

Reading Development and Early Grade Reading Materials

Stephanie Al Otaiba, Ph.D.
Florida Center for Reading Research
at Florida State University



East Asia and the Pacific Early Grade Reading Assessments Conference
Sydney, Australia | 12-14 April 2011

What research knowledge can guide book and material design for the early grades?

- Knowledge about what to teach:
 - ▣ Teach code- and meaning-focused skills
 - ▣ Tailored for language structure

- Knowledge about how to teach it:
 - ▣ Direct instruction
 - ▣ Small group instruction (ability groups)
 - helps match materials to students
 - ▣ And understanding that code-focused skills are slow to develop for struggling individual students

- Knowledge to develop, design, and select among reading materials
 - ▣ Examples from US and from Taiwan- two different written language systems

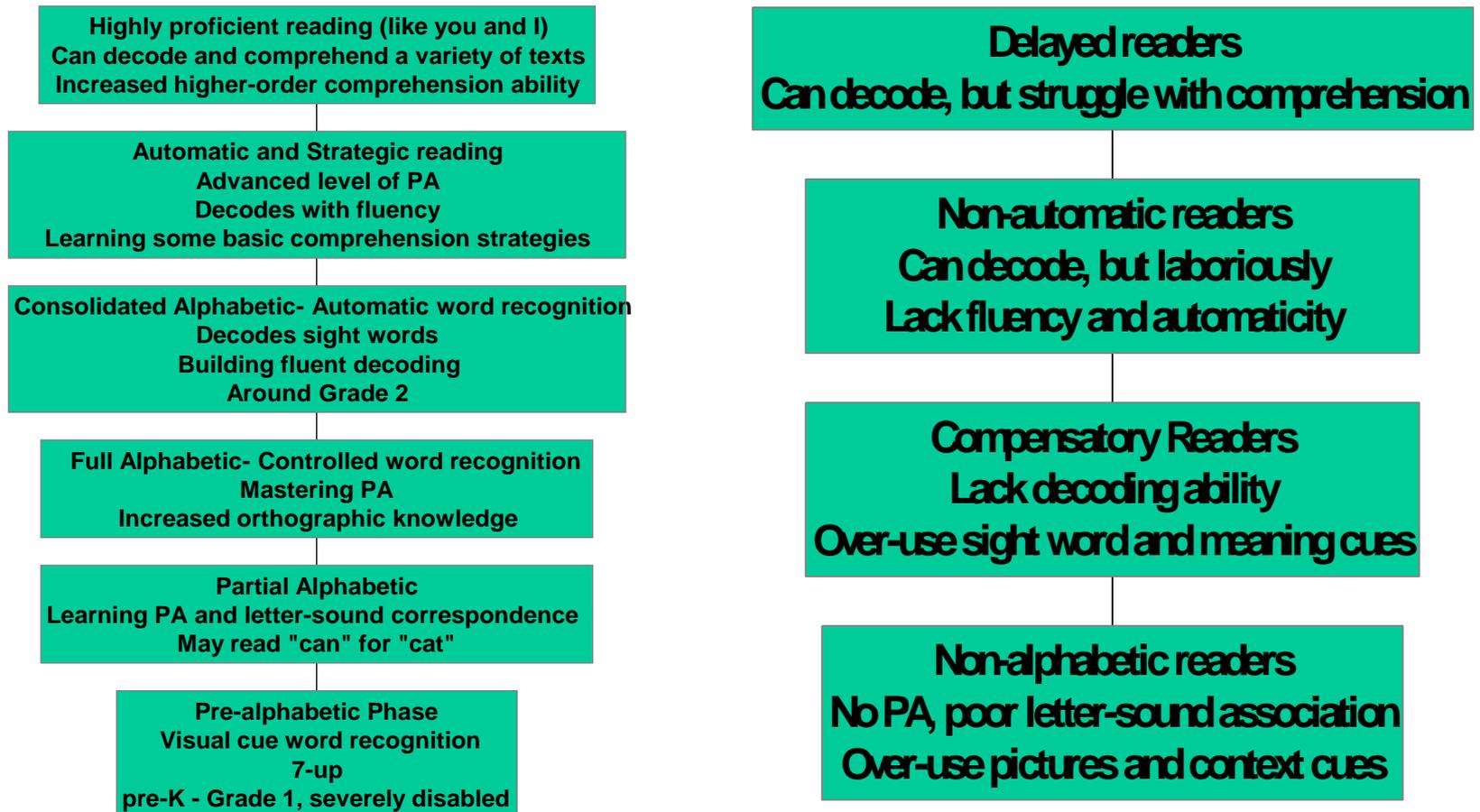
Simple View of Reading

Gough and Tunmer (1986)

- Reading = *Decoding* X *Comprehension*
 - *Code-focused skills* = Phonological awareness and phonics to recognize words, to be able to sound them out phonetically, and to read them fluently.
 - Requires fast linking of sounds and letters (alphabetic languages like English, Arabic, Spanish, Tagalog).
 - Also requires teaching and practice sounding out or decoding words automatically.
 - *Meaning-focused skills* = Vocabulary helps students build comprehension read for meaning. This includes background knowledge or what they know about the world.
 - For some languages (e.g., Chinese, Korean), there is also a link between a character or radical and a unit of meaning.
 - We apply phonics skills, our vocabulary, and our understanding of grammar to give meaning to what we read.

Model of Reading Development: Typical and Atypical Development

Ehri, 2000; Spear-
Swerling & Sternberg,
1996



Chall, 1983;
Ehri, 2000

Stages of Reading Development

Pre-Reading
Language development
Print awareness
Phonological awareness

Learning to Read
Phonemic decoding
Automatic
recognition of
words
Fluency

Reading to Learn
Expand to more
sophisticated
comprehension
Expand vocabulary
Continue to use skills
from other stages

Phonological Awareness

Phonemic Awareness

Rhyming &
Initial Sound
Identification

Sentence
Segmenting

Syllable
Blending &
Segmenting

Onset-Rime
Blending &
Segmenting

Phoneme
Blending &
Segmenting

FCRR K-5 Center activities- samples will be mailed to you

Child-managed
code-focused



Phonological Awareness

PA.042

Phoneme Matching

Phoneme Go Fish

Objective

The student will match initial sounds in words.

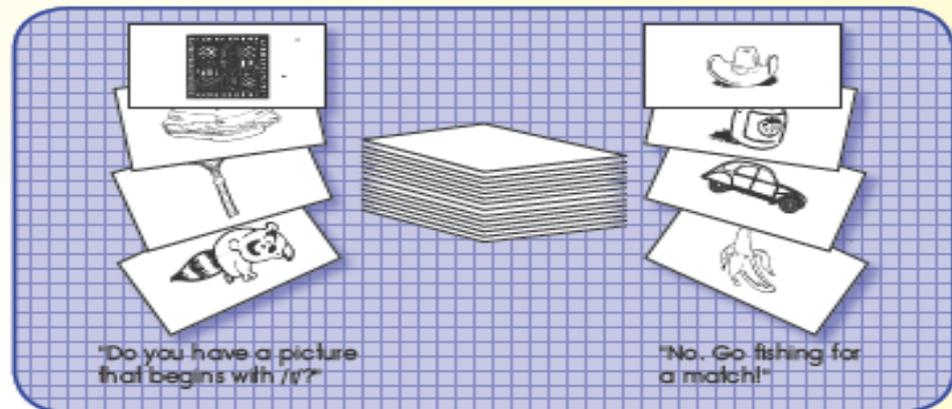
Materials

▶ Sound picture cards (Activity Master PA.042.AM1a - PA.042.AM1f).

Activity

Students play an initial sound Go Fish picture card game.

1. Divide the set of picture cards into three separate and equal stacks. Each student gets one stack and the remaining stack is the "pond."
2. Working in pairs, students check their cards, pair by initial sound, and put aside the matching sets.
3. Student one asks for a picture card that begins with a certain letter-sound. For example, "Do you have a picture that begins with /r/?"
4. If yes, student two gives it to his partner. If no, says, "Go fishing for a match!"
5. Student one then selects a card from the "pond."
6. If a match is made, student one gets another turn. If a match is not made, student two takes a turn.
7. The game continues until all cards are matched.
8. Peer evaluation



Levels of Alphabetic Skills

Fluent Reading

Alphabetic Awareness

“Read” symbols
like 7-up

Recognize
letter names
and sounds

Blend simple
CVC words
like mat

Read simple
high
frequency
words

Read simple
sentences and
stories

Read chunks
of words

Recognize
more high
frequency
words by
sight

Decode more
difficult
phonics
patterns

CVCE;
CVCC

Decode
multi-syllable
words

Read with
expression

General Principles of “direct instruction”

(Carnine, Siebert,
Kameenui, & Carver,
2004)

- Specifying objectives (specific & observable)
 - By the end of week 6, the student will sound out CVC words with 95% accuracy within 3 seconds.

- Devising strategies
 - teach most common letter sound symbols first (m,t,r,s,f,d,a,l); teaching words that can be decoded using those sounds (mat, Sid, fat, mom);
 - then build words using mastered sounds (mad, ram, Sam...)
 - teach most common words (common to background knowledge that are also highly frequent in early grade reading texts)

- Developing teaching procedures
 - format: model, guided, independent practice
 - My turn, let's do it together, your turn or
 - I do it, we do it, you do it

- Selecting examples
 - ▣ Are sounds common in mother tongue and written orthography?

- Sequencing skills
 - ▣ easy before difficult, in English, we teach the most common sound spellings that follow the rules first (cat before circus)

- Providing practice & review
 - ▣ pacing, individual responses, group, whole group/unison

Lesson Plan for Reading based on EGRA

Results: Code-focused

- Phonological awareness
 - Given a word, the learner will (TLW) identify the initial sound of words on a list (or will blend sounds to make a word, or will say each sound in a word).

- Phonics (alphabetic knowledge and decoding) and spelling (encoding)
 - Given a letter, TLW name the letter
 - Given a word “cat,” “gato,” “قط” TLW say each sound and correctly read the word.
 - Given a word, TLW correctly spell each letter in the word.

- Fluency
 - When shown a letter (or word) TLW correctly name the letter in 3 seconds.

Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)

Adaptation as Tutor-Assisted Learning Strategies (TAILS)

KG Letter-sound instruction
"What sound?"

Al Otaiba et al.,
2006; Fuchs et
al., 2001

u 	r	o	l	u	p	★	
i	a	u	m	i	★	c	
n	l	p	u	★	g	h	
u	a	l	o	u	d	★	
							

KG decodable words and simple sentences.

“Read it slowly.”

f a t

c a t

s a t

p a n

r a n

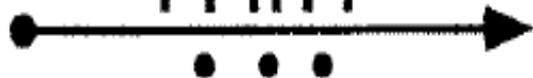
c a n

The cat ran.

First grade decoding instruction

“Sound it out” and “Say it fast”

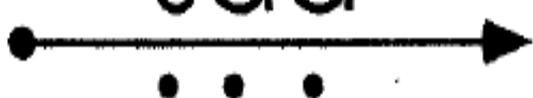
mitt



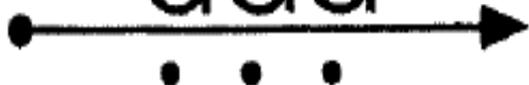
mitts



sad



dad



1. "Sound it out."
2. "Say it fast."

First grade sight word instruction

“What word?”

“What word?”

has with is a and has

with I on has have is

has and on the I have

and is with a has has

First grade stories

“Read the story”

Baseball Mitts



Dad is **big**.

Dad has a **big** baseball mitt.

Sam is **little**.

Sam has a **little** baseball mitt.

Dad and Sam play baseball.

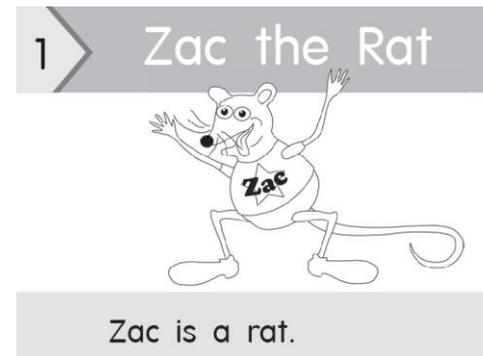
“Read the story”



Other examples of “low tech” or reproducible books and materials that support code-focused instruction

■ US book examples that are black and white

- Starfall
- Bob Books
- Primary Phonics
- Open court



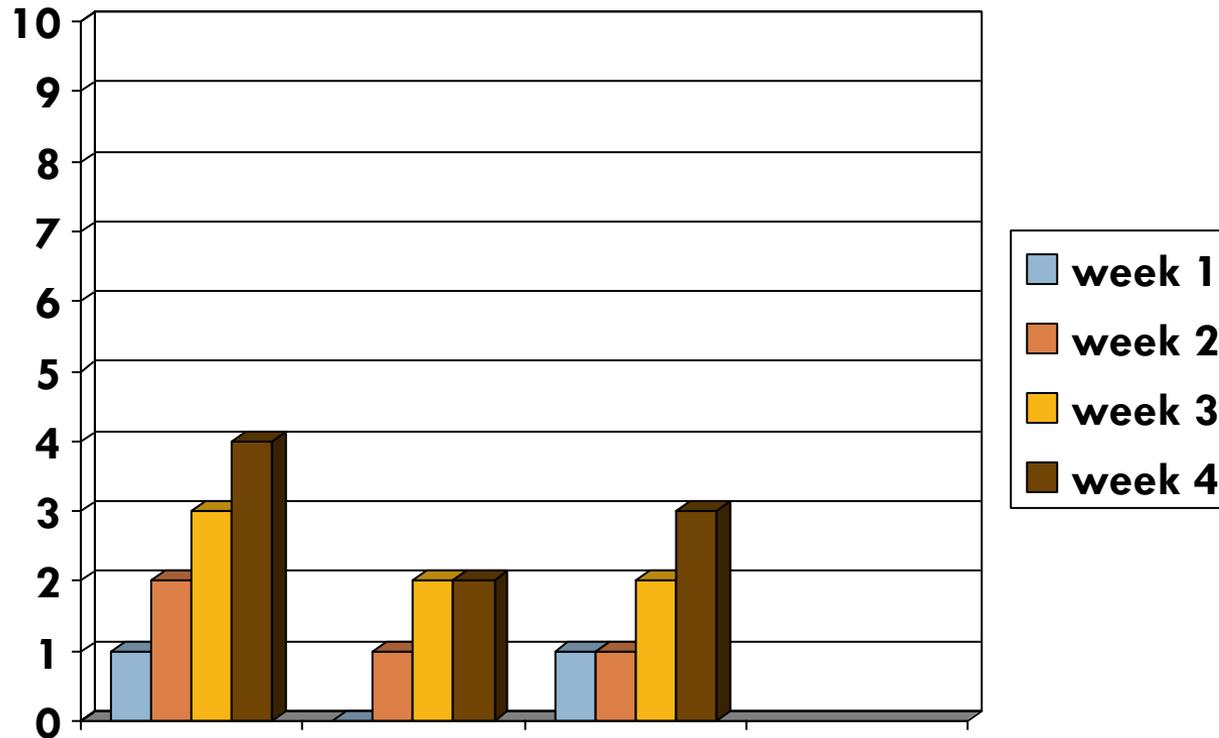
■ US materials that are black and white

- Peer Assisted Learning Strategies
- Sound Partners
- Tutor Assisted Intensive Learning Strategies

Sample Lesson 1b



Teacher Action Research: Choose 3 students and assess their letter sound growth weekly (not on EGRA) but on a teacher-made curriculum based assessment

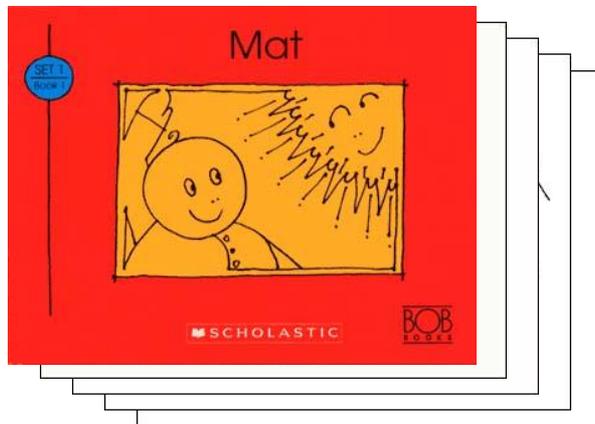
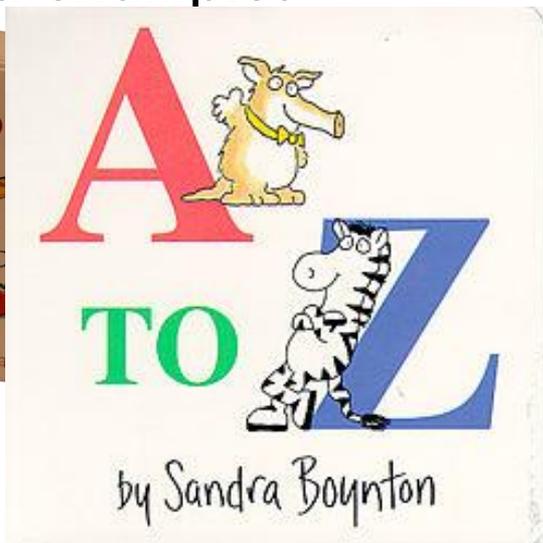
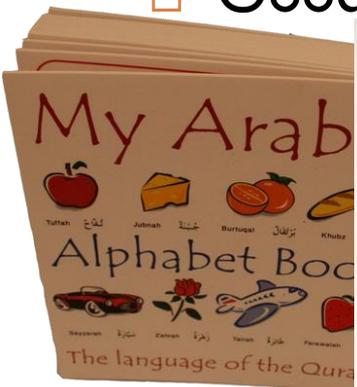


Three Big Ideas about reading materials

- Choose materials for direct instruction that support the objective of the lesson plan.
- Ideally have a reading textbook or “core” curriculum program that is explicit and systematic to support instruction in code-focused and meaning focused instruction that is appropriate for your own language(s).
- Additional reading materials (books, activities) support the grade-level (or stage-level) objectives AND offer a range to meet the needs of all students.

Tomorrow more focus on early grade reading materials

□ Good examples



□ Not so good examples

My big animal book



Another example from Chinese orthography

- Words are composed of characters; characters are composed of radicals.
- Some are semantic and morphological radicals; represent “meaning”; e.g., 水(water), 火(fire), 手(hand), 日(sun)
- Some are phonetic radicals, represent “sound ”; e.g., 爪(claw); 青 (ching),

Courtesy of the Yung-Ling Research Center for Reading Instruction

Shu-Li Chen shuli.chen57@gmail.com

Shih-Jay Tzeng jay.tzeng@gmail.com

National Taitung University, Taiwan

1. catch
2. grab
3. arrest
4. scratch

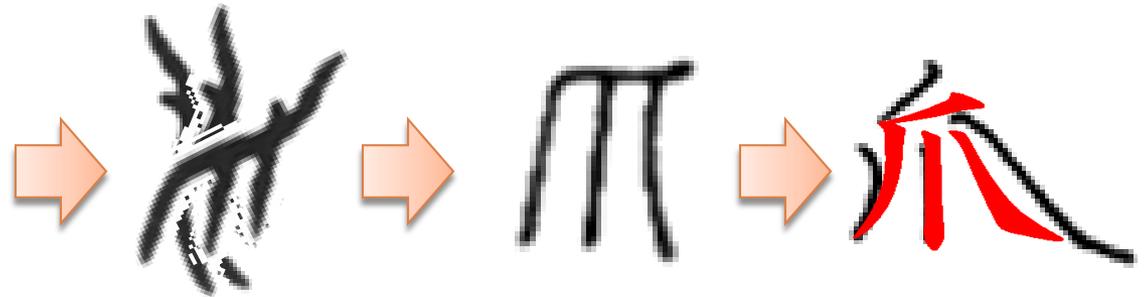
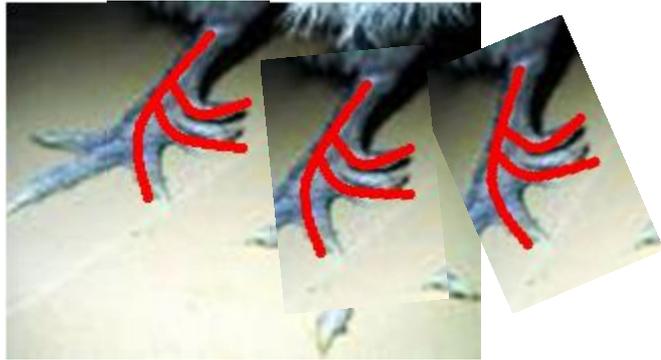
抓

表音部件phonetic radical

抓

爪：

- pronunciation /zhua/
- pictograph
- meaning : claw



The progression about “爪.”

表義部件 semantic radical : “扌” means hand.

抓

手部件演進卡

The progression about “扌” .

從圖像到文字

From pictograph to character.



A “decodable” text for 1st grader

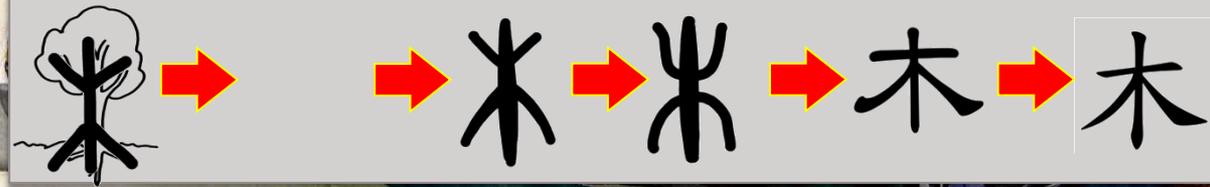
第六課 森林哭了

曾世杰

我們的山，本來有森林，
森林裡，本來有很多大樹，
有一年，村子裡開了木材行，
人們開始上山砍樹，
大樹一棵一棵倒下，
一棵一棵被做成木材和木板，
十棵、一百顆、一千顆、
一萬棵、一百萬棵，
大樹哭了，森林哭了，山也哭了，
現在山上沒有森林了，我也好想哭了。



木



木 → 木 → 木 → 木 → 木

樹 木 林 板 村 材 來 本

Playing radical cards

木 + 反 = 板

木 + 寸 = 村



Questions to discuss regarding reading materials?

- **What materials do you have?**
 - **To teach and practice the code**
 - **To reinforce language and comprehension**
- **What is missing?**

Linking books and reading materials to curriculum: Choosing books for your instructional purpose

- Alphabet books
- Decodable
- Controlled text (emphasis on sight words)
- “Morals”
- Content

- Issues
 - ▣ Are these books part of the curriculum?
 - ▣ Length of book
 - ▣ Length of text (readability)
 - ▣ Language (vocabulary and grammar is at the students’ level)
 - ▣ Comprehensibility of language (oral vs. written)
 - ▣ Multi-lingual
 - ▣ Differences between written and spoken language

Thanks!
Questions?

salotaiba@fcrr.org