the author was asked to present S.P.I.R.E. at a conference in Maine. In 1996, her materials were prepared for general publication and today S.P.I.R.E. is used in over 70% of states through word of mouth. It has received two major grant awards and is growing fast through teacher, administrator, and parent recommendations. Eighty to ninety percent of children succeed with S.P.I.R.E. and it has been successful with children who are learning disabled, have language disorders, dyslexia, and ADD/ADHD. It has not been tested or used with hearing-impaired children.

Lesson format

In a typical lesson to teach a new sound, the teacher would use the following steps:

- **Step One:** Sound symbols are introduced and represented using phonogram cards. These cards are colored green for high frequency words and red for new sight words, and the goal is to have the children say the sounds automatically.

- **Step Two:** Sound segmenting is introduced using a phonemic processing sheet (see Appendix A, number 1). The children use colored blocks, with each color representing a separate phoneme. For example, if the word was hat, there would be three different colored blocks on the sheet, representing each separate phoneme. The teacher may say, “Now change hat to ham,” and watch as the children move a different colored block for /m/ in place of the previous block for /t/.
- **Step Three:** Word building is the reverse of phonemic awareness. The teacher may explain that the letters are blended together to make words, and uses cards to form words that the children read back to her. This is done using the same activity as was presented in step two.
- **Step Four:** The introduction sheet (see Appendix A, number 2) may be used in which high frequency words are listed over and over. The children may place their finger on the sound being taught in the word, say the sound, word, and then highlight the sound. This exercise may be timed and charted to assess progress and automaticity.
- **Step Five:** Students may use the concept sheet (see Appendix A, number 3) to copy words from the board and then read them aloud to the teacher. The students may also read stories containing the key words; in this process, the teacher reviews the vocabulary, the children prepare silently, re-tell the story orally, and then read the story orally. There may also be a ‘word find’ sheet used at this level, in which students search for the words on a sheet with their new sound. These words may be cut from

newspapers, magazines, etc. and then copied onto the new 'concept paper', with the students writing the letter (sound) at the top of the paper. After they have identified the words and copied them, they re-group and read the words aloud, as well as write them on the board as they are read.

- **Step Six:** Sound dictation is done by the teacher, who dictates five to ten sounds and the children write them in their spelling books.
- **Step Seven:** Spelling and sentence writing is practiced using words containing the target sound(s) and putting them into sentences. The students may write them and are taught to bracket [errors] and then re-write the correct response next to the error. This leaves the student's paper looking neater, and provides the teacher with diagnostic teaching information. The student may not go directly from sound to writing, as letter naming is a critical part of the spelling program. The child 'sounds out' the word first to assist with correct sound/symbol relationships. For multi-syllabic words, they need to orally spell the first syllable and then the second, etc. before spelling the entire word. In sentence writing, the teacher starts off using short phrases and gradually increases their length until full sentences are acquired.
- **Step Eight:** Independent work is given, in which concepts that have been taught are reinforced in a way that is challenging enough, yet can be done successfully. The goal is quality, not quantity, and if there are a large number of errors on independent work, the level needs to be reassessed and the concepts retaught. Generally, students need to achieve a

recommended 85% mastery of a new concept before moving onto any new concepts. If further practice is needed, teachers may construct new words sheets and sentences, or stories may be re-read for mastery.

The S.P.I.R.E. curriculum guide notes that it is important not to have students reading outside the readers provided by the program; the readers are methodically controlled to contain only the concepts taught thus far and outside reading will cause students to become frustrated and develop the undesirable habit of guessing (Clarke-Edmands, 1999).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary development is emphasized in S.P.I.R.E. using the following procedures: when an unfamiliar word is encountered, the teacher may 1) ask if anyone has heard of the word, 2) ask if anyone knows what it means, 3) give a definition of the word, explaining the meaning in words the children can understand, 4) use the word in a model sentence, 5) have the students use the word in a sentence, and 6) review the meaning each time it comes up again in context. The students are not to memorize the meanings, but rather become familiar with them in context.

Evaluation

Progress is charted in various ways; the children file daily written work in a three-ring notebook, teachers use observation forms, spelling checks (once every two weeks), and a criterion reference test given on concepts taught after each 'block.' The children are to complete approximately two readers each school year. Standardized testing is designed for a whole language, basal reading approach and reflects that curriculum;

therefore, a more accurate assessment of progress is evidence of mastery on a specifically designed criteria referenced test that reflects the scope and sequence of S.P.I.R.E.

Materials

There are numerous materials that require training for the beginning teacher learning to use S.P.I.R.E. Required materials include:

- lesson plan maker
- phonogram cards
- phonetic word cards
- sight word cards
- key word concept sheets
- spelling concept sheets
- pans
- magnetic consonants and vowels
- student readers
- acetate overlays
- erasable markers
- student workbooks
- handwriting paper
- dictation/spelling paper
- word find sheets
- student phonemic processing card
- wooden colored block set (10 blocks/child)
- teacher-made materials

It is advisable to have all lessons at the same time and place each day, as structure and consistency are important for at-risk learners. The focus should be on the children being taught, thus other children in the room should be taught to respect this and not interrupt. The teacher should give well-organized instructions and should be able to organize and use materials smoothly. Workshop training is recommended for those interested in using the S.P.I.R.E. approach.

Summary

In summary, S.P.I.R.E. was developed for high-risk learners, and is a systematic, phonological approach that teaches total word structure. Phonemic awareness is a critical component, beginning at the pre-reading stage and incorporated daily into lessons. It features a logical, spiral curriculum in which students are taught in a sequence that is developmentally appropriate for their age and level. Tasks begin at the simple level and move onto the complex (letters that represent single sounds into words that carry meaning). Constant repetition is provided in interesting and informative ways, and the teaching is diagnostic. The literature-based controlled text was written to reinforce the concepts and teach important information, and vocabulary development is directly taught along with reading comprehension. A total language approach is used that includes listening, speaking, reading, spelling, writing, and composition skills. Structured, explicit teaching helps organize the students' learning, and multi-sensory teaching helps ensure automatic memory.

Scott Foresman

Introduction/Background

The goal of Scott Foresman reading is to promote and help secure the developmental processes necessary to build children into successful, life-long readers. The general philosophy behind Scott Foresman reading is that a balance of fiction and nonfiction must exist, and selections from works of informational and expository nonfiction, biography, autobiography, textbooks, CD-ROMs, magazines, and newspapers prepare students for standardized tests and today's world of information. Every day Scott Foresman reading provides a consistent system for teaching reading, phonics, oral language, and writing skills. The reading materials provided match the states' frameworks for reading and language arts instruction. Research for developing the program was gathered from the Scott Foresman Task Force, which polled teachers, principals, superintendents, and reading supervisors from all over the nation. Also, a Scott Foresman Annual Literacy Symposium is held for participants to share and discuss current research in reading. State, local, and national tests are examined and a plan to link instruction to assessment is established.

Author Expertise

An authorship team of thirteen that includes experts in phonics, comprehension, assessment, early literacy, and children's literature is assembled to develop the Scope and Sequence of Skills (see Appendix A, number 4). Using research studies and information from master teachers, authors and editors create instructional models and sample pages for student and teacher materials. Peter Afflerbach, a researcher/writer for the National

Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) developed the Scott Foresman reading Assessment Program.

Lesson Format

A weekly unit consists of different skills for each level, but typically looks like this (just the phonics skills are shown):

Day 1: The phonics songs and rhymes chart helps introduce the phonics skills and build phonemic awareness.

Day 2: Students practice the phonics skills and spelling words of the week. They re-read the phonics reader and prepare for the main elements in the literature selection.

Day 3: Students review the main selection applying the phonics skills they've just learned.

Day 4: Students re-read the main selection for fluency. A review of phonics skills and phonics reader may be done for additional practice.

Day 5: Assessment of student progress is made through oral reading, a spelling test, or a Selection Test. Students review phonics skills by reading the phonics take-home reader. Manipulatives vary the learning experience, and provide a wealth of multi-sensory materials to engage students in hands-on word play using magnetic word-building cards.

At each level, phonics skills are separated into goals. In Kindergarten, the alphabetic principle is taught, with a cluster of lessons on initial consonants and short vowel phonograms. The sequence is repeated throughout the year until all initial consonants and short vowels, along with thirteen vowel phonograms, are taught. Long vowels and blends are introduced towards the end of the year. In Grade 1, during the first

six weeks, a review of phonics skills is taught from Kindergarten. Thereafter, short vowels are taught, then final consonants, inflected endings, initial blends, long vowels, long and short vowel patterns, digraphs, diphthongs, and r-controlled vowels. In Grade 2, the systematic sequence from first grade is continued; all lessons now pair a vowel pattern (long or short) with another phonics skill, such as blends or silent consonants. In Grade 3, children learn a new phonics skill each week and review one previously taught. Daily word routines provide quick and effective activities for phonics, vocabulary building, and language review. Instruction focuses on more complex word analysis, spelling patterns, and word structure skills. In Grades 4-6, daily phonics and word routines reinforce the basic skills of reading to ensure mastery. Phonics is connected to spelling, and students learn to decode even more complex words automatically in context and to apply spelling patterns and rules.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary selection in Scott Foresman includes teacher-identified words using the Dolch list for Grades K-2, the Harris-Jacobson Word List for Grades 3-6, and the Marzano for Grades K-6. In Kindergarten, an ABC wall reinforces thirty-two high frequency words, while in Grades 1-2, the word wall activities are referenced daily. Students learn vocabulary strategies and the meanings of unfamiliar words before they read each main literature selection. High frequency words demonstrating the phonics lesson of the week are used in Grades 1-2, and are introduced through the use of a vocabulary chart facilitating the words through oral and written activities. Vocabulary instruction is reinforced through the Read-Aloud selections, speaking and listening

lessons, and Daily Word Routines. Vocabulary at Grades 3-6 is chosen from the main selection.

Evaluation

To ensure student success, each weekly target comprehension skill is taught at least three times before the unit skills test. These skills include: main ideas/supporting details, summarizing, drawing conclusions, sequencing, fact and opinion, cause and effect, classify, compare and contrast, making judgments, predicting, and text structure. Comprehension strategies are explicitly and systematically taught, focusing on the following skills listed above. At grades K-2, listening comprehension lessons introduce a target skill which students apply as they read the main selection. Review of the target skill is accomplished by rereading. At grades 3-6, students start each week with one comprehension skill lesson in the Pupil Edition. They may read a short passage to practice the skill, and then talk or write about what they have learned. Application of that skill is carried over as they go on to read the main selection. Comprehension questions are specifically related to the target comprehension skill. The reading series includes the following for teachers to assess their students: unit and end-of-year skills test, assessment handbook, unit and end-of-year benchmark tests, placement test, and individual reading inventory.

Materials

Materials for the Scott Foresman reading program are provided and included in the following categories: accountability, literature, phonics, skills and strategies, and management. For the phonics portion, materials may include:

- phonics readers

- phonics take-home readers
- phonics workbook
- decodable readers
- phonemic awareness and phonics manipulatives kit
- phonics system handbook
- phonics sourcebook
- phonics songs and rhymes flip charts

There are also supplemental, decodable texts available for readers who need more practice; at Kindergarten, independent readers provide additional practice with high frequency words, at Grades K-3 phonics readers provide additional practice with decodable text that focuses on a specific phonics skill, and at Grade 1, decodable readers are available with 80-100% decodability rates. For those students who read below grade level, Scott Foresman provides leveled readers for each main selection. There are three levels, with Level A and B for readers working one to two grades below level. These go beyond the textbook and address each child's specific needs, and are particularly appropriate for guided reading groups. Level C readers are for students reading above grade level, and offer opportunities to read and respond to literature across texts and make connections to unit themes, helping students gain independence in reading and writing.

Summary

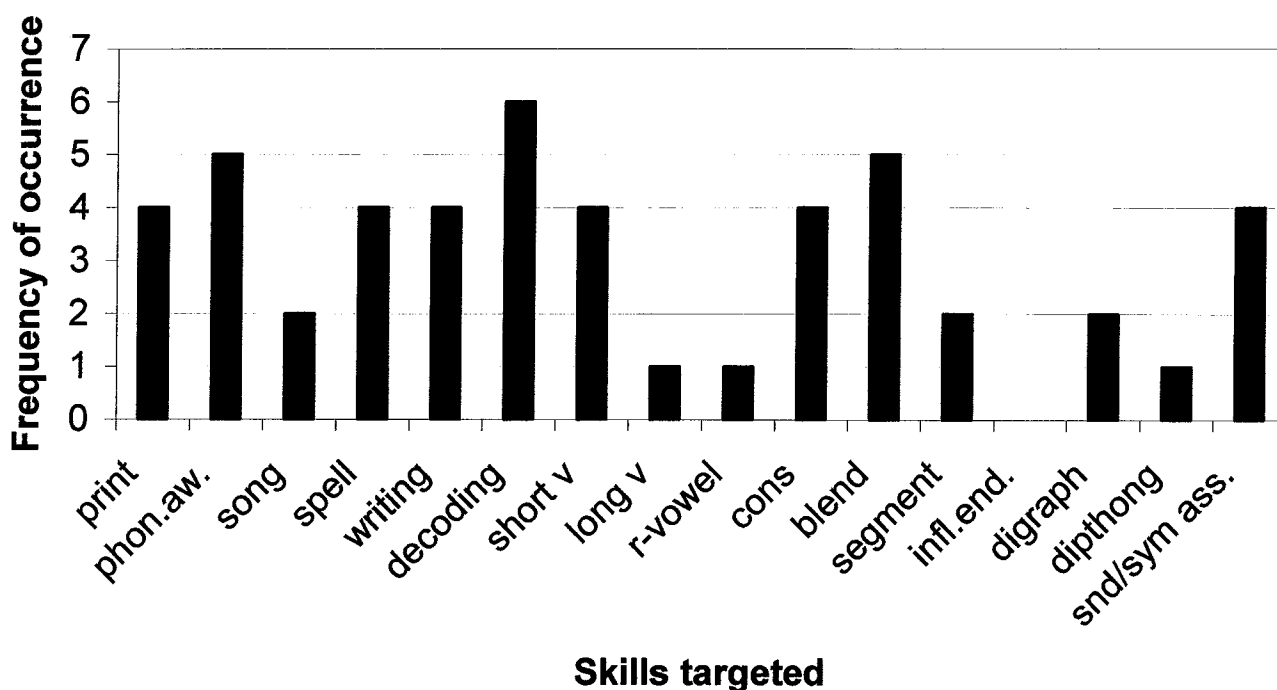
In summary, Scott Foresman reading is a research-based program that works and provides reading materials matching the states' frameworks for reading and language arts instruction. This program is based on research of what teachers are held accountable for

in a school, a district, and the state. A Scope and Sequence provides sequential skill development that builds gradually and was created prior to choosing the literature that supports appropriate reading instruction. Decodable texts, paired with authentic selections, strengthen the process of building fluency along with a systematic phonics strand at all elementary grade levels. Meaning is emphasized through repeatedly targeting comprehension development at every grade level.

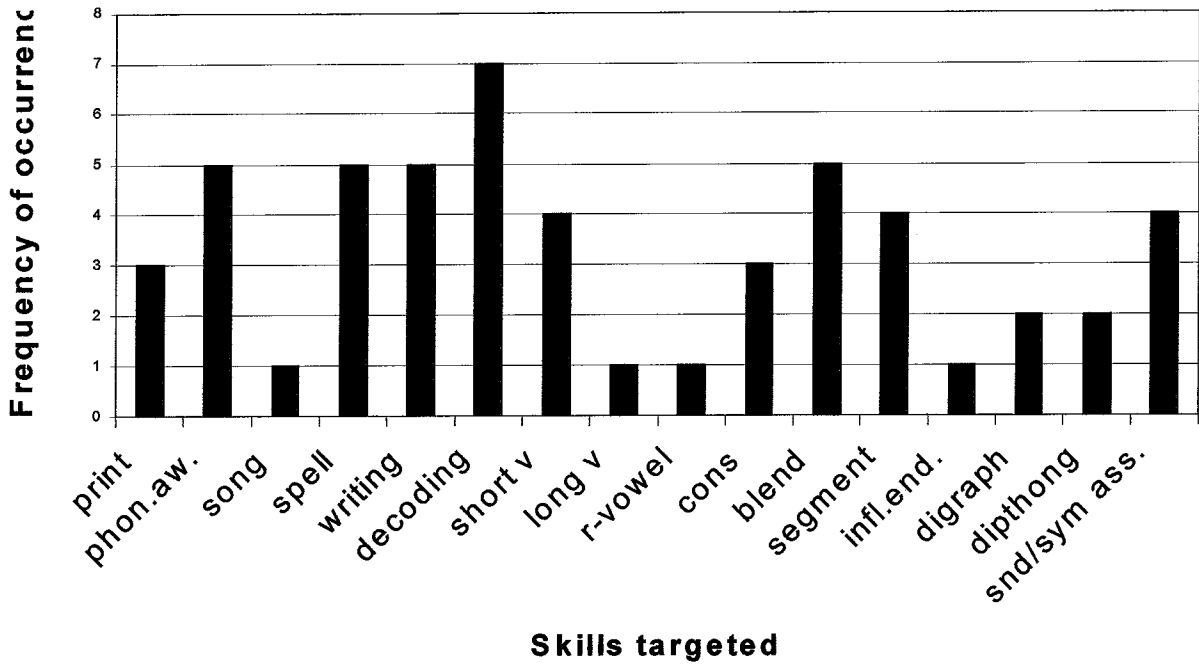
Results of survey data

The results were obtained from a total of 74 out of 80 possible surveys (see Appendix B, number 1); the data were collected weekly over a period of two months (January and February 2002). The charts below indicate the combined responses of the teachers from both programs indicating skills targeted each week:

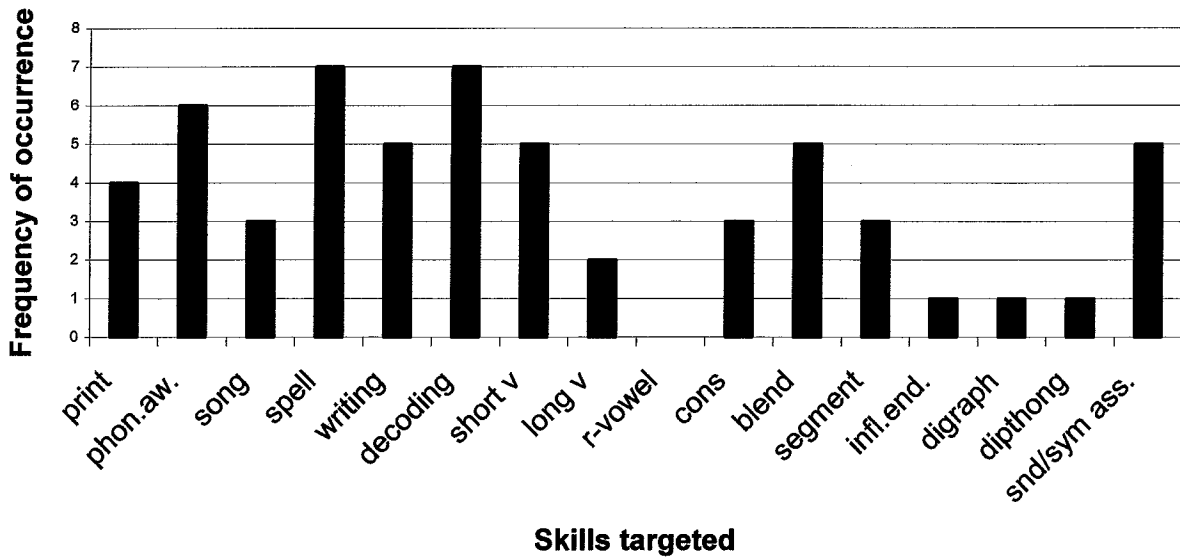
Week 1: Jan. 7-11



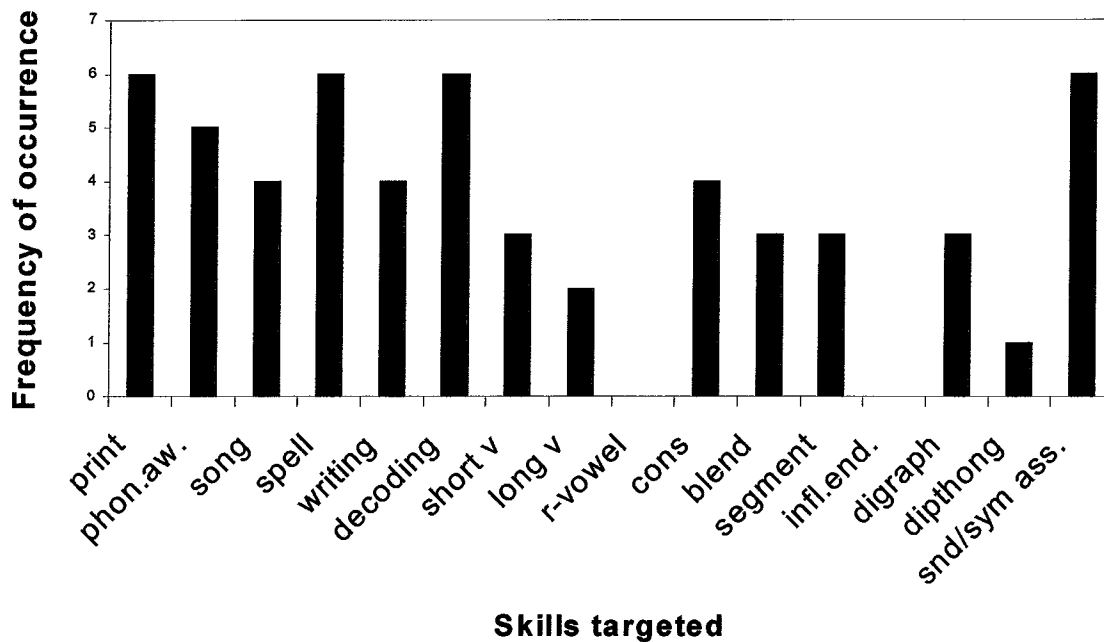
Week 2: Jan. 14-18



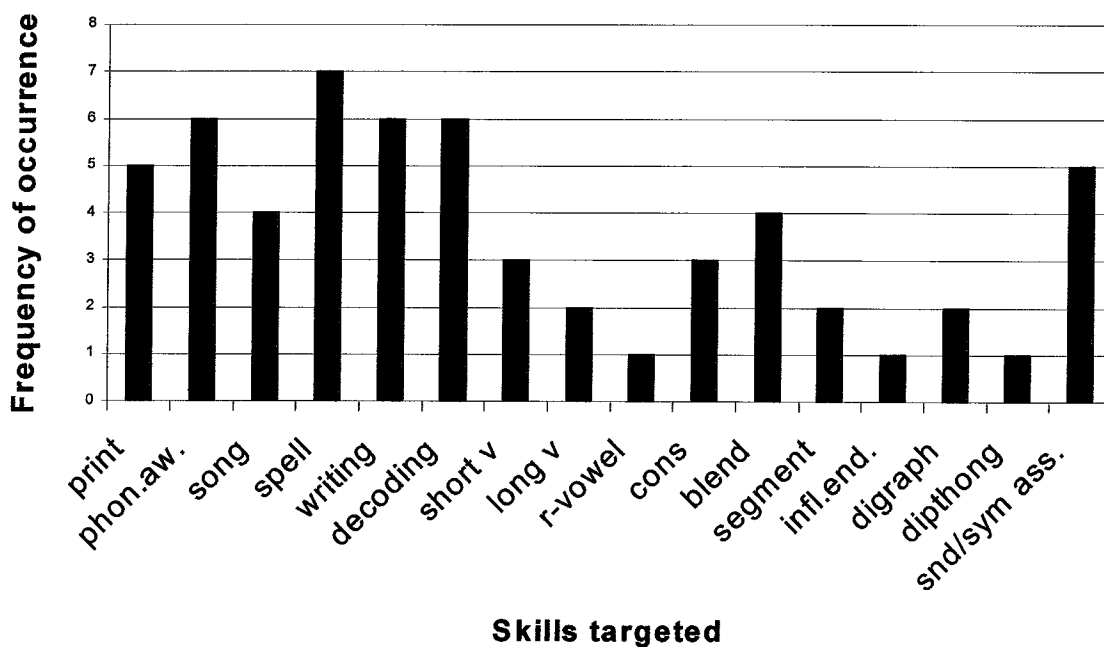
Week 3: Jan. 22-25



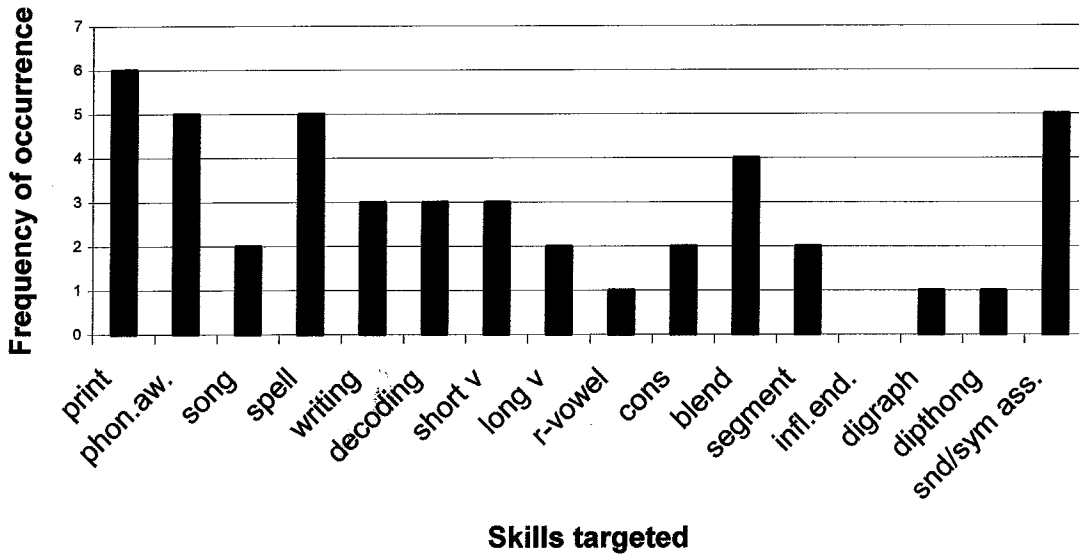
Week 4: Jan. 28-Feb.1



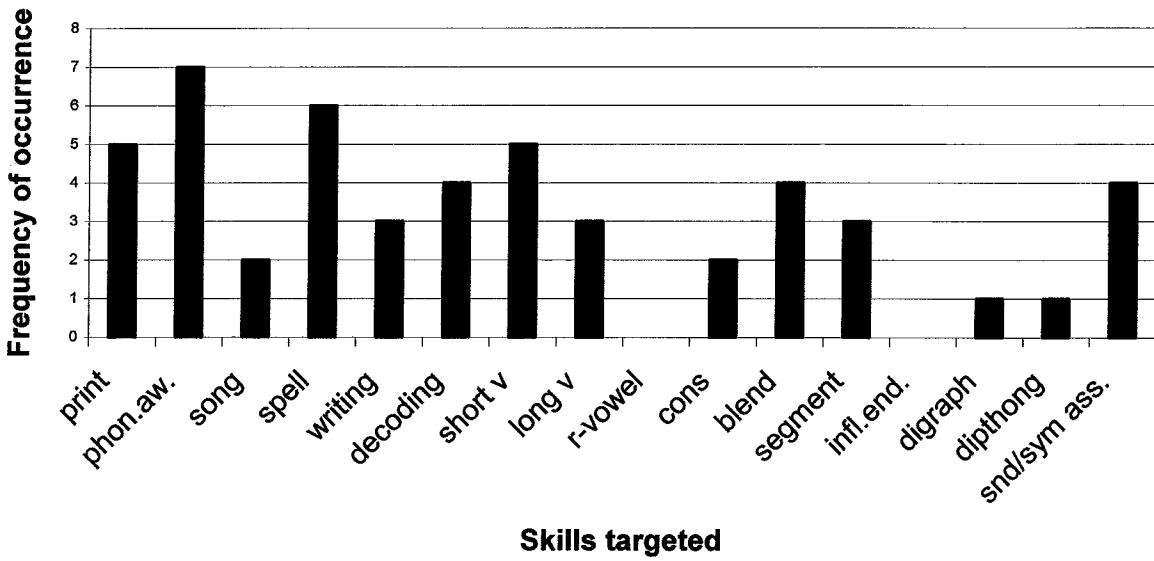
Week 5: Feb. 4-8



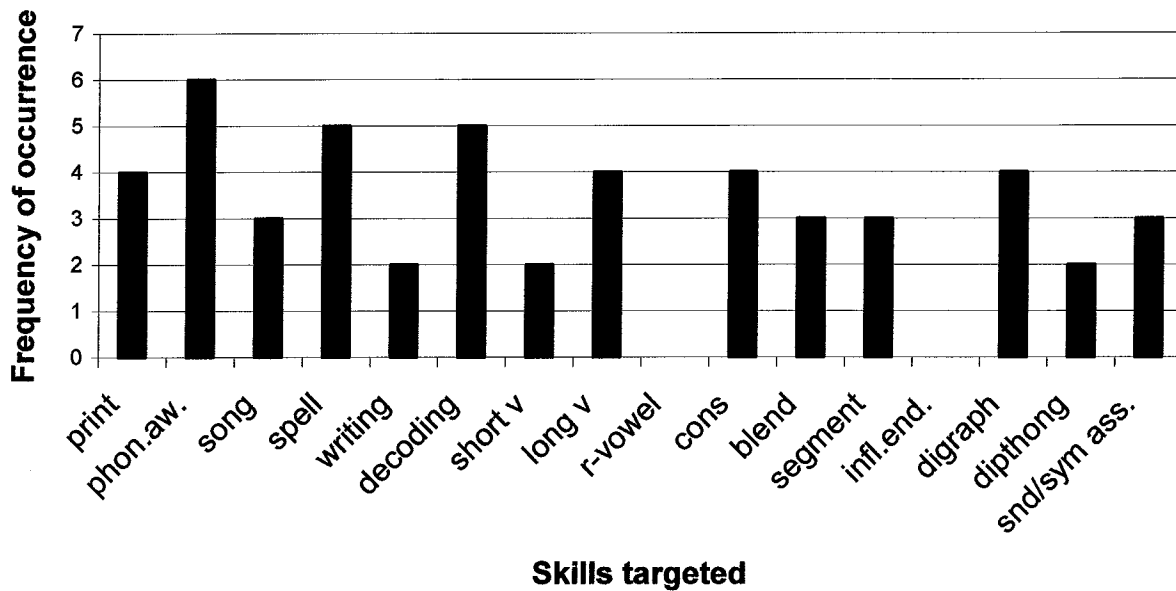
Week 6: Feb. 11-14



Week 7: Feb. 19-22



Week 8: Feb. 25-Mar. 1



Responses were coded and charted on spreadsheets to obtain an average for the following areas: concepts/skills taught, percentage mastery, amount of time spent on phonics and phonemic awareness, and ease of materials. The rest of the responses from the surveys were open-ended questions and therefore had to be gathered and summarized by the student.

The concepts/skills taught most often were the following:

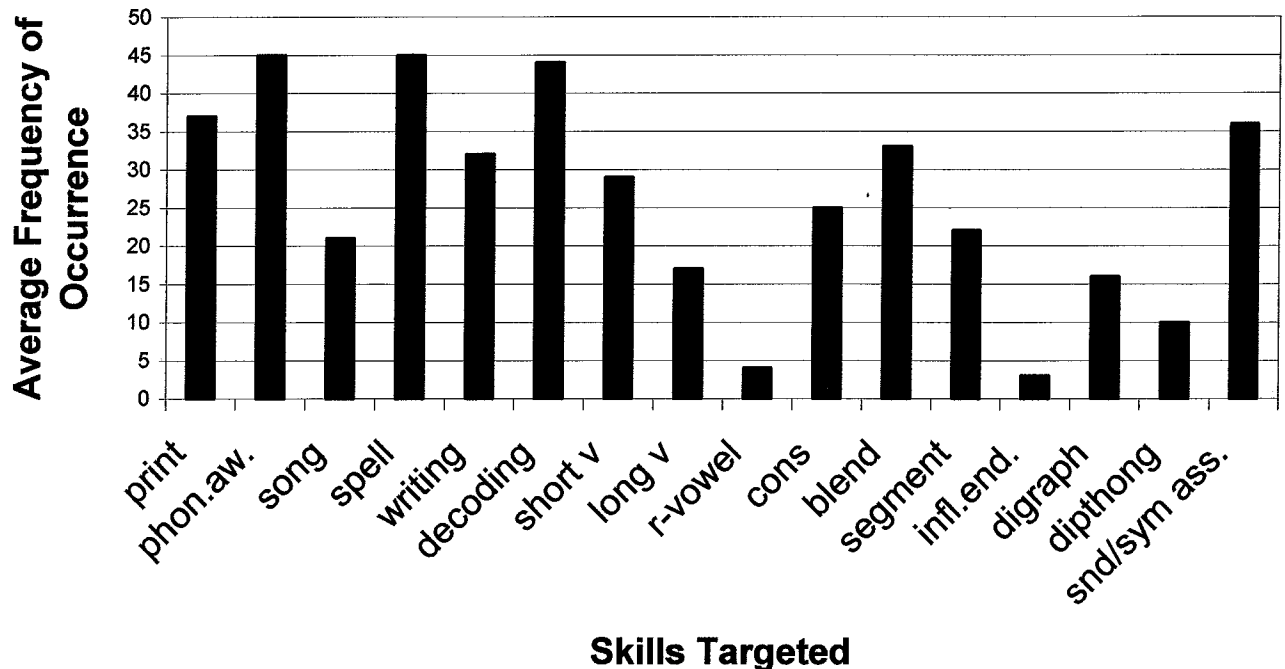
- Decoding
- Phonemic awareness
- Spelling
- Print awareness

The concepts/skills taught the least were the following:

- Inflected endings

- Digraphs
- R-controlled vowels
- Diphthongs

Average of Target Skills: Weeks 1-8



The teachers also rated their student's level of mastery for the concepts/skills taught at the end of each week. The levels of mastery were rated to be 0-40% (skill not present), 40-80% (skill emerging), or 80-100% (skill mastered) and were based on the performance of the group of students as a whole. Most of the time, teachers rated their students' skills as being in the 40-80-percentile range, or emerging, for any given week.

The average time spent on phonics was 19.20 minutes per day and the average time spent on phonemic awareness was 11.18 minutes per day. The less time spent on phonemic awareness may be related to the type and length of activities used.

The materials for each program were rated according to level of ease on a scale consisting of the following categories:

- N/A= not able to determine/not applicable
- 0= Very difficult/ time consuming
- 1=Difficult to average
- 2=Average to easy
- 3=Very easy

The most common response from teachers using both programs was that the materials were average to very easy to use in the classroom.

The remaining responses were open-ended questions concerning the following areas: materials used, additional time needed to teach/re-teach concepts, adjustment of teaching strategy to accommodate children having trouble, areas of difficulty for the children, and general comments. Responses were varied and can be broken down according to the question asked.

What materials were used to supplement the lessons taught?

S.P.I.R.E.: magnetic boards, basal readers, pocket charts, phonics workbooks, letter trays, phonogram cards, blocks, SPIRE reading texts, vocabulary lists, magazines, writing paper, graphic organizers, teacher-made materials, and Explode the Code books.

Scott Foresman: picture cards, phonics readers, letter blocks, phonics workbook pages, teacher-made games for phonemic awareness and phonics, word blending cards, bingo games, picture dictionaries, index cards with words printed on them, children's vocabulary notebooks, and charts on the board.

Was additional time needed to teach/re-teach concepts? Why was additional time needed?

Generally, the respondents answered, “yes” 95% of the time and their answers for why additional time was needed varied. Below, the responses are split according to grade level and program used:

S.P.I.R.E.:

Grade 1: Yes, children had problems with short vowels.

Grade 2: No, concepts are repetitious within the context of the material and we don’t move on to a new skill until 80% comprehension is mastered. Yes, teacher had to review open syllable rules and compare them to long vowels (_ild, _old, _ind, _ost) in closed syllables.

Grade 3: Yes, it took more time for the children to adjust because they had just gotten back from Christmas break. Time was needed to clarify vocabulary, ensure mastery, and individual time was spent with children having trouble.

Grade 4: No additional time was needed for reading, but was needed for writing, spelling, and teaching new concepts.

Grade 5: Additional time was needed for practicing hearing the difference between sounds, and children were confusing consonant sounds with short vowel sounds. Also, children needed help with vowel/sound association and blending.

Scott Foresman:

Grade K (Teacher 1): Yes, additional time was needed to review/practice concepts because the vowel sounds were difficult for the children to distinguish auditorally. The children also needed individual help with segmenting, blending, and comprehension.

Grade K (Teacher 2): Yes, additional time was needed due to the children not retaining their skills learned previously. Sounds are similar-sounding to these children with hearing-impairment, and vowels in the medial position were difficult to hear because of the surrounding consonants.

Grade 1: Yes, additional time was needed to go back and review different phonemic awareness and phonics activities because of the holes in the reading program previously used. Children also needed time to ensure comprehension of short vowels because they were not focusing enough on the vowels and word itself. Children reversed their letters when blending and teacher spent time individually with each child to correct this.

Grade 3 (Teacher 1): No additional time was needed for several of the lessons, but was needed when correcting errors because teacher had to go back and re-teach the original concept.

Grade 3 (Teacher 2): Additional time was needed to re-teach concepts of diphthongs, to review spelling when two sounds are spelled the same way, and to become comfortable with concepts due to lack of previous exposure. Also, children were having difficulty with homophones, and needed more practice to realize that words that sound the same may look/be spelled very differently. More practice/time was needed when reading words than when simply identifying them auditorally. Finally, children had trouble distinguishing between r-controlled vowel sounds.

How did you adjust your teaching strategy to accommodate children who had trouble with certain skills?

S.P.I.R.E.:

Grade 1: Extra materials such as tissue were used to differentiate sounds and the teacher used more workbook worksheets and other phonics books to help the children.

Grade 2: Repetition and more drills were used to supplement the lessons along with manipulatives and visuals. The teacher worked with the concept using different modes of multisensory methods.

Grade 3: The teacher worked with the children individually after the lessons, and assigned extra time to be spent at home with a parent practicing speed drills.

Grade 4: The teacher modeled, repeated, and re-directed, as well as re-phrased answers before writing them. She also used teacher-made sheets for review, used verbal reinforcement, visual cues, and reminders.

Grade 5: Auditory practice, repetition, and exercises that focused on speed and automaticity were used to accommodate students who were having difficulty. This teacher also worked individually to re-teach skills, slowed down drills when needed, and emphasized vowel sounds in words.

Scott Foresman:

Grade K (Teacher 1): This teacher broke down tasks into simpler components, reviewed previously learned concepts, connected concepts into other subject areas throughout the day, and used one-on-one tutoring for children having difficulties. She also increased independent reading time and inventive writing time, used different materials, and used different activities.

Grade K (Teacher 2): For this teacher, one-on-one teaching helped her students master concepts, as well as using visual cues on the board. The teacher also modeled pronunciations or just gave the children the word.

Grade 1: The teacher reviewed the skill for ten minutes per day and asked for help/ideas from other teachers. She also used the technique of stopping, breaking the word down into initial, medial, and final sounds, and then blending it together.

Grade 3 (Teacher 1): The teacher wrote some examples of words with the target vowel sound in them on the overhead to trigger the children's memories.

Grade 3 (Teacher 2): The teacher pronounced the word and vowel sounds to help her children discriminate between them. By pronouncing word and vowel choices (both correct and incorrect), the children were more able to select the correct answer. The teacher also clapped her hands to model the number of syllables in a word, used practice worksheets to supplement lessons, and backed down to base words the children knew and understood when they had difficulty.

What areas were most difficult for the children?

S.P.I.R.E.:

Grade 1: The S.P.I.R.E. worksheets gave some children difficulty because they did not provide clear enough pictures and it was hard to match and name the items accordingly.

Grade 2: The children had difficulty moving from one syllable to two syllable words and when exceptions to rules came up they had trouble remembering rules for long vowel sounds.

Grade 3: The teacher identified the following areas of difficulty: homonyms, definitions/vocabulary, separating -ee- from -ea-, and discrimination of two sounds.

Grade 4: Students had difficulty with writing complete sentences, responding to questions, re-stating what they read, determining when to use a rule, and spelling multi-syllabic words.

Grade 5: Short vowels gave the students difficulty, as well as identifying vowels correctly in words and sentences.

Scott Foresman:

Grade K (Teacher 1): The children had difficulty with phoneme segmentation, blending, identifying vowels, rhyming, hearing the sounds in words, distinguishing between vowel sounds, and decoding unfamiliar words.

Grade K (Teacher 2): The children had difficulty blending consonants and vowels, distinguishing words, rhyming, and initial consonant sounds.

Grade 1: Decoding letters when printed elsewhere, listening for the sound in a word (beginning, middle, and end), and picking rhyming words/pictures in sets of more than three gave these children the most difficulty.

Grade 3 (Teacher 1): The teacher reported that the only thing the children had trouble with was recalling what has been previously taught.

Grade 3 (Teacher 2): Hearing the difference between vowel sounds, distinguishing between diphthongs and digraphs when reading, identifying number of syllables, and spelling words that have multiple meanings gave these children trouble. The teacher also reported that distinguishing between different r-controlled vowel sounds and homophones (words that sound the same, but are spelled/look different) were also difficult for these children.

General Comments:

S.P.I.R.E.:

Grade 1: Comprehension pages are either too easy or confusing for the children.

Grade 2: There was no significant regression after winter break; the children moved quickly because they understood sound-symbol relationships in words. They grasped the concepts well and continue to work on putting rules into long-term memory so that reading and writing become automatic.

Grade 3: none

Grade 4: The children are comfortable with the routine of the drills and lessons, but they still need work on comprehension issues, as well as many exposures to grasp spellings. Fluency in oral reading has improved significantly, the children are more confident, and are scoring a high percentage on orthographic retention of previous material when tested.

Grade 5: Independent work materials are often confusing and minimal.

Scott Foresman:

Grade K (Teacher 1): Suggested activities from the teacher's guide were helpful, but had to be adapted to help the children. Sometimes the teacher's guide suggested activities for skills that had not been previously taught, and, overall, the children needed more independent readers to reinforce skills for phonics and also to provide more variety. The children read to the teacher in class and read at home to parents each night, but the teacher would love to have more time in class to devote to this. The series had interesting stories overall.

Grade K (Teacher 2): The children loved the stories, and started reading independently. There was occasionally a lack of material to add to a lesson, and the teacher thought that the concept of cause and effect was too challenging for the children.

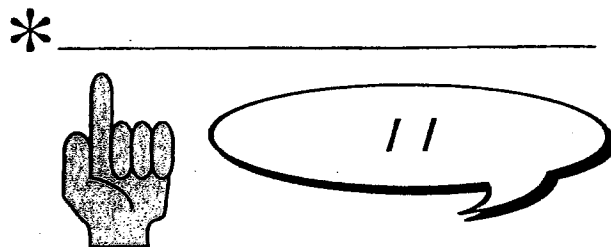
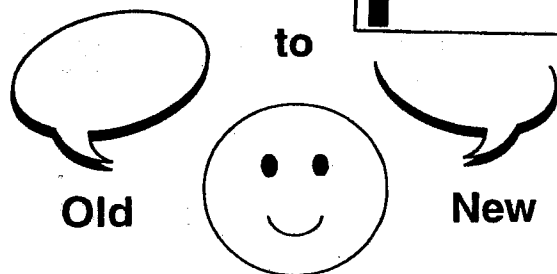
Grade 1: Some children benefit from being given the word, and they remember it next time it comes up in a sentence or story. However, some children get stuck on the same words over and over. Overall, the children have done better with phonics and reading.

Grade 3 (Teacher 1): The children had no difficulty coming up with examples of words with double consonants, inflected endings, and final y. Remembering a phonics skill outside the format of a lesson was sometimes difficult, but a gentle reminder gets them back on track.

Grade 3 (Teacher 2): None

Appendix

Phonemic Processing Sheet



A1.

Appendix

ran at am an and can had am ran and had
am ran can an at and had at can an am
ran had am ran can am had at had am and
an and can ran at had and am ran am had
an at and can an am ran can had at am
ran at had ran am can am had and am had
at had am an am and can ran and ran had
ran am at and had at can an can an am
had am ran can ran am had at had am and
an am and ran at had and can am ran had
am an at and am ran at can an can had
ran am can had ran had and at am had am

A2.

Appendix

mad	am	can	pit	rib
rad	cap	lip	kid	tap
fig	van	hit	had	bag
big	fin	nap	jam	cat
wig	win	tip	tag	Tad
kit	dip	ant	gag	it
bag	pip	Jim	gap	fat
lad	tag	if	dim	tip
jig	at	sat	fan	wag
sap	sip	sad	Sid	ran

Tim sat in the sap.

The bag has a tag.

The man is fat.

The cat had a nap.

The cab hit the van.

A3.

Appendix

Daily Dictation Paper

Name _____

Date _____

Sounds

Words

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. _____

5. _____

5. _____

6. _____

6. _____

7. _____

7. _____

8. _____

8. _____

9. _____

9. _____

10. _____

10. _____

Sentences

5. Please rate the ease of materials, using the numbers below: _____

- NA = Not able to determine/not applicable
- 0 = Very Difficult/time consuming
- 1 = Difficult to average
- 2 = Average to easy
- 3 = Very Easy

6. Was additional time needed to teach/re-teach concepts? If so, please state why additional time was needed:

7. How did you adjust your teaching strategy to accommodate children who had trouble with certain skills?

8. What areas were most difficult for the children?

9. General Comments:

Please complete one survey each week and mail them at the end of the month (Feb. 1st and March 1st) in the self-addressed stamped envelopes provided.

B1.

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