If . . . Then

Instructional Implications and Strategies for Reaching Readers with Special Needs

Selected Sight Word Activities for Practice at School or at Home

Collected and Selected by Cherry Carl

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If . . . Then

I have always considered myself to be a lifelong learner/teacher researcher, looking for the best answer to the perpetual question of why Johnny can't read and what I could do about it. As a result, I took endless workshops and classes and read many articles and/or teacher research/reference books until I eventually became the instructor for teachers. When I came home from such ventures, I always typed up my notes, culling the "good stuff" so that I can readily access the information when I needed it or share it. It was a great piece for helping my peers and parent during conferences about children with special needs. I hope that it serves you as well as it did me in my classroom. Considering that it is about fifty years of notes and observations, revisions and reflections, perhaps you will find the answer to that perpetual question I mentioned.

Cherry Carl
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If a Student Makes Reversals

- ✓ Rule out any vision problems.
- ✓ Trace a word from left to right, following the direction of an arrow at the top of a page or word card (tracing materials may come from newspapers, magazines, overhead transparencies).
- ✓ Copy a word on a typewriter or word processor.
- ✓ Print a word, making the first letter green (go) and the last letter red (stop).
- ✓ Do activities that require awareness of left to right directionality (*Simon says).*
- ✓ Physically guide the child's hand.
- ✓ Use flexible practice (over teach!). (i.e., Try to get flexibility by having the child construct the word in different places with a variety of materials such as magnetic letters, Magna Doodle, with chalk, on the carpet, in the air, on a white board, etc.)
- ✓ Use a hole punch as a tactile anchor to indicate where to begin writing.
- ✓ Provide an individual number line/alphabet strip for easy reference.
- ✓ Trace over dots to form letters/numbers.
- ✓ Sort letters by structure/feature (circles, lines, etc.).
- ✓ Use sandpaper letters, writing in salt and/or sand.
- ✓ Talk through letter formation.

If a Student Reads Word by Word or Uses Incorrect Phrasing Lacks Fluency

- ✓ Tape record a paragraph, listen to the tape, record it again with attention to units of meaning, and listen for improvement. Repeat this process until fluency is reached.
- ✓ Read a paragraph silently and underline groups of words that go together.
- ✓ Read orally with a good reader and imitate the good reader's phrasing and expression.
- ✓ Implement repeated and/or timed readings for building fluency.
- ✓ Modeling: the teacher and fluent readers are both good models. Commercial or teacher-made story tapes also serve this purpose.
- ✓ Echo reading: the student imitates the teacher's oral rendition, one sentence or phrase at a time. Begin with a taping of the student reading a passage, followed by echo reading, and culminating in a second taping of the student reading the same passage. The student compares the results and notes the improvement.
- ✓ Choral reading: less fluent readers are grouped with fluent readers as they read a selected passage in unison. The teacher either reads with the group or serves as a conductor.
- ✓ Reread easy books, songs, poems.

If a Student Reads Word by Word or Uses Incorrect Phrasing Lacks Fluency

- ✓ Text chunking: students read aloud a passage that has been marked with slash marks to show phrase boundaries. Passages from poetry, speeches, or songs usually work best, although narrative with frequent punctuation marks can also be used.
- ✓ Repetition: the use of repeated readings-contextualized reading practice-is one of the most effective ways of improving fluency. The material should be "easy reads" for students, to provide problem-free reading experiences. These passages or selections should also be high-interest so that students will not become bored with the repetition.
- ✓ Reader's theater: this technique gives groups of students an opportunity to practice and demonstrate fluency. Each student is assigned a particular role (one or more character's words or thoughts, the "narrator" who reads the narrative) to dramatize a story that is then presented to classmates.
- ✓ Neurological impress: the teacher, aide, or volunteer reads slightly ahead of, and louder than, the student. As the student gains fluency, the teacher's voice becomes softer and "shadows" (comes just behind) the student's voice. This is a highly effective technique, especially good with students acquiring English.
- ✓ Read different genre to create different moods and show voice.

If a student shows little awareness of structural analysis, when reading

(inflectional endings, prefixes, suffixes, contractions, compound words, syllabication and accents)

- ✓ The best way to improve ability in structural analysis is to read widely from a variety of interesting materials.
- ✓ Count the number of syllables in a spoken word by clapping, tapping a pencil, or holding up one finger for each sound.
- ✓ Match two root words that make a compound word.
- ✓ Create words from a flip chart that contains root words in the center, prefixes at the beginning, and suffixes at the end.
- ✓ Underline the root words on a list of words with affixes.
- ✓ Choose the word with the correct suffix for a sentence. (Sally ___ [walk, walks, walked, walking] a mile yesterday.)
- ✓ Use Elkonin boxes while blending sounds to form words.
- ✓ Sort picture cards into categories: one syllable, two, etc.
- ✓ Reinforce efforts: "I like the way you tried to work that out."
- ✓ Make child aware of root words by "making and breaking" words with manipulative letters.
- ✓ Cut student generated sentences/words apart at critical points to emphasize chunks.
- ✓ Rewards program

If a student shows little awareness of structural analysis, when reading (cont.)

- ✓ Refer to *Complete Reading Disabilities Handbook* (Miller) pages 316-317.
- ✓ Create a cloze passage with missing morphemes.
- ✓ Model strategies to access chunks (cover -ing or -ed endings with your thumb). Use word sorts (Words Their Way).
- ✓ Use the word wall to play "What's my rule?," drawing attention to structure (silent e, double consonants, # of syllables, -ing, vowel teams, etc.).
- ✓ Assess the child's awareness of structure (blends, digraphs, etc.) and use appropriate activities to teach and practice.
- ✓ Teach students to use the "circle, circle, underline" strategy when decoding multisyllabic words (circle the prefix, circle the suffix, and underline the vowels in the root word).
- ✓ Make sure child recognizes letters and produces sounds of phonemes with automaticity.
- ✓ Distribute word cards to students to practice compound word development. Each child finds his/her word partner to create a compound word. Each pair pronounces the new word for the class.
- ✓ Circle, circle, underline.

If a student shows little awareness of structural analysis, when reading (cont.)

- ✓ Play "Team Word Building." Divide the class into two teams. Give each team an equal number of root word cards. Team A displays a card and calls on a member of Team B. If that person cannot give four words using the root word plus an affix, he must join Team A. However, if he can, he selects a person from Team A to join his team. Play until the cards run out or all players are on one team.

If a student lacks knowledge of sight words

- ✓ Associate pictures with words that have concrete referents.
- ✓ Identify names of familiar products that appear in advertisements.
- ✓ Read words from language experience charts and student-written stories as they appear both in context and on word cards.
- ✓ Build word banks of sight words and use them to create sentences or organize by naming or action words.
- ✓ Practice recognizing similar and confusing words, such as those beginning with *th* or *wh*, by circling difference in them on word lists and identifying them on flash cards.
- ✓ Highlight high frequency words in language experience charts.
- ✓ Review common words daily in context and in isolation, teaching the child to use context clues at unknowns.
- ✓ Say, write and read words many times to develop automaticity.
- ✓ Develop knowledge of spelling patterns, root word sight vocabulary, adding common prefixes and suffixes.
- ✓ Use multi-sensory techniques (see Project Read).

If a student lacks knowledge of sight words (cont.)

- ✓ Provide opportunities to practice fluency (timed drills).
- ✓ Provide peer tutoring, frequent interaction, paraprofessionals.
- ✓ Use the analogy approach: seeing similarities and differences among printed words.
- ✓ Reread predictable books for multiple exposure to high frequency words.
- ✓ Establish a high frequency word bank, or picture dictionary.
- ✓ Implement flexible practice on a regular basis, paying attention to details (ascending and descending letters, length, and configuration).
- ✓ "Make and break" words with magnetic letters.
- ✓ *Brand Name Phonics* (Cunningham), move from the known to the unknown.
- ✓ Provide a list to parents with information about grade level benchmarks.
- ✓ Use software programs that allow him/her to hear the word and see the word highlighted.
- ✓ Utilize a vocabulary attributes chart to help students visualize and understand words and their meanings.
- ✓ Students create jigsaw puzzles: word on the left and meaning on the right.

If a student lacks knowledge of sight words (cont.)

- ✓ Teach useful, meaningful sight words first: names, days of the week, months of the year, school Teach useful, meaningful sight words first: names, days of the week, months of the year, school subjects, etc.
- ✓ "Around the World" Game
- ✓ Sight Word Bingo
- ✓ Concentration
- ✓ Transformer Board Games
- ✓ Interact with the Word Wall
- ✓ Link to www.readinga-z.com for high-frequency word books (available with a school or district site license.
- ✓ Play Jeopardy for spelling patterns Group flash cards by categories or word families.
- ✓ Label objects in the classroom using single words or sentences.
- ✓ Post and read daily schedules.

If a Student Demonstrate Poor Comprehension Skills

- ✓ Develop automaticity and word recognition skills. Comprehension breaks down with poor decoding skills, time lapse.
- ✓ Build background knowledge, concept development and oral language skills. Plan direct and vicarious experiences to build schemata, which is necessary for reading comprehension.
- ✓ Provide instruction in understanding of story schema and story grammars. Expose students to well-formed stories (storytelling and story reading). Read a variety of stories with standard structures, building the ability to predict or anticipate.
- ✓ Activate student schemata through a teacher "think aloud."
- ✓ Match books to readers. When reading materials is too difficult, focus is diverted to decoding.
- ✓ Explore and interpret pronoun referents, deleted nouns and predicate adjectives.
- ✓ Make sure that students are aware of the aids to comprehension found in punctuation. Practice interpreting these marks.
- ✓ Teach students to make use of paragraphs that have specific functions. Use summary paragraphs to check their memory for important points in the selection.
- ✓ Model metacognition, prediction checks during reading.

If a Student Demonstrate Poor Comprehension Skills (cont.)

- ✓ Utilize prereading strategies and activities: previews, computer simulations, anticipatory guides, and semantic mapping.
- ✓ Use reciprocal teaching to promote comprehension and comprehension monitoring: predicting, question generating, summarizing and clarifying.
- ✓ Use a cloze procedure as a strategy for teaching comprehension. Vary deletions when creating cloze passages: letters, word parts, whole words, phrases, or whole sentences. Always leave the initial and final sentences intact and delete no more than 10% of the words.
- ✓ Make a cloze story map. Place the main idea in the center of the map, connect key words for major concept or events, add subevents and subconcepts. Delete every fifth item.
- ✓ Follow up reading with story frame activities: story summary, important idea or plot, setting, character analysis and comparison.
- ✓ Practice locating details in a newspaper story, answering who, what, when, where, why, and how questions.
- ✓ Teach cause and effect relationships.
- ✓ Teach students to recognize sequence or time-order words. Reassembling comic strips provides useful practice.
- ✓ Sequence pictures from story: beginning, middle and end.

If a Student Cannot Find the Main Idea

- ✓ Observe the teacher modeling ways to identify main idea (what the selection is mostly about, which idea covers all important aspects of a selection, etc.).
- ✓ Categorize objects, pictures, words, and finally sentences; name the category; and explain *why* items go together.
- ✓ Choose an advertisement, use the product as the main idea, and select several features of the product as supporting details.
- ✓ Read a paragraph that is constructed so that one sentence does not belong with the other sentences, remove the inappropriate sentence, tell why it does not belong, and state the main idea of the remaining sentences.
- ✓ Write a paragraph and give it a title that tells the main idea.
- ✓ Point out that the main idea or topic sentence will always contain one or more of the following: *who, what, where, when, how.*
- ✓ Utilize the reciprocity in reading and writing to demonstrate the development of main idea.
- ✓ Model, model, model.
- ✓ Practice, practice, practice.
- ✓ Practice finding main idea using the "rim rat" newspaper activity. ("Rim rats" write headlines for newspapers.) Match headlines to interesting articles from old newspapers.

If a Student has Difficulty Using Context Clues as a Technique of Word Identification

- ✓ Choose the correct word from several choices to fill in the blank in a sentence and give reasons for the choice. (Jimmy played outside with his [basketball, television, potato, and chair].)
- ✓ Fill in blanks with appropriate words in cloze selections.
- ✓ Brainstorm words that would make sense for the unknown word in a sentence and consider phonics clues (especially beginning sound) in deciding on the word.
- ✓ Underline specific types of context clues, such as definition or comparison.
- ✓ Teach students to recognize and use a variety of context clues as a means to ascertain meaning: experience clues, association clues, synonym clues, summary clues, comparison or contrast clues and previous contact clues.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for children to experience wide reading of assorted materials: predictable texts, nursery rhymes, trade books, newspapers, magazines, student-generated writing, etc.
- ✓ Stress the importance of using semantic (context) clues in effective reading comprehension.

If a Student has Difficulty Using Context Clues as a Technique of Word Identification (cont.)

- ✓ Encourage students to supply words that make sense while reading, to become risk takers.
- ✓ Provide practice in listening for miscues using teacher-read material with intentional errors. Students indicate when the miscues occur and why they are inappropriate.
- ✓ Teach students to read to the end of the sentence. Words following an unknown usually provide more help than the words before it. It is also helpful to reread the prior sentence and the sentence following.
- ✓ Reinforce and praise the use of self-correcting in oral reading.
- ✓ Function words: Write function words such *as a, an, and*, or *the on* word cards. Use pictures to form noun phrases.
- ✓ Irrelevant Words: Create sentences with an extra, irrelevant word in each. Children read the sentence, delete the extra word and reread the sentence.
- ✓ Set a goal of 500 words in context for each lesson (Allington).
- ✓ Cover word or portion of the word (Guess the Covered Word from Pat Cunningham).
- ✓ Watch the teacher modeling ways of using semantic and syntactic context clues.

If a Student Does Not Self-Monitor

- ✓ Ask the child to go back to one-to-one pointing or tracking.
- ✓ Direct the child's attention to meaning.
- ✓ After an error, ask the child: "Where was the hard part?"
- ✓ When the child hesitates or pauses, ask the child, "Why did you stop?" Or "What did you notice?" Be specific with praise.
- ✓ Praise efforts at self-monitoring by saying, "I like the way you tried to work that out."
- ✓ Modify or adjust reading materials to the student's ability level.
- ✓ "You read it this way. Does that make sense? Is that the way we talk? Does that look right? Read it again for me."
- ✓ Cover up word that was misread. "What would you expect to see at the beginning of the word _____? Does this word start like that? Read it again."
- ✓ Discuss what to do at unknowns before reading independently. Have child point out strategies used after reading.
- ✓ Tape record students reading, allowing them to hear errors, lack of fluency and expression.
- ✓ Model self-monitoring through a think aloud process.
- ✓ Strategies chart: students indicate what strategies they use during reading.

If a Student Does Not Use One-To-One Matching

- ✓ Say, "Read it with your finger." Or "Did that match?" Or "Were there enough words?" Or "Did you run out of words?"
- ✓ Use two fingers to frame each word.
- ✓ Point along with the child and stop when he makes an error that could be corrected.
- ✓ Cut up student generated sentences and reconstruct and read.
- ✓ Clap oral and written sentences while counting number of words.
- ✓ Use a variety of pointers: glittered chopsticks, "monster" fingers.
- ✓ Walk on words.
- ✓ Model 1-to-1.
- ✓ Write or highlight each word with a different color.
- ✓ Teacher holds the child's and guides him when pointing
- ✓ Select books with few words on a page.
- ✓ Say: "*Read it with your finger.*"
- ✓ Ask: "*Did that match?*" or "*Were there enough words?*"
- ✓ Point along with the child and fail to move on when he makes an error that you think he can correct.
- ✓ Say: "Point to each word" or "Use a pointer and make them match."
- ✓ Refer to Reading Recovery Guidebook, page 21-22.

If a Student Has Difficulty Remembering Sound-Symbol Relationships

- ✓ Check for possible hearing loss or history of ear infections.
- ✓ "Over learn" at an appropriate level, within a context.
- ✓ Play with words using letter cards, pocket charts, magnetic letters, and overheads.
- ✓ Read simple, decodable text.
- ✓ Develop anchors or supportive cues such as picture cards for each sound spelling so he/she can associate a letter with an image and a key word. Tactile-kinesthetic learners prefer action words as their cue words. Auditory/visual learners prefer nouns.
- ✓ Dramatize a sound, providing an anchor.
- ✓ Use other student names to move from known to unknowns. "Do you know someone whose name starts like that letter or has that letter in it?" Use a visible names chart. Send student ABC book home, giving each one anchor for each letter.
- ✓ Enlist parent help, stressing the importance of the sound-symbol relationship.
- ✓ Start with sounds in student's name, moving to friends and family names.
- ✓ Make an ABC book, writing only the letters the child recognizes, pasting student selected pictures for each. Child reads on a daily basis: "A a apple, B b ball," etc.

If a Student Has Difficulty Remembering Sound-Symbol Relationships (cont.)

- ✓ Move from the known to the unknown: "Do you know a word that starts like that? Now get your mouth ready."
- ✓ Ask student to say the sound as he writes.
- ✓ Practice, practice, practice.
- ✓ Model during interactive writing, shared writing.
- ✓ Provide all at-risk students with a readily available desktop or folder sized chart of sounds, including letters, blends, and pictures for each.
- ✓ Global learners cannot learn sounds in isolation. Teach all phonics-related skills in the context of meaningful words, phrases and sentences.
- ✓ Teach consonants before vowel sounds.
- ✓ Include all the senses in learning the sounds.
- ✓ Raps and rhymes help kinesthetic students learn letter sounds more easily.
- ✓ Implement *Project Read* strategies (ie., salt trays, sky writing, catching words to sound out).
- ✓ Stretch the word like a rubber band.
- ✓ Use mirrors to demonstrate mouth/tongue/teeth position.
- ✓ Jim Stone's Animated Alphabet

If a Student Has Difficulty Remembering Sound-Symbol Relationships (cont.)

- ✓ Lakeshore manipulative tubs for sound sorts
- ✓ Letter collage
- ✓ Make sure that sorts have meaningful pictures and words. They should be easy to name and to sort for fluency and speed.

If a Student Refuses to Try or Fails to Decode While Reading; Lacks Word Attack Skills

- ✓ Provide time to analyze the word instead of being given the word.
- ✓ Model and use prompts that lead to developing strategies: What letter sounds do you know in the word? Are there any word parts (chunks) that you recognize in the word? Can you get your mouth ready? What else can you do? Could it be _____?
- ✓ Use assorted word attack skill games with the assistance of a paraprofessional or a peer tutor.
- ✓ Do word sorts (*Words Their Way*).
- ✓ Use picture books, poetry and songs that repeat a phonological element.
- ✓ Teach the student to scan for and underline known words.
- ✓ Use quality predictable text as well as decodable texts, depending upon the level and development of the child's phonological processes.
- ✓ Allow the child ample opportunities to read and reread easy books at an independent level in order to build sight word mastery and facilitate fluency.
- ✓ Use Reading Recovery's "making and breaking "words strategy.
- ✓ See "does not self-monitor".

If a Student Cannot Make Inferences Or Draw Conclusions

- ✓ Observe the teacher modeling ways to draw inferences by thinking aloud about clues for meaning.
- ✓ Look at pictures or collections of objects, find reasonable connections among them, and create stories from them.
- ✓ Listen to a story and predict what will happen next.
- ✓ Underline word and phrase clues that lead to making an inference. (What season is it? The *snow fell* and the *streets were icy.* It was *very cold* outside.)
- ✓ Solve short mysteries.

If a Student Has a Limited Vocabulary

- ✓ Expand experiences by watching films and listening to stories that contain new concepts and words.
- ✓ Keep a file or notebook or new words with his meanings and use some of these words in creative writing.
- ✓ Play games that use word knowledge, such as *Password*.
- ✓ Brainstorm with other children lists of synonyms and antonyms.
- ✓ Compare figurative and literal meanings of figurative expressions.
- ✓ Provide a rich environment with many varied, concrete experiences.

If a Student is a Second Language Learner

- ✓ Hear stories read frequently in small groups so that they can hear many different types of stories.
- ✓ Observe verbal and nonverbal cueing strategies (pauses, exaggerated intonation, gestures, and so on).
- ✓ Hear thought-provoking questions to promote interaction during story reading.
- ✓ Be exposed to predictable books and be encouraged to "read along."
- ✓ Hear and read well-illustrated books so that the pictures provide additional clues to meaning.
- ✓ Reread favorite stories to reinforce vocabulary, language patterns, and awareness of sequence.
- ✓ Do follow-up activities using different formats and materials.
- ✓ Use story grammars to analyze story elements.
- ✓ Write language experience stories.
- ✓ Participate in dramatizations and have direct experiences with concrete objects and activities.
- ✓ Have vicarious experiences (films, filmstrips, puppets, pictures, etc.).
- ✓ Develop functional oral language.
- ✓ Use Language Experience Method of teaching reading.

If a Student is a Second Language Learner (cont.)

- ✓ Provide opportunities and materials for primary language reading practice for students who can read in their primary language.
- ✓ Use realia and apply lessons to real life situations
- ✓ Preteach (into)
- ✓ Fill in the blanks (word substitutions).
- ✓ Use pictures first and then replace with words.
- ✓ Use technology and videos for building schema in the content areas.

If a Student Has a Different Cultural or Linguistic Background

- ✓ Experience oral language and listening activities during the prereadiness period (name objects, identify one object by name from several, listen to the teacher read stories, learn simple songs, tell about something that happened, carry on a brief conversation with another child or with the teacher, point to a picture and tell what they see, follow simple directions, answer simple questions).
- ✓ Practice and apply skills to the point of overlearning.
- ✓ Learn lower-level skills before higher-level skills are introduced.
- ✓ Read orally frequently, possibly using a tape recording of readings.

If a Student Has Behavior Disorders Or a Short Attention Span

- ✓ Use reinforcement: verbal reinforcers, activity reinforcers and tangible reinforcers.
- ✓ Have student paraphrase directions back to you.
- ✓ Make sure student clearly understands expectations.
- ✓ Build "community" so that every student can be accepted.
- ✓ Make assignments that allow for success.
- ✓ Expose student to structured schedules, routines and rules.
- ✓ Provide step-by-step directions, some individualized instruction, short sessions, contracts and progress charts.
- ✓ Expose student to varied activities that move quickly and can be completed in a short amount of time.
- ✓ Have short term goals that enable him/her to succeed at frequent intervals.

If a Student Has Poor Phonemic Awareness

- ✓ Play with rhyme, producing and recognizing. Include nonsense words in your activities.
- ✓ Highlight rhyming words in a poem using the white board and the overhead projector and then use magnetic letters to build the rhyming words.
- ✓ Use the "word block out" strategy on the overhead. Make an overhead transparency of a poem of the week and block out the second half of each rhyming pair with 3M tape. Read the poem to the class, asking them to listen for the blanks. Ask individuals or groups to produce words to fill in the blanks. Read it through together a second time with their predictions. Read it through a third time, uncovering each blank as you read.
- ✓ Play rhyming bingo.
- ✓ During a big book or read aloud session, pause long enough for students to supply the missing rhyming words (**cloze** procedure).
- ✓ Sort rhyming pictures in a pocket chart.
- ✓ Find Your Buddy: Give each student a picture or an object and ask them to find the person who has one that rhymes with theirs.
- ✓ Elkonin Boxes and Phonemic Awareness Mats
- ✓ Word Rubber-Banding (Reutzel, page 115).
- ✓ Hearing Sounds in Words (Reutzel, page 116).

If a Student Has Poor Phonemic Awareness (cont.)

- ✓ Where Do You Hear That Sound?
- ✓ Jump Rope Jingles
- ✓ Use Raffi tapes for playing with rhymes and sounds.
- ✓ Rhyming Concentration (*Words Their Way*, page 120)
- ✓ Sound Boxes (*Words Their Way*, page 121)
- ✓ It's in the Bag (*Words Their Way*, page 122)

If a Student is Unable to Recognize Letters of the Alphabet

- ✓ Read the alphabet chart on a daily basis.
- ✓ Display a wide variety of alphabet charts.
- ✓ Provide each student with a copy of the alphabet chart.
- ✓ Sing the alphabet chart.
- ✓ Refer to the ®Reading Recovery Manual section on letter recognition.
- ✓ Sort letters on the white board using an over teaching method.
- ✓ Read an alphabet book each morning. Have a wide variety on hand in a literacy center. Ask children to predict what letter comes next. Confirm.
- ✓ Use flexible practice when writing a troublesome letter, saying the name of the letter.
- ✓ Make an alphabet book (See ®Reading Recovery Manual) for each child. This provides the child with an anchor picture for each letter.
- ✓ Display a vast collection of environmental print in a literacy center, which allows students to explore the alphabet. Arrange in a grid by letter/sound: M & M, Marshmallows, Macaroni, etc.
- ✓ Ask students to bring in labels from environment print: Butterfinger, Baby Ruth, Barbie.

If a Student is Unable to Recognize Letters of the Alphabet (cont.)

- ✓ Play Concentration, matching capitals and lower case letters.
- ✓ Play Go Fish to create pairs of letters (capital and lower case).
- ✓ Transformer Boards
- ✓ Read the Room, looking for specific letters.
- ✓ Alphabet Hunt: Give each child a pointer. Call out a letter and ask students to search for that letter in the classroom.
- ✓ Use the newspaper to find and circle specific letters.
- ✓ Power writing to build automaticity: Provide a white board and marker for each child. Call out a letter and ask students to write it as quickly as they can.
- ✓ Play alphabet bingo or letter lotto.
- ✓ Use magnetic letters for sorting by attribute (circles, sticks, half-circles, etc.).
- ✓ Stock an alphabet literacy center with plenty of manipulatives: alphabet puzzles, magnetic letters, sandpaper letters, games, charts, MagnaDoodles, etc. (*Balanced Reading Strategies and Activities*)
- ✓ Sing a variety of alphabet songs that repeat a particular letter or sound.
- ✓ Hidden Letter Rubbing (*Word Recognition Activities, page 70*).

If a Student is Unable to Recognize Letters of the Alphabet (cont.)

- ✓ ABC Place Mats (*Word Recognition Activities*, page 79-80)
- ✓ Alphabet Soup
- ✓ Hopscotch
- ✓ Build, build, and build some more: start with the child's name. Build it with letter tiles, out of play dough, match it letter for letter with another set.
- ✓ Letter Sandwiches (*Word Recognition Activities*, page 71)
- ✓ Play Dough Letters
- ✓ Set up a Names Corner (*Apprenticeship in Literacy*) (*Words Their Way*, page 125)
- ✓ Include student names on the word wall.
- ✓ Sort letters with different fonts.
- ✓ Sort alphabet cereal.

If a Student is Unable to Use Consonants to Decode

- ✓ Develop awareness of hearing the sound.
- ✓ Word Bird: Scatter word cards around the room. Sing the song and ask the children to find word cards that begin with that letter.
- ✓ Use a make-up mirror to focus in on what the mouth is doing to produce the sound.
- ✓ Sound blending: Focus on one consonant sound as the onset in single syllable words.
- ✓ Sharing the pen: Students refer to their alphabet chart when writing a sentence. What picture begins like the sound/symbol you're trying to produce?
- ✓ Names Corner (Dorn): Use a list of student names to elicit the sound/symbol for writing.
- ✓ Buy and display consonant sound posters and charts.
- ✓ Where Do You Hear the Sound?
- ✓ Consonant Sound Shape Books: Write and illustrate words that begin with a specific sound.

If a Student is Unable to Use Consonants to Decode

- ✓ Consonant Bingo
- ✓ Make picture dictionaries.
- ✓ I'm Thinking of a Word (*Locating and Correcting Reading Difficulties*, page 65).
- ✓ Hard and soft *C* sorts in a pocket chart.

If a Student is Unable to Use Vowels to Decode:

- ✓ Link to www.readinga-z.com for explicit instructional materials.
- ✓ Play short vowel bingo.

If a Student is Unable to Give the Correct Sounds of Blends, Digraphs or Diphthongs

- ✓ Practice using recognizing and vocalizing sounds with charts.
- ✓ Pocket Chart Sorts (*All Sorts of Sorts* and *Words Their Way*).
- ✓ Building Words (Cunningham).
- ✓ Post commercially available charts.