Intervention Guide: Word Boxes

Purpose

Objective: Students will be able to segment and blend sounds, master letter-sound correspondence and learn how to decode and read CVC words using words boxes and the "say it and move it" approach.

Skill area/need: Accuracy in letter-sound correspondence and reading CVC words.

Preparation

Pre-assessment
- Determine need for intervention based on low accuracy and rate on earlyReading Nonsense Words or Decodable Words assessment.
  - If needed, identify unknown and known letter sounds based on earlyReading Letter Sounds assessment.

Progress monitoring
- earlyReading nonsense word fluency or decodable words; CBMreading

Time
- Conduct intervention 3-5 times per week for 15-20 minutes until the student(s) attain appropriate accuracy level in reading CVC words (approximately 4-8 weeks).

Materials
- Lowercase letter cards or magnetic letters for each student and teacher
- Word box template or marker board for each student and teacher
- Prepared word list based on selected letter set for the session
  - Prepare your own list of 8-10 words to teach OR use word box word lists in materials
  - Optional: create short phrases/sentences with the words in them (Can write short sentences on board or provide paper copies to each student)
  - Pictures (if appropriate) representing target words

Format
- Flexible grouping: classwide, large group, small group or one-on-one

Lesson Sequence Plan
- Introduce 1-2 unknown/target letters each week and review 3-5 known letters each week using the prepared word list materials.
- Recommended sequence for teaching unknown letters/sounds: a, m, t, s, l, f, d, r, o, g, i, h, u, c, b, n, k, v, e, w, j, p, u, x, q, z
Intervention Procedures

Prepare Materials
1. Determine where to begin in the lesson sequence plan using the student pre-assessment information of unknown and known sounds or letter sounds the student(s) have difficulty decoding when reading CVC words.
   - Based on the lesson for the day, gather the needed materials, including (1) letters, (2) word box sheet, (3) prepared word list for session. Hand out materials to students.

Explain the Activity
2. Explain the activity by providing the objective and what the activity includes (this step can be shortened when students become familiar with the activity).
   - “Today you will learn how to break a word into its sounds and then we will put the sounds together to make words. This is important to learn because you need to know how to segment and blend letter sounds together to read and write words. For this activity, we will review some letters and their sounds and then we will put those sounds together to make words with the letters.”

Review Letter Sounds
3. Review and teach chosen set of letter names/sounds to students using explicit instruction (may skip step when letters are learned or modify by having students say letter sounds).
   - Hold each letter and say, “This letter is ___ and it makes the /_/ sound. What sound does it make?”
     - If correct, say “Good, __ makes the /_/ sound.”
     - If incorrect, say, “No, this is the letter __ and it makes the /_/ sound. What sound does __ make?”

Model the Activity
4. Model the activity by saying the first word (use a word with one of the unknown letters in initial sound or vowel as the middle sound) and stating the sounds in the word (if available, provide the picture above the sound boxes or on the board). Have students observe you without using their own letters.
   - “I want you to watch what I do for this first word. The first word is ____. I hear the /_/ sound first in the word ____. I know that the letter __ makes the /_/ sound so I am going to put the letter __ in the first box. The second sound I hear is /_/ I know that the letter __ makes the /_/ sound so I am going to put the letter __ in the second box. Finally, the third sound I hear is /_/ I know that the letter __ makes the /_/ sound so I am going to put the letter __ in the third box.
     - When needed, tell students that some words may be made-up words but the words can be pronounced the same way as real words.
5. Say each sound individually by pointing at the letters. Then, blend the sounds together to read the whole word slowly while running your finger underneath the word.
   - “/_/ /_/ /_/ make the word ____.”
6. After building the word, go back and put the three letters in the word below the word boxes on the line.
   ▪ “Now I am going to put the letters on the line below the boxes in order. Then, watch me place each letter in the box while I say the word slowly. I will move each letter and say it, /_/..../_/..../_/.... Now I will use my finger below each letter and say the word fast, _____.”

Provide Guided Practice

7. Say the second word. Help students figure out the sounds, put them in the correct box, and then say the word.
   ▪ “Let’s do the next word together. Our second word is ______. What sounds do you hear in the word ______?”
     o If students respond correctly say “Good, we hear the /_/ , /_/ , and /_/ sounds in the word ______.”
     o If incorrect say, “No, I hear the /_/ , /_/ , and /_/ sounds in the word ______. What sounds do you hear in ______?”
   ▪ “Now we will build the word in our boxes. I hear the /_/ sound first in the word ______. I know that the letter ___ makes the /_/ sound so I am going to put the letter ___ in the first box. The second sound I hear is /_/ . I know that the letter ___ makes the /_/ sound so I am going to put the letter ___ in the second box. Finally, the third sound I hear is /_/ . I know that the letter ___ makes the /_/ sound so I am going to put the letter ___ in the third box. /_/ , /_/ , /_/ make the word ______.”

8. Then, have the students place the letters below the word and complete the “say-it-and-move-it” activity one time.
   ▪ “Now we will each put our letters on the line below the boxes in order. Then, place each letter in the box while saying the word slowly, /_/..../_/..../_/.... Now we will use our finger below each letter and say the word fast, __________.”
   ▪ Continue to build 4-6 more words as a group, providing feedback when needed using steps 7 and 8. Keep a running list of words built on the board.
   ▪ “Now we will build 6 more words together.”

Provide Independent Practice

9. Once the students successfully complete the task with a high level of modeling, give the students time to build 2-3 words (one at a time) with the letters in the lesson. Make sure to switch what sounds are in the initial, middle, and end sounds.
   ▪ “Now you will build three words by yourself. I will say the word, then you will build the word on your board. I will come check with each of you to see if you have the correct word. Then, we will move on to the next word.”
     o When checking on each student, have them do “say-it-and-move-it”.

10. After building all words on list, have students practice reading the words using a list or with prepared flashcards of each word. Read the words chorally and then have them take turns reading the words quietly to self or in pairs focusing on reading the words faster.
    ▪ “Now we will read each of the words we built together and then you will practice reading them quietly out loud to yourself.”
**Additional Ideas**

**Procedure modifications or accommodations**

- For a simplified approach with students who need additional phonemic awareness skill building, use counters/chips when beginning to teach each word and then switch to the magnetic letters when the students are ready.
- Include letter sounds that are currently being taught during core instruction as target letter sounds during the intervention.
- Digraphs can also be taught using this intervention if students need a higher level of modeling in comparison to the modeling procedures for the *Word Mix Up Intervention*. Incorporate sh, ch, and th after students have learned all letter sounds.
- Over time, consider fading out the use of word boxes by using a template with a line to place the letters rather than boxes.

**Additional Practice Ideas**

- If there is additional time allow, create sentences or find short story passages with the words used in the session to provided generalized practice for students. Write the sentences or phrases on the board, read them to the students, and have students read sentences chorally.
- For additional independent practice, have students use a marker and write the words out in their sound boxes for additional practice with spelling.
- Have students think of other words that have the target sound in the word and have the student say the word and figure out what place in the word the target sound is at.
- Add in an activity that involves onsets and rimes of the words made for the lesson. With the list of word, underline words that have the same rime or the same onset.