

MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES FOR WRITE IT

Write It: Encoding for Literacy Development

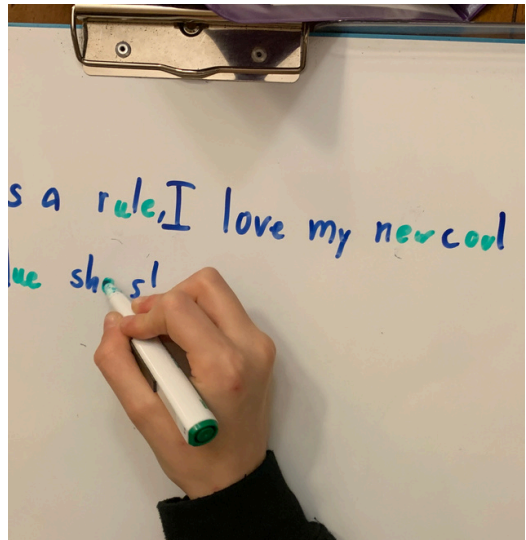
Write It is one of the most efficient and transformative activities in the Reading Simplified system. In just a few minutes, it weaves together phonemic segmentation, sound-symbol mapping, handwriting, spelling, and orthographic mapping. This deceptively simple routine builds the bridge from decoding to fluent encoding by teaching students how to hear the sounds in words and match each one to its appropriate spelling—while writing and saying them aloud.

At the heart of Write It is the **Write & Say** strategy: students say each sound or chunk aloud as they write its corresponding letter(s). This synchronization of speech, motor action, and visual input wires the brain for reading success, deepening the connections between sounds and symbols. It also taps into the power of retrieval practice and multisensory learning, boosting retention of high-utility spellings and accelerating students' ability to spell and read with confidence. Rather than relying on memorization, students internalize the code and learn how speech becomes print.

Purpose of Write It

Write It serves as the bridge from decoding to encoding, supporting:

- Phonemic segmentation
- Letter-sound knowledge
- Sound-based spelling (encoding)
- Connection between encoding & decoding
- Visual-motor integration through handwriting



Procedure

• Activity Setup

- Have word list or sentence(s) prepared to dictate to the student. Choose a CVC, CCVC, CVCC, or increasingly complex one-syllable word. Say the word clearly and in a sentence (e.g., "Let's write the word 'ship.' A ship sails on the sea."). Teachers select words for dictation from the Guided Oral Reading passage, a dedicated Write It list, or their own creativity, based on students' Most Pressing Need and target letter-sounds. For beginning readers, this might be simple CVC words like "sat," progressing to phrases like "on the boat" or "run fast," and eventually full sentences. When dictating multisyllable words, teachers can teach students the "chin trick" to help identify syllables first before writing (e.g., placing a hand under the chin and feeling it drop for each vowel sound/syllable). At the Advanced Phonics level and beyond, teachers also use Write It with Key Sentences (e.g., "Go home to show the boat to Joe" for the /oa/ sound) to help reinforce the mnemonic hooks of those core spellings for a given sound.
- Say, "We're going to do the Write It activity. I'm going to say a word/sentence and I want you to write it on your board (paper).

• Teacher dictates to the student and uses word in a sentence.

- "I want you to try to write the word ____." Use the word in a sentence.
- "Remember to say each sound in the word(s) as you write each sound.
- If you're doing Write It at the full sentence level, ask the student to repeat back the sentence before beginning to write.

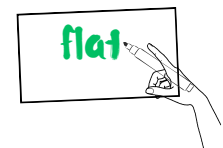
"I want you to try to write the word 'flat' as in this board is flat."



• Student Writes & Says the Sounds in the word.

- If the student doesn't say the sounds, remind her as you erase the word and ask her to try again.

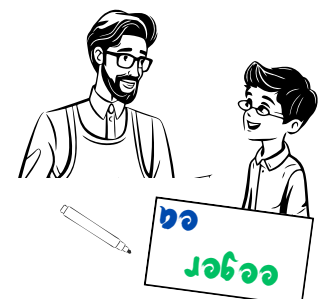
"/f/ /lll/ /a--/ /t/"



• Teacher offers specific, positive feedback to coach student through errors.

- "Great job hearing all of these sounds! But this one is not how we see the /ee/ sound in books. It looks like this in 'eager'" (write 'ea' on board).

"This one is not how we see the /ee/ sound in books. It looks like this in 'eager.'"



Procedure

- **Teacher Praises Student for Correctly Writing Word**
 - “You did it! You correctly wrote the word ____.”
 - Once all the spellings have been corrected, praise the student specifically for what she did (at least occasionally). If the error correction caused the word to look sloppy or hard to read, write a better example for the student to look at or show him the word in a text. Prompt student to look at (or read) their word/sentence again.
- **Student Erases & Says Each Sound**
 - For another reinforcement of phonemic segmentation and letter-sound knowledge, encourage the student to say each sound as she erases each letter-sound.
- **Teacher Bundles Some Words with Other Words with Common Pattern**
 - If student misspells a word that includes a spelling pattern that you think they should recognize by now, then write down a few other words that have the same spelling. For instance, if the student misspelled “try,” the teacher can draw attention to the other small words that have this same ending pattern: by, my, fly, try, cry, spy, etc. Line up the target spelling so it’s easier to see the pattern.
 - Ask the student to read these words. “What do they have in common?”

Feedback and Coaching:

Errors are not setbacks but valuable diagnostic information; they indicate that students are at their instructional match and provide opportunities for deeper learning. Write It is not a spelling test. It is a process drill that helps students become more aware of our spelling system. When a student makes an error, the teacher’s corrections help students learn the letter-sound more deeply. Keep feedback simple and targeted. A handful of feedback prompts will cover most errors:



Student doesn’t say the sound as he writes each sound.

- "If you don't say the sounds as you write each sound, I'll erase the word and you'll have to do it over." :o

“If you don't say the sounds as you write each sound, I'll erase the word and you'll have to do it over.”



Student makes a phonemic error as she writes.

- For example, she adds or deletes a letter-sound that's not in the word. Stop her at this point--even if she's not at the end of the word. "There's no /l/ in /po---t/. Try to write /po-----t/." OR, "Don't forget the /l/ in /pooooo---t/."

"There's no /l/ in /po---t/. Try to write /po-----t/."



Student makes a phonics error as she writes.

- Generally, we can wait till the word has been written to correct phonics errors.
 - Then we correct: "Great job hearing all of these sounds! But this one is not how we see the /ee/ sound in books. It looks like this in 'eager'" (write 'ea' on board).
- Sometimes it may be confusing as to whether it's a phonemic or phonics error. That's ok. Just be sure to correct eventually: if the sentence is "Pam sat" and the student writes 'Pam set,' provide praise for "Pam" and elongate the sounds in "sat" for the student to focus on the incorrect letter-sound and self-correct.

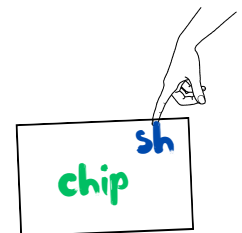
"This one is not how we see the /ee/ sound in books. It looks like this in 'eager.'"



Example Error Correction:

- If a student writes "chip" for "ship," the teacher responds, **"Actually, what you wrote says /chip/ but we want /sh---ip/. This [tapping the 'sh' grapheme] is the /sh---/ sound you were hearing in /sh---ip/".** Correct only one error at a time; let her fix it; and then correct the next one. Use contrast to highlight the error and exaggerate the target sound. **Emphasize saying sounds, not letter names.**

"Actually, what you wrote says /chip/ but we want /sh---ip/. This is the /sh---/ sound you were hearing in /sh---ip/"



Coaching Tips

- Use clear mouth modeling for tricky vowels.
- Keep sessions brisk; 4–5 words or 1 sentence is typically sufficient.
- Focus especially on one vowel sound or spelling at a time, when applicable.
- Encourage the student to reread the word or the sentence after writing it.
- Use sound boxes or color-coded writing for extra support (i.e., put the “ea” in “eager” in a different color from the rest of the word to help remember the tricky part).
- When in the Advanced Phonics section of the Streamlined Pathway, we often review the current week’s and past week’s Key Sentence, in addition to another one. Soon the teacher can use the core words in the Key Sentence as a prompt to help a student spell. “The word ‘road’ uses the same /oa---/ sound as the word ‘boat’ in ‘Go home to show the boat to Joe.’”
- **Rapid Progression:** Teachers should be rapidly moving students to higher and higher levels of phonemic difficulty (e.g., CVC to CVCC, CCVC, etc.) as they are able, rather than lingering too long on mastered or even nearly mastered skills. Like Switch It and Read It, Write It word lists and sentences systematically progress from the simple CVC level to harder levels of phonemic difficulty: CVCC → CCVC → CCVCC → CCCVCC.
- **Diagnostic Planning:** Teachers make notes on the **Dynamic Assessment** during and after the lesson about students’ areas of need to plan the next day’s instruction. This planning focuses on selecting the highest level of phonemic difficulty the group can handle and reinforcing specific letter-sounds.

Scaffolds for Multilingual Learners

- Preview the word’s meaning with the Picture Dictionary or with a real object.
- Connect new English sounds to similar ones in the student’s home language.
- Use translation as needed to clarify unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Allow extra processing time and repetition.



Summary

Write It integrates multiple strands of the reading rope into one efficient activity. By writing words sound-by-sound, students not only improve spelling but also deepen decoding automaticity and phonics knowledge. It allows students to transition effectively from manipulating words to encoding them, solidifying their understanding of how speech becomes print.