

LAB Learning Clinic – *Specialist Assessment Report*

Name:	Spencer Rowe
Date of Birth:	18/12/2013
School:	St Aloysius

Date of Assessment:
08/11/2021
Age at Assessment:
7 years 10 months
Grade Equivalent at Assessment:
2.10

Background Information:

Spencer was seen for an initial assessment of functional communication skills of encoding and decoding on the 8th of November, 2021. Spencer's assessment was at our East Maitland office, where he attended with his mother, Patsy.

Patsy expressed her concerns about Spencer's struggles with reading and her eagerness for Spencer to be academically working at the appropriate grade levels after having received a D on his Semester 1 school report for English when he has previously received a C. Patsy discussed Spencer feeling daunted when faced with longer samples of text to read and that Spencer is displaying confusion when reading words with vowel teams which are pronounced differently, such as the 'ea' in *really* and *meant*. Spencer is severely long-sighted and is required to wear glasses at all times.

Mum, Patsy, indicated that Spencer was previously supported through Mini Lit at school prior to 2021. He has been working with Kip McGrath for the past few months, which has all been online. Spencer has demonstrated difficulties navigating the online platform, and neighbours recommended LAB Learning to Patsy to further support Spencer.

Spencer was comfortable chatting throughout the assessment, talking about his cat Rosie and their pet chickens; he was highly cooperative and did his best to attempt the requested assessments, maintaining attention throughout.

The following assessment is functional in nature and should not be used for the purposes of formal diagnosis, rather should be used to identify strengths and areas of need to support functional communication skills of decoding and encoding.

Assessments Administered:

The following Assessments were administered:

1. Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP 2)
2. Phoneme/Grapheme Assessment
3. Letter Sound Test (LeST)
4. Gray Oral Reading Test – GORT5
5. Decode assessment
6. Barnell Loft Diagnostic Encoding assessment

In addition to the assessments, you will find:

- Summary findings
- Recommendations
 - Initial support
 - Ongoing support
 - Suggested classroom accommodations
- Appendix
 - LAB - What is phonemic awareness?

Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing Second Edition

The CTOPP-2 is a norm-referenced test that measures phonological processing abilities related to reading. It contains three reading-related phonological processing abilities: phonological awareness, phonological memory, and rapid naming. The CTOPP-2 subtests were designed to assess skills within each of the three constructs. In addition to the subtests, the CTOPP-2 has five composite scores.

	Composite Score* (average=100)	Percentile Rank**	Interpretation
Phonological Awareness	92	30	Average
Phonological Memory	67	<1	Very Poor
Rapid Symbolic Naming	67	<1	Very Poor

What do the numbers mean?

* A composite score of 100 is average, with 86-114 being the 'age appropriate' range, i.e., the range expected at this age.

** A percentile rank of 50 is average, with 18-83 being the 'age-appropriate' range. Percentile ranks tell us about a student's performance relative to other students their age. For example, a percentile rank of 56 indicates that the student performed better than or equal to 56% of students their age.

Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness refers to an individual's awareness of and access to the sound structures of oral language. The spoken words of a language represent strings of phonemes that signal differences in meaning. Spencer obtained a composite score of 95 with a percentile rank of 30. This indicates **Spencer presents with an average phonological awareness**. Sub scores are outlined below.

Phonological awareness composite score comprises the standard scores of three subtests:

	Age Equiv.	Percentile Rank	Interpretation
Elision	6.9	25	Low Average
Blending Words	7.6	37	Average
Phoneme Isolation	7.3	37	Average

Phonological Awareness is a skill that can significantly improve with specialist therapies. It is also a skill that may be impacted by a student's auditory working memory. This score suggests that Spencer would benefit from specialist intervention to further enhance his phonological awareness. Particularly developing the ability to manipulate sounds within a word. This skill will directly support Spencer's orthographic mapping, which feeds into fluency.

Elision

This subtest measures the extent to which an individual can say a word and then say what's left after dropping out designated sounds.

- Spencer scored in the **low-average range** in his ability to manipulate phonemes.
- Spencer was able manipulate syllables and initial sounds in words. 2-syllable words, e.g., "Say cowgirl without saying cow," were fluent in completing this task.
- Spencer was able to delete the initial sounds in one-syllable words, e.g., "Say bold without saying /b/." However, he was more hesitant when deleting the final sound, such as "Say meet without saying /t/." and was unable to delete the final sound in "time".
- Spencer was inconsistent in his ability to delete the internal units in words. E.g. "say snail without saying /n/." indicating that the task of manipulating internal phonemes is not yet natural or automatic for Spencer.

Blending Words

This subtest measures an individual's ability to combine sounds to form words.

- Spencer scored in the **average range** for this subtest, indicating an **average ability** to blend phonemes.
- Spencer was able to blend up to 8 sounds

Phoneme Isolation

This subtest measures an individual's ability to isolate sounds within words.

- Spencer displayed an **average** ability to isolate sounds within words is.
- Spencer was able to consistently identify the initial, final and most medial sounds.
- Spencer was inconsistent when identifying the internal units, particularly in words that contained blends.

Phonological Memory

Phonological memory refers to coding information phonologically for temporary storage in working or short-term memory. Phonological memory impairments can constrain the ability to learn new written and spoken vocabulary. Spencer obtained a composite score of 67 with a percentile rank of 1. This indicates Spencer **presents with a severe phonological memory impairment.**

Phonological memory composite score comprises the standard scores of two subtests:

	Age Equiv.	Percentile Rank	Interpretation
Memory for Digits	4.6	9	Below Average
Non-word Repetition	<4.0	1	Very Poor

These scores should be read with caution due to the discrepancy between each of the scores.

Memory for Digits

This subtest measures the extent to which an individual can repeat a series of numbers ranging from two to eight digits. After the individual has listened to a series of audio-recorded numbers presented at a rate of 2 per second, they are asked to repeat the numbers in the same order in which they were heard.

- Spencer scored within the **below-average range** for this task. He was able to consistently hold and repeat up to 4-digit numbers.

Non-word repetition

This subtest measures an individual's ability to repeat non-words that range in length from 3 to 15 sounds. The students are asked to listen to an audio-recorded made-up words and repeat it exactly as they heard it.

- Spencer found this a difficult task to complete, scoring in the **very poor range**, indicating difficulties in retaining and repeating the sounds heard consistently in words of up to 4 syllables.

Difficulties with phonological memory may impact a student's ability to recall verbal instructions within the classroom and hold onto sounds long enough to blend them or segment for encoding.

Rapid Symbolic Naming

Rapid naming of digits, objects, or colours requires efficient retrieval of phonological information from long-term or permanent memory. Unlike phonological awareness and phonological memory (which are entirely auditory-oral in mode), rapid naming has visual components, most of which are graphemes or glyphs. Spencer obtained a composite score of 67 with a percentile rank of 1. This indicates **Spencer presents with a severe rapid-automatic naming impairment**. The below results should be read with caution due to the large discrepancies between subtests. Spencer scored in the very poor range for rapid digit naming and in the low average range in rapid letter naming.

Rapid Symbolic Naming composite score comprises the standard score of two subtests:

	Age Equiv.	Percentile Rank	Interpretation
Rapid Digit Naming	<4.0	<1	Very Poor
Rapid Letter Naming	6.3	25	Low Average

An impairment in Rapid Automatic Naming may impact a student's ability to store and fluently retrieve new or previously acquired information from long-term memory. This includes the ability to absorb newly presented information and to demonstrate subsequent acquisition of such information.

Rapid Digit Naming

This subtest measures the speed with which an individual can name numbers. The individual's score is the total of seconds taken to name all the numbers on the page.

- Spencer was able to name all digits; however, he was hesitant and unable to fluently recall the letter names with automaticity, resulting in Spencer scoring in the **very poor range** for this subtest.

Rapid Letter Naming

This subtest measures the speed with which an individual can name letters. The individuals' score is the total number of seconds taken to name all the letters on the page.

- Spencer was more confident when naming letters and was able to identify all letter names accurately, scoring in the low average range for this subtest.

Summary:

Overall, Spencer's **Phonemic Awareness is in the average range**. He demonstrated strengths in Blending Words and Phoneme Isolation and scored in the low average range for Elision. Manipulating phonemes in words has a high correlation to language-based learning difficulties, and as such, this needs to be monitored as grade expectations increase.

Spencer scored in the **severely impaired range for Phonological Memory**. He scored in the below-average range for Memory for Digits and in the very poor range for Non-Word Repetition. Impairment in this area can affect a student's ability to follow oral instructions in the classroom and learn new vocabulary. It can also impact a student's ability to hold onto information long enough to blend the parts in reading or pull the parts apart for spelling, hence impacting Spencer's functional communication skills.

Spencer scored in the **very poor range for Rapid Symbolic Naming**, indicating a **severe impairment**. The results should be read with caution due to the large discrepancy between subtests. A recommendation to repeat Rapid Automatic Naming subtests in 12 months. This impairment may impact Spencer's ability to store and fluently retrieve new or previously acquired information from long-term memory. This includes the ability to absorb newly presented information and to demonstrate subsequent acquisition of such information.

Given Spencer's impairments in both phonological memory and rapid automatic naming, he may have greater difficulty with functional communication skills across all settings on a daily basis and requires specialised support to strengthen these areas.

Phoneme/Grapheme Assessment

This assessment asks students to identify the most common phonemes (sounds) for the phonogram (letter or group of letters) presented.

IMSLE Phoneme/Grapheme assessment

Can give sounds for

Single Consonants	21	/21	100%	/b/,/c/,/d/,/f/,/g/,/h/,/j/,/k/,/l/,/m/,/n/,/p/,/q/,/r/,/s/,/t/,/v/,/w/,/x/,/y/, /z/
Vowels short sounds	5	/6	83%	/a/,/e/,/i/,/o/,/u/,/y (i)/
Vowels long sounds	5	/7	71%	/a/,/e/,/i/,/o/,/u/,/y (i, e)/
Common consonant digraphs + qu	6	/7	86%	/qu/,/sh/,/ch/, /th/,/ph/,/wh/
ck, tch, dge	1	/3	33%	/ck/,/tch/,/dge/
soft c, g, s	2	/3	67%	/c/ (s),/g/(j),/s/(z)
Common vowel combinations	12	/19	63%	/ee/,/ai/,/oa/,/igh/,/oo/,/oi/,/au/,/ea/,/ay/,/ow/,/ie/,/ei/,/ie/aw/
Advanced vowel combinations	0	/13	0%	/ue/,/iu/,/ei/,/ey/,/eigh/,/ew/,/eu/,/eu/,/oe/,
Common combinations of vowels with r	0	/5	0%	/ar/,/or/,/er/,/ir/,/ur/
sion tion	0	/3	0%	/tion/, /ssion/, /sion/
3 sounds ed	0	/3	0%	/ed/ (ed, d, t)
Total score	52	/90	58%	

Requires assistance in the following areas:

- common vowel combinations
- advanced vowel combinations
- common combinations of vowels with r
- 3 sounds of ed
- ck, tch, dge
- soft s
- sion, tion

Letter Sound Test (LeST)

The Letter Sound Test (LeST) tests a person's ability to sound out single letters and letter combinations.

Raw Score	Percentile rank	Description
40	40	Normal Range

Findings/ Recommendations:

When comparing Spencer with other learners in his grade using the results from the LeST assessment, Spencer received a percentile rank of 40%, meaning he scored better than 40 out of 100 students in his grade. Spencer was able to identify all consonants, vowels and the digraphs; *th, sh, ch, ee, qu, ph, oi, ai, ay, oy, wr, ea, wh*, and the trigraph *igh*. Spencer was not able to correctly name *ur, ou, ir, aw, gn, au, oa, kn, oo, or ng*. Spencer scored in the **normal range**.

Having an automatic recall of all 44 phonemes of the English language and an in-depth understanding of how they work within our alphabetic system will further support Spencer's orthographic mapping. This will then have a lasting effect on his functional communication of decoding, encoding, and written expression.

IMSLE Decode Assessment

During this assessment, students are presented with words containing elements from each of the 6 syllable types. This demonstrates how a student can use their phonemic awareness skills and letter/sound correspondence to map across words successfully.

IMSLE Diagnostic Decoding Assessment (Reading)				
Can read words with				
Closed syllables	20	/25	80%	Closed syllable words contain a short vowel, followed by a consonant. E.g. Top, pet him
Consonant digraphs and blends	13	/20	65%	Consonant digraphs are words that contain two consonants that form one sound such as th, ch. A blend is where two sounds come together but can still be heard individually, such as dr, sp.
Silent e and open syllables	10	/15	67%	Open syllables are words where the vowel has a long sound and is not followed by a consonant, e.g. me, so. Silent e syllables are words where the e is added to make the vowel long vowel, e.g., cake.
Soft g and c, tch, dge	0	/15	0%	Words containing the letter c or g with a soft sound, e.g., space, cent. Tch, dge- words containing longer spelling with the ch or dge sound.
Vowel team syllables	0	/25	0%	Vowel sounds from two letters. E.g., oa, ee, ay
Vowel r syllables	0	/15	0%	Syllable type where the r controls the vowel. ar, er, or, ar, ir.
Total score	43	/185	23%	
Phonetically irregular words	12	/20	60%	Words that are phonetically irregular can't be sounded out.

This assessment demonstrates that Spencer is inconsistent when decoding at single-word level. He was able to read 20 closed syllable words such as; fat, big, six; however, he demonstrated difficulty when decoding closed syllable non-words such a jed, vid and yud. Spencer accurately decoded 13 words that contained digraphs and blends such as chest, smell, and strong. Spencer was, however, hesitant and guessing rather than decoding words such as spat which he read as splat, mint read as minute, and cran read as crane. Spencer was confident and demonstrated fast recall of familiar phonetically irregular words, being able to identify 12 known irregular words such as where, because and could. Spencer was unable to decode the phonetically irregular words, though, decoding as thought; what, decoding as want; whose, decoding as hose; and pull, decoding as put. With mastery of individual phonemes, the process to develop Spencer's blending and segmenting skills using multisensory tools and strategies will be instrumental in supporting his further acquisition of skills to decode at word level.

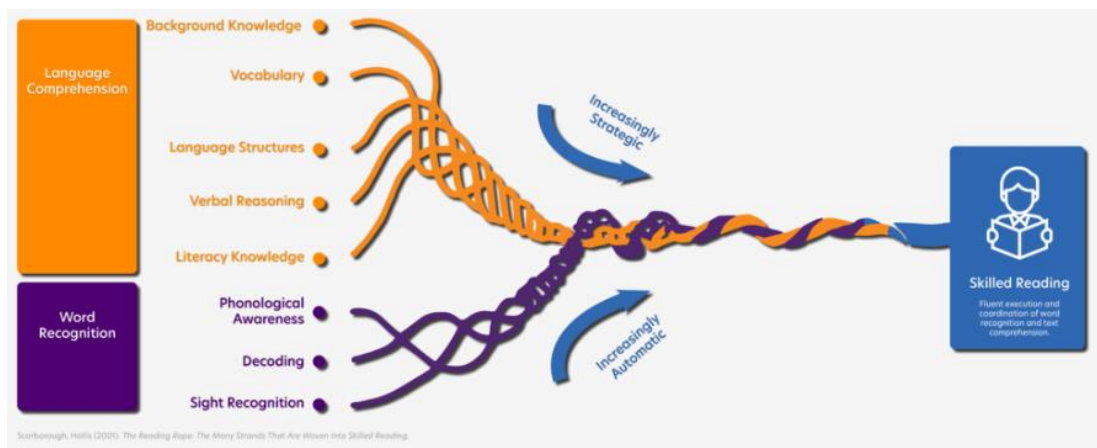
Gray Oral Reading Test – GORT 5

The GORT-5 is an individually administered norm-referenced measure of oral reading and comprehension ability. It is used for people 6 – 23 years of age to better understand the degree of difficulty, strengths, and weaknesses within an individual's ability to take meaning from written passages.

	Age Equivalent	Percentile rank	Description
Rate	6.3	16	Below Average
Accuracy	6.6	25	Low Average
Fluency	6.3	16	Below Average
Comprehension	7.0	25	Low Average
Total		18	Below Average

Overall, the results of the GORT-5 show that Spencer scored in the **mildly impaired range for decoding skills at passage level**. Spencer scored approximately 1.4 years below when compared to his peers. Spencer scored in the mildly impaired range for rate and fluency and the low average range for accuracy and comprehension. Spencer requires further assistance when breaking down words to increase rate, accuracy, and fluency. Supporting Spencer's ability to scan text and his ability to break down large multisyllabic words is likely to assist in building his understanding of texts more accurately. He also requires support linking background knowledge to information in the text when asked to infer information.

The Scarborough reading rope below is a famous graphic that depicts the complexities involved in learning to read. Spencer's word recognition skills require assistance. He demonstrates strengths in phonemic awareness and requires further assistance in word recognition and sight word skills. Spencer's phonological memory and rapid digit naming skills may impact his ability to successfully blend words. Spencer requires further support to develop his ability to learn new vocabulary and to hold onto information long enough to blend the parts in reading or pull the parts apart for spelling as well as storing and fluently retrieving new or previously acquired information from long-term memory



Given the difficulties Spencer is experiencing with regular non-words and irregular words, it is evident that he is experiencing difficulty breaking down the sounds of language and matching those sounds with written symbols. This makes it hard for learners to sound out or 'decode' words. Spencer is also experiencing difficulty recognising common words by sight, words that don't sound the way they're spelt, like *what*, *many* or *whose*, which have to be memorised. Understanding the different subtypes of reading development is important as it shapes the supports and therapies required to remediate a learner. It also provides an indication of the time it may take moving a learner from decoding at the word level to rapidly recalling words within sentences and passages.

Alphabet Sequencing and Letter Formation Assessment

Spencer was asked to write the letters of the alphabet in the correct sequence and in lowercase. He was able to accurately sequence and form all 26 lowercase letters. It is important for students to develop automaticity at the letter formation level as it directly supports functional communication of writing and spelling. Accurate letter formation and sequencing was a strength for Spencer.

Record form 1

Name: <i>spencer</i>	Date: <i>8 / 11 / 21</i>	Grade: <i>2</i>
Q-Z		
<i>A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z</i>		

Barnell Loft Diagnostic Encoding Assessment - Spelling

During this assessment, students are asked to encode (spell) a variety of words containing the 6 syllable types ranging in order of complexity. It asks students to apply a variety of spelling rules and morphemic knowledge when spelling words.

IMSLE Diagnostic Encoding Assessment (Spelling)

Encoding

Short Vowels	5	/5	100%	Words containing short vowels. E.g. fun, not
Vce (v-e)	2	/3	67%	Words containing silent-e syllable. E.g. ride, those
ai,ee,ea,oa	2	/4	50%	Words containing vowel teams/combinations ai, ee etc.
Doubling rule	1	/6	17%	Doubling suffix rule.
Silent e + suffix	1	/4	25%	Silent e-suffix rule.
Vowel -r	1	/5	20%	Words containing controlled r e.g. turn, storm
ew, oi/oy, au/aw, oo	0	/7	0%	Words containing vowel teams/combinations, oi/oy, ew etc.
Compound words	0	/3	0%	Compound words. E.g. Bathtub
Total score	12	/49	24%	

Grade Equivalent	Spelling Grade Equivalent
2.10	1.7

Demonstrates sound skills in:

- CVC words

Areas requiring support:

- Silent e syllable
- words containing vowel teams/combinations
- words containing controlled 'r.'

Record form 1

Name: spencer Date: 8/11/21 Grade: 2

q-z

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

A1 tap ✓	7 tape ✓	D13 waiting
2 pet ✓	8 tease ✓ those	14 drummer ^m
3 did ✓	9 trees ✓	15 bump ^t bumped
4 fun ✓	10 boat ✓ boat	16 running ⁿ
5 not ✓	11 rat ✓	17 roasted
B6 ride ✓	12 train ✓ train	18 fishing ✓

This assessment showed Spencer's spelling is at a mid-year 1 level, scoring approximately 1 year and 3 months below his current grade level. It was challenging for Spencer to accurately encode words that contained vowel teams/combinations

Spencer requires support to understand open and silent 'e' syllables and to develop and apply the skills of segmenting when encoding words. Results indicate Spencer requires assistance in building grapho-phonemic knowledge in spelling and understanding associated rules. Accurate letter formation and encoding words containing short vowels was a strength for Spencer.

Requires assistance in the following areas:

- silent e syllables
- words with vowel teams
- controlled r
- doubling rule
- silent e suffix rule

Findings and Recommendations

Based on the above assessment results, Spencer demonstrates some solid building blocks for learning and strengths in a number of areas. Spencer scored in the 40th percentile in the (LeST), demonstrating average skills in phoneme identification. He also scored in the average range for phonemic awareness skills, with sound skills in blending and phoneme isolation. Further assistance in Elision is recommended as this will further support Spencer's skills in language-based learning activities.

Spencer successfully represented all letters of the alphabet sequentially, demonstrating sound skills in this area.

Spencer requires further support in the following areas:

- Spencer presents with a **severe Phonological Memory skill impairment**, scoring approximately 3+ years below when compared to his peers. He scored in the below-average range for Memory for Digits and the very poor range for Nonword Repetition. Difficulties in phonological memory may impact a student's ability to follow instructions in the classroom when they are presented orally; he may require instructions to be broken down and the use of visuals to assist in processing verbal information. Impairment in this area can also affect a student's ability to hold onto sounds long enough to successfully blend them to decode and segment them to encode.
- Spencer presents with a **severe impairment in Rapid Autonomic Naming skills**. He scored in the very poor range for rapid digit naming and the low average range for rapid letter naming. Weakness in Rapid Autonomic Naming may impact a student's ability to store and fluently retrieve new or previously acquired information from long-term memory. This includes the ability to absorb newly presented information and to demonstrate subsequent acquisition of such information.
- Spencer scored in the **mildly impaired range for decoding at passage level**, scoring in the 18th percentile. At single word level, he was able to CVC words, some digraphs and silent e syllables. Spencer took time and was often hesitant when decoding, guessing unfamiliar words. Spencer

would benefit from explicit instruction on how phonology (sound understanding), orthography (spelling patterns), and morphology (word meaning) come together to form our English language to assist in decoding skills at single word and passage level.

- Spencer's spelling is sitting below his grade level, scoring at a Year 1 level. He is experiencing difficulties with words containing vowel teams, silent 'e' syllables and words containing controlled 'r'. Spencer requires systematic and purposeful instruction in developing his understanding of open, silent e syllable types, vowel teams and suffix rules. Targeted supports should include systematic direct instruction starting with digraphs and final blends.

Spencer may demonstrate the following:

- Difficulties in following multistep instructions and learning new vocabulary.
- Taking longer than peers to complete tasks.
- Struggle to demonstrate his skills, knowledge, and understanding, particularly when asked to demonstrate those skills through writing.
- A stronger performance on tasks that are assessed orally.
- Requirement for higher level of repetition to assist with the learning process and consolidating new information.
- A preference for hands-on learning opportunities.

Initial supports

A block of therapy is recommended to target the following skills:

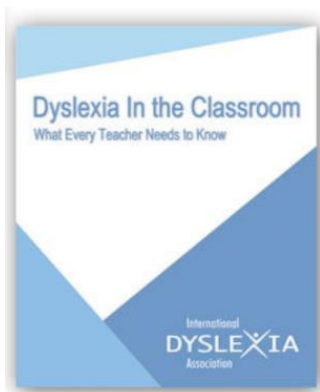
- Tuning in to the sounds of spoken words to support phonological processing necessary for the acquisition of language-based learning.
 - Increase oral vocabulary
 - Manipulating phonemes
- Encoding skills- Ability to apply letter sounds rules and orthographic patterns to increase spelling ability.
- Strengthen phonological memory and phonological processing.
- Decoding skills- Build an understanding of the layers of our English language and how they can support decoding of unfamiliar words at a single word and passage level.

Ongoing supports

- It will be important that concepts are taught using a Multisensory approach. Multisensory learning involves the use of visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic-tactile pathways simultaneously to enhance memory and learning of written language. When links are being consistently made between the visual (*language we see*), auditory (*language we hear*), and kinaesthetic-tactile (*language symbols we feel*), pathways to learning to read and spell are strengthened.
- Spencer requires explicit teaching of 6 syllable types to assist in decoding and encoding skills development.
- Spelling words should be introduced by *listening* to the word before Spencer even sees the word. This will encourage Spencer to focus on the sounds in words, which can then be mapped to their letters and letter patterns.
- SPELD – provides information and services to children and adults with Specific Learning Difficulties and those who care, teach and work with them. www.speldvic.org.au
- Learning Disabilities Online – provides some useful advice and information on learning challenges www.ldonline.org
- Learning Disabilities Australia - LDA is an association of teachers and other professionals dedicated to assisting students with learning difficulties through effective teaching practices based on scientific research. www.ldaaustralia.org
- National Centre for Learning Disabilities: NCLD www.nclld.org www.understood.org

Suggested classroom accommodations

Spencer would benefit from accommodations provided by his school and teachers in order to support his access to the school environment and the curriculum. The below link contains recommended accommodations from the International Dyslexia Association to assist individuals in the classroom with learning difficulties. Please note Spencer does not have a diagnosis of Dyslexia.



<https://dyslexiaida.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DITC-Handbook.pdf>

- Spencer's impaired reading rate and fluency may impact his executive functioning skills. This means that Spencer requires extra time for ALL tasks.
- Provide Spencer with decodable readers, which focus on the phonics concept being explicitly taught at the time. There are many age-appropriate reading series available through Phonics Australia.

- Use brainstorming, guided discussion, list making, and graphic organisers to break down writing into steps to allow more success.
- Keep expectations high with support and guidance to reach his goals.

I am more than happy to discuss Spencer's results and my recommendations further if required.



Melody Henry

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B.Teach, B.Ed.

OG Therapist

LAB Learning Clinic

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Natalie Williamson

Director, LAB Learning Clinic

BGenStudies/Teach

Practising MSL Therapist

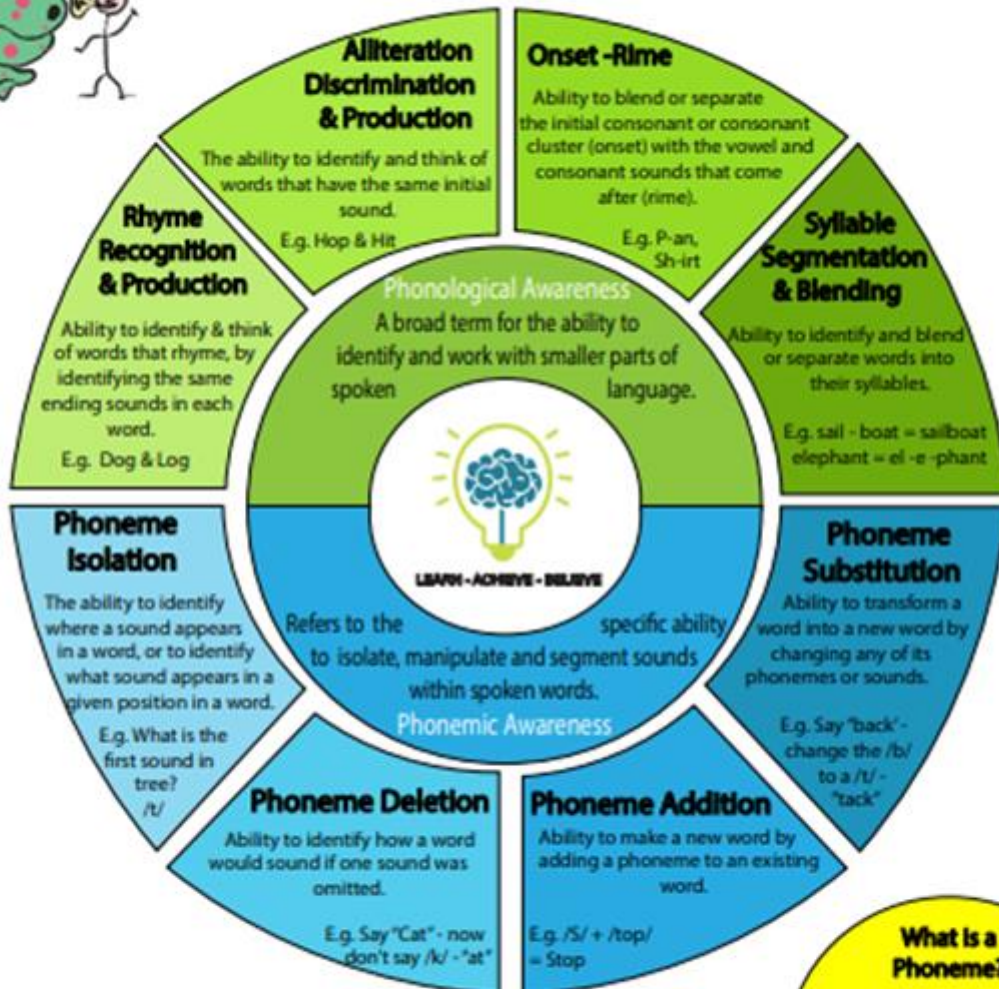
OG Maths Therapist

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Currently studying Masters of Speech Pathology CSU

SPELD NSW Member M00129

What is Phonological & Phonemic Awareness?



Note: Phonological and Phonemic Awareness activities are purely oral tasks.

What is a Phoneme?
A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognised as distinct from other sounds in the language.