

How to Build an Effective Language Environment, prepared by Chrissy Manzi  
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Let's get started!

**YELLOW** – for any child at any time

SPLS – however you arrange them – we have boxes with four sounds in each (until the end box)

MAST CRIB GOLF PEND HJKUV QWXYZ

- each sound box will correlate to how the SPL boxes are assembled
- beginning sounds, MAST 12 objects, 3 objects each sound (COE)
- for some of your 3's, M/S bowl with 3 objects
- ending sounds, then middle sounds (creative with materials so they are not confused with the initial sound box, use games/different types of vessels for materials)
- can introduce that sounds make words using a special moveable alphabet using the first few SPL boxes

For example, MAST / CRIB / GOLF > mat, cat, bat, log, cog, bib, rib, rag

- use three-piece puzzles

**BLUE** – for children who have solidified most/all of their letter sounds

WORD BUILDING - 3-6 CVC objects, arranged by middle sounds, with a mixed vowel at end (built in COE, or use labels – sometimes labels are too many pieces for a younger child)

- objects with exact letters
- pictures with exact objects
- objects with moveable alphabet (COE labels needed)
- objects with words (three-part cards) for reading, not building (good movement work)
- creative materials

INTRODUCE ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR MORE ADVANCED SKILLS

INTRODUCTION TO > writing sentences, reading, comprehension, sight words

Sentence structure is usually introduced in the “blue” section.

Interpretive sentences are used to encourage blending/reading skills.

INTERPRETIVE SENTENCES

- read sentence, get cues from objects
- build sentences using COE
- build sentences and checking work with COE
- make your own sentences

Can provide blue writing journal if child can write.

SIGHT WORD TRAY – introduction to ‘blue’ sight word go-fish

**PINK** – for children who know their letter sounds and can read/build CVC’s

Pink section is very similar to blue – can increase number of steps/pieces in a work, ie: objects with moveable ABC and COE labels.

#### WORD BUILDING

- objects with exact letters
- pictures with exact objects
- objects with moveable alphabet (COE labels needed)
- objects with words (three-part cards) for reading, not building (good movement work)
- creative materials

With ‘pink’ section, can make allowances for COE with using place markers so the child knows how many letters make the sounds. Four letter puzzles are great here to show how many letters are in a word.

Interpretive sentences, pink go-fish game, pink books, pink writing journal.

**GREEN** – for children who can blend, read phonetically

Green section requires more lessons from the teacher, however it is important to still encourage independence.

Introduce long vowel sounds > group them to show that there are different ways to make same sound, ie: ee, ea, e-e or ai, ay, a-e

Use materials on shelf for initial lesson, or use pad/red pencil to show sound.

There are two ways to build this section. You can usually expand on the previous patterns of the section because a) the child is typically older and b) there are many more sounds to repeat and it may take a long time for a child to progress through. Your choice!

#### 1) WORD BUILDING (at least three isolated works for each long vowel sound)

- objects with exact letters
- pictures with exact objects
- objects with moveable alphabet (COE labels needed)
- objects with words (three-part cards) for reading, not building (good movement work)
- creative materials

2) WORD BUILDING (difference is there is only two isolated words repeated before mixing up)

- objects with exact letters
- objects/pictures with moveable alphabet and COE labels
- mixed objects/pictures
- long / short vowel basket > can/cane, snack/snake, pin/pine, cub/cube, tot/tote
- creative materials

Concept as you move into 'green' is to repeat and use COE so they can practice.

Interpretive sentences, green go-fish game, green books, green writing journal.

***NOTE – typically use interpretive sentences (in addition to reading) as a guide to see when a child is ready to move on to next color***

**ORANGE** – child understands long vowels and can de-code many words

This section is similar to green in that it requires initial lessons from the teacher. Introduce diphthongs. Most children are reading well at this point and may recognize many of the words.

WORD BUILDING – typically only two repetitions

- object with moveable alphabet and COE label
- picture with moveable alphabet and COE label

Interpretive sentences (make your own), orange go-fish, orange books, orange writing journal.

**PURPLE** – for the fluent reader with good comprehension skills - section can be customized

Typical materials may include:

- months of the year (spelling)
- colors (spelling)
- classifications (spelling)
- enrichment of vocabulary
- Sensorial materials (spelling)
- alphabetical order/dictionary work
- Function of Words curriculum
- Reading Analysis

HOW TO RECORD?

- sequence tracking form (handout)

## HOW DO YOU CREATE THE SHELVES?!?!

- containers from dollar stores
- 'make your own colors' using ribbons & stickers with white containers/baskets
- swap containers with another classroom

## LET'S TALK ABOUT OBJECTS !!!

- have children
- find friends that have children
- thrift/consignment stores
- requests from parents
- Craigslist
- holiday clearance

Be creative! <remember enrichment of vocabulary>

- short 'i' initial sounds, Italy, isthmus, inchworm, index card, insect
- use things in your environment such as shapes, octagon, Africa, Spain, valentines
- peach pits collected from the summer's feast!
- reuse objects
  - rock>stone>pebble
  - cup>mug>sip>drink
  - log>stick>twig
  - insect>bug>ladybug>spider>fly>centipede
  - (poker chip)disc>plate>chip
  - doll parts! arm>leg>knee>head
  - cut out objects from felt: vest, cape, mat, rug, rag, cloth

## Storage!

Ideally each classroom would have access to three language sets. (This excludes orange and purple as they are the latest to be used.) A large tub should be able to hold yellow/blue in one and pink/green in another.

GOOD LUCK!

