

TEACHING

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NC State Foundations of Reading (190)

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Question: 1

Activating prior knowledge motivates learners. Children naturally want to know about their worlds. They want to make sense of what often seem to be chaotic situations. Children become motivated when they realize the possibility of increasing their competencies and extending their previous understandings. Successful teachers devote attention to prior knowledge when preparing their students to read and write. Practically, every classroom lesson begins with which of the following?

- A. what the students are about to learn
- B. what students already know about the topic under consideration
- C. common interests among students
- D. vocabulary word list

Answer: B

Explanation:

Activating prior knowledge is a key strategy in education that serves the dual purpose of engaging students and providing a foundation for new learning. This approach is based on the understanding that learning is most effective when it connects with what students already know. By tapping into students' existing knowledge, teachers can motivate them and facilitate deeper understanding.

Children are naturally curious about the world around them. They are eager to understand situations that may initially appear chaotic or confusing. When educators connect new information to what children already know, it not only helps clarify these situations but also encourages students by showing them that they are capable of learning and understanding more complex material.

In practical terms, effective teaching often involves starting each lesson by assessing and activating students' prior knowledge. This can be done through various techniques such as brainstorming, questioning, predicting, writing, and discussing. These activities help teachers gauge the students' current understanding and tailor the lesson to meet their needs and build on what they already know. By beginning with what students know about the topic under consideration, teachers create a learning environment where students feel more connected to the material. This approach not only makes the learning process more relevant to the students but also boosts their confidence as they see their existing knowledge validated and expanded.

The relevance of starting with students' prior knowledge goes beyond just engaging them. It also plays a crucial role in the cognitive process of learning, where new information is most effectively absorbed when it is linked to familiar concepts or ideas. This linkage facilitates easier recall and application of new knowledge, leading to more meaningful learning experiences.

In summary, the practice of activating prior knowledge is not only about acknowledging what students know but is a strategic approach to teaching that fosters motivation, engagement, and deeper learning. This is why successful teachers consistently focus on students' prior knowledge when planning and executing their lessons.

Question: 2

About how many phonemes are there in the English language?

- A. 7
- B. 27
- C. 36
- D. 44

Answer: D

Explanation:

The correct answer to the question about how many phonemes there are in the English language is approximately 44. Phonemes are the smallest units of sound in a language that can distinguish one word from another. For example, the sounds /p/ and /b/ in "pat" and "bat" change the meaning of the words, hence they are different phonemes.

The English phonemic inventory includes a variety of sounds, comprising vowels, consonants, and semivowels. The exact number of phonemes can vary slightly depending on the dialect of English being considered. For instance, certain accents or regional variations might merge two phonemes into one or distinctly separate others, influencing the total count.

Phonemes play a crucial role in the phonology of a language, which is the study of how sounds are organized and used in natural languages. The concept of phonemes is fundamental in the field of linguistics because it helps in understanding how sounds function within a particular language to encode meaning.

The presence of unique phonemes in English that may not exist in other languages can pose challenges for non-native speakers. These unique sounds require learners to develop new listening and pronunciation skills, which can complicate the acquisition of English as a second language. For example, sounds like the voiced and unvoiced "th" (/ð/ and /θ/) do not exist in many other languages, making them particularly difficult for learners to master.

Understanding the phonemic structure of English not only aids in language learning but also in literacy, as it helps with spelling and reading. Phonemic awareness is a critical component of reading readiness, illustrating yet another aspect of why phonemes are an essential area of study in both linguistics and education.

Research has shown that there is a vocabulary gap between students who come from advantaged homes and students who come from disadvantaged homes. The latter begin Kindergarten with 1,000

Question: 3

fewer root-word meanings than average students. To close the vocabulary gap in students with impoverished vocabularies, teachers should:

- A. Reduce the rate of vocabulary introduction from 2.4 words per day to 1.6 words per day for these students
- B. Keep the rate of new vocabulary instruction to the same level as average students
- C. Provide opportunities for vocabulary acquisition for a rate of 3.5 to 4.0 root words per school day
- D. Refer these students for remedial instruction

Answer: C

Explanation:

Research indicates a significant vocabulary gap between students from socioeconomically advantaged backgrounds and those from disadvantaged ones. This gap manifests as early as Kindergarten, where disadvantaged students may know 1,000 fewer root-word meanings compared to their peers. Such a disparity can have long-term effects on academic success and literacy, underscoring the need for targeted educational strategies to address and close this gap.

To effectively bridge this vocabulary gap, it is crucial to accelerate the rate at which vocabulary is introduced to disadvantaged students. Instead of decreasing the rate of vocabulary introduction, as might seem intuitive to allow for more processing time, research suggests that increasing the exposure to new vocabulary is more beneficial. The recommendation for these students is to learn between 3.5 to 4.0 new root words per school day. This approach is grounded in the principle that higher exposure increases the opportunities for learning, thereby enabling these students to catch up more quickly to their peers.

Implementing a higher rate of vocabulary acquisition can be achieved through various instructional strategies. Teachers can create a vocabulary-rich classroom environment that immerses students in language through reading, storytelling, and interactive activities. These methods not only introduce new words but also provide the context necessary for understanding and retaining these words. Additionally, the use of multimedia resources, such as videos and computer programs, can complement traditional teaching methods by providing diverse and engaging ways to encounter new vocabulary.

Furthermore, teachers can personalize learning experiences to cater to the specific needs of disadvantaged students. Small group sessions or one-on-one tutoring might be employed to reinforce new vocabulary and ensure comprehension. Regular assessments can track vocabulary growth and help tailor instruction to address areas where students may struggle.

In conclusion, to close the vocabulary gap experienced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds, it is crucial to provide them with increased opportunities for vocabulary acquisition. Aiming for a target of 3.5 to 4.0 new root words per school day, supported by engaging and varied instructional methods, can significantly enhance the vocabulary foundation of these students, setting them on a path toward academic equity and success.

Question: 4

The most important component of reading ability in first grade is word recognition, the most important component of word recognition is decoding ability, and the most important components of decoding ability are _____.

- A. phonemic awareness
- B. instruction
- C. writing
- D. spelling

Answer: A

Explanation:

The most important component of reading ability in first grade is word recognition. Word recognition allows children to identify words and understand their meanings quickly, which is crucial for fluent reading and comprehension. Within word recognition, the key factor is decoding ability, which refers to the process by which a reader interprets the letters and sounds of a word to understand its meaning. Decoding ability hinges significantly on two fundamental skills: phonemic awareness and phonics. Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds—known as phonemes—in spoken words. This skill is essential because it forms the basis of understanding how sounds correlate with written symbols (letters). For example, recognizing that the word "cat" is composed of the sounds /c/, /a/, and /t/ and being able to manipulate these sounds enables a child to decode new words that share similar phonemic structures. Phonics complements phonemic awareness by teaching the relationships between these phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (the letters or groups of letters representing the sounds). It involves learning the systematic and predictable patterns between the written letters and spoken sounds. For instance, understanding that the letter "c" typically sounds like /k/ as in "cat," or that "ph" sounds like /f/ as in "phone." By mastering phonics, children learn to apply these rules to read words fluently and accurately. Together, phonemic awareness and phonics are crucial for developing strong decoding skills in young readers. These components allow children to break down unfamiliar words into manageable parts, sound them out, and blend the sounds to read new words. This process is vital for expanding vocabulary and improving reading comprehension, as it enables first graders to access a broader range of texts and start building their reading confidence and proficiency. These foundational skills not only support the technical aspects of reading but also help in fostering a lifelong enjoyment and mastery of reading.

Question: 5

You are a second grade teacher who is in charge of the reading program in your classroom. How many books per year should your students be reading after first grade?

- A. 10 to 15
- B. 15 to 20
- C. 25 to 35
- D. 35 to 40

Answer: C

Explanation:

As a second grade teacher responsible for the reading program, it's important to ensure that students are adequately challenged and engaged with their reading material. After first grade, students should be reading about 25 to 35 books per year. This recommendation is based on educational research and guidelines which suggest that a higher volume of reading enhances literacy skills, including vocabulary development, comprehension, and the ability to analyze text.

At this stage in their educational journey, students are transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn. Therefore, providing a mix of narrative (stories), informational (facts-based), and magazine (current events and varied topics) texts not only caters to different reading interests and enhances engagement, but also helps to develop a well-rounded skill set. These types of texts expose students to different writing styles and formats, further enhancing their reading competence.

It is crucial to set this target range to ensure that all students are reading enough to support their educational development while not feeling overwhelmed. Books chosen should be age-appropriate and

inclusive of various cultures and perspectives to foster a broader understanding of the world. Adjustments might be necessary depending on individual reading levels within the classroom to ensure that all students are adequately supported and challenged. Moreover, encouraging students to read a variety of books also promotes a love for reading, which is essential for lifelong learning. Regular reading habits can significantly contribute to academic success and are linked to better outcomes in other subjects as well. As the teacher in charge, it will also be beneficial to incorporate activities that involve discussions and projects related to the books read, to enhance comprehension and critical thinking skills. In summary, setting a goal for second grade students to read 25 to 35 books per year is a strategic approach to develop their reading abilities and instill a passion for reading. This range is optimal for maintaining students' interest and providing sufficient practice without causing fatigue. It is essential to provide a diverse range of books and supplement reading with interactive and reflective activities to maximize educational benefits.

Question: 6

Mrs. Winn is teaching her 2nd grade students vocabulary words. All except which of the following words would be known to more than 80% of her students?

- A. cafe
- B. fish
- C. alias
- D. listen

Answer: C

Explanation:

Mrs. Winn is teaching her 2nd grade students vocabulary words. Among the list given, the task is to identify the word that is known by fewer than 80% of her students.

The words provided in the question are "cafe," "alias," "fish," and "listen." From the additional information provided, it is evident that the words "cafe," "fish," and "listen" are part of the vocabulary known well by more than 80% of the students. These words are commonly used and are likely familiar to young children, possibly from everyday conversations or basic educational materials.

On the other hand, the word "alias" is included in the list of words that students are unlikely to know. These words, such as "abrasive," "cartilage," "chaperone," and others mentioned alongside "alias," tend to be more complex or specialized and are not typically used in everyday language that would be familiar to 2nd graders. The concept of an "alias," which refers to an alternate name used by a person, is a more abstract idea that might not be covered in early primary education.

Therefore, the correct answer to the question is "alias." This word is unlikely to be known by more than 80% of Mrs. Winn's 2nd grade students, as it does not commonly appear in the basic vocabulary typically taught at this educational level.

Question: 7

Mrs. Colbert asks her first grade students, "What letter in the word "tin" makes the /t/ sound? What is Mrs. Colbert assessing with this question?"

- A. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
- B. Semantic relationships
- C. Syntactic structure
- D. Auditory blending

Answer: A

Explanation:

When Mrs. Colbert asks her first grade students, "What letter in the word 'tin' makes the /t/ sound?" she is assessing their understanding of phoneme-grapheme correspondence. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence is the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and the letters or groups of letters (graphemes) that represent those sounds in written language.

This concept is fundamental in learning to read and write in alphabetic languages like English. Phonemes are the smallest units of sound in a language that can distinguish one word from another. For example, the word "tin" is made up of three phonemes: /t/, /ɪ/, and /n/. Graphemes, on the other hand, are the letters or combinations of letters that represent these sounds. In the word "tin," the graphemes are 't,' 'i,' and 'n,' corresponding to the phonemes they represent.

By asking which letter corresponds to the /t/ sound, Mrs. Colbert is checking whether the students can identify the letter 't' as the grapheme that represents the phoneme /t/. This skill is crucial as it helps in decoding words while reading and in encoding sounds into letters while writing.

Phoneme-grapheme correspondence is different from other literacy skills such as semantic relationships, which involve understanding the meanings of words and their relationships with other words; syntactic structure, which involves understanding the grammatical organization of sentences; and auditory blending, which is the ability to blend individual sounds together to form words. Each of these skills plays a significant role in language comprehension and usage, but phoneme-grapheme correspondence specifically relates to the basics of reading and writing at the letter-sound level.

Question: 8

The nature of English demands that children pay attention to patterns of letters to decode and spell new words. For small words, the patterns are onsets - all the letters up to the vowel - and rimes - the letters from the vowel to the end of the word. For longer words, the letter patterns are morphemes - roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Which of the following statements is FALSE?

- A. Readers use patterns to decode and spell new words
- B. Beginning readers must develop phonemic awareness and learn some letter names and sounds
- C. Children do not need to develop strategies for decoding and spelling unknown words as they will become automatic
- D. Knowledge of morphemes is required for multi-syllabic words

Answer: C

Explanation:

The question asks to identify a false statement among the given options about the process of decoding and spelling words in the English language, particularly for children learning to read and write. The

correct answer, which is a false statement, is: "Children do not need to develop strategies for decoding and spelling unknown words as they will become automatic."

To understand why this statement is false, it is essential to delve into the concepts of reading and spelling acquisition in children. Reading and spelling are complex cognitive processes that require the development of various skills and strategies. One crucial aspect is phonemic awareness, which involves the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate phonemes—the smallest units of sound that can differentiate meaning. Phonemic awareness is foundational for spelling and decoding, as it enables children to break down words into their constituent sounds and link these sounds to the corresponding letters or letter patterns.

Moreover, the process of decoding words involves recognizing patterns in letters that frequently appear together. For small words, these patterns can be categorized into onsets and rimes. The onset refers to the initial consonant(s) of a word before the first vowel, while the rime encompasses the vowel and any subsequent consonants until the end of the word. Recognizing these patterns helps children to decode words more quickly and efficiently.

For longer words, understanding morphemes—such as roots, prefixes, and suffixes—becomes crucial. Morphemes are the smallest grammatical units in a language that have meaning. For example, in the word "unhappiness," "un-" is a prefix, "happy" is the root, and "-ness" is a suffix. Each component contributes to the overall meaning of the word, and recognizing these morphemes helps in both spelling and understanding complex words.

The statement that strategies for decoding and spelling will become automatic without needing to develop them is misleading and contrary to educational research. While some aspects of reading and spelling can become more automated with practice and exposure, the initial learning and application of these skills require deliberate instruction and strategy development. Children need to actively learn and practice how to apply knowledge of phonemes, onsets, rimes, and morphemes to become proficient readers and spellers.

In summary, the development of specific strategies and skills in decoding and spelling is essential for children. This includes phonemic awareness, knowledge of letter patterns in small words (onsets and rimes), and understanding morphemes in longer words. These skills do not automatically manifest but must be taught and nurtured through targeted educational practices. Thus, the statement that suggests these skills will automatically develop without intentional strategy is indeed false.

Question: 9

Mrs. Harrington is asking a group of five-year-olds from strong literacy backgrounds why people need to read and write, and they reel off a string of answers such as reading books and signs, birthday cards that come in the mail, recipes and you can send postcards, and make lists to write on your computer. Mrs. Harrington can tell from their answers that these children who come to school with clear ideas about the functions of reading and writing have which of the following?

- A. excellent tutors
- B. great parents
- C. real-world experiences with reading and writing
- D. fun books to read at home

Answer: C

Explanation:

Mrs. Harrington's interaction with the five-year-olds reveals a crucial aspect of early literacy development: the impact of real-world experiences with reading and writing. When children articulate the need for reading and writing in diverse everyday contexts, such as reading books and signs, handling birthday cards, following recipes, sending postcards, and making lists on a computer, it indicates that they have been exposed to a literacy-rich environment.

These real-world experiences are instrumental because they help children understand the practical applications of reading and writing, thus making these skills more relevant and motivating to learn. In environments where literacy is visibly practiced, children learn to associate reading and writing with daily activities and communication. This association helps foster a natural inclination towards seeking literacy skills as tools for interaction and information gathering.

Furthermore, early exposure to practical uses of reading and writing sets a foundation for more formal education. Children who come from homes where literacy is an integral part of daily life are likely to have a smoother transition into the structured learning environments of schools. They often have a clearer understanding of how textual communication functions and why it is important, which enhances their learning readiness and educational outcomes.

Research underscores that the early introduction to literacy is often supported by four key elements in the home environment: 1. ****Availability of Print Materials****: Homes stocked with books, magazines, newspapers, and other reading materials naturally encourage children to read. 2. ****Observational Learning Opportunities****: Seeing adults and older siblings engaged in reading and writing activities models these behaviors as both normal and valuable. 3. ****Accessibility of Writing Materials****: Having access to paper, pens, markers, and other writing tools invites spontaneous writing and experimentation. 4. ****Responsive Support****: When adults respond positively to a child's reading and writing attempts, it reinforces their effort and interest in developing these skills.

In summary, the children's responses to Mrs. Harrington's question about the necessity of reading and writing suggest that their literacy skills are being nurtured not only through direct instruction but also through immersive, meaningful interactions with text in their everyday lives. This holistic approach to early literacy development is crucial for fostering proficient and motivated readers and writers.

Question: 10

Comprehension can be observed in a variety of ways. Some students show they comprehend by being able to "recall" material previously read. Which of the following is an example of an activity a student can complete that shows he "recalls" the material?

- A. Completing a comparison table.
- B. Using a recipe.
- C. Answering multiple choice questions.
- D. Answering "short answer" questions.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Comprehension is a key aspect of learning, and it can be demonstrated through various activities that require students to process and recall information. The ability of a student to "recall" material means that they can remember and reproduce information they have learned previously. This capability can be assessed through different types of educational tasks, each designed to show that the student not only

remembers the information but also understands it well enough to apply or explain it in various contexts. Here are some activities that exemplify this:

****Answering "short answer" questions:**** This activity requires students to provide brief responses to direct questions about the material. Short answer questions typically demand more specific information than multiple-choice questions and less detail than essay questions. This format helps teachers assess whether students recall specific facts, details, or processes they have studied. For example, after reading a chapter on photosynthesis, a student may be asked, "What are the main stages of photosynthesis?" This type of question tests direct recall of learned material.

****Completing fill-in-the-blank statements:**** This activity involves students completing sentences or statements with key terms or concepts missing. It challenges them to recall specific vocabulary or details from their lessons. For instance, a fill-in-the-blank statement like "_____ is the process by which green plants make their food using sunlight" would prompt the student to recall and write the term "photosynthesis."

****Using flashcards for Q&A:**** Flashcards can be a highly effective tool for reviewing and recalling information. One side of the card may have a question or a keyword, and the other side provides the answer or explanation. This method encourages active recall as the student needs to remember the information associated with each prompt. It's particularly useful for subjects requiring memorization of terms, definitions, dates, or formulas.

****Retelling in one's own words:**** Although not the answer to the original question, retelling the material in one's own words is another powerful way to demonstrate comprehension and recall. This activity involves summarizing the content after reading or listening to it, which ensures that the student has not only memorized it but also understood it well enough to express it in their own style.

****Completing a comparison table:**** This activity, though not directly linked to recall, helps in understanding and organizing information by comparing and contrasting different concepts or entities. It indirectly aids in solidifying recall by engaging deeper cognitive processing.

Each of these activities serves a specific purpose in educational settings, enabling educators to assess various levels and types of comprehension and recall. Answering "short answer" questions is particularly effective for directly testing recall of factual and conceptual knowledge, which is why it is highlighted as the correct activity for demonstrating "recall" in the initial question.

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