

Lesson Plan #10:

Reading Skills – Chunking (for advanced learners 9.0-12.9)

INTRODUCTION:

Chunking is a technique that encourages the learner to read a text in phrases or “chunks” of language that represent meaning rather than separate words. Students learn that they can understand meaning without having to read each individual word, a process which slows reading and can negatively impact comprehension. Chunking is an extremely useful reading skill for transitioning to post-secondary education or training.

OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson, students will:

- learn to read a passage in meaningful phrases by echo reading the teacher who models chunking.
- become less reliant on having to think about every word
- gain practice in reading phrases of text that represent thoughts to understand meaning
- become faster readers without sacrificing comprehension

PROCEDURE:

1. Teacher chooses a text to read.
2. Teacher and student echo read the passage using meaningful phrases. In reading a sentence, the teacher models appropriate chunks of the sentence, and the student repeats.

The example that follows illustrates the sequence:

Sample text: During World War II, the United States fought the Germans, mainly in Europe, and the Japanese, mainly in the Pacific.

Explanation:

Teacher explains to students that she is going to help them become able to read faster and to understand more by reading in chunks, or phrases, rather than one word at a time. Teacher explains that she will help them, and that they will practice this strategy numerous times so that they begin to feel comfortable about it and can ultimately do it on their own.

Modeling:

Teacher reads the sentence in chunks:

During World War II/the United States fought the Germans,/mainly in Europe,/and the Japanese,/ mainly in the Pacific.

Student echoes:

During World War II/the United States/fought the Germans,/mainly in Europe,/and the Japanese,/mainly in the Pacific.

Guided Practice:

The teacher and students continue reading. When possible, the teacher increases the number of sentences to be chunked before students repeat the model. Numerous

opportunities for guided practice should be provided.

Application:

As students' ability to chunk phrases increases, the teacher no longer models, and students read independently.

Continuous Monitoring of Progress:

Teacher questions student about what he or she has read to check comprehension, using open-ended questions designed to demonstrate understanding.

Example:

1. Who did the United States fight? (Germans and Japanese)
2. When? (during World War II)
3. Where? (Germans mainly in Europe; Japanese mainly in Pacific)

CONCLUSION:

After numerous opportunities to practice chunking with various passages and texts, students can become adept at reading short phrases rather than individual words, one at a time, to better understand meaning, increase reading speed, and enhance overall comprehension. These skills become extremely important as students progress in their studies and transition to post-secondary education.

Lesson plan developed by Linda Cox, SIPDC – 2008

References:

Allington, R.L. (1983). Fluency: The Neglected Reading Goal. *The Reading Teacher*, 36, 556-561.

Samuels, S.J., Schermer, N., and Reinking, D. (1991). "Reading Fluency: Techniques for Making Decoding Automatic." In S. J. Samuels and A.E. Farstrup (eds.) *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association