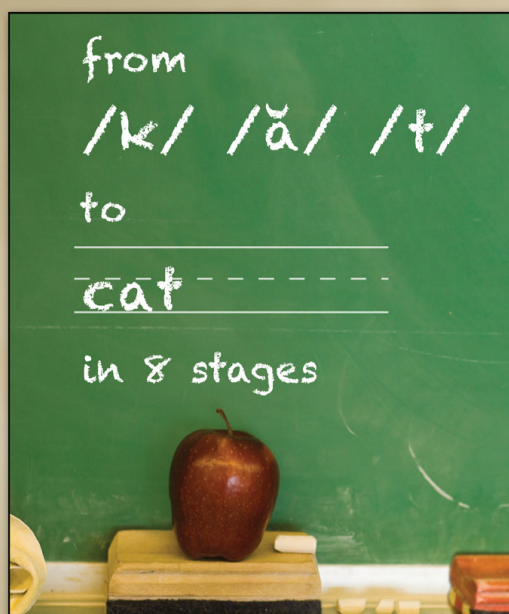




PART OF THE
Blueprint
for Intervention®
SERIES

Teaching Blending



95 percent of students reading at grade level . . . an achievable goal

Stage A Sample

95 Percent Group, Inc.
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To Order
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Part 2 – Getting Started with Teaching Blending

Lessons

1 Stage: The letter of the stage of blending instruction.

2 Goal: What the student should be able to do before moving to the next stage.

3 Materials: Chips, word cards, and other materials needed for the lesson.

4 Word List: Words to use during the lesson.

5 Set the Stage: Instruction to prepare the student for the lesson.

6 Graphics: Representations of chip movement, gestures, word cards, etc.

7 I Do: Teacher models explicitly.

8 Font: Bold black font is spoken teacher text; regular black font is directions to the teacher; blue font is student response.

9 We Do: Teacher models and students respond with him/her.

10 You Do: Teacher monitors students as they practice more independently.

11 Apply and Practice: Additional practice for students on the concept.

Stage A – Blending Awareness With Phonemes

Goal: Develop awareness that spoken words are pronounced without pauses between the sounds.

To develop the student’s awareness of the difference between pronouncing words sound by sound and blended, this stage is taught by moving sound chips closer and closer together. The use of blank color-coded sound chips makes the abstract concept more concrete by showing that the space between the chips represents the length of the pause between sounds. Blue chips represent consonants and red are short

vowels (from our *Phonics Chip Kit™* products). While it would have been possible to move chips into Elkonin boxes (boxes stacked horizontally), a line was selected because the chips will be moved closer together. The focus of the lesson is not as much on moving one chip per sound (which is a prerequisite skill), but rather to direct the student’s attention on the difference between saying individual sounds separated with

pauses, and blending a word where the sounds are connected, or coarticulated. When a whole word is heard, the ear doesn't detect spaces or pauses between the sounds in the word.

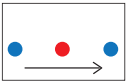
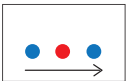
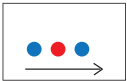
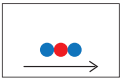
95 Percent Group has coined a new reading term: *blending awareness*. The definition of blending awareness is "an awareness of the difference between whole words read with blended sounds and those that are pronounced sound by sound." In order to teach students how to read the words, first they need to be aware of their goal. The purpose of this stage is not to blend sounds into words, but rather it is to call attention to the fact that what we want them to do is to read words without pauses (or spaces) between the sounds. Students can't learn to do it if they don't understand the goal and recognize the difference between the sound-by-sound and blended words.

Stage A uses sound chips before going to letters because we don't want the student's attention diverted to the letter; the goal is to pay attention to the pauses. The Stage A word list includes only words with continuant sounds in all 3 positions because stop sounds are problematic for pulling chips to the line when the sound can be elongated only by adding a schwa or vowel (for example, /p/ becomes /pŭh/). There is a correspondence

between the visual space between the chips and the length of the pause between oral sounds. The teacher dialogue in the lesson represents the following:

- **Number of letters** appearing inside the slashes emphasizes the elongation of sounds. When there are 4 letters between the slashes, the sound is held longer than where there are only 3, 2, or 1 letter.
- **Number of dots** between the slashed letters represents the number of seconds for the pause (3 dots = 3-second pause, 2 dots = 2-second pause, or 1 dot = 1 second pause).
- In **I Do**, the chips are moved closer together 3 times and the 3rd time they are touching.
- In **We Do**, the chips are moved closer together 2 times and the 2nd time they are touching.
- For the **You Do** and the **Apply and Practice**, there are only 2 positions (apart or touching) so the students don't have to try to move the chips in small incremental steps.

The table below illustrates the change in chip movement and length of pauses in the Stage A lesson.

Graphic						
						
	Farthest Apart	Closer	Even Closer	Touching		Number of Steps
Length of Pause	3 Seconds	2 Seconds	1 Second	None		
I Do	x	x	x	x		4
We Do	x		x	x		3
You Do	x			x		2
Apply and Practice	x			x		2

Stage B – Blending Awareness With Letters

Goal: Develop awareness that when reading words, there are no pauses between the sounds.

Stage B is essentially the same thing as Stage A except with letter chips instead of sound chips. Now the student applies an awareness of the contrast between sound-by-sound and continuous blending with written words. In this stage, letter chips are moved closer and closer together to focus the student's attention on the fact that

there are no pauses between sounds in reading whole words. The only difference in the word list is that words using the Floss rule were fine for Stage A, where the written word was not shown, but were removed from the Stage B word list.

Stage C – Voiced Rehearsal

Goal: Rehearse sound by sound orally before reading blended word aloud.

Stage C is the first lesson in a trio that moves to rehearsal with less and less scaffolding. Students nearly always start out trying to sound out words by saying the individual sound aloud followed by the whole word. Stage C is exactly that stage. In the *Set the Stage* section, the analogy of rehearsing before performing is introduced because in all 3 of the rehearsal stages, the terms *rehearse* and *perform* are used.

In the lessons piloted by teachers from across the country we suggested that teachers talk with students in the *Set the Stage* section that before a play or song is performed, there is typically rehearsal before

performance. We included a gesture of holding a script for rehearse and a microphone for perform. Many 5-year-olds didn't know what a microphone was without explanation. You may wish to still use these props when introducing this lesson. In order to make the gesture more closely tied to the reading behavior, we changed the gestures to scooping under sounds for rehearsing and sliding a pointer finger under the word for performing. It also worked better because young students often use their finger when reading and pretending to hold a microphone tied up the student's dominant hand.

Stage D – Silent Rehearsal

Goal: Rehearse by silently mouthing sounds before reading blended word aloud.

This stage is called "Silent Rehearsal" because the student will still be going sound by sound, but by moving the lips only and not voicing the sounds aloud. Many teachers consider this subvocalizing the sounds. Adults may think of this as *lip-syncing*, but because the pilot students didn't know that term, it was not used in the final version of the lesson. In the *You Do* and the *Apply and Practice* sections of the lesson, a word grid is used to

make the manipulative management easier for teachers. There are 2 graphics on each box of the word grid to remind the student to scoop first and then read; the lips at this stage are still open (although there isn't supposed to be any sound), and the arrow reminds the student to read all the sounds blended in the second attempt of the word.

Stage E – Eyes-Only Rehearsal

Goal: Rehearse with eyes only before reading blended word aloud.

Stage E is the 3rd and final rehearsal stage where the student learns to stop subvocalizing the sounds, or moving their lips when they look at a word. In *Teaching Blending*, the student is taught to do an "eyes-only rehearsal" as a concrete way to let the student know that at this point any rehearsal that is still necessary cannot be seen by the observer. The student is shown

how to do any necessary rehearsal in his/her head first and then just say the whole word. This is made more explicit to the student with a gesture pretending to zip your lips before looking at the word; all rehearsal is in the mind at this point. The student learns to let go of any silent mouthing they've relied on in the past.

Stage F – No Rehearsal

Goal: Read words out loud without any rehearsal.

In Stage F, there is no rehearsal at all. In the lesson, there are no longer 2 steps as in the 3 rehearsal stages, but now only 1 step in reading a word. The student reads the sounds blended without any rehearsal of the sounds first. For the *Apply and Practice* section of the lesson,

the student sees a word grid again, but there is only one word on it. The student can still use a pointer finger for this one last stage; it will be dropped in the next stage. Therefore, there is an arrow under the words in the student booklet for the No Rehearsal stage.

Stage G – Fluency

Goal: Build fluency by decreasing the amount of time it takes to read the word.

This is the final stage of learning to read a whole word. This stage is focused on the student learning to read the word fluently at a rate that enables attention to be directed to comprehend the meaning of the word. Because this is the fluency stage, the teacher uses word cards so when a word is shown, it's not possible for the

student to have practiced it because it's not visible on a grid. To avoid having teachers keeping track of lots of student word cards, the student booklet contains two words per box so that it's harder for a student to practice the next word.

Stage H – Adjust Vowel Sound

Goal: In irregular words, adjust the sounds until pronouncing a word that is recognized.

As discussed earlier, this stage should not be taught immediately after teaching stage G. It is recommended that teachers take a break in time to continue teaching short vowel words with consonant blends and digraphs. Teachers will then use this lesson at an appropriate point when students need an explanation of what to do when they pronounce a word with an expected short vowel sound and discover that it doesn't make a word they recognize. For example, if *log* is pronounced with the short *o* sound in *octopus*, the word doesn't sound right.

Then the student is taught to "adjust" the vowel sound and try it different ways to make a word that he/she recognizes. The word list for this stage must be examined carefully. Many English words are pronounced differently in various regions of the United States; therefore, some words will be considered an exception that needs adjusting in one region while the same word will be fine with the initial pronunciation in another region. Teachers can review the list and determine which words to use in their region.

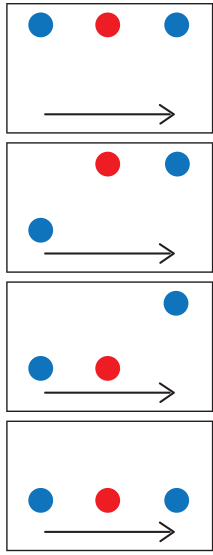


Goal: Develop awareness that spoken words are pronounced without pauses between the sounds.	
Materials: 2 blue sound chips ● ● 1 red sound chip ● Magnetic white board	Word List: fan, fill, fin, fizz, fuzzi, ham, hen, hiss, hum, man, mess, mill, miss, mom, Nan, ram, ran, rim, run, Sam, sun, van, win

Set the Stage (1 minute)

Introduce Sound Chips

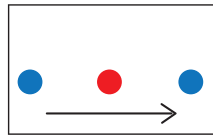
Draw an arrow at the bottom of the whiteboard.
 Place blue-red-blue circles at the top of the whiteboard.



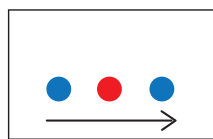
- We're going to learn that there are no pauses between sounds in spoken words. We'll use these colored chips to represent sounds. The blue chips represent consonant sounds, and the red chip represents a short vowel sound.
- Do you remember the short vowel sounds? (/ă/, /ĕ/, /ĭ/, /ŏ/, /ŭ/)
- When the chips are at the top of the board they are in the ready position; when they're on this line (point to the arrow) it means that they represent the sounds in a word.
- The first sound is /m/. I'll pull this blue chip down to the line while saying the sound: /m/. (Say the /m/ sound the entire time you pull the blue chip down to the line.)
- (Leave large spaces between the chips as you pull them down to the line.) The next sound is /ă/. I'll pull this red chip down to the line while saying the short vowel sound: /ă/.
- The last sound is /n/. I'll pull this blue chip down to the line while saying the consonant sound: /n/.

I Do (3 minutes)

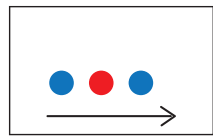
Leave chips widely spaced apart on the line, as they were in the final step of "Set the Stage." In Steps 1-3, you'll pause between each sound, gradually moving the chips closer together and reducing the length of the pauses until you reach Step 4. In the final step, move the chips so that they touch. Then blend the word, eliminating all pauses between sounds. Tap and/or move chips with your dominant index finger unless otherwise noted.



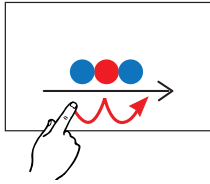
• **Step 1: Watch me touch each chip while saying the sounds again: /mmm/.../ăăă/.../nnn/.** (Simultaneously hold your finger on the center of each chip and say the sound, pausing for 3 seconds between the sounds to show that the chips are not touching.)



• **Step 2: Watch me push the chips a little closer together.** (Using index fingers on each hand, move the blue chips toward the middle red chip, about one-third of the distance originally between them.) **When the chips are closer together, I'll say the sounds closer together: /mmm/.../ăăă/.../nnn/.** (Touch the center of each chip as you say the sound. Pause for 2 seconds between sounds.)



• **Step 3: Now I'm going to push the chips even closer together.** (Move blue chips toward middle red chip another one-third of the distance originally between them.) **When the chips are closer together, it signals that the sounds should be said closer together: /mm/.../ăă/.../nn/.** (Tap each chip as you say the sounds, but pause for 1 second between each sound, reflecting that they are not yet blended.)



- **Step 4:** I'll push the chips together so that they are touching. This time I *won't* pause between each sound because the chips are touching. When I say the sounds without pausing between them, I'll use a scooping motion below the chips because I hold each sound until my mouth moves into the next sound. There is no pause between sounds: /männ/. (Scoop your finger under the line as you make each sound, continuing to hold each sound until it blends into the next sound.)

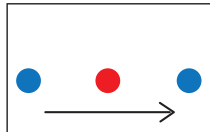
We Do (5 minutes)

For each new word, start with the chips in the farthest apart position. Move the chips closer together in each step.

- Now do it with me. I'll move the chips and you'll answer with me.

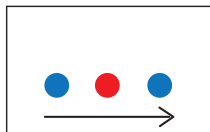
- **Step 1:** Look at the chips on the line.

- Are the chips touching? (no)
- Are they far apart or close together? (far apart)



- When I put my finger on the chip and say "sound," that's when you say the sound with me. (Hold finger on chip as you say each sound elongated.)
 - The first sound is /mmmm/. Say it with me. Sound? (/mmmm/)
 - The middle sound is /öööö/. Say it with me. Sound? (/öööö/)
 - The last sound is /mmmm/. Say it with me. Sound? (/mmmm/)
 - Now say each sound. (3 second pauses) (/mmmm/.../öööö/.../mmmm/)
 - Was the pause between the sounds short or long? (long)

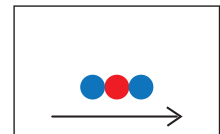
- **Step 2:** Now I'll push the chips a little closer together. (Move chips closer by one-half of the distance originally between them.)



- Are the chips touching now? (no)
- Are they far apart or a little closer together? (closer together)
- What happened to the space between the chips when I moved them closer together? (It got smaller.)
- When the chips are closer together, the pause between sounds is shorter.
 - First sound? (/mm/)
 - Middle sound? (/öö/)
 - Last sound? (/mm/)
 - Now say each sound. (1-second pauses) (/mm/./öö/./mm/)
 - Was the pause between the sounds shorter or longer than the first time? (shorter)

- **Step 3:** Now watch me push the chips together. (Chips should be touching.)

- Are the chips touching? (yes)

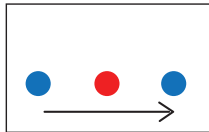
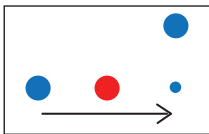
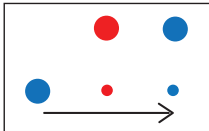


- Now we *won't* pause between each sound because the chips are touching. We'll hold each sound until our mouth moves into the next sound, and there is no pause between sounds.
 - Say all the sounds. (Scoop your finger under the line as you make each sound, continuing to hold each sound until it blends into the next sound.) (möm)
 - What is the word? (mom)
 - Was there any pause between the sounds? (no)
 - When the chips are touching, there is no pause between the sounds.
 - When the sounds are said together without a pause between them, that's called blending.
- (Repeat using other words from the word list. Once students understand that the spaces between chips and pauses correspond, move to the *You Do*.)

You Do (5 minutes)

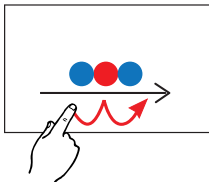
Give each student a Student Booklet open to Stage A: You Do.

- Now it's your turn. You'll be using this mat and these chips. Make sure that your chips are in the ready position with a blue, a red, and a blue chip at the top of your mat. Remember that when the chips are apart, you pause between sounds. When the chips are touching, you say the sounds blended.
- Look at your mat. See the blue dot, the red dot, and the blue dot. This is where your chips will end up when you're done with this step.
- I'll give you each sound, and first you'll repeat the sound. Then you'll pull the chip down to the line while saying the sound. Before you move a chip, I'll show you on my mat the place where your chip should end up on your line.
- Step 1: Look where my first blue chip is located on the line. That's where your blue chip will be.



- First sound: /ssss/. Say it with me. (/ssss/)
- Pull a blue chip down while saying the sound. (/ssss/)
- Is your blue chip in the same place as my first blue chip? (yes)
- Look where my middle red chip is located on the line. That's where your red chip will be.
- Middle sound: /ääää/. Say it with me. (/ääää/)
- Pull your red chip down while saying the sound. (/ääää/)
- Is your red chip in the same place as my red chip? (yes)
- Look at my last blue chip. That's where your blue chip will be.
- Last sound: /mmmm/. Say it with me. (/mmmm/)
- Pull a blue chip down while saying the sound. (/mmmm/)
- Is your last blue chip in the same place as my last blue chip? (yes)
- Now we'll say all the sounds.
- Take your pointer finger and touch under the chip and say the first sound. Sound? (/ssss/)
- Put your finger under the middle chip. Sound? (/ääää/)
- Put your finger under the last chip. Sound? (/mmmm/)
- Watch me say all the sounds while touching under the chips: /ssss/.../ääää/.../mmmm/.
- Now you touch and say all the sounds. (/ssss/.../ääää/.../mmmm/)

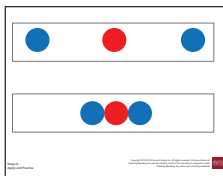
- Step 2: Look at my mat. Now push your chips together so they look like mine. (Chips should be touching.)



- I'll review the sounds. /s/ /ä/ /m/.
- Scoop and say all the sounds blended. (/sämm/)
- (Repeat using other words from the word list.)

Apply and Practice (5 minutes)

Give each student a Student Booklet open to Stage A: Apply and Practice.



- Look at your mat. There are 2 rows of chips. Put your finger on the top row.
 - Are the chips touching or apart? (apart)
 - When the chips are apart, is there a pause or no pause between sounds? (pause)
- Put your finger on the bottom row.
 - Are the chips touching or apart? (touching)
 - When the chips are touching, is there a pause or no pause between sounds? (no pause)
- I'll say a word. If the word has pauses, put your finger next to the top row. If the sounds are together, put your finger next to the bottom row.
- Ready? The first word is /f/ /i/ /z/. Point. (Repeat with other words.)
- (See the website for more activities.)

95 Percent Group's Blending Continuum

