

Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Standards Concepts and Competencies Guide (4th edition)

Standard 1 Foundational Literacy Concepts



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Introduction

This document outlines concepts and competencies for the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Coursework, Standard 1. It is intended as a guide for both literacy instructors and preservice teachers.

Section 1 states the language of Standard 1. This is part of the Idaho Standards for Initial Certification of Professional School Personnel approved during the 2022 Idaho Legislative session, to which teacher preparation programs were to be aligned by July 1, 2022.

Section 2 contains specific Standard 1-based content and concepts, off of which the assessment is based.

Section 3 lists key terms and definitions.

Instructors are encouraged to use the content list, and the key terms and definitions list, when planning their courses.

Students are encouraged to use the content list and the key terms and definitions list as a study guide for the assessment.

Section I

Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Standard 1 - Foundational Literacy Concepts

(Applies to the following endorsements: All Subjects K-8; Blended Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education Birth through Grade 3 and Pre-K through Grade 6; Deaf/Hard of Hearing K-12; Early Childhood Special Education Pre-K-3; Exceptional Child Generalist K-8, 6-12, and K-12; and Visual Impairment K-12.)

The teacher candidate demonstrates knowledge of the following foundational concepts of literacy instruction and their typical developmental progression, oral language, emergent literacy, concepts of print, phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, phonics skills, automatic word recognition, orthographic knowledge, fluency, linguistic development, and English language acquisition. The candidate teaches these concepts using evidence-based practices including systematic, explicit, and multisensory instruction. The teacher candidate understands learners with reading difficulties require code-based explicit, systematic, sequential, and diagnostic instruction with many repetitions.

(Idaho Standards for Initial Certification of Professional School Personnel, 2022, p. 5)

Section 2

Concepts and Competencies for Elementary Education

In order to support students' literacy development, teachers are expected to meet the multiple components of the standard. Below, concepts and competencies related to the standard are delineated. Candidates should be able to demonstrate understanding of the concepts and performance (or knowledge of how to perform) in the competencies.

The list of concepts and competencies includes well-researched and documented information, but is not intended to be an all-inclusive list. A variety of instructional approaches should be researched, depending upon the discipline and the purpose of the instruction. The provided concepts and competencies are intended to be utilized in course design.

Candidate knowledge of the concepts and competencies are additionally assessed in the Standard 1 ICLA.

Concepts and Competencies Outline

1. **The teacher candidate demonstrates knowledge of the following foundational concepts of literacy instruction and their typical developmental progression:**
 - a. oral language
 - b. emergent literacy
 - c. concepts of print
 - d. phonological awareness
 - e. alphabetic principle
 - f. phonics skills
 - g. automatic word recognition
 - h. orthographic knowledge
 - i. fluency
 - j. linguistic development
 - k. English language acquisition
- Structure of the English language
 - Phonemes
 - Consonant and vowel classifications
 - Sound/spellings
 - Syllables
 - Onset-rimes
 - Morphemes

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

- Early Literacy Instruction
 - Oral language
 - Phonological awareness
 - ☐ Word
 - ☐ Syllable
 - ☐ Onset-rime
 - ☐ Phoneme
 - ◆ Blending
 - ◆ Segmenting
 - ◆ Manipulation
 - ◇ Words
 - ◇ Syllables
 - ◇ Onsets and rimes
 - Written language
 - Concepts about print
 - Print awareness
 - Letter Knowledge

3. The candidate teaches these concepts using evidence-based practices including systematic, explicit, and multisensory instruction.

- Decoding and Word Recognition
 - Phonics
 - Approaches
 - ☐ Synthetic Phonics [research-preferred]
 - ☐ Analogy Phonics
 - ☐ Analytic Phonics
 - ☐ Embedded Phonics [not supported by research as effective instructional practice]
 - Systematic and Explicit Instruction
 - Word Reading
 - Irregular words
 - High frequency words
 - Sight words
 - Multisyllabic Word Reading
 - Common syllable types
 - Division principles
 - Affixes
- Fluency
 - Components
 - Accuracy
 - Automaticity
 - Rate
 - Prosody

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

- Fluency Influences
 - Foundational skills
 - ☐ Phonics
 - ☐ Phonemic awareness
 - ☐ Letter knowledge
 - Connection to comprehension
 - Effective instructional approaches
- Reading Comprehension
 - Influences
 - Foundational skills
 - Fluency

4. The teacher candidate understands learners with reading difficulties require code-based explicit, systematic, sequential, and diagnostic instruction with many repetitions.

(from IDA KPs) Understand/apply in practice the general principles and practices of structured language and literacy teaching, including explicit, systematic, cumulative, teacher-directed instruction.

Section 3

Terminology

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
accuracy	This is the ability to recognize or decode words correctly (Honig et al., 2018).
affix	Most commonly a suffix or prefix attached to a base word, stem, or root (Bear et al., 2016).
aliteracy	Students who can read fairly well but choose not to (Honig et al., 2018).
alliteration	The occurrence in a phrase or line of speech of two or more words having the same beginning sound. Example: big burly bears bashed berry baskets (Bear et al., 2016).
alphabetic principle	1. The principle that letters are used to represent individual phonemes in the spoken word (Moats, 2020). 2. Representing the sounds of speech with a set of distinct symbols (letters), each denoting a single sound (Bear et al., 2016).
analogy phonics	In this approach, students learn how to use a phonogram, or rime, in a familiar word to identify an unfamiliar word having the same rime (Honig et al., 2018). <i>*Formerly described as Decoding by Analogy. To be used in conjunction with synthetic phonics.</i>
analytic phonics	Word study that divides words into their elemental parts through phonemic, orthographic, and morphological analysis (Bear et al., 2016). <i>*To be used in conjunction with synthetic phonics.</i>
automaticity	Refers to the speed and accuracy of word recognition and spelling. Automaticity is the goal of word study instruction and frees cognitive resources for comprehension (Bear et al., 2016).
base word	A word to which prefixes and/or suffixes are added. For example, the base word of <i>unwholesome</i> is <i>whole</i> (Bear et al., 2016). <i>*See also root word.</i> <i>*See also free morphemes.</i>

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
blends	A phonics term for an orthographic unit of two or three letters at the beginning or end of words that are blended together. There are <i>l</i> -blends such as <i>bl</i> , <i>cl</i> , and <i>fl</i> ; <i>r</i> -blends such as <i>gr</i> , <i>tr</i> , and <i>pr</i> ; <i>s</i> -blends such as <i>pc</i> , <i>scr</i> , and <i>squ</i> ; and final blends such as <i>ft</i> , <i>rd</i> , and <i>st</i> . Every sound represented in a blend is pronounced , if only briefly (Bear et al., 2016).
bound morpheme	Meaning units of the language (morphemes) that cannot stand alone as a word. <i>Respected</i> has three bound morphemes: <i>re</i> + <i>spect</i> + <i>ed</i> (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>free morpheme</i> .
choral reading	Oral reading done in unison with another person or persons (Bear et al., 2016).
closed sort	Word or picture sort based on predetermined categories (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>open sort</i> .
closed syllable	1. A syllable that ends with or is “closed” by a consonant sound (Bear et al., 2016). 2. A syllable ending in one or more consonants and having a short-vowel sound spelled with one vowel letter. VC, CVC, CCVC, CVCC (Honig et al., 2018).
cognates	Words in different languages derived from the same root (Bear et al., 2016).
compound word	Words made up of two or more smaller words. A compound word may or may not be hyphenated, depending on its part of speech (Bear et al., 2016).
Concepts About Print (CAP)	Understandings about how books are organized (front-to-back page turning, titles, illustrations), how print is oriented on the page (top to bottom, left to right), and features of print such as punctuation and capitalizations (Bear et al., 2016).
consonant	Letters that are not vowels (a, e, i, o, u). Whereas vowel sounds are thought of as musical, consonant sounds are known for their noise and the way in which air is constricted as it is stopped and released or forced through the vocal tract, mouth, teeth, and lips (Bear et al., 2016).
consonant blend	1. Two or more consonants in which you can hear both sounds blended. The word <i>blend</i> begins and ends with a consonant blend (Cunningham, 2017). 2. Every sound represented in a blend is pronounced, if only briefly (Bear et al., 2016).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
consonant digraph	Two consonant letters with a single sound different from that of either of the letters: <i>sh, ch, wh, th, ph</i> (<i>Digraph</i> ends with the digraph <i>ph</i>) (Cunningham, 2017). *See also <i>digraph</i> .
consonant -le (syllable pattern)	A final, separate syllable containing a consonant followed by the letters <i>-le</i> , pronounced /əl/ (Honig et al., 2018).
decoding	Ability to translate a word from print to speech, usually by employing knowledge of sound-symbol correspondences; also the act of deciphering a new word by sounding it out (Moats, 2020).
derivational affix	Affixes added to base words that affect the meaning (e.g., sign, resign ; break, breakable) and/or the part of speech (Bear et al., 2016).
developmental spelling (<i>aka invented spelling</i>)	Spelling that reflects the current word knowledge of students who “spell” as best they can, based upon what they know about the phoneme-grapheme correspondences.
dialogic reading	An approach to reading aloud that is designed to stimulate oral reading and dialogue while enhancing students’ ability to retell stories (Bear et al., 2016).
Digraph *Pronounced <i>di-graph</i> , not <i>di-a-graph</i> .	Two letters that represent one sound. There are consonant digraphs and vowel digraphs, though the term most commonly refers to consonant digraphs. Common consonant digraphs include <i>sh, ch, th, wh, and ph</i> . Consonant digraphs at the beginning of words are <i>onsets</i> (Bear et al., 2016). Common vowel digraphs include <i>oa, aw, and oo</i> . *See also <i>consonant digraph</i> and <i>vowel digraph</i> .
Diphthong *Pronounced <i>dif-thong</i> , not <i>dip-thong</i>	A complex speech sound combining two vowel sounds into one vowel sound. The mouth moves while pronouncing the dual-vowel sound (Bear et al., 2016). Common diphthongs are <i>oi, oy, ou, and ow</i> (<i>as in brown</i>). *See <i>vowel diphthong</i> .
echo reading	Oral reading in which the student echoes or imitates the reading of the teacher or partner. The purpose of echo reading is to offer support for beginning readers and to model fluency (Bear et al., 2016).
Elkonin Boxes / sound boxes	A card with a picture and boxes that represent the number of phonemes in the picture name (Honig et al., 2018).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
emergent literacy	A period of literacy development ranging from birth to beginning reading (Bear et al., 2016).
encode	To write or spell a word (Cunningham, 2017). Ability to translate a word from speech to print.
explicit instruction	Concepts are clearly explained and skills are [directly] modeled, without vagueness or ambiguity (Honig et al., 2018).
environmental print	Print in the environment all around us, like advertising and street signs.
etymology	The study of the origin and historical development of words (Bear et al., 2016).
final sound	The last sound in a word. *See <i>phoneme</i> .
fluency	Fluency is defined as the ability to read with appropriate speed, accuracy, and prosody/proper expression. In order to understand what they read, children must be able to <i>read fluently</i> whether they are reading aloud or silently. When reading, fluent readers read in phrases and add intonation appropriately. Their reading is smooth and has expression (Reading Rockets, 2017). *See also <i>accuracy, prosody, and rate</i> .
free morpheme	Meaning units of language (morphemes) that stand alone as words. <i>Workshop</i> has two free morphemes: <i>work</i> and <i>shop</i> (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>bound morpheme</i> .
grapheme	A letter or letter combination that spells a phoneme; can be one, two, three, or four letters in English (e.g. <i>e, ei, igh, eigh</i>) (Moats, 2020).
guided reading	An explicit instructional approach that involves working with small groups of students who all read at similar levels, using instructional-level text and teaching strategies and skills.
high-frequency words	Words that make up roughly 50% of any text; those words that occur most often (e.g. <i>the, was, were, is</i>) (Bear et al., 2016).
illiteracy	Totally unable to read a simple sentence in any language (Honig et al., 2018).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
initial sound	The first sound in a word. <i>*See phoneme</i>
inflected/ inflectional endings	Suffixes that change the verb tense (walks , walked , walking) or number (dogs , boxes) of a word (Bear et al., 2016).
implicit instruction	Teaching without directly explaining what is to be taught. <i>*Contrast with explicit instruction.</i>
interactive read-alouds	A dynamic whole-group instructional strategy where a teacher reads a text aloud to students, strategically pausing to engage them in active discussion and response. This process goes beyond simply listening and extends to analyzing the text, reflecting on meaning, and making personal connections.
irregular word	A word that does not follow common phonic patterns; one that is not a member of a word family, such as <i>were</i> , <i>was</i> , <i>laugh</i> , <i>been</i> (Moats, 2020).
literacy	The ability to read, write, speak, and listen, to communicate and receive ideas.
long vowels	Every vowel (<i>a</i> , <i>e</i> , <i>i</i> , <i>o</i> , and <i>u</i>) has two sounds, commonly referred to as “long” and “short”. The long-vowel sound “says its letter name” and frequently are paired with other vowels, as in <i>bake</i> , <i>break</i> , and <i>bay</i> (Bear et al., 2016). When symbolizing phonetically, long vowels are marked with a macron (e.g., /ā/, /ē/, /ī/, /ō/, /ū/).
medial sound	The middle sound in a word. <i>*See phoneme</i>
morpheme	The smallest meaningful unit of language (Moats, 2020).
morphemic analysis	The process of analyzing or breaking down a word in terms of its meaning units or morphemes (e.g., in-struct-or) (Bear et al., 2016). <i>*Also referred to as structural analysis.</i>
morphology	The study of word parts related to syntax and meaning (Bear et al., 2016).
murmur diphthong	<i>*See R-Controlled Vowels</i>

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
onset	1. All the beginning letters up to the vowel: spend; know; string; band. (Cunningham, 2017) 2. The initial consonant(s) sound of a single-syllable word. The onset of the word <i>sun</i> is /s/. The onset of the word <i>slide</i> is /sl/. See <i>rimes</i> (Bear et al., 2016). *Not all syllables have an onset (e.g. <i>ice</i>).
open sort	A type of picture or word sort in which the categories are left open. Students sort pictures or words into groups according to the students' own judgement (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>closed sorts</i>.
open syllable	Syllables that end with a long-vowel sound (e.g. <i>la-bor</i>, <i>sea-son</i>, <i>may-be</i>). *Compare to <i>closed syllable</i> (Bear et al., 2016).
orthographic mapping	The brain's process of storing and retrieving words automatically and effortlessly by connecting their spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. The process of creating a mental "map" of words that allows readers to recognize them instantly without having to sound them out letter-by-letter.
orthography	The writing system of a language—specifically, the correct sequence of letters, characters, or symbols (Bear et al., 2016).
oral vocabulary	The set of words for which students know the meanings when others speak or read aloud to them, or when they speak to others (Honig et al., 2018).
phoneme • initial • medial • final	1. The smallest unit of sound in a word (e.g. <i>step</i> has four phonemes: /s/ /t/ /ě/ /p/; <i>church</i> has three phonemes: /ch/ /ur/ /ch/) 2. The unit of sound used to distinguish one word from another (e.g. <i>pad/bad</i>, <i>mad/mat</i>) (Bear et al., 2016). 3. Phonemes are described by their position in a word: initial (first), medial (middle), final (last).
phonemic awareness	1. Refers to the ability to consciously manipulate individual phonemes in a spoken language. 2. Phonemic awareness is often assessed by the ability to tap or count every sound heard in a word like <i>cat</i>: /c/ /ă/ /t/ (Bear et al., 2016), to verbally blend individual sounds into a word, to manipulate sounds (e.g. exchange the /c/ in cat for a /b/ to make bat), to manipulate syllables, and to produce rhymes.
phonics	The systematic relationship between letters and sounds in a written alphabetic system (Bear et al., 2016).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
phonetically regular words	Phonetically regular words adhere to a regular written letter/sound correspondence structure and can be decoded by “sounding out” (Honig et al., 2018).
phonetically irregular words	1. Phonetically irregular words do not adhere to a regular written letter/sound correspondence structure and cannot be easily decoded by “sounding out” (Honig et al., 2018). ● Permanently irregular words: One or more sound/spellings in the word are unique to that word or a few words and therefore are never introduced/taught as a phonetic pattern (Honig et al., 2018.) ● Temporarily irregular words: One or more sound/spellings in the word have not yet been introduced/taught to the student, but the word will become “regular” to the student after learning the more advanced rule[s] (Honig et al., 2018).
phonograms	Often called <i>word families</i> , phonograms end in high frequency rimes that vary only in the beginning consonant sound to make a word (Bear et al., 2016). (e.g. <i>back, sack, black</i>)
phonological awareness	1. The awareness that spoken language is composed of separate words that make up sentences and that words are made up of syllables (Cunningham, 2017). 2. Includes various speech sounds such as syllables, rhyme, and individual phonemes (Bear et al., 2016). 3. A more encompassing term than phonemic awareness, as it includes manipulations of words, syllables, onsets, and rimes (Moats, 2020).
pragmatics	The system of rules and conventions for using language and related gestures in a social context (Moats, 2020).
prefix	An affix attached at the beginning of a base word or word root that changes the meaning of the word (Bear et al., 2016).
print awareness	*See <i>Concepts About Print</i>
prosody	1. The musical qualities of language, including intonation, expression, stress, and rhythm that contribute to fluency. (Bear et al., 2016) 2. The features that convey information beyond that provided by the actual words themselves: pitch (intonation, inflection), stress patterns, and phrasing (chunking groups of words into phrases of meaningful units) (Honig et al., 2018).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
rate	This is the speed or ability to read words automatically, which frees cognitive resources for comprehension (Honig et al., 2018).
r-controlled vowels	1. A vowel followed by an <i>r</i>, in which the <i>r</i> impacts the sound/pronunciation of the vowel. 2. In English, <i>r</i> affects the way the preceding vowel is pronounced. For example, compare the pronunciation of the vowels in <i>bar</i> and <i>bad</i>. The vowel in <i>bar</i> is influenced by the <i>r</i> (Bear et al., 2016). 3. When identifying phonemes, the r-controlled vowel + <i>r</i> equals one sound. (e.g. “ar” is one phoneme pronounced /ar/ in the word <i>bar</i> and /or/ in the word <i>war</i>; “or” is one phoneme pronounced /or/ in the word <i>forge</i> and /er/ in the word <i>word</i>). 4. When syllabifying words, the “r” is not separated from the vowel. *See also “R-controlled syllable.”
r-controlled syllable	A syllable containing a letter combination made up of a vowel followed by the letter <i>r</i>, such as <i>ar</i>, <i>er</i>, <i>ir</i>, <i>or</i>, and <i>ur</i>. The vowel-<i>r</i> combination is one welded sound that cannot be segmented (Honig et al., 2018). *See also <i>R-controlled vowels</i>.
rime	A unit composed of the vowel and any following consonants within a syllable. For example, the rime unit in the word <i>tag</i> is <i>ag</i>; the rime unit in the word <i>ice</i> is <i>ice</i>. *See also <i>onset</i>. *See also <i>phonogram</i> (Bear et al., 2016).
root word	Word or word parts, often of Latin or Greek origin, that are often combined with other roots to form words such as <i>telephone</i> (<i>tele</i> and <i>phone</i>) (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>base word</i>. *See also <i>stem</i>.
schwa /ə/	1. A vowel sound in English that often occurs in an unstressed syllable, such as the /uh/ sound in the first syllable of the word <i>above</i> (Bear et al., 2016). 2. Any vowel can make the schwa sound in an unstressed syllable (e.g. the “a” in “amazing,” the “e” in “the,” the “i” in “pencil,” the “o” in “occur”). 3. Schwa is phonetically symbolized with an upside down “e” -- /ə/.

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
shared reading	<i>See also: Interactive read-alouds</i> 1. An activity in which the teacher pre-reads a text and then invites students to join in on subsequent readings (Bear et al., 2016). 2. An interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a book or other text while guided and supported by a teacher. The teacher explicitly models the skills of proficient readers, including reading with fluency and expression. The shared reading model often uses oversized books (referred to as big books) with enlarged print and illustrations (Reading Rockets, n.d.).
short vowels	Every vowel (<i>a</i>, <i>e</i>, <i>i</i>, <i>o</i>, and <i>u</i>) has two sounds, commonly referred to as “long” and “short”. The vocal cords are more relaxed when producing the short-vowel sound than the long-vowel sound. Because of this, short-vowel sounds are often referred to as <i>lax</i>. The five short vowels can be heard in the middle of these words: <i>mat</i>, <i>bed</i>, <i>pig</i>, <i>top</i>, <i>nut</i>. Compare to <i>long vowels</i> (Bear et al., 2016). When symbolizing phonetically, short vowels are marked with a breve (e.g., /ă/, /ĕ/, /ĭ/, /ŏ/, /ŭ/).
sight word/ sight vocabulary	Printed words stored in memory by the reader that can be read immediately, “at first sight,” without having to use decoding strategies (Bear et al., 2016).
sound- spellings	A phoneme/grapheme pairing (Honig, et. al., 2013).
stressed/ accented syllable	1. The syllable in a word that is given an added emphasis when spoken. 2. The syllable marked with bold letters or accent marks in the dictionary (e.g., ap’ ple or ap ple) (Bear et al., 2016).
structural analysis	The process of determining the pronunciation and/or meaning of a word by analyzing word parts, including syllables, base/root words, and affixes (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>morphemic analysis</i>.
suffix	An affix attached at the end of a base word or word root (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>affix</i>.
syllables	A word or part of a word pronounced as a unit (Honig et al., 2018) Units of spoken language that consist of a vowel that may be preceded and/or followed by several consonants. Syllables are units of sound and can often be detected by paying attention to movements of the mouth (Bear et al., 2016).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
syllable patterns (six common types)	● closed ● VCe (long vowel-consonant-final e) ● open ● vowel team / vowel combination ● r-controlled ● consonant +le (final stable syllable) (Honig et al., 2018)
synthetic phonics	1. Phonics instruction that begins with individual sounds and the blending of sounds to form words (Bear et al., 2016). 2. A systematic and explicit approach to phonics instruction in which students learn how to transform letters and letter combinations into sounds and then blend (synthesize) the sounds together to form recognizable words (Honig et al., 2018).
systematic phonics instruction	Teaching a set of useful sound/spelling relationships in a clearly defined, carefully selected, logical instructional sequence (Honig et al., 2018).
unaccented/ unstressed syllable	The syllable in a word that gets little emphasis and may have an indistinct vowel sound, such as the first syllable in <i>about</i>, the second syllable in <i>definition</i>, or the final syllables in <i>doctor</i> or <i>table</i> (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>schwa</i>.
unvoiced (or voiceless)	A sound that, when produced, does not cause the vocal cords to vibrate. For example, the <i>t</i> in <i>at</i> is unvoiced. Unvoiced/voiced consonant contrasts include these pairs: [/p/ /b/], [/t/ /d/], [/k/ /g/], [/ch/ /g/], [/f/ /v/], [/s/ /z/]. In most languages, vowels are voiced (Bear et al., 2016).
voiced	A sound that, when produced, vibrates the vocal cords. The letter sound of <i>d</i> in <i>add</i> , for example, vibrates the vocal cords. Compare to <i>unvoiced</i> (Bear et al., 2016).
vowel combination (syllable pattern)	A syllable with a short-vowel, long-vowel, or diphthong sound spelled with a vowel combination, such <i>ai</i> , <i>ea</i> , <i>ee</i> , <i>oi</i> , or <i>oo</i> . Example patterns include CVVC, CCVVC, CVVCC (Honig et al., 2018).
vowel-consonant e (syllable pattern)	A syllable with a long-vowel sound spelled with one vowel letter followed by one consonant and a silent <i>e</i> . Example patterns include VCe, CVCe, CCVCe (Honig et al., 2018).

Standard 1 Concepts and Competencies

Term	Definition
word sorts	A basic word study routine in which students group words into categories. Word sorting involves comparing and contrasting within and across categories. Word sorts are often cued by key words placed at the end of each category (Bear et al., 2016). *See also <i>closed sort</i> and <i>open sort</i> .
vowel	A speech sound produced by the easy passage of air through a relatively open vocal tract. Vowels form the most central sound of a syllable. In English, vowel sounds are represented by the following letters: <i>a, e, i, o, u</i> and sometimes <i>y</i> and <i>w</i> (i.e. <i>ow</i> and <i>aw</i>). (Bear et al., 2016).
vowel digraph	A phonics term for pairs of vowels that represent a single vowel sound (such as <i>ai</i> in <i>rain</i> , <i>oa</i> in <i>boat</i> , <i>ue</i> in <i>blue</i>) (Bear et al., 2016). *See <i>digraph</i> . *Pronounced <i>di-graph</i> , not <i>di-a-graph</i> .
vowel diphthong	1. A complex speech sound beginning with one vowel sound and moving to another within the same syllable. The <i>oy</i> in <i>boy</i> is a diphthong, as is the <i>ou</i> in <i>cloud</i> (Bear et al., 2016). 2. Two vowel letters that produce a “gliding” sound: <i>oi, oy, ou, ow</i> Note: The <i>ou</i> in <i>soul</i> and <i>ow</i> in <i>tow</i> are vowel digraphs, not diphthongs, because each has a single sound. *See <i>diphthong</i> . *Pronounced <i>dif-thong</i> , not <i>dip-thong</i>
vowel teams	See <i>vowel digraphs</i> and <i>vowel diphthongs</i> .
word	A unit of meaning. A word may be a single syllable or a combination of syllables. A word may contain smaller units of meaning within it (Bear et al., 2016).
word families	Phonograms or words that share the same rime (e.g. <i>fast, past, last</i> , and <i>blast</i> all share the <i>ast</i> rime) (Bear et al., 2016).

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