Phoneme Substitution

About the Strategy

PHONEME SUBSTITUTION is a strategy that helps develop students' phonemic awareness, which is part of phonological awareness. Phoneme substitution involves having students manipulate spoken words by substituting certain phonemes for others. Phoneme substitution tasks take place orally without the written word. Phoneme substitution should be taught using direct and explicit instruction but after such instruction, it can also be reinforced with educational games/activities. For additional information about Reading: Foundational Skills, see Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts Appendix A, pages 17-22 (http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf).

Implementation of the Strategy

- Select the word(s) to use for the phoneme substitution.
- Tell students you are going to say some words out loud and ask them to replace certain sounds with others and then say the new word. Tell them the new word might not always be a real word—it might be silly made up word.
- Say the word out loud and prompt students to replace a specific sound with another sound (e.g., "What word do we have if we change the */r/* in *run* to */b/*?") Practice substituting beginning, middle, and ending sounds.
- Repeat the tasks until students can fluently substitute phonemes with accuracy.
- Complete this activity with picture cards where students substitute the beginning, middle, or ending sounds in words.

Measuring Progress

- Teacher observation
- Conferencing
- Informal substitution assessment

Research

Bursuck, W. D., & Damer, M. (2011). *Teaching reading to students who are at risk or have disabilities: A multi-tier approach* (2nd Ed). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Chard, D. J., & Dickson, S. V. (1999). Phonological awareness: Instructional and assessment guidelines. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 34*, 261-270.

Vaughn, S., & Linan-Thompson, S. (2004). *Research-based methods of reading instruction: Grades K-3.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Wisconsin State Standards

Reading: Foundational Skills

– Phonological Awareness

Grade Level

K-5

Purpose

Use with students to support phonological awareness: explicitly teach students to manipulate sounds by substituting phonemes in a word

When to Use

Before Reading
During Reading
After Reading

Grouping

Whole Group
Small Group
Partners
Individuals

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Phoneme Substitution

Decide which sounds you'd like students to substitute: beginning, middle, or ending sound.

Direct Teaching of Phoneme Isolation	
Beginning Sound	The teacher says a spoken word or presents a picture card and asks the students to replace the beginning phoneme in the word with a new phoneme. The students have to mentally substitute the phonemes and say the new word. Example: Teacher: "What word do we have if we change the */k/* in *cat* to */r/*?" Student: "rat" Teacher: "What word do we have if we change the */s/* in *sat* to */p/*?" Student: "pat"
Middle Sound	The teacher says a spoken word or presents a picture card and asks the students to replace the middle phoneme in the word with a new phoneme. The students have to mentally substitute the phonemes and say the new word. Example: Teacher: "What word do we have if we change the */a/* in *cat* to */o/*?" Student: "cot" Teacher: "What word do we have if we change the */o/* in *clock* to */i/*?" Student: "click"
Ending Sound	The teacher says a spoken word or presents a picture card and asks the students to replace the ending phoneme in the word with a new phoneme. The students have to mentally substitute the phonemes and say the new word. Example: Teacher: "What word do we have if we change the */t/* in *cat* to */p/*?" Student: "cap" Teacher: "What word do we have if we change the */p/* in *clop* to */m/*?" Student: "clam"

Word Picture Cards

Examples of word picture cards that can be used during phoneme substitution tasks and games.