

This is a running log of a lesson with Jared's Reception class at St Ignatius College in Adelaide. I've made notes of strategies used by Jared that might not be easily noticed by someone new to teaching this way. I have highlighted strategies that keep the lesson moving quickly and ensure students stick to established routines. Students are always looking where Jared wants them to look and thinking about what Jared wants students to think about. This manages students' cognitive load.



## Review: Letter Naming

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Jared ensures students know they will be naming letters, not reading the sounds. It's vital to constantly reinforce the difference between the letter sounds and names because it confuses many students.

*"We are going to do letter names first ... okay ... of you go"*

Watch Jared's eyes as he actively observes all the students' naming letters. He scans back and forth, checking students' ability to name letters easily. His scanning also lifts student accountability because students know he is looking.



## Review: Reading Card Drill

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Because his class is familiar with the progression of the lesson, they are cued by Jared changing card decks and they transition easily into the Reading Card Drill. They know that they need to read the sounds (phonemes) now. Again, Jared scans back and forth, checking that students are participating and gathering information about which students can quickly recall.

Because all students were proficiently recalling the letter sounds, Jared didn't need to review any GPCs in this deck. If mistakes were made, he would separate those cards and review them again using an I do, we do routine again at the end of the drill.

The **vowels** are  
**a e i o u**  
and sometimes  
**y**

## Review: Concepts from Slides

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Jared is again actively observing students to check for participation and proficiency. He has strategically sat students who might lose attention in the front row so he can lean down and cue them non-verbally if needed.

The class uses multisensory movements for the syllable definition and the floss spellings. These immediately lift engagement and act as a memory hook to help students recall definitions. There are only a couple of these because too many multisensory gestures can be counterproductive, slowing the drill down.

*"Saying it together."*

Jared reminds students that they need to say the definitions together. Sometimes, students will go ahead and show the teacher they know the definitions or use a silly voice to get attention. Students who do this need to be quickly (and briefly) reminded, with words or looks, that this isn't how it is done.

**Tip 26: Remind the class that reciting and working together is a kind act**



Some kids zoom ahead...

*Insist they don't.*

Many parts of the lesson are a team effort. Sticking together scaffolds those who aren't automatic yet!

Teaching Tips

 **LaserT1-2**  
Literacy Program

When students try to get attention through this, the teacher must be brief and not too intrusive in their corrections to avoid drawing too much attention to the student. Students can also be tactically ignored and spoken to later if appropriate. Ensuring economy of language in this feedback is important to ensure it does not hold up the routine.

*"OK, walk silently back to your desks."*

This important precorrect cues students to how Jared wants them to move.

**Tip 2: Precorrect behaviour**

"If you expect it - precorrect it" (Anita Archer)



Remind students of the behaviour or routine before they have a chance to forget.

*"Remember, when we chin it, boards go under chins and nowhere else."*

Teaching Tips

 **LaserT1-2**  
Literacy Program



## Spelling Review Drill

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

*“Voices off, eyes on me ... (narrating compliance) ... lids off, pens in the air ... (narrating compliance)”*

This deliberately fast transition starts with directing students' attention to the board, pre-correcting pen use routine, and narrating compliance as students follow the correct routine. Jared then begins the drill without delay. This creates a motivation to get ready quickly and makes students less likely to distract themselves or be distracted.

If Jared were to wait for every student to be ready, the students who are ready early could become distracted and lose motivation to follow instructions quickly over time.

Jared moves around actively observing as students work. This is an excellent time to correct any letter formation problems. Phase one is a critical time when students can form poor letter formation if not corrected.

Some students look at other students' work and use it as a cue. This is fine as long as the teacher is also checking because sometimes students will copy an inaccuracy from the person sitting next to them.

*“Big loud voices”*

It's essential to ensure students complete the routine's spoken part correctly. If teachers don't insist on this, all students will quickly fall silent, and the multisensory routine will break. When students don't repeat the phoneme and say the grapheme, their learning is slowed considerably.

*“Chin it for me under your chin...”*

Notice that Jared models where he wants whiteboards whenever he asks students to 'chin it.'

Jared and his class are working hard on the correct routine of chinning whiteboards. If teachers allow students to wave whiteboards in the air or hold them above their heads, it becomes harder for teachers to quickly and easily see student work.

*“Park it and wipe it...”*


*“Eyes on the screen once you have wiped it...”*


### Tip 6: Insist on your routines

Routines reduce cognitive load

- Teach, reteach and... reteach your routines  
*Make your routines easy to follow and hard to forget*
- Precorrect routines before starting  
*“...Before we start, phoneme fingers ready...”*
- Correct students not following a routine  
*Bad habits form fast and hold tight*
- Remind / model exactly what to do  
*Don't waste words on what they're not doing - keep it brief*
- Provide additional practice in their own time  
*A little extra practice to lift motivation when necessary ;)*

For a video on routines



Teaching Tips 



## Words to Read

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

The class has a well-established routine of sounding out the word in time with the slide to blend the words sequentially. They then say the complete word twice. Jared is constantly trying to push the pace during this routine, as students become more capable decoders.

Jared actively observes the students as they read from the screen and prompts a student:

*"Eyes on the screen"*

As it is normal for some students to look elsewhere.

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## Review: Words to Spell

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

*"Lids off, pens in the air ..."*

*Receptions ... I've got three hot spots today. The first one is 'park it,' the second one is 'chin it,' and the third one is 'phoneme fingers.' I'm going to be watching for those three things for a bit of extra practice if we need it."*

*Hotspots* are routines that Jared and the class are working on, but Jared isn't entirely happy with them yet. Students who don't correctly use routines are given brief bursts of additional practice in their own time. This serves the dual purpose of reteaching routines and is a low-level consequence for willfully not following routines.

Students understand this additional practice is not a punishment, rather, a means to help them to remember the routine. It still functions as a consequence, but it is framed positively when enforced.

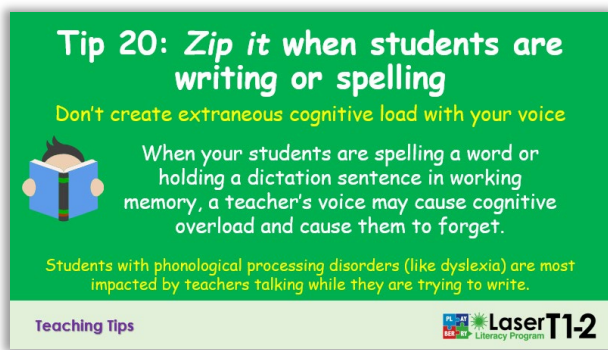
The routine Jared has taught the class is an “**I do, we do, you do**” sequence that works well for this level. Jared breaks this up by saying:

**I do:**                    *“My turn ... well ... (w) (ě) (l)”*


**We do:**                   *“Together ... well ... (w) (ě) (l)”*

**You do:**                *“Your turn ... well ... (w) (ě) (l)”*

On the last word in the set, Jared releases responsibility to the students, allowing them to go straight to the ‘you do.’



**Tip 20: Zip it when students are writing or spelling**  
Don't create extraneous cognitive load with your voice  
When your students are spelling a word or holding a dictation sentence in working memory, a teacher's voice may cause cognitive overload and cause them to forget.  
Students with phonological processing disorders (like dyslexia) are most impacted by teachers talking while they are trying to write.

Teaching Tips 

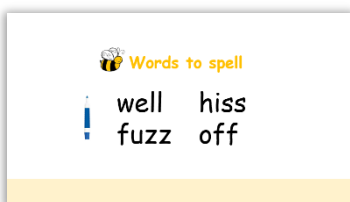
Jared then points downward to cue students to write the word. The reason he doesn't say anything is that the students are holding the phonemes (w) (ě) (l) in their working memories.


If Jared were to say anything here, it would likely disrupt what students are holding in working memory - (w) (ě) (l) and significantly lift the error rate of students while spelling the word.

Jared then follows the same routine for the other words in the set. Each time he moves and checks the students he knows have difficulty encoding, he gives quiet feedback.

Making sure students redo their phoneme fingers is an essential first step when Jared notices students have begun spelling with the wrong letter.

Notice the error the students make on the word ‘hiss’ when they accidentally mispronounce the finger spelling as (h) (i) (z). When students chin their boards, you'll see that a few have spelled *hiss* as *hizz*. This goes to show that these students are paying attention to the segmented sounds and will spell what they hear in the finger spelling routine. We only noticed this small error when reviewing the footage and decided to leave it in as an example of the importance of carefully listening for the correct sounds.



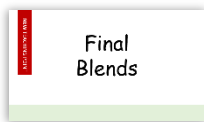
 Words to spell

well	hiss
fuzz	off

Next, Jared asks students to correct any errors by checking the screen. Jared takes the students, word-by-word, through the set of four, aware of the mistakes several students have made in spelling ‘hiss.’

Teachers will often read the spellings aloud, asking students to tick or correct them as they go.

*“Wipe it and park it ... eyes on the board?”*



## New Teaching Point

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Jared directs students to look at the board, and the students follow the slides to blend the CVCC words sequentially.

The class has a well-established routine of sounding out the word in time with the slide to blend the words sequentially. They then say the complete word twice. Jared actively observes the students as they read from the screen.



## Review: New Words to Spell

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

*"Lids off, pens in the air when you're ready ... Good job Carter and Eva ... (narrates compliance) ... voices off ..."*

Jared and the class again use their well-established "I do, we do, you do" sequence to spell the new words.

**I do:** *"My turn ... sand ... (s) (ă) (n) (d)"*

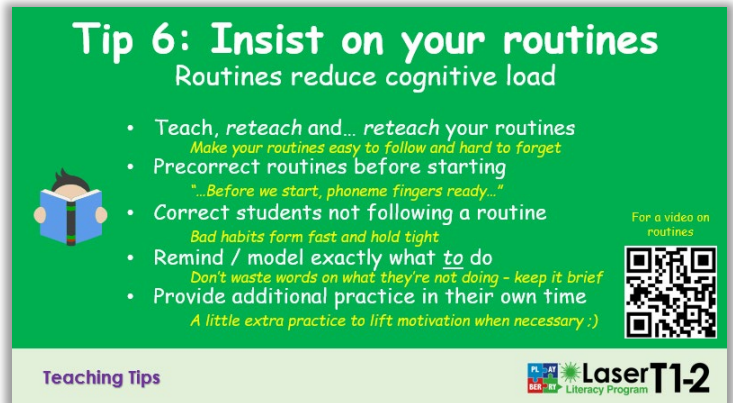
**We do:** *"Together ... sand ... (s) (ă) (n) (d)"*

**You do:** *"Your turn ... sand ... (s) (ă) (n) (d)"*

Jared stops the class and asks them to re-do the phoneme fingers at the 'we do' stage when several students don't do it correctly. This insistence on the correct routine is essential. If Jared were to allow a few students not to do this, then very soon, most of the class would not use phoneme fingers.

Phoneme fingers are part of the routine that students will become lazy with unless teachers insist. Although many students can mentally segment phonemes, the finger routine remains crucial scaffolding for many students with phonological weakness. Phoneme fingers also lower error rates for all students as words become more complex.


This continual insistence on routines never stops as students will naturally slip into bad habits. The use of *hotspots* and constantly changing them based on the behaviors in a given class are key to ensuring routines remain effective and robust.



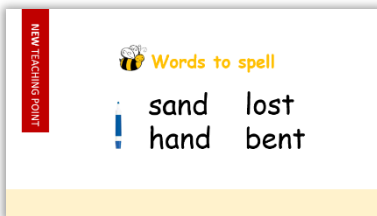

**Tip 6: Insist on your routines**  
Routines reduce cognitive load

- Teach, *reteach* and... *reteach* your routines  
*Make your routines easy to follow and hard to forget*
- Precorrect routines before starting  
*"...Before we start, phoneme fingers ready..."*
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*Bad habits form fast and hold tight*
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For a video on routines



Teaching Tips



**NEW TEACHING POINT**

 **Words to spell**

• sand	lost
• hand	bent

Next, Jared asks students to correct any errors by checking the screen. Jared takes the students, word-by-word, through the set of four, aware of the mistakes several students have made in spelling 'hiss.'

Teachers will often read the spellings aloud, asking students to tick or correct them as they go.



## Heart (irregular) Words

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

The Superman heard word drill also takes practice and insistence. Jared follows an **"I do, we do, you do"** sequence to spell the heart words.

**I do:** *"My turn ... see ... S...E...E..."*

**We do:** *"Together ... see ... S...E...E..."*

**You do:** *"Your turn see ... S...E...E..."*

The same routine is followed for the heart word set. Jared moves around and goes to students who need to re-run the Superman arm routine to get the spelling correct. These students are seated in the front rows.



## Dictation

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Jared reminds students of the routine:

*“OK, so we are going to do our dictation. We are going to say the whole sentence today ... (same thing)... We’re going to say it together three times, you’re going to say it to me, and then we’re going to tell the roof.”*

*The sentence is:”*

**I do:** *“He can sit in the sand.”*

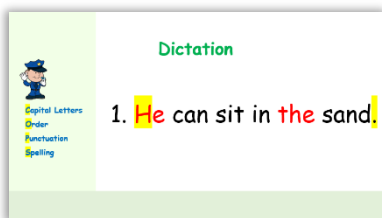
**We do x3:** *“He can sit in the sand.”*

**You do (tell the roof):** *“He can sit in the sand.”*

Jared then points downward to cue students to begin writing. He doesn't say anything because the students are holding the sentence in their working memories.

If Jared were to say anything here it would likely disrupt what students are holding in working memory and significantly lift the error rate of students while writing the sentence.

Jared moves to selected students, asking them to say the sentence again if they have forgotten it. Jared whispers as he knows his voice will distract other students with very loaded working memories.



Next, Jared asks students to correct any errors by checking the screen. Jared allows students to check their sentences against the board while moving around and helping some students.

Students chin their whiteboards when they have completed their check.

Teachers often ask students to follow the **COPS** routine when checking their sentences. This breaks the editing task into smaller steps and increases editing accuracy.





**Capital Letters**

**Order**

**Punctuation**

**Spelling**

**Step 1 Capital Letters**

Check that a capital letter is at the beginning of the first word.

**Step 2 Order**

The teacher reads the sentence slowly, and students check that they have included every word and that the words are in the correct place.

**Step 3 Punctuation**

Check that all punctuation is in place.

**Step 4 Spelling**

Check each letter in each word.

**Connected Text: Jill and Bess**  
Bess sat on her rug in the sand.  
Jill naps on the sand.  
Bess snaps at Jill. Jill spits at Bess.  
Hiss! Hiss! Hiss!

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## Connected Text

(Refer to Teachers' Manual for directions)

Jared begins with an "I do" where he reads and students track. You'll notice some students who are not tracking (fatigue has kicked in).

Then, the class read together with Jared (We do).

Finally, the class read, and Jared can look at the group as they chorally read.

### Tip 22: Watch the students as they chorally read



Look for students trying to guess words, looking at other students or zoning out. This gives important information.

Watching students gives information about how they are attending and can also raise red flags that progress monitoring may have missed.

Teaching Tips