

Possible Sequence of Phonic Skills

In my own words and experience, following common phonic sequences, adapting for the early Waldorf grades. ALWAYS along with daily storytelling, oral review, speech arts, singing, painting, form drawing, drawing, drama, dictation, teacher modeled and student generated writing. Phonics is one layer, albeit essential, amongst the many levels and lenses of literacy. It is both/and, not either/or. We go back and forth across the bridge!

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A. English Language Arts Gr. 1 blocks I and II

1. Consonants I – M,B,P,D,T, L, N, F, H, G
2. Consonants II- K, C, Qu sequence; S, R, J, V, W (unless done with N, 3 letters, Nixie, Valley, Wave from the fairy tale *Nixie of the Mill Pond*; X, Y, Z sequence

B. English Language Arts Gr.1 blocks III and IV

1. Initial Long Vowel *sounds*- English vowels!! As in ape, eat, ice, oat, use: not to be confused with European Eurythmy long vowel sounds. Initial sounds first. Medial long vowel *sounds* will introduce the territory of the spellings of vowel teams.
2. Initial Short Vowel *sounds* – a,e,i,o,u as in ant, egg, in, on, up within one syllable patterns
3. *Medial short vowel *sounds* in one syllable CVC or CVCC spelling patterns, with initial phoneme the same, but endings different. Note this is not the same as rhyming words. This encourages auditory discrimination and articulation for endings of words: i.e. back, bad, bag, bam, ban, bass, bat.
4. Medial short vowel *sounds* in CVC and CVCC rhyming words, where initial phoneme is different, but ending phoneme is the same, also known as “rime and onset”: mat, sat, rat or lit, sit, bit, or dock, lock, sock
5. Initial Consonant Blends – st, sp, sk, sw, sm, sn, in CCVC patterns, noting that the sounds for R and L “come in” later developmentally,- bl, cl, fl, etc., and br, dr, fr and so on save for last.
6. Ending Consonant Blends – nd, st, sk in CVCC patterns such as best, nest, pest or hand, send, wind, pond, fund
7. May introduce digraphs CH, SH and voiced and unvoiced TH as the need arises. Detailed patterns and spellings for grade 2. Also, WH and PH
8. Two consonants can stand for the same sound; hard and soft C -as in can and circle and G- as in great and giant (as in A-2 where the hard /k/ sound represented by K, C, CH, or Qu as in king, cat, Christmas, and queen.
9. Silent letters - gnat, know, write, limb
10. Double consonants – bell, bass

* #3 is a step I introduce *prior to* the typical rhyming patterns where the beginning phonemes differ, but the ending is the same, also known as “rime and onset”: bat, cat, rat, sat, etc. This is different than typical practice. I find it supports blending and segmenting of sounds. Listening comes first in the sequence of literacy capacities.

The line between 1st and 2nd grade depends on the class, the school's individual scope and sequence, resources available. Review and reinforcement of all previous skills before introducing a new skill/content.

C. Grades 2 and 3: Vowel Teams, Diphthongs, R, L and NG controlled vowels

- a. Long Vowels – silent e makes the first vowel long e.g. bit/bite; can/cane; hop/hope; mad/made. As well as: bone, make, nine, these
- b. Long Vowels – open syllable rule at the end e.g. go, me
- c. Long Vowel Teams/ Digraphs- long ea/ee as in bead and seed; long ai/ay as in pain and pay; long oa/ow as in coat and low
- d. Long -igh pattern -igh (sight)
- e. Long Y Vowels – /i/ in my, /e/ in funny
- f. R-Controlled Vowels – /ar/ as in star; /er/ as in *Her first nurse works early*. /or/ as in for. /er/ an example of one sound represented (spelled) by several patterns.
- g. R controlled vowel teams and silent e (air, ear, peer, mare, mire, more- air, fare
- h. NG controlled Vowels as on sang sing song sung
- i. L- and LL controlled Vowels as in all, call, fall

ONE SPELLING-SEVERAL SOUNDS:

- j. Diphthong /aw/au/, as in saw, sauce, off, regional accents here.
- k. Diphthong /oi/oy/ as in boil and boy
- l. Diphthong /ow/ou/ as in cow and loud
- m. /ea/ as in short e for head and long e for bead

ONE SOUND-SEVERAL SPELLINGS:

- n. long /oo/ as in pool and flute
- o. short /oo/ as in book, foot, and push
- p. Ough (though), ough (rough), ough (through), ough (ought)
- q. The /schwa sound as in bedlam, label, pencil, beckon, minus

D. More consonants

- a. All Consonant Blends (review and new) – pr, fr, tr, st, gr, sp, br, sk, cr, sc, dr, sw, sm, fl, sn, sl, pl, gl, cl, tw, bl, str, thr
- b. All Final Consonant Blends – ld, nt, lf, mb, sk, mp, st, nk, ng (ing), lk, lp, lt, ft, pt, nd, nk, nt, sp, nch, tch and /ck/

As recommended by the National Reading Panel (see handout), teaching these skills over 3 years is more effective than all on one year.