

READING UNIVERSE

All About Teaching Reading & Writing



Syllabus 2: Teaching Word Recognition

Part of a Four Model-Course Syllabi
for College and University Faculty

Developed by Dr. Stephanie Stollar

Syllabus 2: Teaching Word Recognition

Educator Preparation Program

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SECTION 1: USING THE SERIES

INTRODUCTION

This model syllabus is developed for educator preparation programs to support the teaching of evidence-based literacy practices to teacher candidates. It is designed to illustrate how these components of literacy instruction can be integrated into coursework. It is part of a four-course syllabus series prepared for Reading Universe by Dr. Stephanie Stollar, consultant, author, and founder of the Reading Science Academy.

SAMPLE COURSE SEQUENCE

	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4
Title	Foundations of Evidence-Based Reading Instruction	Teaching Word Recognition	Teaching Language Comprehension	Linking Reading Assessment and Instruction
Credit Hours	3	3	3	3
Duration	15 weeks	15 weeks	15 weeks	15 weeks
Prerequisites	None	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3

You are welcome, and encouraged, to copy and paste this syllabus into your own format for your courses. Organized into a 15-week course, this syllabus includes:

- A course description
- Required student resources
- Weekly objectives aligned to the [International Dyslexia Association Knowledge and Practice Standards](#) (KPS) to ensure teacher candidates have both the knowledge and skills to teach students to read proficiently
- Suggested assignments that align to the weekly topics and objectives. You will find a [Focus Notes Template](#) to use as you design the assignments for the full course.

Syllabus 2: Teaching Word Recognition

SECTION 2: COURSE SYLLABUS

DESCRIPTION

This course covers an in-depth exploration of the foundational literacy skills that are essential for effective reading instruction. You will examine the role of phonological and phonemic awareness in literacy development, focusing on word recognition and decoding. Systematic, explicit instruction in phonics and English orthography is emphasized with a focus on instruction in decoding and encoding, progressing from simple to complex patterns.

You will explore evidence-based structured literacy practices designed to support students with varying needs. Instruction in foundational skills is covered in depth, including consonant and vowel phonemes, phonics patterns, promoting fluent word reading, teaching irregular words, and implementing progress monitoring tools to support instruction and intervention. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with evidence-based practices for both phonemic awareness and decoding.

REQUIRED STUDENT TEXTBOOKS

Honig, B., Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2018). *Teaching reading sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Arena Press/CORE.

Archer, A. L. & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Understand the role of phonological and phoneme awareness (consonant and vowel phonemes), skill development, and how phonemes are produced and sound in English and in languages other than English.
2. Understand and practice the progression of phonemic awareness skills to identify goals for instruction.
3. Know and apply phonics (sound-symbol association) to understand the structures of English orthography for explicitly teaching decoding and spelling skills following a structured plan.
4. Know and apply structured literacy routines to engage and adapt instruction for students with memory, processing, and executive functioning needs, and identify appropriate uses of technology to support student learning.
5. Know and apply practices for systematically teaching irregular and multisyllabic words, including the rationale for a scope and sequence from simple to complex.
6. Know and apply practices for fluent word reading using different texts with an emphasis on decodable text for automatic word recognition.
7. Know and apply techniques for reading fluency with an understanding of oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and motivation advanced through informed instruction and progress monitoring.

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Week 1: Phonological Awareness

OBJECTIVES

- Understand considerations for levels of phonological sensitivity. **(4B.2)**
- Know/apply in practice consideration for the progression of phonemic awareness skill development across age and grade. **(4B.4)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Define phonological and phonemic awareness</p> <p>Understand why phonemic awareness is important</p> <p>Know how phonemic awareness relates to the other essential components</p> <p>Recognize the elements of research-based phonemic awareness instruction</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 1: "Structure of English" (p. 22–27)</p> <p>Moats, L. & Tolman, C. Why Phonological Awareness Is Important for Reading and Spelling</p> <p>Reading Rockets</p> 	<p>No assignments for Week 1.</p>

Notes:

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Week 2: Phonemic Awareness with Multilingual Learners and Speakers of Language Variations

OBJECTIVES

- Understand/apply in practice considerations for phoneme awareness difficulties. (4B.3)

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Consonant and vowel phonemes</p> <p>State the implications for teaching phonemic awareness to diverse learners including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and speakers of language variations</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 5: "Phonological Awareness" (pp. 115–127)</p> <p>Moats, L. What Does it Mean When a Student Confuses 'f' and 'v' in Spelling? Reading Universe</p> <p>Fierro, A. Sounds of the Vowel Valley Reading Universe</p> <div> </div> <p>Walton, M. Pronounce the Vowel Sounds Reading Universe</p> <p>Washington, J. & Seidenberg, M. Teaching Reading to African American Children: When Home and School Language Differ AFT</p>	<p>Take focused notes on Teaching Reading Sourcebook: Chapter 5</p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Select key words to illustrate each phoneme that feature nondistorted phonemes (no coarticulation effect).</p>

Notes:

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Week 3: English Phonemes

OBJECTIVES

- Understand rationale for and identify, pronounce, classify, and compare all the consonant phonemes and all the vowel phonemes of English. **(4B.1)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
Correct production of the 44 phonemes of English	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 1: "Structure of English" (pp. 24–28)</p> <p>Reading Universe How to Pronounce the English Phonemes: An Interactive Demo</p> <p>Reading Universe Quick Look: Segmenting Phonemes</p> <p>Reading Universe Segmenting Phonemes with DeAngela Huggins</p> <p>Reading Universe How Do I Help an English Learner Who Says /h/ for the Letter 'j'?</p> <p>Reading Universe Articulation of the Unvoiced 'th' Sound</p>	<p>Quiz</p> <p>Identify phonemes that are more likely to be confused with each other because they share articulation features and thus sound similar.</p>

Notes:

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Week 4: Alphabetic Principle

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for the general and specific goals of phonemic awareness instruction. **(4B.5)**
- Know/apply in practice considerations for the principles of phonemic awareness instruction: brief, multisensory, conceptual, articulatory, and auditory-verbal. **(4B.6)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Effective phonemic awareness instruction</p> <p>Using sound boxes</p> <p>Linking sounds to letters</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 5: "Phonological Awareness" (pp. 154–158)</p> <p>Texas Education Agency The Alphabetic Principle Reading Rockets</p> <p>Reading Universe Segmenting Onset and Rime with Stephanie Fincher</p>  <p>Reading Universe Quick Look: Elkonin Sound Boxes</p> <p>Institute of Education Sciences Video 15: Phonemes Linked to Letters</p>	<p>Submit video on producing 44 phonemes</p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Watch the IES Guide video. Identify examples of the following components of effective instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit • Systematic • Cumulative • Phonemes linked to letters • Corrective feedback • Tactile and kinesthetic aids • Use of sound boxes

Notes:

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Week 5: Letter Formation and Orthographic Mapping

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for research-based principles for teaching letter formation, both manuscript and cursive. **(4G.2)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Teaching letter names and forms</p> <p>Orthographic mapping</p> <p>Ehri's Phases of Word Reading</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 4: "Letter Knowledge" (pp. 83-114)</p> <p>Reading Universe Teaching the Short 'u' Sound: Full Lesson</p> <p>Reading Universe Letter Warm-Up with Flash Cards: Kindergarten</p>  <p>Reading Universe Letter Warm-Up with Flash Cards: First Grade</p> <p>Reading Universe How to Teach Letter Formation</p> <p>Sedita, J. What is Orthographic Mapping? Reading Universe</p> <p>Ehri, L. Phases of Development in Learning to Read and Spell Words AFT</p>	<p>Take focused notes on <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook: Chapter 4</i></p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Group letters for practice that require similar motor patterns, and explicitly teach those basic pencil strokes.</p>

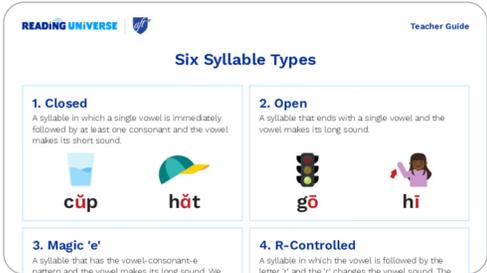
Notes:

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Week 6: Understanding Phonics Instruction

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for the structure of English orthography and the patterns and rules that inform the teaching of single-syllable and multisyllabic regular word reading. **(4C.1)**
- Know/apply in practice considerations for systematically, cumulatively, and explicitly teaching basic decoding and spelling skills. **(4C.2)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Define phonics</p> <p>Understand why phonics is important</p> <p>Know how phonics relates to other essential components</p> <p>State implications of phonics for diverse learners</p> <p>Recognize elements of research-based phonics instruction</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 1: "Structure of English" (pp. 28–42)</p> <p>Reading Universe Blending Sounds to Read Words with Short Vowels</p> <p>Reading Universe Teaching Closed Syllables with the Alphabet Queen</p> <p>Moats, L. & Tolman, C. Six Syllable Types</p> <p>Reading Universe Six Syllable Types</p>  <p>Amplify Science of Reading: The Podcast Deconstructing the Rope: Decoding with Louisa Moats</p> <p>Really Great Reading Heart Word Magic: Unlock the Magic of Heart Words for Lasting Literacy Success</p> <p>Reading Universe Overview of Irregularly Spelled High-Frequency Words</p>	<p>Quiz</p> <p>Define key terms (e.g., grapheme, phoneme, syllable, suffix) and identify examples of each.</p> <p>Sort single-syllable regular words according to written syllable type (closed, open, vowel-consonant-e, vowel team, r-controlled, and consonant-le).</p>

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Week 7: Decoding and Encoding Practices

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for systematically, cumulatively, and explicitly teaching basic decoding and spelling skills. **(4C.2)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Effective decoding instruction</p> <p>Integrating morphology into beginning decoding instruction</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 6: "Phonics" (pp. 161–195)</p> <p>Reading Universe Open and Closed Syllables: How to Differentiate Between Them</p>  <p>Reading Universe Overview of Closed Syllables</p> <p>Reading Universe Overview of Suffixes</p>	<p>Take focused notes on <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>: Chapter 6</p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Annotate all steps in an explicit phonics lesson provided by your instructor. (For example, develop phonemic awareness, introduce sound-letter correspondence, blend and read words, practice word chaining, build automatic word recognition, spell and write selected lesson words, and apply to decodable text reading.)</p>

Notes:

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Week 8: High-Frequency and Irregularly Spelled Words

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for teaching irregular words in small increments using special techniques. **(4C.6)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
Teaching irregular word reading	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 7: "Irregular Word Reading" (pp. 241-258)</p> <p>Reading Universe Teaching Trick Words to Kindergartners</p> <p>Reading Universe Practicing Irregularly Spelled High-Frequency Words</p> 	<p>Take focused notes on <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook: Chapter 7</i></p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Practice teaching an explicit phonics lesson provided by your instructor.</p>

Notes:

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Week 9: Decoding Multisyllabic Words

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for systematically teaching the decoding of multisyllabic words. **(4C.7)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
Teaching multisyllabic word reading	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 1: "Structure of English" (pp. 42–47)</p> <p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 8: "Multisyllabic Word Reading" (pp. 259–270)</p> <p>Reading Universe Overview of Multisyllabic Words</p> <p>Reading Universe How to Divide Multisyllabic Words: VCCV</p>  <p>Reading Universe Multisyllabic Word Reading Practice</p> <p>The Children of the Code Project The Brain's Challenge: Elements: Morphemes</p>	<p>Quiz</p> <p>Identify the roots and affixes in a given list of words.</p> <p>Explain why the English writing system is, in fact, highly regular and words that are not fully regular usually differ in one phoneme/grapheme correspondence and preserve morphological information.</p>

Notes:

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Week 10: Orthography and Morphology

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for organizing word recognition and spelling lessons by following a structured phonics lesson plan. **(4C.3)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Effective spelling instruction</p> <p>Integrating morphology into spelling instruction</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 6: "Phonics" (pp. 200–208)</p> <p>Reading Universe Dictating Sentences with Short 'i' and Short 'e'</p> <p>Reading Universe Spelling Words with Short 'i' and Short 'e'</p>  <p>Reading Universe Helping English Learners with Short 'i' and Short 'e'</p> <p>Reading Universe Overview of Prefixes</p>	<p>Take focused notes on <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>: Chapter 6</p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>Describe the purpose of each of the following word work activities and their purpose in relation to the lesson plan: word sorting, quick speed drills, sound (Elkonin) boxes with letters and graphemes, word building, word chaining, and writing to dictation.</p>

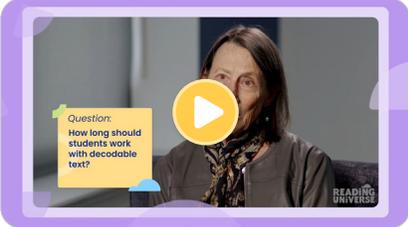
Notes:

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Week 12: Decodable Texts and Fluency

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for the different types and purposes of texts, with emphasis on the role of decodable texts in teaching beginning readers. **(4C.8)**
- Understand/apply in practice the general principles and practices of structured language and literacy teaching, including explicit, systematic, cumulative, and teacher-directed instruction. **(4A.1)**
- Know/apply in practice considerations for text reading fluency as an achievement of normal reading development that can be advanced through informed instruction and progress monitoring practices. **(4D.3)**

Topics	Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
<p>Understand the rationale for using decodable text</p> <p>Routine for using decodable text</p> <p>Providing immediate corrective feedback during text reading</p> <p>Define text reading fluency</p> <p>Understand why reading fluency is important</p> <p>Know how reading fluency relates to other components</p> <p>State implications for teaching diverse learners</p> <p>Recognize the elements of research-based fluency instruction</p>	<p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, Chapter 6: "Phonics" (pp. 233–235)</p> <p>Reading Universe How Long Should Students Work With Decodable Text?</p>  <p>Honig et al., <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>, "Reading Fluency Introduction" (pp. 321–323)</p> <p>National Institute of Child Health and Human Development What Works in Fluency Instruction Reading Rockets</p>	<p>Take focused notes on <i>Teaching Reading Sourcebook</i>: Chapter 6</p> <p>Quiz</p> <p>When given a text by your instructor, list the phonics patterns students would need to know how to read in order for the text to be considered decodable.</p>

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Week 14: Implementation in the Classroom

OBJECTIVES

- Know/apply in practice considerations for the general and specific goals of phonemic awareness instruction. **(4B.5)**
- Know/apply in practice considerations for organizing word recognition and spelling lessons by following a structured phonics lesson plan. **(4C.3)**
- Know/apply in practice considerations for research-based principles for teaching letter formation, both manuscript and cursive. **(4G.2)**
- Know/apply in practice considerations for the role of fluent word-level skills in automatic word reading, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and motivation to read. **(4D.1)**

Readings and Other Media	Assignments Due This Week
Classroom observation or video	Observation Reflection

Notes:

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LIST OF ALL STUDENT READINGS AND MEDIA ASSIGNMENTS

- Ehri, L. (Fall 2023). Phases of development in learning to read and spell words. *American Educator*, 47(3), 17-18. <https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2023/ehri>
- Fierro, A. (2024, April 30). *Sounds of the vowel valley*. [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/articulation-pronunciation/sounds-of-the-vowel-valley>
- Honig, B., Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2018). *Teaching reading sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Arena Press/CORE.
- Institute of Education Sciences. (2016, September 14). *Video 15: Phonemes linked to letters* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wjU03hjOvs>
- Lambert, S. (Host). (2021, February 10). Deconstructing the rope: Decoding with Louisa Moats (S3-03) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Science of Reading: The Podcast*. Amplify. <https://www.buzzsprout.com/612361/episodes/7707625-s3-03-deconstructing-the-rope-phonological-awareness-with-louisa-moats>
- Moats, L. C. (Winter 2005/06). How spelling supports reading: And why it is more regular and predictable than you think. *American Educator*, 12–22, 42–43.
- Moats, L. (2024, May 7). *What does it mean when a student confuses 'f' and 'v' in spelling?* [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/top-100-qas/qa-what-does-it-mean-when-a-student-confuses-f-and-v-in-spelling>
- Moats, L. & Tolman, C. (2009). *Six syllable types*. Reading Rockets. <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/spelling-and-word-study/articles/six-syllable-types?fbclid=IwAR11WFB8FBaI28nEiYhXYl0fZMlwwOvkbqAihGV2DKiujXfRTy2sbTAetDg>
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- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (n.d.). *What works in fluency instruction*. Reading Rockets. <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/fluency/articles/what-works-fluency-instruction>
- Reading Universe. (2025, January 6). *Articulation of the unvoiced 'th' sound*. [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/phonics-patterns/consonant-digraphs-skill-explainer/articulation-of-the-unvoiced-th-sound>
- Reading Universe. (2024, March 5). *Blending sounds to read words with short vowels*. [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/phonics-patterns/short-vowels-skill-explainer/blending-sounds-to-read-words-with-short-vowels>
- Reading Universe. (2024, March 25). *Dictation sentences with short 'i' and short 'e'*. [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/phonics-patterns/short-vowels-skill-explainer/dictating-sentences-with-short-i-and-short-e>
- Reading Universe. (2024, March 25). *Helping English learners with short 'i' and short 'e'*. [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/phonics-patterns/short-vowels-skill-explainer/helping-english-learners-with-short-i-and-short-e>

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LIST OF ALL STUDENT READINGS AND MEDIA ASSIGNMENTS, CONTINUED

- Reading Universe. (2025, March 7). *How do I help an English learner who says /h/ for the letter 'j'?* [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/sound-letter-correspondence/how-do-i-help-an-english-learner-who-says-h-for-the-letter-j>
- Reading Universe. (2024, April 8). *How long should students work with decodable text?* [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/phonics/how-long-should-students-work-with-decodable-text>
- Reading Universe. (2025, July 8). *How to divide multisyllabic words: VCCV* [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/multisyllable-words/how-to-divide-multisyllabic-words-vccv>
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- Reading Universe. (n.d.). *How to teach letter formation*. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/skill-explainer/handwriting-spelling-typing/handwriting/how-to-teach-letter-formation>
- Reading Universe. (2023, December 19). *Letter warm-up with flash cards: First grade* [Video]. Reading Universe. <https://readinguniverse.org/resources/video/sound-letter-correspondence/letter-names-sounds/letter-warm-up-with-flash-cards-first-grade-with-carla-miller>

Focused Notes Template

Focus Question	Response/Notes