

SOUND WALLS 101

A tool for cohesion and student independence

1

DEFINITION

- "A sound wall does the work of matching our articulation of speech sounds/phonemes to the letters/graphemes that represent those sounds."
- "Speaking is natural and something we can learn to do by being immersed in language. However, reading is not natural. We need to explicitly teach students to hear the individual phonemes in the words they hear in language...Helping students recognize the way their mouth feels and looks when producing sounds will help them connect speech to print."

Reading Rockets- "Transitioning from Word Walls to Sound Walls"

- "Get your ears ready for what your eyes are about to see."
—Antonio Fierro

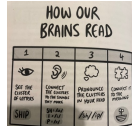
WHAT CAUSED OUR BUY IN

- Mississippi Literacy Conference presentation showing 3 different students at different ages attempting to spell the same word. Instructional coaches used the sound wall to diagnose errors by looking at rows and columns on sound wall to clearly where the students were confusing letters and sounds.
- Desperation to help my 10/21 students that were in speech
- Noticed lack of retention with phonics skills with 3rd graders, and after researching learned that things like sight words do not go into long term memory automatically
- Students had extreme difficulty labeling and explaining their learning (ex: why a certain word is spelled the way it is)

Science of Reading in Action by Malia Hollowell

PERSONAL STRUGGLES

- Transitioning from traditional sight word teaching method (flash cards and repetition with very little success and retention) to using mirrors and the sound wall as tools to orthographically map the same words
- Had to take the time to analyze word list to see what could be broken down with vowel teams etc. and what were truly heart words
- Feeling overwhelmed with terminology and fear of implementing it incorrectly (page 4 in Tools4Reading handbook)



Science of Reading in Action by Malia Hollowell



4

SOUND WALL VS TRADITIONAL PHONICS CARDS OR WORD WALL

Sound Wall



- Mouth pictures are relatable to students
- Show me how to make the sound.
- What happened with your voice box?
- Is the airflow continuing?
- Now, tell me where the sound is in these words- is it at the beginning, the end, or in the middle of the word?

Phonics cards



5

SET UP AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Labeling the categories of sounds so that students can begin seeing the similarities and differences and put names to their learning
- Clear sections for each sound category for students to follow
- Sticky notes for words studied (sight/heart words, can also be used for vocabulary etc.). This allows for it to be a working and active resource for students, which will provide more buy in and usage in classroom.
- Sound wall can be used to cohesively tie entire literacy block together. Used during phonemic awareness (Heggerty), phonics, sight word instruction (reordering our list based on phonics pattern), breaking apart vocabulary words, used as a resource for critical writing in response to reading, and in student writing.



6

TIER 1 INSTRUCTION

- "The best defense (intervention) is a good offense (Tier 1 instruction)." -Steve Babin
- Structured literacy approach:
 - Explicit (following phonics scope and sequence)
 - Multi-modal (verbal, written, motions, sand trays, play doh, music, etc.)
 - Diagnostic (immediate feedback)
 - Sound walls are an enormous support in this. It allows the teacher to notice, address, and instantly support the productive struggle to correct mistakes.
 - Use of mirrors, classroom culture (student coaching other student to turn voice box on)
 - Think of yourself like a coach or diagnostician (voice coach video example)
 - "With this background, we can evaluate how closely children's spelling errors approximate the sound patterns in speech...The spellings look odd until we consider the strategies the student is using." -Moats in *Speech to Print*
 - "Distance from the target phoneme should be noted, with reference to the vowel and consonant charts. Substitutions of sounds that share most features with the target phoneme are most positive, indicating that substitutions that share *few* or *no* features with the target phoneme." -Moats in *Speech to Print*
 - Cumulative
 - We cannot just assess the phonics pattern/skill we are currently working on. Using running survey to log decoding and encoding data to chart continuous mastery of skills will help us provide authentic and vital feedback.



7

PHONICS

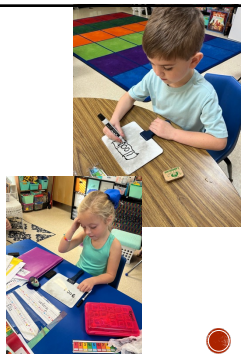
- "The pedagogy a teacher uses to teach phonics has its basis in how children learn and touches both science and art. This makes understanding by the teacher of how decoding knowledge unfolds in children critical so that they are more likely to learn and retain what is taught." - Young, Paige, and Rasinski in *Artfully Teaching the Science of Reading*
- Tools used: mirrors, Tools4Reading instruction guide, sound wall, reading roads, phonics ppt created from Phonics First teacher's guide, dictation page, alphabet arcs, textured grapheme cards with verbal script of letter formation
- Multi-modal strategies: ppt with pictures, letter tracing on carpet, motions for each sound, sound wall and other phonics songs, sand trays in small group, playdoh letters/words, magnetic tiles, pushing chips etc., tapping fingers for sounds...



8

GNUUSER

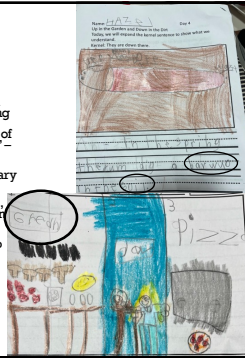
- Traditional method-put on flashcards and practice at home or during transition times, maybe put in a sentence to hear word in context.
- Orthographic mapping using sound wall and multi-sensory approach-
 - The gnouser swam away from the predator into its home in the coral reef. (with action)
 - Load it up using Phonics First method
 - Weekly routine:
 - Day 1: Orthographically map using mirrors and dictation page and collectively place on sound wall in at least one area
 - Day 2: Use whiteboards and mirrors to orthographically map (load up word, tap it out, write together, touch brains (Reading fingers out! Let's send those messages to our brains!), touch and read word together, erase and rectangle, tap out word again and write it in the rectangle, tap it out and put lines for sound boxes, read word (let's build those dendrites!), how many syllables, sounds, letters, erase and show (teacher informal assessment of students' grasp of learning)
 - Day 3: Same basic procedure with bumpy boards and red crayons
 - Day 4: Same procedure but with play doh
 - Day 5: Review game



9

VOCABULARY

- "Phonological processing is an integral part of oral language because words by definition have sound, meaning, and roles in sentences. If an individual is having trouble encoding incoming speech codes into long-term memory, then the quality of the memory may be degraded. Degraded mental representations of speech, in turn, will affect ease and accuracy of word retrieval." – Moats in *Speech to Print*
- Tools used: mirrors, preselected vocabulary from text, vocabulary picture cards, sound wall, various texts, kernel sentences
- Strategies: use sound wall to notice patterns, syllables, motions, used in sentence for context, part of speech, students do motion when word is heard in text, discussion of related words
- Famous Friday example with Alexander Graham Bell (intro into morphology)
- Picture examples



10

WRITING

- "Approaches that incorporate writing instruction are more effective than one focused only on the teaching of phonics instruction. This is because writing builds additional and overlapping pathways in the brain which work to strengthen phonics acquisition." – Young, Paige, and Rasinski in *Artfully Teaching the Science of Reading*
- Tools used: mirrors, sound wall, writing paper, content-related vocabulary words, text to reference
- Strategies: verbalizing and pounding out sentences, tapping out words, using vocabulary in writing, constantly referring to sound wall
- Wealth of information and most authentic way to analyze and assess mastery and transfer of knowledge (student work slides)



11



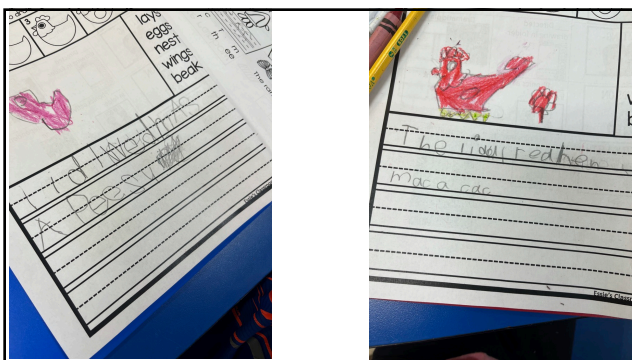
12



13



14



15

**CONSISTENCY IN USE THAT PRODUCES
INDEPENDENCE**



16

**“EMBRACE YOUR IMPACT.”—WILEY
BLEVINS**



17