



Literacy handout 3: introducing reading and beginning writing

Building on the phonics skills covered in previous units, this handout guides you through the process of introducing your secondary ELs to reading and beginning writing. Effective reading instruction is based on a strong foundation in phonics, which enables students to decode words and understand text.

Moving from sound-symbol correspondence to reading:

- Students learn to connect phonemes (sounds) to graphemes (letters or letter combinations)
- This knowledge of sound-symbol correspondence forms the foundation for reading
- As students master more sound-symbol relationships, they can begin to read simple words and sentences

The Off2Class foundational literacy lessons are designed to help students make the transition from understanding sound-symbol correspondence to applying this knowledge in reading contexts. By providing a systematic, scaffolded approach, the lessons support students in developing literacy skills.



Strategies for introducing reading:

Once students are familiar with phonemes, graphemes, and the basic phonics rules, they are ready to start reading words and sentences. Following the Off2Class foundational literacy lessons will:

- Start with Decodable Words: Use words that strictly follow the phonics rules taught in earlier lessons. This helps reinforce students' decoding skills.
- Read in Context: Gradually introduce sentences that incorporate both new and reviewed phonics patterns. This practice helps students apply their phonics knowledge in real reading scenarios.
- Use Visuals to Aid Comprehension: Support reading comprehension by using pictures and visuals that relate to the text. This helps students make connections between words and their meanings.

When introducing reading, we start with words that students can easily decode using their knowledge of sound-symbol correspondence. The Off2Class lessons provide decodable texts that align with the phonics patterns taught in each unit, allowing students to apply their skills in a supported context.

Foundations of writing:

As students develop their reading skills, they should also begin to practice writing. Writing at this stage should reinforce their phonics knowledge and help them cement the connection between sounds and letters. The Off2Class foundational literacy lessons get students writing from the very beginning.

- Encourage students to practice writing the letters and letter combinations they have learned
- Provide opportunities for students to write individual words using the sound-symbol patterns they know
- Offer scaffolded writing tasks that focus on writing simple words rather than complete sentences

At this early stage of literacy development, writing practice should focus on reinforcing sound-symbol relationships and providing students with opportunities to apply their knowledge in a highly structured context. The Off2Class lessons include basic writing tasks that are tailored to the phonics patterns and sight words taught in each unit, allowing students to practice writing individual words.



Lesson structure in Off2Class foundational literacy lessons:

- Review: Practice previously learned sound-symbol correspondences and sight words
- New Concept: Introduce new phonics patterns and sight words
- Practice Reading: Apply new and reviewed skills to reading decodable words and sentences
- Beginning Writing: Complete simple writing tasks using new and reviewed sound-symbol patterns and sight words
- Extended Practice: Engage in additional reading activities to reinforce skills

The consistent lesson structure in the Off2Class foundational literacy lessons supports students in developing reading skills and beginning writing skills by providing a repeated format that emphasizes practice and application. Each component of the lesson builds upon the previous one, allowing for a predictable and cohesive approach to literacy instruction.

Overview of units 7-12: applying phonics skills to connected text and building comprehension:

- Unit 7: Longer word patterns 1
- Unit 8: Longer word patterns 2
- Unit 9: R-controlled vowels
- Unit 10: Long vowel combinations & diphthongs 1
- Unit 11: Long vowel combinations & diphthongs 2
- Unit 12: Long vowel combinations & diphthongs 3

Units 7-12 of the Off2Class foundational literacy lessons focus on applying phonics skills to connected texts and building comprehension. Students engage with increasingly complex texts and tasks, developing the skills needed for academic success.



Unit	Reading & phonics skills	Example sound-out words	Key sight words
7	Suffixes, multisyllabic words	Rested, planting, pulling	Many, any, been, into
8	Complex consonant patterns, advanced digraphs	Bridge, judge, witch	Move, both, four
9	R-controlled vowels	Far, from, third	Pretty, nothing, other
10	Long vowel combinations, diphthongs	Paint, meet, boat	Today, very, above
11	Long vowel variations, complex patterns	Cook, room, chew	Floor, door, poor,
12	Comprehensive review and application	Read, point, loud	Monday, Wednesday

Next Step: [Open the “a e, i e, o e” lesson](#) in Off2Class.

Notice how the lesson transitions from practicing individual sound-symbol correspondences to reading complete words that include the target graphemes. Consider how you can support your students in applying their new phonics knowledge to decode these words successfully.