

# Skill Words and Decodable Sentences Activities

Providing students with a list of skill words and decodable sentences such as the Reading Horizons Transfer Cards ensures students become **proficient in decoding**. Students practice reading the cards chorally, with partners, and independently. They use the Word Banks and sentences for various games and activities to support all areas of literacy. Following is a list of activities that can be done with Transfer Cards or any list of decodable skill words and sentences your students are practicing. Many of these activities also support oral language development through verbal discussion and student collaboration.

Lesson 33: Phonetic Skill 2				
Words:				
just	list	mask	jump	stand
desk	west	stamp	chimp	grasp
fast	miss	bench	milk	went
buff	lunch	vent	crisp	dump
Sentences:				
He went to get a stamp.				
The chimp can stand on the bench.				
She just had a glass of milk for lunch.				
<small>Grades 1-3 Whole Class Transfer Card      Published by Reading Horizons®      Copyright © November 2015</small>				

Lesson 33: Phonetic Skill 2			
stuff	soft	fund	end
lump	rest	sprint	plant
hunt	fast	dump	stand
quilt	bump	ramp	dress
jump	trust	milk	golf
The soft quilt had a lump in it.			
Stand at the end of the ramp.			
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Examples: Reading Horizons Whole Class and Student Transfer Cards

## Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness (PA) is a critical skill for students to orthographically map the patterns they are learning in phonics instruction. Many students, especially struggling readers, need explicit instruction and practice with PA to efficiently map speech to print. Following are examples of activities that can be used to support PA through the use of Transfer Cards or similar word lists.

- Blending
  - Play [Scramble](#) with a focus on PA: Say the individual phonemes of a word and have students find the word on the card and hit it with a fly swatter.

- Have students choose a word and segment the sounds for a partner to identify and blend the sounds as they read and point to the word.
- Segmenting
  - Practice segmenting each word on the card using finger tapping or Elkonin Boxes.
  - Play [How Much Is It?](#)
- Identifying initial, final, and medial sounds
  - Play [1, 2, 3](#).
  - Choose a word and have students identify the initial, final, or medial sound they hear.
  - Choose an initial, final, or medial sound and have students make a list of all the words that have the sound in the correct place.
  - Have students cut and sort words by their initial, final, or medial sound.
- Manipulating
  - Play [Change That Word](#).
  - Choose a word and have students practice either adding, deleting, or substituting a sound you identify to make a new word.
- Using other phonological awareness tasks
  - Rhyming
    - Have students come up with rhyming words.
    - Have students sort words that rhyme.
  - Syllabication
    - Have students clap the syllables for each word.
    - Have students identify the syllable types within words on the card.

## Fluency

Fluency is achieved when students become proficient and accurate in decoding with automaticity. An element of fluency is required for students to successfully map the patterns they are learning in the brain. Prosody is another element of fluency that needs to be explicitly taught and practiced. Following are some activities that will support elements of fluency.

- Rate
  - Have students time themselves or a partner reading their decodable text.
  - Have students see how many words they can read on their Transfer Card or skill word list in one minute while reading the card quickly but, more importantly, accurately.
  - Have students time themselves or a partner reading the sentences three separate times, improving their reading rate each time while still reading clearly.
- Accuracy Have students read to a partner as the partner identifies and supports them with any words they might miss.

- Prosody
  - Have students read the cards using different voices (e.g., like a monster, in a high voice, in a low voice, like a singer).
  - Have students read sentences with punctuation marks in mind. Students can touch and pause for the punctuation marks as they read the sentences. Use inflection for question sentences.

## Phonics

Since phonics is the main focus of the Reading Horizons program, many activities can support this component of reading. Automaticity with phonics increases reading rate and accuracy and frees up the cognitive capacity to focus on language comprehension.

- Reading the words and sentences
  - Chorally read the card.
  - Read every other word or column to a partner.
  - Chorally read with a partner.
  - Work with a partner and pick random words from the card to have the partner read.

## Comprehension

Comprehension is the goal of reading. It is a product not a strategy. However, many skills need to be developed to comprehend text. Following are examples of activities that support the upper strands of Scarborough's Reading Rope.

- Language Structure
  - Have students find the subject and predicate in the sentences.
  - Have students determine the parts of speech for each word.
  - Have students complete a word sort for the part of speech each word is.
  - Have students write sentences using the words from the card.
  - Have students expand simple sentences to either compound or complex sentences.
  - Have students write paragraphs using one of the sentences as a topic sentence.
- Verbal Reasoning: (Note: Accessing background knowledge is important to verbal reasoning.)
  - Use questioning based on inference.
    - Text-connecting inference: Have students find the pronoun referring back to someone or something in the sentence.
    - Gap-filling inference: Model through think-alouds how to use background knowledge to answer questions the text doesn't specifically address.

- Have students identify figures of speech using a WCTC: metaphors, hyperboles, understatements, puns, irony, personification, or idioms.
- Literacy Knowledge
  - Concepts of print:
    - Students use their fingers to track while they read the sentences.
    - Students read left to right, top to bottom on the card.
  - Genre characteristics: Ask students what genre they might see a certain word or sentence in. There may be multiple options.
  - Text structure:
    - Ask students if a certain sentence sounds like it comes from a narrative story or an informational text.
    - Have students write a sentence they might see in an informational text or a narrative story.

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an important step to comprehension but is also one of the pillars of effective reading instruction. Following are some example activities that support vocabulary development.)

- Synonyms and antonyms
  - Choose a word and have students come up with either synonyms or antonyms for that word.
  - Say a synonym or antonym for one of the words on the card and see who can identify the word you are thinking of.
- Definitions and examples
  - Have students add words to a [word journal](#).
  - Have students complete a [Four Square](#) with words from the card.
- Associations
  - Choose a word and say words that are associated with that word to see if students can identify the word you are thinking of.
  - Choose a word to have a discussion with students. Ask students what that word makes them think of. Create a word association map.
  - Choose two words and have students explain how they are similar and how they are different.
- Context
  - Ask students to identify the meaning of a word in one of the sentences based on context.