



# Program Overview

**Building a foundation for reading and spelling:  
A multisensory structured literacy approach**

Prevention • Tier 1

Early Intervention • Tier 2

a  
b  
c



# Level K Overview

## What is the focus of Foundations® Level K?

Foundations® stands out for its thorough and multisensory structured literacy approach to teaching foundational reading and spelling skills, systematically addressing:

- Print Concepts
- Phonological/Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics & Word Study
- Accuracy, Automaticity, & Fluency
- High Frequency Words
- Handwriting
- Spelling

Level K is a yearlong program:

- 30 minutes/day
- 5 Units
- 32 weeks of instruction

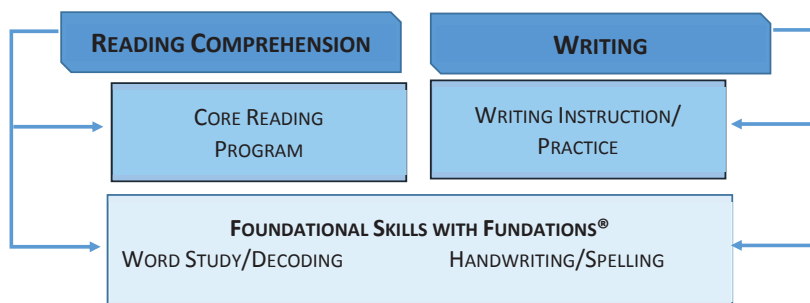
Additionally, it significantly reinforces other English language arts standards using an integrated approach, particularly: **Vocabulary & Comprehension**

Foundations is delivered to all students in general education classrooms. Learning is made fun while laying the groundwork for lifelong literacy.



## How does Foundations work with core reading programs?

Foundations teaches accuracy of decoding, spelling, and handwriting in a carefully integrated and scaffolded sequence that is taught to mastery level. It is designed to be combined with a literature-based language arts program in order to address comprehension and writing more thoroughly. Practice in a core literacy program will ensure students apply decoding with connected text and apply transcription skills (handwriting and spelling) in their writing.



Both Foundations and the core curriculum should be implemented with fidelity, reinforcing literacy activities throughout the school year.

Visit [www.wilsonlanguage.com/Foundations](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com/Foundations) to learn more.

## Foundations Program Highlights

### Essential Features

- Incorporates the science of reading and writing in a carefully designed scope and sequence for all K-3 students.
- Provides a multisensory, structured, systematic, cumulative, and explicit program with a documented research base.
- Skills overlap and are not treated in isolation. The power of the 30-minute daily lesson is that it teaches and reinforces skills using a highly integrated approach.
- Differentiates instruction while actively engaging students in their learning.

### Foundations and College- and Career-Readiness Standards

Foundations teachers can be assured that the instruction they provide aligns with their state's rigorous college- and career-readiness standards by:

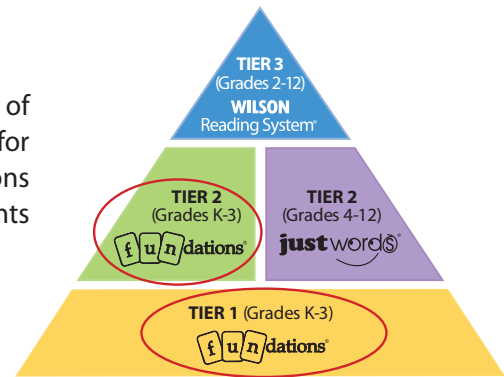
- **Thoroughly** teaching the foundational skills (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word study, and fluency); and
- Strongly supporting the reading, writing, and language standards, providing mastery instruction for many of the goals in each of those areas.

Foundations' alignment to standards is available at [www.wilsonlanguage.com](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com) and in the online Foundations Learning Community on Wilson Academy®.

# Implementation Guidelines

## How does Foundations® fit into an MTSS/RTI framework?

Foundations® is an established part of Wilson's Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and is integral to a Response to Intervention (RTI) model for successful reading and writing instruction. A yearlong program, Foundations is designed for the entire K classroom (Tier 1) as well as for at-risk students who require early intervention (Tier 2).



Tier 1: Prevention		Tier 2: Early Intervention	
Foundations instruction is delivered to <b>all students</b> in the <i>general education</i> classroom as a phonics and spelling supplement or the word study block of the core literacy program.		Foundations instruction is provided to <i>at-risk students</i> in need of <i>strategic intervention</i> and is conducted in a small-group setting by the classroom teacher and/or push-in or pull-out interventionist.	
<b>Student Focus</b>	• All K-3 general education students	• All K-3 struggling, at-risk readers in lowest 30th percentile	
<b>Group Size</b>	• Whole class	• Small group or one-to-one	
<b>Lesson Length</b>	• Standard lesson is 30 minutes daily, 5 days/week	• Intervention lesson is 30 minutes, 3-5 times per week, <b>plus</b> the daily 30-minute standard lesson	
<b>Setting</b>	• General education classroom	• May be conducted within or outside the general education classroom	
<b>Instructor</b>	• General education teacher	• General education teacher, reading specialist, paraprofessional, or intervention personnel	
<b>Professional Learning and Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated teacher support through Wilson Academy®/Foundations Learning Community (online)</li> <li>• Program Workshops</li> <li>• Virtual Implementation Support</li> <li>• Coaching Days</li> <li>• Facilitator Certification</li> <li>• Presenter Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated teacher support through Wilson Academy®/Foundations Learning Community (online)</li> <li>• Program Workshops</li> <li>• Virtual Implementation Support</li> <li>• Coaching Days</li> <li>• Facilitator Certification</li> <li>• Presenter Development</li> </ul>	

## What supports are available for teachers?

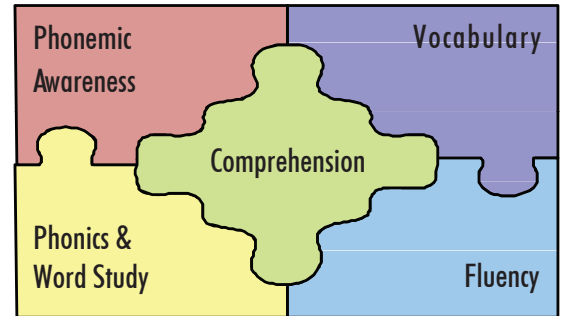
- Hardcover teacher manual with explicit day-by-day learning plans, a quick-glance for the day's activities, and list of materials to be used by the teacher and students
- Instantly accessible instructional support (printable materials, animations and video demonstrations, and discussion boards) through membership in the online Learning Community
- Guidelines on differentiating instruction for advanced students, struggling students, and ELL students
- Assessments of student mastery with weekly diagnostic checks and Unit tests
- Home Support Pack with information for parents and accompanying materials for each Unit
- Workshops, virtual implementation support, coaching, and other professional learning opportunities



# Research Base

Fundations® is based on scientific reading research demonstrating that reading is the intersection of five critical components: phonemic awareness and phonics (also referred to as alphabetics), fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. In fact, they are specified as critical foundational reading skills in states' college- and career-readiness standards, as well as the National Reading Panel report (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000).

Specifically, all children should receive direct, systematic instruction in these five areas during grades K-3. Together, they form the foundation upon which higher level reading skills, critical to success in college and the workforce, are built. Without the ability to fluently pull print from the page and comprehend it, students will be unable to understand complex text, one of the best predictors of college success (ACT, Inc., 2006).



See the Teacher's Manual to learn more about how Fundations' Learning Activities align with research findings on effective practices.

A lack of foundational skills is a major cause of poor performance in struggling readers. Word-level deficiencies limit an individual's exposure to text, which in turn impedes vocabulary development and reading comprehension (Stanovich, 1986). Fundations instruction is designed to prevent these deficiencies.

## Phonemic Awareness

Research supports direct instruction in phonemic awareness as a critical component of an effective reading curriculum (Ehri, Nunes, Willows et al., 2001; Lonigan et al., 2009; Melby-Lervåg et al., 2012). Wilson's approach to phonemic awareness instruction is based on research validating best practices that maximize growth in these skills. Research has found that, "Instruction that taught phoneme manipulation **with letters** helped normal developing readers and at-risk readers acquire phonemic awareness better than phonemic awareness instruction without letters" (*National Reading Panel Report*, NICHD, 2000, p. 2-28). Furthermore, Dr. Sally Shaywitz found that, "While phonemic awareness refers to the sounds of spoken words, it **often helps to use letters** to emphasize the different sounds and to facilitate transferring this skill to reading" (2003, pp. 178-179).

Aligned with these findings, Fundations teaches letters with sounds to help students learn how to manipulate and segment sounds. It also teaches blending of individual sounds, and integrates this instruction with phonics and spelling.

## Phonics

Fundations is explicit and systematic, aligning with research demonstrating that students in the primary grades make stronger gains when provided with direct phonics instruction as compared to incidental phonics instruction that is not clearly defined nor explicitly taught (Stuebing et al., 2008). In Fundations, students are directly taught letter-sound correspondence in the written form of the English language and they begin blending three-sound short vowel words, also called CVC words.

## Fluency

Research consistently demonstrates fluency to be a strong predictor of reading comprehension (Adams, 1990; Breznitz, 2006; Fuchs et al., 2001; Hudson et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2012). Since prosody helps readers chunk text into syntactically appropriate units that assist them in constructing meaning (Schreiber, 1980, 1991; Schreiber & Reid, 1980), Fundations teaches students to work on this skill using a penciling technique to chunk text into meaningful phrases, and practice fluently reading connected texts with accuracy, automaticity, and prosody.

## Vocabulary

Word consciousness, or “an awareness of and interest in words and their meanings, . . . can and should be fostered among preschoolers as well as among students in and beyond high school” (Graves, 2006, pp. 7-8). Foundations® instruction strives to develop students’ interest in and knowledge of both word structure and meanings. Vocabulary is taught directly and with distributed practice. First, students are taught the meaning of select words. Selection of words is based on Beck, et al.’s research on vocabulary instruction (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002). Next, students have distributed opportunities to practice reading and use vocabulary words across different contexts, which helps foster a deeper understanding of words’ meanings and students’ memory of them (Cepeda et al., 2006).

## Comprehension

Accurate, fluent word reading is a leading factor affecting a skilled reader’s comprehension of text (Carlisle & Rice, 2002), so Foundations® instruction supports this goal. Foundations instruction is also informed by research highlighting the behaviors of good and poor readers, and strategies that support comprehension (Marzola, 2011). Although meant to be combined with a core program, Foundations touches upon both reading and listening comprehension instruction, and incorporates instruction in visualization strategies, guided close reading, and oral language instruction.

## Spelling

Foundations incorporates instruction in spelling skills due to research demonstrating a connection in the brain between reading and spelling activities, leading researchers to believe that spelling strongly reinforces reading (James & Engelhardt, 2012). Additionally, students who are unable to adequately map alphabetic symbols to sounds and lack orthographic awareness have been found to have a corresponding spelling deficit (Banks, Guyer, & Guyer, 1993; Bruck, 1993; Ehri, 2000). This has led to the recommendation that as children learn to read words, they also learn to spell them (Shaywitz, 2003; Carreker, 2011). In Foundations, spelling is connected to phonics instruction and is taught through explicit instruction in spelling rules, proofreading strategies to support accurate spelling, and high frequency sight words.

## English Language Learners

Research has found that the ability to decode words is a prerequisite for reading comprehension. Therefore, for students who need practice with decoding, whether ELL or not, targeted, systematic phonics instruction is essential (Torgesen et al., 2007).

### Independent Review by the Florida Center for Reading Research identified the following program strengths:

- Foundations is derived from research that has been proven to be successful with a wide variety of learners.
- Foundations is highly systematic, both within lessons and across lessons.
- Multisensory methods are employed in teaching children sounds, their representative letters, and their combination into words, phrases, and sentences.
- Students learn a variety of techniques to analyze multisyllabic and unknown words, and words with spelling options.
- Frequent practice and review builds students’ mastery.
- Foundations can be used in a 1:1, small-group, or whole-class setting, and can be used for prevention, intervention, or immediate, intensive intervention purposes.
- Many lesson activities and games for whole class or group participation.
- Materials are very teacher friendly, and the online learning community for Foundations gives excellent demonstrations of each of the teaching activity types used in the program. Teachers can review techniques as needed.
- No program weaknesses were noted.

In schools across the U.S., students using Foundations® in Tiers 1 and 2 achieve greater gains in foundational literacy skills compared to students using programs previously implemented by the schools. These results held true for English language learners (ELL) as well. For more details: <https://tinyurl.com/FoundationsEvidence>





# Instructional Principles

*"Using multisensory experiences activates more circuitry during language learning and produces multiple representations in working memory that improve the explicitness, completeness, and durability of what is stored in long term memory." -Birsh, 2005*

Fundations® incorporates the principles of instruction identified by research as effective in increasing student achievement for all students, whether struggling, accelerated, or English language learners.

## Structured, Sequential, & Cumulative

All concepts are taught and practiced step by step following a specified sequence and building upon previously taught skills. Optimal learning is facilitated by a gradual release of responsibility model that moves from "I do it" (teacher demonstration) to "We do it" (guided instruction/practice), then "You do it together" (collaborative learning), and finally, "You do it alone" (independent success).

## Visible, Direct, & Explicit

The teacher directly teaches all concepts and skills to students through explanation, modeling, and active learning. Classroom demonstrations using manipulatives accompany explanations. Students are only expected to demonstrate knowledge of concepts taught.

## Multisensory, Engaging Multiple Learning Modalities

Lessons are interactive in nature and designed to fully engage students in the task at hand. All skills and concepts are taught and reinforced through visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic senses. This learning through various modalities helps students maintain their focus. For example, students learn by hearing sounds; manipulating color-coded sound, syllable, and word cards; using a finger-tapping technique; writing down spoken words; reading aloud and repeating what they have read in their own words; and listening to others read aloud.

## Differentiated & Diagnostic

Teachers plan lessons diagnostically to differentiate instruction based on students' needs and mastery of previously taught material. Teachers assess student mastery by analyzing student outcomes on formative and summative assessments and through daily observations.

## Integrated

Each lesson plan incorporates a variety of learning activities to ensure an integrated and applied approach to skill and strategy development across all areas of instruction.

## Ample Practice with Targeted Feedback (Teaches to Mastery/Automaticity)

Multiple and varied opportunities to practice, apply, and reinforce new and mastered skills and demonstrate understanding are provided within each lesson through a range of learning activities. Students receive immediate, specific, and supportive feedback.

Supplemental games, worksheets, activities and other resources for extra practice and review are available to teachers on the online Learning Community.

Review is also sent home as extra practice in the Level K Home Support Pack.

## Cognitive & Rigorous

Students are engaged in metacognitive thinking since it is essential that they understand the underpinnings of word structure and can apply and generalize concepts. Teachers directly discuss with students how and why they can now decode and spell words. Students explain, apply, and generalize concepts in order to express what they do in order to succeed.

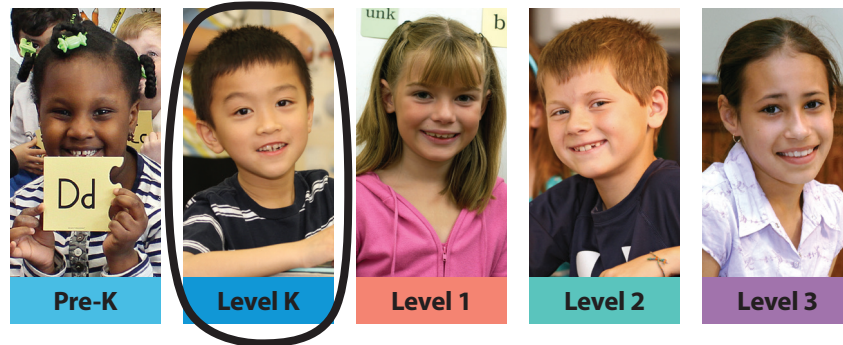
## Emotionally Sound

Expectations are clear and manageable. Students develop self-efficacy as they see that their small successes add up to very measurable achievements. Regular activity routines allow students to focus on learning concepts rather than activity processes. Students are engaged in rigorous work but with the necessary scaffolding and support for both daily successes within a lesson and overall reading and writing success.

# Instructional Principles

## Sequential and Cumulative Instruction Across the Grades

Level K lays the critical groundwork for developing proficient readers by providing critical instruction in foundational skills. Each Level of Foundations® builds upon the previous one.



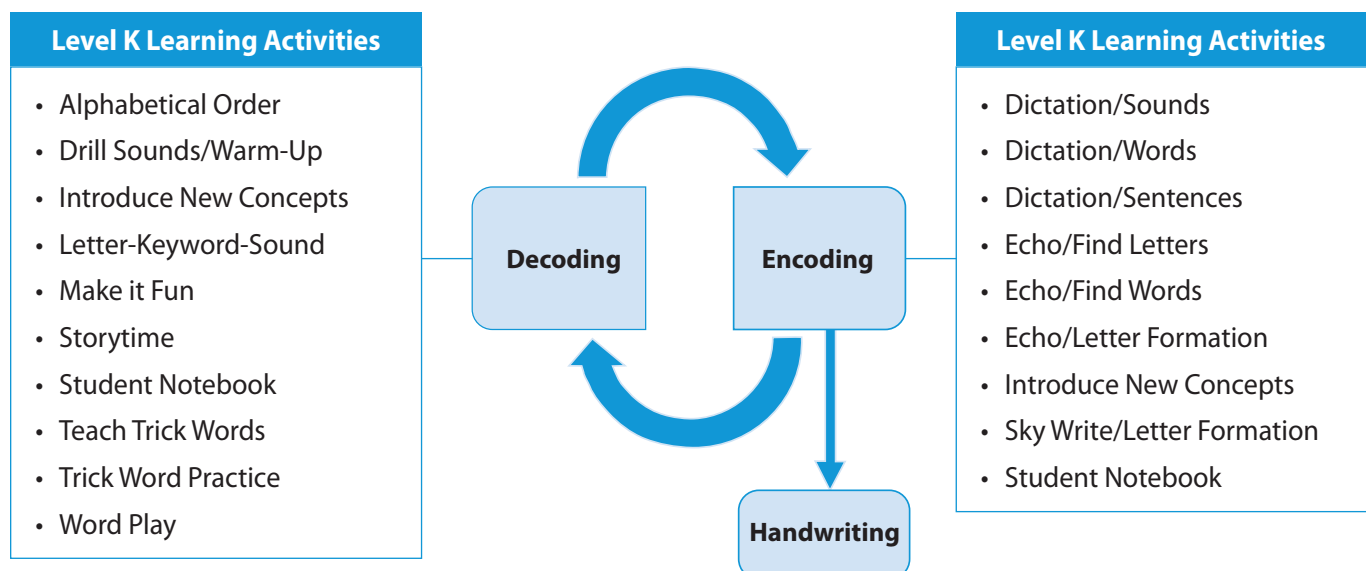
## Teaching to Mastery Through Learning Activities

Within a 30-minute lesson, Foundations emphasizes the mastery of skills through activity-based learning.

After new concepts are introduced, students engage in a variety of learning activities that allow for:

- ✓ initial practice of new skills
- ✓ deeper development of these skills
- ✓ review of previously taught skills
- ✓ reinforcement of skills through practice using multiple formats
- ✓ integrated practice of new and review skills

Rotating through diverse activities using different modalities and reinforcements supports learning and mastery while maintaining interest.



# Level K Scope & Sequence

**Level K of Foundations®** will set a very strong foundation for reading and writing. In addition to Foundations, teachers should provide students with a wide variety of text experiences, and expose them to poetry and narrative and informational text.

**By the end of Level K, students will be able to:**

- Recognize and produce rhyming words
- Segment words in an oral sentence
- Segment words into syllables
- Segment and pronounce initial, medial, and final phonemes in spoken CVC words
- Manipulate phonemes with additions or substitutions in one-syllable words
- Name all letters of the alphabet
- Write all manuscript letters in lowercase and uppercase
- Sequence letters of the alphabet
- Fluently produce sounds of consonants (primary) and short vowels when given the letter
- Fluently produce sounds for basic digraphs (**wh, sh, ch, th, ck**)
- Name and write corresponding letter(s) when given sounds for consonants, consonant digraphs, and short vowels
- Distinguish long and short vowel sounds within words
- Read and spell approximately 200 CVC words
- Spell other words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships
- Identify 75% of first 100 high frequency words, including 25-30 irregular (trick) words such as **the, was, of**
- Identify and name correct punctuation at end of sentences
- Capitalize words at beginning of sentences and names of people
- Name the author and illustrator of a story and define their roles
- Explain narrative story structure, including character, setting, and main events
- Use a combination of drawing and dictating to narrate linked events to tell a story in sequence
- Retell key details of narrative and informational text, using pictures or prompts as a guide
- Identify characters, setting, and main events in a story with pictures or other prompts
- Describe what happened in a story when given a specific illustration
- With prompts, compare and contrast the experiences of characters in two stories
- Explain difference between narrative and informational text
- Echo-read a passage with correct phrasing and expression
- Identify and explain new meanings of familiar words and newly taught words
- Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities

*Specific scope and sequence can be found in the Teacher's Manual.*

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- Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities

### Unit 1 (12 weeks)

- Letter-Keyword-Sound for consonants
- Letter-Keyword-Sound for short vowels
- Letter Formation for lowercase letters (a-z)
- Sound recognition: consonants and short vowels
- Print and word awareness
- Rhyming
- Phonemic awareness: initial and final sounds
- Story retelling
- Beginning composition skills
- Fluency/phrasing with echo and choral reading

### Unit 2 (4 weeks)

- Phonemic awareness skills: blending, segmenting, and manipulation of sounds
- Blending and reading three-sound short vowel words
- Story prediction
- Alphabetical Order
- Uppercase letter formation
- Sample words: **map, sad, rat**

### Unit 3 (6 weeks)

- Phonemic awareness skills: blending, segmenting, and manipulation of sounds
- Blending sounds in nonsense CVC words
- Segmenting and spelling three-sound short vowel words
- Distinguish long and short vowel sounds
- Narrative story form: character, setting, main events

- Fluency and phrasing with echo and choral reading
- Beginning composition skills
- High frequency words (trick words)
- Sample words: **cat, tap, wet**
- Trick words: **the, a, and, are, to, is, his, as, has, was**
- Unit 4 (4 weeks)**
- Phoneme segmentation
- Concept of consonant digraph, keywords and sounds: **wh, ch, sh, th, ck**
- Decoding three-sound words with digraphs
- Spelling three-sound words with digraphs
- Spelling of **ck** at end of words
- Narrative story form: character, setting, main events
- Sample words: **bath, chop, thick**
- Trick words: **we, she, he, be, me, I, you, they**
- Unit 5 (6 weeks)**
- Sentence structure
- Sentence dictation
- Narrative fiction vs. informational books
- Trick words: **or, for, of, have, from, by, my, do, one**



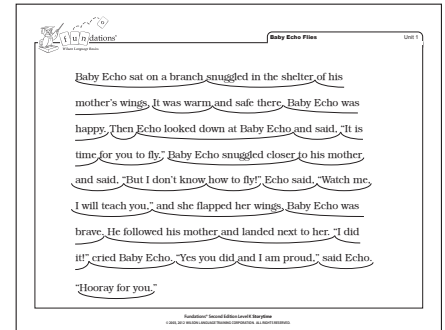
# Print Awareness

*"It has become increasingly clear that several aspects of children's knowledge about written language processes of reading play a crucial role in their development of reading ability." -Lomax and McGee, 1987*

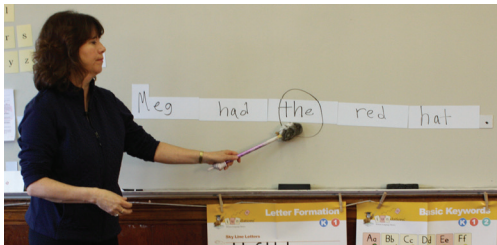
## How does Foundations® teach print awareness in kindergarten?

Print awareness is developed through varied practice designed to advance students' understanding that print has different purposes and is an ordered system that must be approached in a way that unlocks its meaning.

Print awareness is explicitly connected to books and stories during the **Storytime** Activity. The multi-part "Echo" stories allow teachers to guide students through the process of hearing a story, retelling it, drawing pictures to represent the story, writing words and sentences to correspond to the pictures, and then finally reading the story by scooping and reading sentences in phrases, one sentence at a time. This process helps students make the connection that printed language, like spoken language, carries messages for both information and for enjoyment. It helps students recognize words as distinct elements of oral and written communication. As teachers read the story, they demonstrate reading left to right and top to bottom, associate words on the page to the events in the story, and point out that sentences are made up of individual words. For an example of this process, see Unit 1 Baby Echo Flies: Part I, Week 8; Part II, Week 9; Part III, Week 10; and Part IV, Week 11.



Other **Storytime** activities recommend books (both informational and narrative for a specific purpose) and direct teachers to discuss print and book awareness, such as handling a book, front and back cover, title, author and illustrator, and features of print. (See Unit 1, Week 6, Day 5, and Unit 4, Week 1, Day 5 for examples.)



Print awareness is also demonstrated and reinforced during several activities that use the Sentence Frames to teach concepts. Activities using Sentence Frames include **Introduce New Concepts**, **Teach Trick Words**, **Trick Word Practice**, **Word Play-Word Awareness**, **Word Play-Read Sentences**, and **Dictation/Sentences**. These activities emphasize that sentences are read left to right and words are separated by spaces in print. Also, key elements of sentence structure such as capitalization and punctuation are directly taught.

The Home Support Pack K (Spanish version available and sold separately) provides activities to focus on print awareness and print concepts. (See Unit 1, Weeks 3 and 7 letters for examples.) The Learning Community for Foundations also provides resources to support print awareness and print concepts in the classroom.

## Learning Activities that Support Print Awareness and Standards Connections

### Learning Activities



- Dictation/Sentences
- Introduce New Concepts
- Make it Fun
- Storytime
- Teach Trick Words
- Trick Word Practice
- Word Play

### Standards Supported:

(See crosswalk)

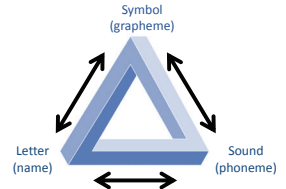
- Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page (RF 1a)
- Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters (RF 1b)
- Understand that words are separated by spaces in print (RF 1c)
- Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I (L 2a)
- Recognize and name end punctuation (L 2b)
- Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book (RI 5)
- Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text (RI 6)

# Letter Recognition & Letter-Sound Mastery

*"Children's knowledge of letters is a strong predictor of their success in learning to read." -Adams, 1990*

## How does Level K help students identify letters and master the alphabetic principle?

Kindergarten students not only learn to recognize and name letters, they simultaneously learn their formation and the letter-sound correspondence. This creates important linkages that help to **"bind the visual, motor, and phonological images of the letter together at once"** (Adams, 1990, p. 355). The sequence of letter and sound introduction is carefully considered based upon this integrated approach. Daily activities reinforce this connection, resulting in mastery of:



- Recognition and identification of all 26 letters (lowercase and uppercase)
- Association of letter name, keyword, and sound represented by the 26 letters of the alphabet (letter-sound correspondence), including short vowel sounds
- Visual connection between the letter name, sound represented by the letter(s), its written representation (grapheme), and the formation for all lowercase and uppercase letters
- Alphabetical order

## Which activities provide explicit, varied, and repeated practice in these skills?

The following daily activities offer practice in a multi-modal/multisensory manner using engaging materials.



The **Letter-Keyword-Sound** activity introduces new letters and sounds associated with a keyword. Every lesson starts with a quick **Drill Sounds/Warm-Up** activity, which helps students master the alphabetic principle of letter-sound associations.



Sound mastery is taught in two directions: letter-to-sound and sound-to-letter. The **Echo/Find Letters** activity helps to solidify sound-to-symbol correspondence and sets the foundation for spelling.



Letter formation skills are taught using kinesthetic and tactile memory in the **Sky Write/Letter Formation** and **Echo/Letter Formation** activities, and the **Student Notebook**. These activities help students make a multisensory association between the auditory sound of a letter, the grapheme or its visual representation, and the kinesthetic memory of its letter formation. (Also see Handwriting page.)

Other activities such as **Alphabetical Order**, **Dictation/Sounds**, **Make it Fun**, **Word Play**, and **Storytime** reinforce letter recognition and letter-sound mastery. Letter identification practice is embedded in meaningful print during initial letter/sound identification activities and later during decoding and encoding activities.

The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on letter recognition and letter-sound mastery. (See Unit 1 letters for examples.) The online Learning Community also provides resources to support letter recognition and letter-sound mastery in the classroom.

### Learning Activities that Support Letter Recognition, Letter-Sound Mastery, & Handwriting and Standards Connection

#### Learning Activities



- Alphabetical Order
- Dictation
- Drill Sounds/Warm-Up
- Echo/Find Letters
- Echo/Letter Formation
- Letter-Keyword-Sound
- Make It Fun
- Sky Write/Letter Formation
- Student Notebook
- Word Play

#### Standards Supported:

(See crosswalk)

- Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters (RF 1d)
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or most frequent sound for each consonant (RF 3a)
- Print many upper- and lowercase letters (L 1a)
- Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short vowel sounds (phonemes) (L 2c)

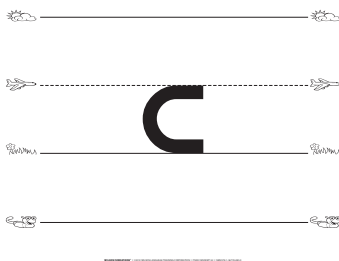
# Handwriting

*"Skills, such as handwriting fluency and spelling, play an important role in writing development, accounting for a sizable portion of the variance in writing quality and fluency." -Graham, Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, Whitaker, 1997*

## How are handwriting skills taught?

Handwriting is another important aspect of Foundations instruction. Automaticity and fluency in handwriting are strong predictors of the quantity and quality of written composition. This is true for both typically developing writers and writers with disabilities (Blalock, 1985). In Foundations, letter formation is tightly integrated with learning the letter name and the sound represented by the letter(s). Students are directly taught letter formation with the Wilson font.

Automaticity and fluency in handwriting are strong predictors of the quantity and quality of written composition.



In Level K, students master letter formation with verbal cues, repetition, sky writing, tracing, and writing practice. The students also begin to systematically learn punctuation, capitalization, and proofreading skills.

Handwriting must be fluent and automatic; it should flow naturally. This is critical because fluent, legible handwriting goes hand in hand with the ability to write strong compositions. Non-proficient handwriters cannot keep up with their ideas (Graham, 2005). The following principles of handwriting instruction are adhered to in the Foundations Level K curriculum:

Effective work habits are reinforced, such as correct posture, paper position, and pencil grip.



Letter formation is initially introduced using gross motor memory during the **Sky Write/Letter Formation** activity.



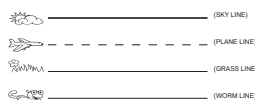
Letters are grouped into "like patterns."



Teachers use a gradual release approach to support students' incremental skill mastery. Students first use gross motor memory to sky write, then fine motor memory to trace the letter, then to copy it, and finally to write the letter from memory.



Grid lines for writing are given specific names and used as reference points.



Students are held accountable for neat, proper handwriting.



Students are guided through a letter's formation using consistent verbalization.



*Letter Formation Guides are laminated cards on a ring that provide a step-by-step guide for lower- and uppercase letter formation.*

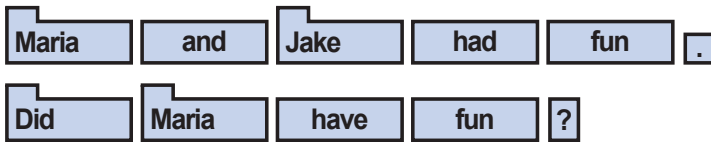
The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on handwriting. (See Unit 1, Week 1, and Unit 3, Week 1 letters for examples.) The online Learning Community also provides resources to support handwriting in the classroom. (See Level K Activity Demonstration Video – Sky Write/Letter Formation and Level K Writing Letter Formation – Let's Write for examples.)

# Phonological Awareness

## How do students practice phonological awareness skills?

Students practice these skills as they learn **word and syllable awareness**.

The blue Sentence Frames are used to help explicitly teach word awareness. These frames allow students to discern separate words in a dictated sentence. This skill is emphasized throughout Unit 1 in the **Word Play** activity. (See Week 1, Day 4 for an example.)



The skill of recognizing that our spoken thoughts (a sentence) are separated into words is reinforced throughout the year in the **Teach/Practice Trick Words** (starting in Unit 3) and the **Dictation/Sentences** (Unit 5) activities.

Moving along the phonological awareness continuum, students are then introduced to the concept of syllable awareness. This is taught and practiced using the white Syllable Frames, allowing students to see and count syllables. Each student puts a hand under their chin to *feel* the syllables and claps them out to help *hear* the syllables. This skill is practiced in the **Word Play** activity in Unit 1. (See Week 4, Day 4, and Week 5, Day 4 for examples.)

## Does Foundations® include skills such as rhyming, onset and rime, and distinguishing initial and final sounds of words?

Although the daily plan does not have a Learning Activity labeled “Phonological/Phonemic Awareness,” these skills are practiced in the **Make It Fun** activity throughout Units 1, 2, and 3. Rhyming and phonemic awareness practice are often integrated into activities that also reinforce the letter-sound and letter formation skills that have been taught. (See Unit 1, Week 7, Day 3, and Week 9, Day 3 for examples.) Unit 1 also has a few **Storytime** activities that provide activities with rhyming and alliteration books. The higher-level skill on the phonological awareness continuum of distinguishing phonemes in a word is practiced **daily** beginning in Unit 2 through the end of the year.

The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on phonological and phonemic awareness. (See Unit 1, Weeks 4, 7, and 9 letters for examples.) The online Learning Community also provides resources to support phonological and phonemic awareness in the classroom.

### Learning Activities that Support Phonological & Phonemic Awareness and Standards Connections

#### Learning Activities



- Word Play
- Make it Fun
- Storytime
- Word Play–Make Words for Decoding
- Echo/Find Words

#### Standards Supported:

(See crosswalk)

- *Recognize and produce rhyming words (RF 2a)*
- *Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in a spoken word (RF 2b)*
- *Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words (RF 2c)*
- *Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words (RF 2d)*
- *Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words (RF 2e)*



# Phonemic Awareness

*"Phonemic awareness instruction makes a stronger contribution to the improvement of reading and spelling when children are taught to use letters as they manipulate phonemes than when instruction is limited to phonemes alone."*

*-Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read, 2006*

## How is phonemic awareness taught in Foundations®?

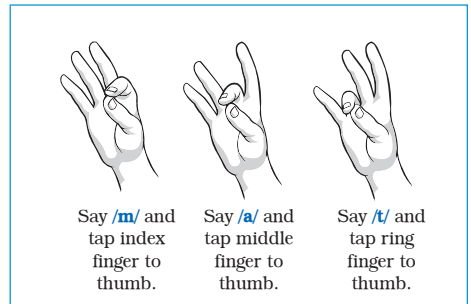
Throughout Unit 1, instruction emphasizes phonological activities across the continuum while teaching letter-sound correspondences. This prepares students for phonemic awareness instruction that begins in Unit 2 through the end of the year. Through the end of the year, students' phonemic awareness is developed **daily** through the **Word Play-Make Words for Decoding**, **Make It Fun**, and **Echo/Find Words** activities:

- identifying phonemes
- blending phonemes to form words
- segmenting words into phonemes
- deleting or adding phonemes to form new words
- substituting phonemes to make new words

Foundations "tunes in" the student to the separate phonemes in a word and develops the understanding that the sounds of **spoken** language work together to make words. This is done through card manipulation and a sound-tapping process.

Teachers and students use letter manipulatives (Sound Cards and Letter Tiles) to support the understanding of phoneme segmentation and manipulation, and identification of initial, medial, and final sounds in CVC words. Using letters to teach phonemic awareness is found to be more effective than using sounds alone (NICHD, 2000). Thus, phonemic awareness training in Foundations is closely linked with the direct teaching of the alphabetic principle (letter-sound/grapheme-phoneme correspondences).

The Wilson tapping technique is a tool to help students develop their phonemic awareness skills and practice the alphabetic principle so that they can read and spell words. Finger tapping adds a powerful tactile component to segmenting and clarifying phonemes before blending them to read the word. It helps to develop a student's awareness about the way phonemes are coarticulated when they are blended.



*"Phonemic awareness is emphasized in [Foundations] lessons where children segment and blend phonemes in words, and practice phoneme substitution, addition, and manipulation with up to six sounds in a syllable by Level 2. A unique feature of Foundations and the Wilson Reading System® is a tapping method in which students tap out the individual phonemes in a word with their fingertips, and then blend the phonemes into a word."*

*-FCRR Report on Foundations*



The skill of isolating phonemes in a spoken word is further emphasized in the **Echo/Find Words** activity beginning in Unit 3. To teach phoneme segmentation for spelling, the same tapping method is used. A student first hears the word dictated, then taps out each sound. Then, the teacher or students use the corresponding Letter Tiles to form the word to reinforce segmentation skills and the spelling-reading connection. In both the **Word Play-Make Words for Decoding** and **Echo/Find Words** activities, teachers are directed to manipulate the sounds in words.

*"...acquiring phonemic awareness is a means rather than an end. PA is not acquired for its own sake but rather for its value in helping learners understand and use the alphabetic system to read and write." –National Reading Panel: Reports of the Subgroups, 2000*



# Phonics & Word Study

*Once children understand and can use letter-sound correspondence to “sound out” new words, they are on their way to becoming independent readers. This marks an important transition for the “would be reader.” -Torgesen, 1998*

## How do Foundations® students develop sound mastery and learn the alphabetic principle?

Sound mastery is a key component of phonics. In Foundations, students are directly taught a consistently used keyword to help them remember the sound represented by a letter(s). Research has shown that the use of keywords works as a memory device to help students associate the sound relationship to the letter. The **Drill Sounds/Warm-Up** activity reinforces the alphabetic principle and allows students an opportunity to “warm up” for each lesson by practicing the letters, keywords, and sounds they have already learned. This 2-3 minute sound drill is the only drill aspect of Foundations, and is designed to create fast and efficient neurotransmission pathways to access sounds (sound mastery and automaticity).

*Using memory aids, such as mnemonic pictures, can aid the rate and ease of letter-sound correspondence learning for kindergartners.*  
- McCardle et al., 2008

An important aspect of sound mastery is the teaching of sounds in two directions to support both reading and spelling:

### Letter to Sound (reading)



In this direction, students see the letter(s) and identify the sound represented by the letter(s).



### Sound to Letter (spelling)

In this direction, students hear the sound and identify the corresponding letter(s).



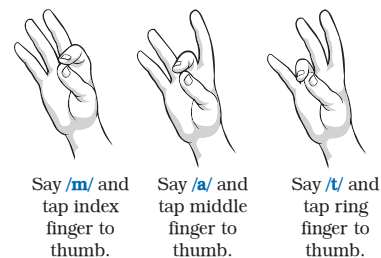
In Level K, the short vowel sounds are emphasized and practiced daily in the **Drill Sounds/Warm-Up** and **Vowel Extension** activities because students are taught the closed-syllable pattern, where the vowel is short. However, students are taught to listen for and distinguish between the long and short vowel sounds in words they segment.

## Is Foundations primarily a phonics program?

Level K lays the critical foundational groundwork as students begin with blending and segmenting CVC words.

Unit 3. Blending and segmenting are taught explicitly through Sound Card and Letter Tile manipulation, and a sound-tapping process. Spelling skills are transferred to writing during the **Dictation** activity. What is taught for decoding is also taught for spelling. (See Spelling section.)

The Wilson finger-tapping procedure is a multisensory approach with tactile input through the fingertips, which assists students in blending phonemes for reading and separating them for spelling.



Say /m/ and tap index finger to thumb.

Say /a/ and tap middle finger to thumb.

Say /t/ and tap ring finger to thumb.

**Level K Phonetically Regular Word Study Skills:** In Level K, students identify and fluently produce sounds represented by consonants (primary), short vowels, and basic digraphs. Students learn to read and spell CVC words and words with digraphs, up to three sounds, beginning by blending words that start with continuous consonants **f, m, n, l, r**, and **s**.

# Accuracy, Automaticity, & Fluency

## How does Foundations® teach reading accuracy and automaticity?

With mastery of letter-to-sound correspondence and the development of blending skills, students will be able to decode all words presented with the CVC and VC patterns. Students do not need to rely on memorization of word families. Instead, they will have a strong understanding of word structure and recognize that individual letters (not simply patterns of letters) can be changed, added, or deleted to create new words. Students work with this concept and the automatic reading of words, regardless of patterns, through exercises such as word chaining.

**Example** m a t → c a t → b a t → b a g → b u g → m u g

Students also solidify their mastery of letter-sound correspondence through the decoding of nonwords, or pseudowords, beginning in Unit 3 in the **Word Play** activity. To accurately read or spell a nonword that follows the rules of orthography, a student must apply letter-sound correspondences to determine something that has not been memorized.

Finally, while moving toward automaticity, students are explicitly encouraged to use their resources, such as classroom posters, alphabet strips, and Student Notebooks, for reference. Teachers, meanwhile, are explicitly instructed to use questioning techniques to support students' metacognition and mastery of concepts.

## How do students practice fluency with connected text?

Once students have been introduced to and have practiced single-word decoding, they will begin practicing decoding with connected text. This begins at the end of Unit 4 and is emphasized daily in Unit 5 in the **Word Play-Read Sentences** activity and reinforced with some **Make It Fun** activities. The sentences are 100% decodable, containing only the word structures that have been directly taught. From the beginning, students are taught to read in phrases and with expression.

Students also practice decoding skills when chorally reading dictated sentences written on the board in sentence frames, and when proofreading their own written sentences in **Word Play-Review Sentence Dictation** and **Dictation-Dry Erase** activities.

Direct instruction and guidance on phrasing is included at the sentence level and at the story level. Foundations uses a scooping technique to provide a graphical representation of phrasing for learning.



## The dog and cat sat on the deck.

In addition to **Storytime** activities, teachers model and students practice prosody in **Word of the Day** and **Teach Trick Words-Reading** activities, as well as when they proofread their sentences in **Dictation/Sentences**.



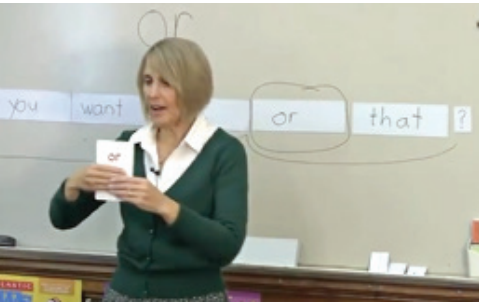
The **Geodes® Level K Classroom Library** is also available to offer authentic reading experiences for students. Organized into four modules comprising 48 unique books, topics include the five senses, farms, America, and the continents.

The first half of Level K contains Wordless Picture Books, which boost students' knowledge of story structure and vocabulary, and Sound Search Books, which grow students' letter-sound awareness. The second half of Level K contains Duet Books for children to read along with an adult while building their decoding and word recognition skills. Knowledge building occurs within books, across sets, and throughout modules, helping students develop a deep understanding of the module topic.

# High Frequency Word Study

## Does Foundations® include high frequency word (HFW, trick word) instruction?


Phonetically irregular high frequency words and high frequency words with regular sound and spelling patterns not yet introduced in the curriculum are called trick words. Trick words are not tapped out and are taught separately from phonetically regular words. Irregular high frequency words are taught for quick recognition as they do not follow regular letter-sound correspondences. High frequency words with regular patterns not yet learned are taught because they allow a student access to connected text in advance of learning the phonics principles otherwise necessary for decoding them (Ehri, 2014), and because they appear so often in text that learning to read them by sight will increase children's reading fluency (Joseph, Nation, & Liversedge, 2013).



Starting in Unit 3, several trick words are introduced in each Unit in a set sequence within the **Teach Trick Words** activity. The teacher reminds students these words have parts that are “tricky,” so they cannot be tapped out. Then, the teacher identifies any phonetic part(s) of the words the students have already learned. The teacher also points out (by naming the letters), the “tricky” part, explaining it is what they will need to remember. Words with overlapping spelling patterns are introduced together (e.g. **to**, **into**), and words are always introduced within the context of a sentence to promote automatic and fluent reading, and to aid in defining the word

when necessary. Students have repeated opportunities for practice during the **Trick Word Practice** activity, which also provides practice within the context of sentences. Automatic recognition of Level K Trick Words, combined with students' emerging phonetic knowledge, will provide mastery of 25/25 of the most common words and 75% of the first 50 words on both the Fry and American Heritage word frequency lists (Fry & Kress, 2006; Carroll, Davies, & Richman, 1971).

The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on phonics & word study; accuracy, automaticity, & fluency; and high frequency word study. The online Learning Community also provides resources to support these skills in the classroom.

Learning Activities that Support Phonics & Word Study; Accuracy, Automaticity, & Fluency; & HFW Study; and Standards Connections		
Learning Activities	Standards Supported:	(See crosswalk)
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dictation</li><li>• Drill Sounds/Warm-Up</li><li>• Echo/Find Letters</li><li>• Echo/Find Words</li><li>• Echo/Letter Formation</li><li>• Introduce New Concepts</li><li>• Letter-Keyword-Sound</li><li>• Student Notebook</li><li>• Teach Trick Words</li><li>• Trick Word Practice</li><li>• Make it Fun</li><li>• Storytime</li><li>• Word Play</li></ul></div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or most frequent sound for each consonant (RF 3a)</i></li><li>• <i>Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels (RF 3b)</i></li><li>• <i>Read common high frequency words by sight (RF 3c)</i></li><li>• <i>Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ (RF 3d)</i></li><li>• <i>Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding (RF 4)</i></li><li>• <i>Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., <b>to</b>, <b>from</b>, <b>in</b>, <b>out</b>, <b>on</b>, <b>off</b>, <b>for</b>, <b>of</b>, <b>by</b>, <b>with</b>) (L 1e)</i></li><li>• <i>Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes) (L 2c)</i></li><li>• <i>Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships (L 2d)</i></li></ul>	

*"An extensive and evolving body of research shows that direct and explicit spelling and handwriting instruction is required if all students are to master the mechanics of reading and writing." -Gentry & Graham, 2010*

## How does Foundations® support the development of transcription skills?

Foundations sets the foundation for writing by directly teaching handwriting, the study of English orthography for spelling, and the basic skills for capitalization and punctuation. (See also the Print Awareness and Handwriting pages.)

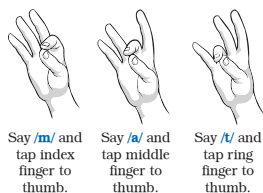
## How are spelling skills taught?

In Foundations, encoding (spelling) skills are approached in tandem with decoding (reading) skills. In other words, students learn to segment and spell words corresponding to decoding patterns taught. Spelling skills are directly taught and reinforced using multisensory techniques and manipulatives. Students learn to segment and associate letters with sounds rather than memorize words. This explicit instruction is critical because spelling does not offer visual cues so students must determine the correct letters in sequence, making spelling generally more difficult than reading.



*"Spelling is intimately related to reading and to the relation of letters to sounds. Effective spelling instruction is more than rote memorization of word lists. Spelling (going from sound to letter) strongly reinforces reading (going from letter to sound), and its instruction should be linked to a child's reading lesson." – Shaywitz, 2003*

The Wilson finger-tapping procedure is used to segment phonemes to support spelling. Foundations teaches sound mastery in two directions: letter to sound and sound to letter. Sound-to-letter mastery teaches students to hear a word, break the word down into individual phonemes by using the tapping technique, and then associate the individual phonemes in the word to the appropriate letter for spelling. Encoding instruction is conducted using manipulatives (cards, tiles) with letters during the **Echo/Find Words** activity, as well with the Dry Erase Writing Tablet and in the Student Composition Books during the **Dictation** activity.



When Foundations teaches tapping for reading, students learn to sound out the individual phonemes and then blend them into a word. When Foundations teaches tapping for spelling, students learn to segment the word into individual phonemes, and then leave the sounds segmented so that they can identify each individual phoneme and write the corresponding letter.

The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on spelling. (See Unit 1, Week 1, and Unit 3, Week 1 letters for examples.) The online Learning Community also provides resources to support spelling in the classroom. (See *Level K Activity Demonstration Video – Sky Write/Letter Formation* and *Level K Writing Letter Formation – Let's Write* for examples.)

## Learning Activities that Support Spelling Conventions of English, and Standards Connections

### Learning Activities



- Echo/Find Letters
- Echo/Find Words
- Dictation/Sound
- Dictation/Words
- Dictation/Sentence

### Standards Supported:

(See crosswalk)

- Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I (L 2a)
- Recognize and name end punctuation (L 2b)
- Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes) (L 2c)
- Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships (L 2d)



# Vocabulary

*"The average child learns approximately 3,000 new words each year." -Stahl, 2002*

## How does Foundations® help foster a rich oral language environment?

Vocabulary knowledge is an important part of the comprehension puzzle, and we know that not all our students are walking through the doors of kindergarten with equal vocabulary skills. A rich oral language environment is critical in helping these students learn the staggering number of words needed for comprehension success.

In Foundations, teachers develop a "word conscious" classroom, constantly emphasizing both structure and meaning. Vocabulary instruction is incorporated in almost every lesson. Throughout the Teacher's Manual, including the Skills Taught section of the introduction, there are reminders and ideas about how to make vocabulary a part of daily instruction.

*"Literacy piggybacks on [oral] language. The richer the [oral] language base tied to cognitive growth and experience, the stronger the foundation for reading, writing, spelling, and comprehension." -Birsh, 2010*

*Vocabulary instruction must be interwoven into word-study work.  
-Boardman et al., 2008; Murray et al., 2010;  
Wilson & O'Connor, 1995*

Foundations is only a small part of daily instruction. Teachers can create a rich oral language environment by using Foundations' strategies for integrating vocabulary throughout the school day so that students encounter multiple and varied vocabulary words.

## How does Foundations teach vocabulary?

In Foundations Level K, vocabulary is explained, not defined. There is no specific vocabulary activity because vocabulary instruction is intertwined in many different daily activities. We recommend this approach when coming across a new vocabulary word:

- Children repeat word to create a phonological representation.
- Meaning of word is explained in everyday language.
- Teacher provides student-friendly examples of the word in a sentence that helps explain the meaning, and that likely has a familiar context for the students. "I carefully took the kitten off the kitchen table and **set** her on the floor" is a more explanatory sentence than "I **set** the kitten down."
- Children provide sentences (without using definition).

**The power of Foundations is that it overlaps skills and does not address them in isolation.**

When asking students for a word's meaning, they are taught to explain it without using the word itself. Teachers will also help cement understanding by encouraging students to tell them about the word. For example, a teacher may ask "What might someone look like if he or she were **cheerful**?"

The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on vocabulary. (See the Orientation Week and Unit 1, Week 5 letters for examples.) The online Learning Community also provides resources to support vocabulary in the classroom. (See *Level K Activity Demonstration Video – Echo/Find Letters and Words* and *Level K Expert Tips/Ideas – Activity Tips Vocabulary* for examples.)

### Learning Activities that Support Vocabulary and Standards Connections

#### Learning Activities



- Dictation
- Echo/Find Words
- Introduce New Concepts
- Student Notebook
- Trick Words
- Make It Fun
- Storytime
- Word Play

#### Standards Supported:

(See crosswalk)

- Vocabulary instruction is intertwined in word study and comprehension activities.
- Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text (RL 4, RI 4)
  - Identify new meanings for familiar words & apply them accurately (L 4a)
  - Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word (L 4b)
  - Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) (L 5b)
  - Identify real-life connections between words and their use (L 5c)
  - Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action by acting out the meanings (L 5d)



# Comprehension

*"Even teachers in the primary grades can begin to build the foundation for reading comprehension. Reading is a complex process that develops over time. . . . Beginning readers, as well as more advanced readers, must understand that the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension." -Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read, 2001*

## How does Foundations® address comprehension, which is the ultimate goal of reading?

Foundations is a foundational skills program, meant to teach to mastery the many sub-skills needed to reach the ultimate goal of reading: comprehension! Accurate, fluent word reading is a leading factor affecting a skilled reader's comprehension of text (Carlisle & Rice, 2002), so Foundations instruction supports this goal. Foundations instruction is also informed by research highlighting the behaviors of good and poor readers, and strategies that support comprehension (Marzola, 2011).



While Foundations is designed to be paired with a core program that fully addresses comprehension, it does practice comprehension strategies weekly. In Foundations, these are taught explicitly, which is particularly useful for those who struggle with comprehension (Gersten, Fuchs, Williams, & Baker, 2001). Foundations addresses reading and listening comprehension instruction, and incorporates instruction in visualization strategies, guided close reading, and oral language instruction.

## What is Comprehension S.O.S™, and how is it used during Foundations Storytime?

Students must hold onto information across sentences to create cohesion so that they understand and link events in a text. Then, they must develop the skill to retell those events in a coherent way. In Foundations, teachers will use a technique called Comprehension S.O.S. (Comprehension: Stop-Orient-Support/Scaffold), a teacher-led interactive discussion about written text.

### Storytime!

Units 1-5, Day 5 of each week

*Mental images aid comprehension and memory by acting as mental pegs onto which the information can be hooked.*

- Sadoski & Paivo, 2001

In Foundations, retelling begins in kindergarten with the **Storytime** activity, which offers explicit instruction on creating mental images through listening comprehension. Students learn to use their working memory to hold several words/sentences in mind and to process, understand, and recall them, eventually retelling the whole story in their own words. **Storytime** helps develop students' awareness of print visualization, understanding of story structure, verbal memory, and comprehension.

In Foundations, each Unit describes the varied **Storytime** procedures and offers recommended readings. The progression of reading text grows throughout the year.

The Home Support Pack K provides activities to focus on comprehension. (See Unit 1, Week 5, and Unit 3 Intro letters for examples.) The online Learning Community also provides resources to support comprehension in the classroom. (See *Level K Activity Resources – Storytime Activities Guiding Questions* and *Level K Expert Tips/Ideas – Reinforcing Activities Story Strips* for examples.)

## Learning Activities that Support Comprehension and Standards Connections

### Learning Activities



- Storytime

### Standards Supported:

(See crosswalk)

While not a comprehensive core ELA program, Foundations activities support these standards.

- Key details in a text (RL 1, RI 1) • Retell familiar stories (RL 2) • Identify the main topic (RI 2)
- Identify characters, settings, and major events in a story (RL 3) • Connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text (RI 3) • Recognize common types of texts (RL 5) • Name the author and illustrator of a story in telling the story (RL 6) • Describe the relationship between illustrations and the story (RL 7, RI 7) • Compare and contrast experiences of characters (RL 9)
- Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (RI 9) • Actively engage in group reading activities (RL 10, RI 10) • Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges (SL 1b) • Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally (SL 2)

# Lesson Planning

## How is the Teacher's Manual organized?

The Teacher's Manual contains information on how to present program content to students. Specifically, the *Implementing Foundations®* section provides a summary of what is taught and the rationale behind instruction of each component. The *Learning Activity Overview* explains each Learning Activity while the *Orientation* clearly explains how to construct a learning plan for each day of a five-day lesson plan rotation.

The manual is organized by Units. Within each Unit is a comprehensive weekly learning plan to support word study, spelling, and handwriting. Each week is further divided by day, with each day having a "Daily Plan" containing two to five Learning Activities. Collectively, these take 30 minutes to complete and all content can be completed within a regular school year. The Learning Activities address essential skills using an integrated approach. Teachers must do each standard lesson daily so the goals of the curriculum are met. Activity Cue Cards K are a quick reference for correct activity procedures.

**Weeks 2 • 11**

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
Letter-Keyword-Sound	Drill Sounds/Warm-Up	Drill Sounds/Warm-Up	Drill Sounds/Warm-Up	Drill Sounds/Warm-Up
Drill Sounds/Warm-Up	Sky Write/Letter Formation	Make It Fun	Word Play	Storytime
Sky Write/Letter Formation	Student Notebook	EchoFind Letters	Sky Write/Letter Formation	EchoFind Letters
Student Notebook	Echo/Letter Formation	Student Notebook	Echo/Letter Formation	

**Activity Cue Card Front**

**Activity Cue Card Back**

## How would I plan a Foundations Lesson?

Within each standard lesson, teachers compose their own daily learning plan that is tailored to students' needs. A fillable learning plan is available in the online Learning Community, as are Learning Plan samples. Personalized lesson planning is a key to Foundations' success. When teachers create their own learning plans, they:

- strengthen the process of learning and understanding the curriculum
- diagnostically differentiate instruction for students based on need and mastery of concepts

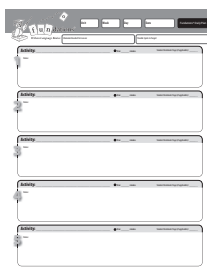
As teachers learn to plan and teach lessons, they should:

- read through a daily standard lesson
- fill out and print a learning plan using the template from the Learning Community
- review activity procedures for the day's Learning Activities (practice with Activity Cue Cards for mastery)
- determine clear step-by-step instructions to guide students during transitions
- visualize lessons and transitions between activities

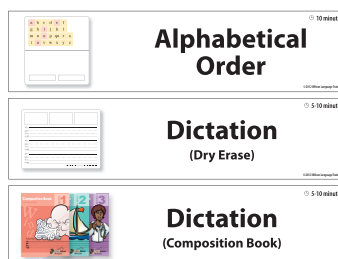
Teachers are encouraged to plan metacognitively by considering lesson goals and why those goals are important. Introducing the day's activities (via Activity Strips) and goals to students is important as well. Foundations also stresses teacher reflection after lessons, allowing for evaluation of lessons' effectiveness.

### Learning Community Connection

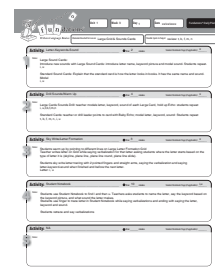
#### Fillable Daily Plan



#### Activity Strips



#### Sample Learning Plan K



# Diagnostic Teaching

The diagnostic nature of Foundations® combines assessment and instruction, allowing teachers to determine and address students' strengths and challenges.

## What does informal and formal assessment look like in Foundations?

Informal formative assessment is used during the learning process (i.e., daily Learning Activities) to let teachers know how well their students are learning. "Show me" is a phrase Foundations teachers use with clear instructional objectives. It requires learners to do intellectual work and demonstrate their thinking through performance. Teachers provide immediate feedback to students.

Students' achievement is assessed by looking at their progress from multiple perspectives, including direct observation of daily work and independent application of skills. For example, teachers might ask students to explain their thinking when determining unknown words or when attempting to spell a word for their independent writing. Even if the words are incorrect, are students able to correct them with guiding questions? Teachers observe whether students are beginning to self-monitor their responses and use problem-solving strategies to complete decoding or spelling tasks.

Formal formative assessment is completed via the Mid-Unit Check and Unit Tests. With Unit Tests, each student is assessed individually, and 80% of the class should be at benchmark (scoring 80% on each subtest) before moving to the next Unit. Students receiving Tier 2 intervention with Foundations are also assessed using the Progress Monitoring Tool.

## How does Foundations differentiate instruction?

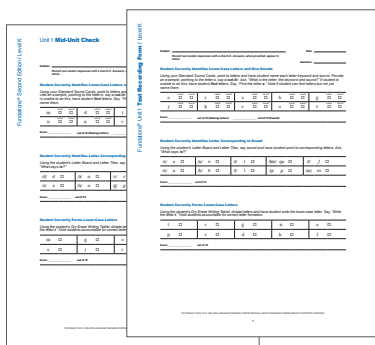
Differentiating instruction is a product of diagnostic teaching. Foundations provides teachers with strategies for differentiation to meet the needs of various learners. Once needs are determined through assessments, classwork is tailored accordingly. Differentiation guidelines for students who need extra support (ELLs and those who perform below grade level) or greater challenges (i.e., advanced students) can be found in the manual's *Learning Activity Overview* and in each Unit's introduction. The online Learning Community offers Lesson Support Activities for targeted instruction, and supplements for advanced work.

## Who needs Tier 2 intervention and progress monitoring?

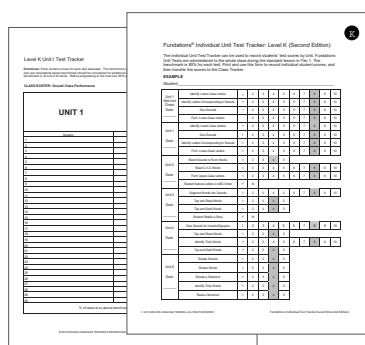
By the Mid-Unit Check (Unit 1, Week 6), teachers determine if students need small-group intervention. Prior to that, teachers using benchmark assessments such as DIBELS can use *beginning of the year* scores to identify at-risk students. Instruction for these students includes the standard lesson plus an intervention lesson targeting difficulties. Intervention guidance is available in the online Learning Community and with intervention workshops. **Foundations Level K Progress Monitoring** measures what students know compared to skills taught in the Level K curriculum. This can be used with all Foundations students, but is particularly helpful for those in Tier 2 Intervention. It includes measures in letter naming, letter-sound automaticity, sound identification, word identification, nonsense word fluency, phoneme segmentation, fluency, and sight word fluency.

### Learning Community Connection

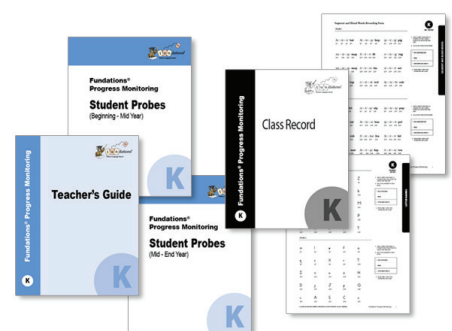
#### Mid-Unit Test & Unit Test Recording Forms

The image shows two overlapping forms. The top form is the 'UNIT 1 Mid-Unit Check' recording form, which includes a table for recording scores for various subtests. The bottom form is the 'Foundations® Unit Test Recording Form', which is a larger table for recording scores for multiple units and subtests.

#### Whole Class & Individual Class Test Trackers

The image shows two overlapping trackers. The left tracker is the 'Level K Unit 1 Test Tracker', which is a table for recording scores for individual students across different subtests. The right tracker is the 'Foundations® Individual Unit Test Tracker: Level K (Second Edition)', which is a more detailed table for recording scores for individual students across multiple units and subtests.

#### Progress Monitoring K



# Materials

The Foundations® Teacher's Kit K includes comprehensive materials to facilitate teachers' use of the program. Level K materials support an integrated, multisensory approach to instruction, utilizing visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic modalities.



- ① **Teacher's Manual K:** Provides background understanding and research support for the why and how of instruction, scope & sequence of skills taught, and daily learning plans with activities to practice new skills and weave in review of taught concepts
- ② **Echo & Baby Echo Puppets:** Serve as effective helpers for promoting student responses
- ③ **Activity Cue Cards K:** Offer a quick reference for Learning Activities
- ④ **Home Support Pack K:** Informs parents/caregivers about Foundations and how they can support progress, and includes student activities
- ⑤ **Alphabet Wall Strip,** ⑥ **Keyword Puzzles,** ⑦ **Large Sound Cards K,** ⑧ **Standard Sound Cards K,** ⑨ **Magnetic Strips,** ⑩ **Trick Word Flashcards K,** ⑪ **Classroom Poster Set K,** and ⑫ **Vowel Extension Poster:** These materials support students' letter recognition, phonological awareness, and phonics skills via visual prompts, oral language, and systematic modeling and practice.
- ⑬ **Large Letter Formation Grid,** ⑭ **Sentence and Syllable Frames,** and ⑮ **Manuscript Letter Formation Guides:** These materials are used extensively for handwriting, spelling, and punctuation instruction, making it possible for students to see, hear, say, and touch while learning. Likewise, student materials provide for both reading and writing activities and multisensory, visible learning.

- ⑯ **Letter Board** and ⑰ **Magnetic Letter Tiles:** These allow students to kinesthetically manipulate/practice sounds, and build words.
- ⑱ **Dry Erase Writing Tablet:** A kinesthetic component for letter formation practice
- ⑲ **Student Notebook K:** A reference for letter formation, keyword pictures, and sounds; lends itself to kinesthetic tracing strategies
- ⑳ **My Foundations Journal:** A supplemental material for writing letters and words as well as coloring
- ㉑ **Desk Strip:** A useful reference material for independent decoding and spelling activities
- ㉒ **Foundations Writing & Drawing Pad:** A sample pad for students to journal or practice their emergent writing; includes the Wilson grid lines with paper template also available on the online Learning Community.

## Supplemental materials (not included in kit):

- ㉓ **Geodes® Level K Classroom Library:** A collection of 48 unique books from Great Minds® and Wilson Language Training®

*Note: The visual design of Foundations products is minimally distracting to allow students to focus on concepts being learned. Teachers and students can rely on consistent and clear visual cues.*



# Teacher Support

## What is the Foundations® Learning Community?

Part of Integrated Teacher Support, the online Learning Community for Foundations is a companion website that provides resources to help teachers with instruction. It includes video demonstrations to watch, animations that assist with the understanding of word structure, print resources, monthly expert tips from master teachers, and a discussion board connecting teachers to a community with others. For Intervention teachers, specific resources are also included. Membership is included with the Teacher's Manual.

## What professional learning opportunities are available?

Wilson offers a range of professional learning opportunities to help educators enhance their instruction and support Foundations® implementation with fidelity.

**Foundations Workshop for Level K:** Provides underlying principles and practical strategies. Reviews Level K skills, materials, multisensory practices, and activities.

**Intervention Workshop:** Focuses on the skills, materials, activities, and lesson planning of the Intervention lesson, how to use the Progress Monitoring Tool, and the background knowledge, practice, and guidance needed to incorporate fluency instruction.

**Virtual Implementation Support:** Provides teachers with access to a virtual collaborative community where they can interact and learn from a Wilson Literacy Specialist.

**Foundations Demonstration Sites with On-site Coaching:** Provide support through demonstrations, coaching, and feedback. For intervention teachers, coaching also focuses on specific features of the intervention setting.

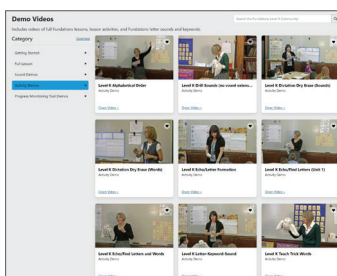
**Sustainability Plan:** The Foundations Facilitator Certification is a yearlong program designed to build staff capacity by supporting the implementation of Foundations and contributing to teacher and student success. Facilitator Certification is offered in Levels K and Intervention (as well as the other Foundations Levels). Graduate credit is available. Upon completion of the Certification, Foundations Facilitators are well-positioned to:

- Support a common understanding among all teachers of effective implementation for Level K;
- Demonstrate working knowledge of the Level K curriculum;
- Assist teachers by demonstrating specific Foundations activity procedures and lesson planning;
- Assist and support teachers with program materials, classroom setup, and online resources;
- Schedule and facilitate ongoing study groups; and
- Support teachers so they have the materials needed to implement Level K from year to year.

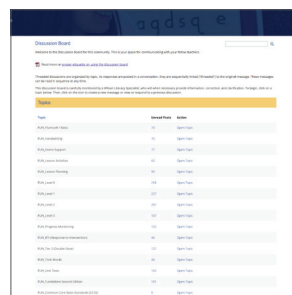
Presenter Development builds capacity by providing districts with a cost-effective way to deliver program workshops. Upon completion of the Presenter program requirements, Credentialed Presenters can deliver the Foundations Level K Workshop within the district. Comprehensive workshop materials, access to Wilson's online community, and ongoing support from Wilson Fidelity Team members are provided.

## Learning Community Connection

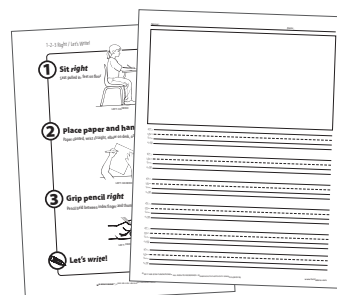
### Lesson, Sound, and Activity Demos



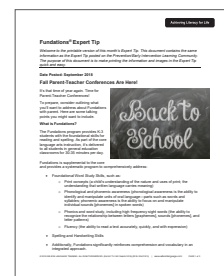
### Discussion Board



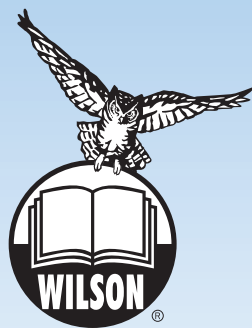
### Printable Resources



### Expert Tips







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[www.wilsonlanguage.com](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com)

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