

The Science of Reading in TESOL: Challenges, Opportunities & Practical Approaches

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Objective:

- To spark a discussion about how literacy within the TESOL space can be guided by the science of reading.

Outline

01

My SOR Journey

02

What is SOR?

03

SOR and ELLs

04

Practical Ideas

01

My SOR Journey

About me



Secondary EAL teacher



Master of Speech Pathology



Department
of Education

Student Support Services (SSS) Speech Pathologist

My Journey so far

2014 – 2020

- Exposure to different types of texts
- Practise completing literal & inferential questions
- Independent reading time
- Traditional spelling tests
- “sound it out” “break it up”

2021 onwards

- Continued deepening my understanding of literacy and how to teach it
- Changed my reading instruction guided by the Science of Reading

2020

- Allocated the lowest literacy class
- Began researching how to teach reading

02

What is SOR?

Science of Reading

A vast **body of scientifically -based research** about reading and literacy

Draws from over **five decades of rigorous studies** from multiple disciplines – e.g. education, cognitive psychology, neuroscience

Sits within the science of learning (attention, memory)

It contains evidence on:

- How proficient literacy develops
- Why literacy difficulties/disorders occur
- How we can effectively assess reading
- How we can **effectively & efficiently teach reading**

Misconception

“Our EAL/D students learn differently so this body of research doesn’t apply to them.”

Psychosocial factors (e.g. trauma, prior education) can influence someone’s ability to learn but ultimately, our brains learn in pretty much the same way.

Effective English literacy instruction for native speakers is just as effective and is arguably even more crucial for English Language learners.

Misconception

“Science of reading does not work for our students. They need to learn the meaning of the words.”

The Science of Reading does not equate to just phonics.

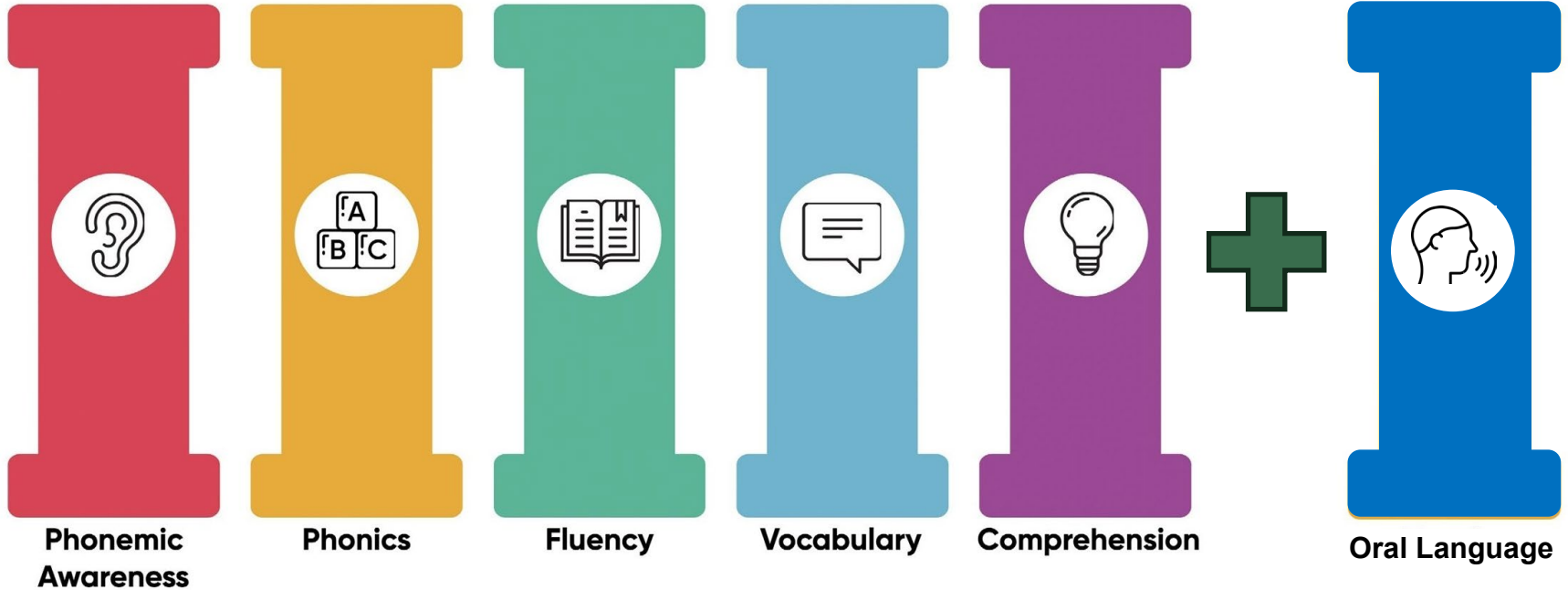
Phonics is a necessary aspect but it alone is not sufficient for proficient reading.

Science of Reading is NOT...

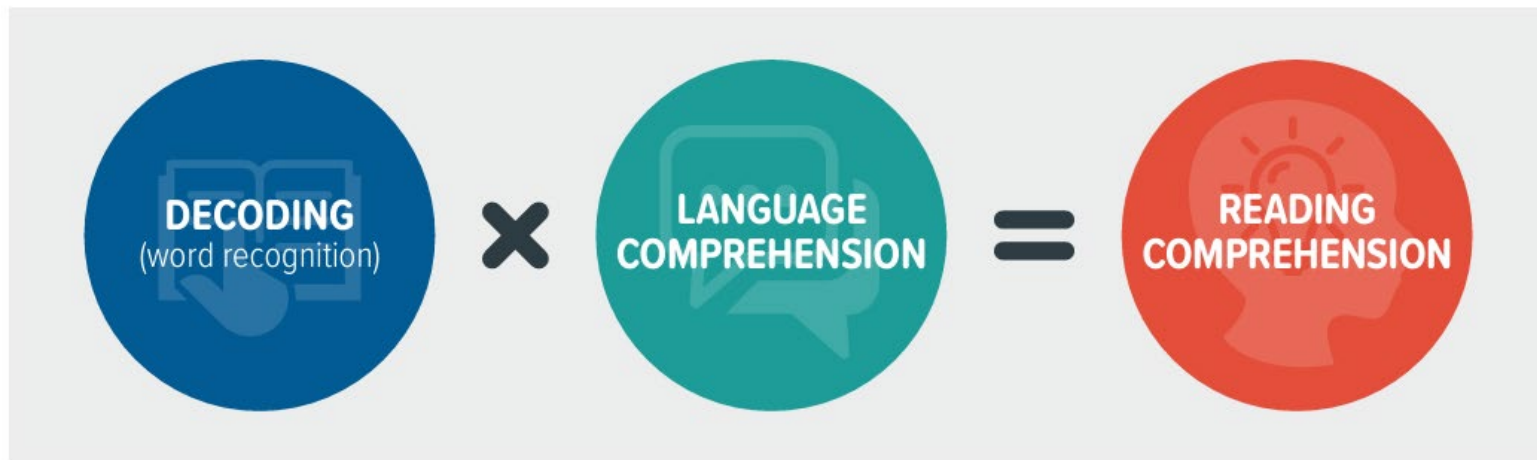
..not an ideology, a philosophy, a political agenda, a one -size-fits -all approach, a program of instruction, nor a specific component of **instruction**. It is the emerging consensus from many related disciplines, based on literally thousands of studies, supported by hundreds of millions of research dollars, conducted across the world in many languages.

Dr Louisa Moats

Big 5 (+1) Pillars of Reading



The Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986)



03

SOR and ELLs

The English Language

- 26 letters
- 44 phonemes/sounds
- > 200 graphemes/spellings
- Opaque/semi-transparent = letter - sound correspondences (alphabetic code) are not simple
- Morpho-phonemic language
- ~2.5 years to acquire alphabetic code



English Language Learners

Typically have challenges with:

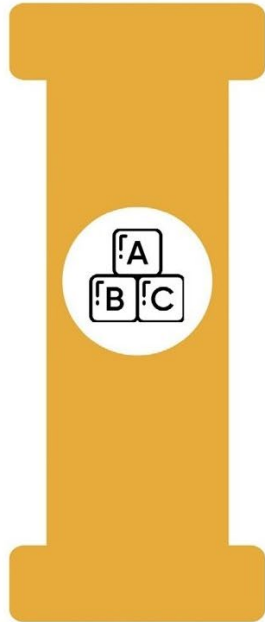
- Oral language
- Auditory discrimination
- Pronunciation
- Background and cultural knowledge



Big 5 (+1) Pillars of Reading



**Phonemic
Awareness**



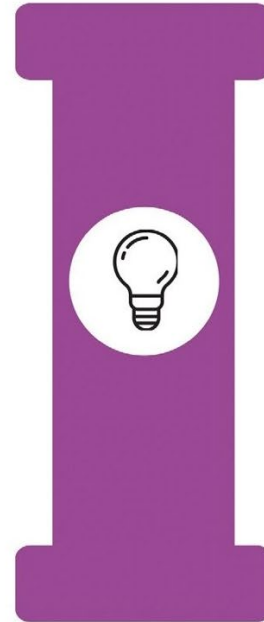
Phonics



Fluency



Vocabulary

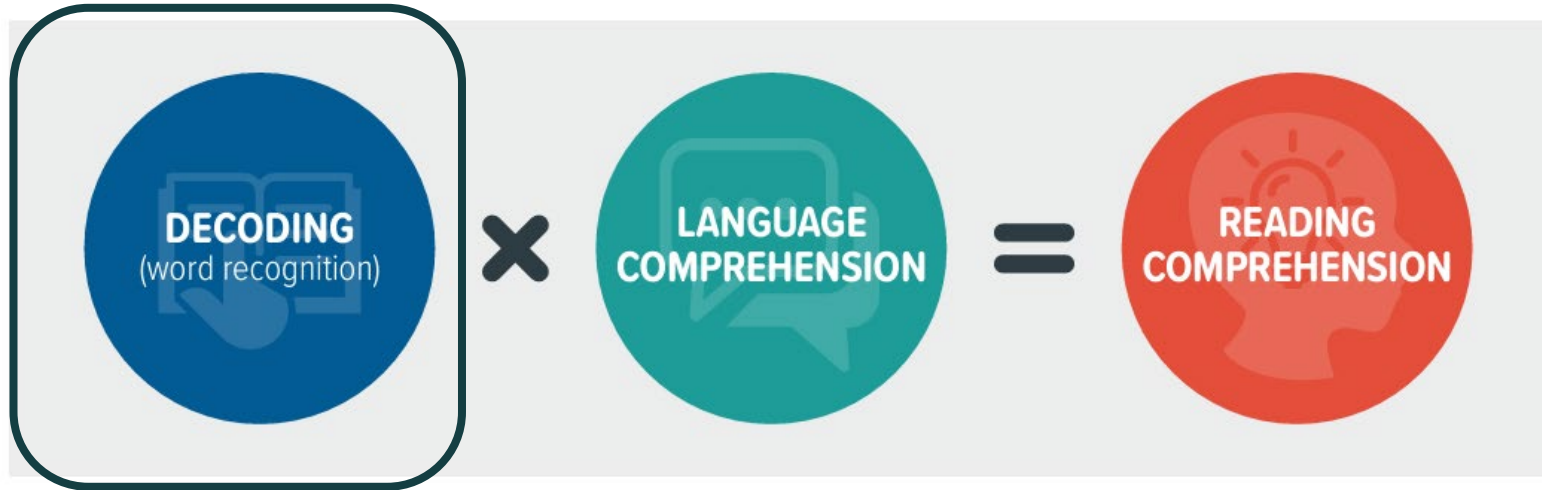


Comprehension



Oral Language

Based on the SOR, how do we teach decoding?



Explicit systematic synthetic phonics instruction

Explicit

Students are clearly taught the relationships between phonemes and spelling

Systematic

Follows an evidence - based scope and sequence (simple to complex code)

Synthetic

Students learn to build from the smallest units (graphemes & phonemes) by blending and segmenting

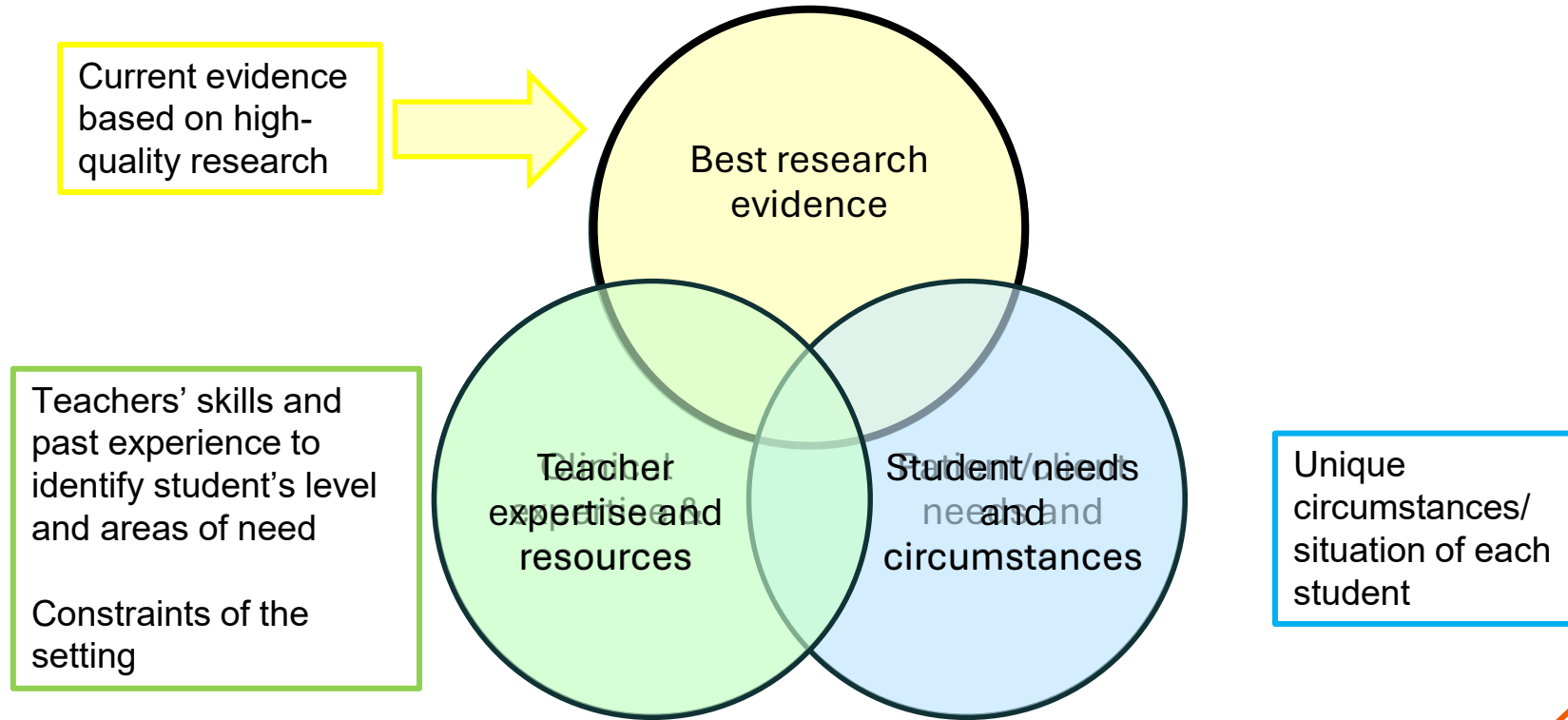
Misconception

“Explicit systematic synthetic phonics is boring for students.”

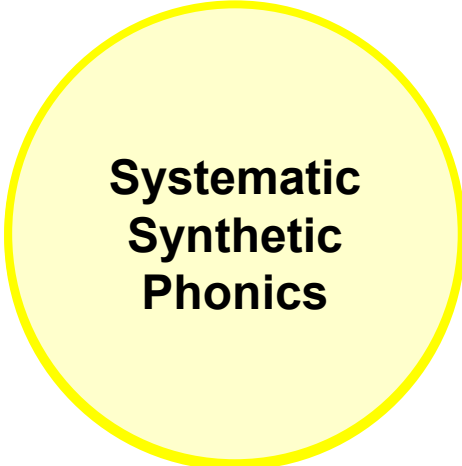
Not being able to access texts and work independently disengages students, One of the biggest motivators is making progress and experiencing success. Students become engaged and excited as they learn to “crack the code”.

They feel safe and supported because the routine and expectation is clear.

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) model



Adaptations to Phonics Instruction



**Systematic
Synthetic
Phonics**

Higher dosage of phonics (2 -3 times)

Fast-tracked scope & sequence

Incorporate auditory discrimination practice

Incorporate explicit pronunciation instruction

Teach polysyllabic words as soon as possible

Teach high frequency words and morphology earlier

Misconception

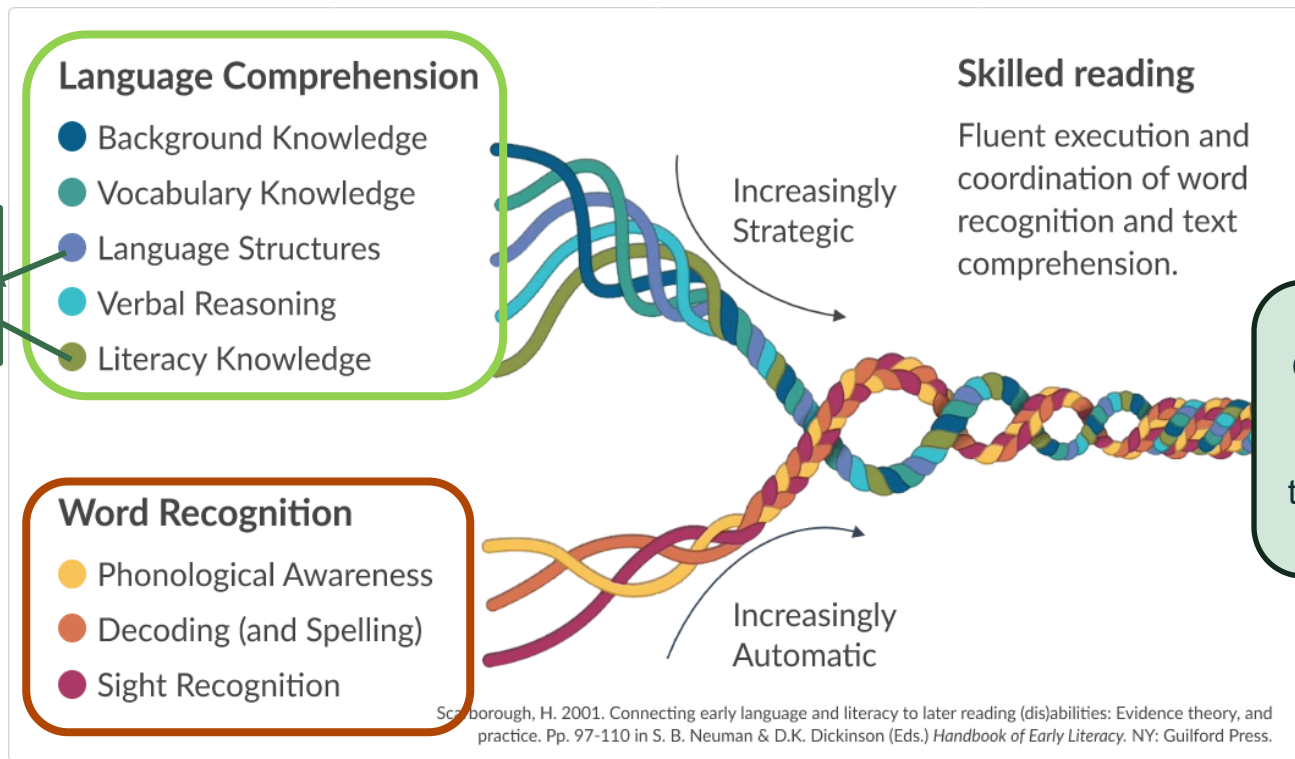
“My student can already decode so I don’t need to teach phonics.”

First, check their knowledge of the alphabetic code. Don’t assume they know!

Remember, a good phonics scope and sequence includes morphology instruction.

If they are fluent decoders, shift your focus to language comprehension.

The Reading Rope (Scarborough, 2001)



Reading Instruction for ELLs

**Systematic
Synthetic
Phonics**



Intensive oral language development

Target language comprehension through more complex texts
read to them

Explicit robust vocabulary instruction

Explicit teaching of language structures and the functions (e.g.
noun group, conjunctions, pronouns)

Explicit teaching of different types of writing (genres)

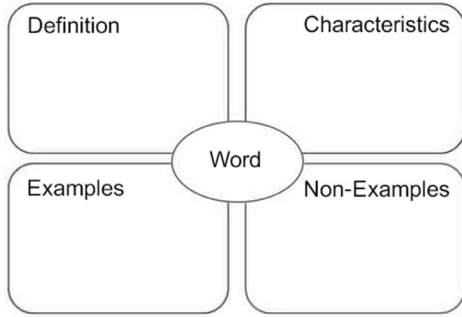
The background features a white central area with two diagonal orange lines forming a large 'X'. In the top-right and bottom-left corners, there are solid-colored triangles: a green triangle in the top-right and a dark teal triangle in the bottom-left.

04

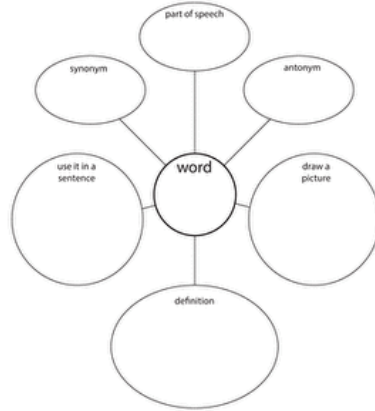
Ideas

Rich Vocabulary Instruction

Frayer Model



Word Web



P.O.S.S.U.M

P honology - What does it sound like?

O rthography - How is it spelled? Syllable type/spelling rule?

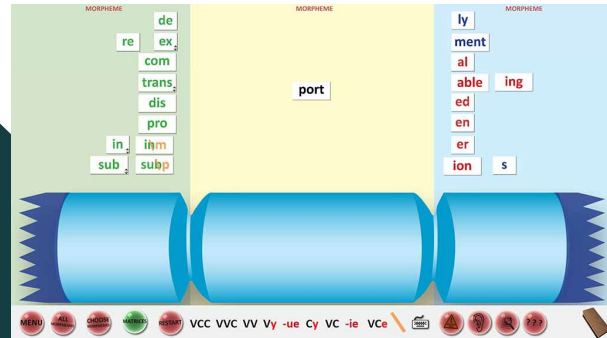
Syntax - What part of speech is it?
Noun Verb Adjective Adverb Preposition Conjunction

Semantics - What does it mean?

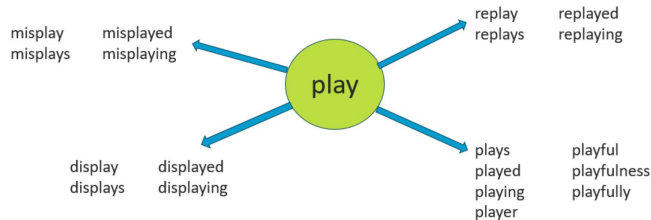
Understanding - Where have I heard this word before?

Morphology - What are the word parts?
 Prefix Root Word Base Word Suffix

Morphology Cracker



Morphology word families



PhOrMes – Morphology Instruction



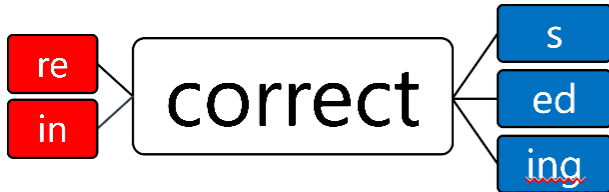
Bases



I will define these words using base words and affixes:

de + frost = defrost

'to take away/off frost from something'



Define these words using base words and affixes:

in + correct = incorrect

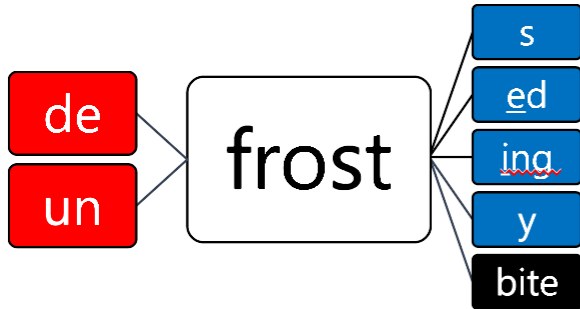
'not correct'

"That answer is incorrect; it's not right."

frost + y = frosty

'full of frost'

The grass was frosty on the cold morning.



de + frost + ed = defrosted

'to take away/off frost in the past'

I defrosted the freezer yesterday.

Extension: put incorrect and defrosting into sentences.

Alphabetic Code Chart












The English Alphabetic Code	
simple code	complex code
units of sound (phonemes)	graphemes (in key words with key pictures) / graphemes, or spelling alternatives which are code for the sounds
/s/	snake, glass, palace, house, cents, city, bicycle, scissors, castle
/a/	apple, /s/ pseudonym
/t/	teddy, letter, skipped, debt, pseudonym
/i/	insect, cymbals

The English Alphabetic Code	
simple code	complex code
units of sound (phonemes)	graphemes (in key word examples) / spelling alternatives which are code for the sounds
/s/	s, -ss, -ce, -se, ce, ci, cy, sc, -st, snake, glass, palace, house, cents, city, bicycle, scissors, castle
/a/	a, /s/ ps
/t/	t, -tt, -ed, -bt, pt, teddy, letter, skipped, debt, pseudonym
/i/	i, -y, insect, cymbals

The English Alphabetic Code	
simple code	complex code
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/a/	a, /s/ ps
/t/	t, -tt, -ed, -bt, pt, teddy, letter, skipped, debt, pseudonym
/i/	i, -y, insect, cymbals

Debbie Hepplewhite's Alphabetic Code Charts

Draw attention to unfamiliar/more complex letter-sound relationships to build up code knowledge

Units of Sound Phoneme/s	Graphemes (letters or letter groups) that are code for the sounds					
	Simple Code	Complex Code				
/s/	s 	-ce  palace	ce  cents	ci  city	cy  bicycle	sc e i y  scissors PI Unit 7
	snake 	-ss  glass	-se  house	-st  castle PI Unit 8	ps  pseudonym PI Unit 12	

The English Alphabetic Code - With Audio

Spelling Template

Mark the sounds	Write the sounds	# of letters	# of sounds	Highlight the vowel sounds	Count the syllables	Affixes
<u>ch</u> ocolate	< ch o c o l a t e > / ch o k l ə t /	9	6	chocolate	choc/o/late 3	
su <u>cc</u> ess	< s u c c e ss > / s ə k s e s /	7	6	success	suc/cess 2	
<u>ch</u> ef	< ch e f > / sh e f /	4	3	chef	chef 1	
re <u>d</u> o	< r e d o > / r ee d oo /	4	4	redo	re/do 2	re

Support students to spell new words by engaging with syllables, letter-sound correspondences and morphology

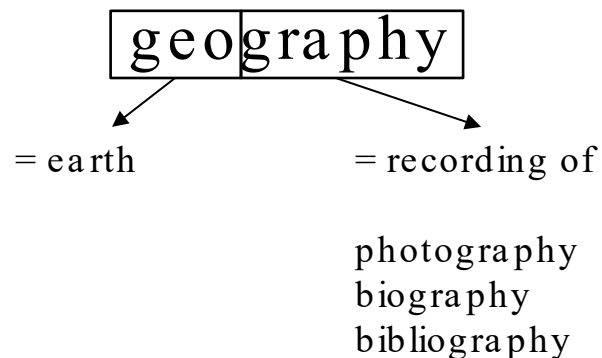
Words with Tricky Code

e.g. geography

Syllables

ge | o | gra | phy

Morphology



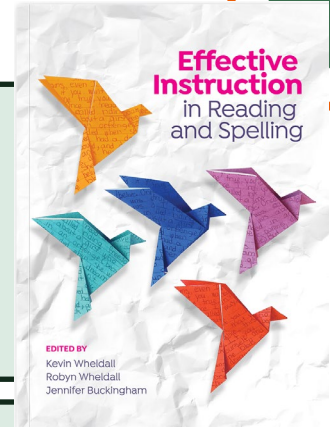
Highlight the tricky code

/j/ /ee/ /f/ /ee/
geography

Next steps ...

Further learning:

Sharing Best Practice
Five from Five Professional Learning seminars
Think Forward Educators
Podcasts
Facebook groups



Implement:

1. Incorporate explicit robust vocabulary instruction in your practice
2. Use and adapt a Systematic Synthetic Phonics scope and sequence
Sounds-Write MultiLit
(DE) Phonics Plus PhOrMes UFLI Decodable Readers Australia
3. Explicitly teach genres and language features (see The Writing Revolution or The Syntax Project)

Share, discuss and advocate!

Questions?



Thank you!



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