

Taken from “A 2020 Perspective on Research Findings on Alphabetics (Phoneme Awareness and Phonics): Implications for Instruction”

<https://www.thereadingleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Brady-Expanded-Version-of-Alphabetics-TRLJ.pdf>

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### Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Terms:

US Kindergarten = WA Pre-Primary

Phonological sensitivity = awareness of rhyme, onsets, syllables

Phoneme Awareness	Phonics
Phonological awareness instruction in kindergarten should concentrate on early phoneme awareness, not on phonological sensitivity.	Phonics instruction is most effective with a synthetic method. Teaching code skills in this way leads to development both of basic and more advanced phonics concepts, also facilitating sight word recognition.
It is not necessary for teachers to devote the time and effort to foster skills in phonological sensitivity in order for children to acquire phoneme awareness.	Beginning synthetic code instruction in kindergarten is effective, providing a more productive coordination of phoneme awareness and code skills at this grade level than would onset-rime instruction.
Although phonological sensitivity skills can be taught to young children as part of an extensive phonological awareness program that culminates in phoneme awareness, it is not clear that doing so improves acquisition of phoneme awareness or is necessary.	Phonics instruction should continue beyond kindergarten and first grade covering more advanced content about the structure of the writing system.
Phoneme identity skills are important to attain in kindergarten, focusing first on the external phonemes in CVC words (the initial phoneme, followed by the final phoneme) and progressing to the medial vowel. In addition, blending and segmentation activities should be conducted with CV, VC, and CVC words.	When struggling readers have weaknesses in phonics, explicit phonics remediation should be provided, tailored to students' levels of skill development.
Phoneme awareness instruction in first grade should continue the sequence of instruction, ensuring that students are able to identify each of the phonemes of English, that is, the remaining consonants and vowels in the language beyond those taught in kindergarten, including diphthongs, remaining consonant digraphs, etc. In addition, deletion skills with writing activities would be beneficial.	Evidence clearly indicates the benefits for students of being consistently engaged with reading and writing activities in addition to being provided with explicit and systematic instruction in phoneme awareness and phonics instruction.
Relatively short time spans for effective programs were noted, providing reassurance that adding phoneme awareness into the curriculum need not be burdensome. However, the goal should be to build mastery for all of the specified levels for all students, providing extra sessions and continuing instruction on phoneme awareness for those students who are making slower progress, continuing beyond first grade for some students, if needed to ensure mastery.	Teaching phonics is not in opposition to providing ongoing reading and writing activities with a focus on comprehension and communication. In short, it is well past time for the reading wars to be over and for widespread recognition that both components are essential for literacy success.
Phoneme awareness instruction should be integrated with letter instruction. Teaching phoneme awareness for a set of individual phonemes should be followed by instruction in the corresponding letter(s) when phoneme awareness as a listening activity is well established for those phonemes. This order helps clarify for students that phonemes are elements in spoken words and that letters are how those speech sounds are represented in writing.	The evidence of successful interventions for older struggling readers with programs that teach graphosyllabic patterns, complex GPC patterns and other code and morphological concepts likewise indicate the need to extend the scope of remedial instruction for students with phonics weaknesses.