Sound Walls
Why Do We Need Them and How Do We Use Them
To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens.

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community.
ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

EVERY School and District is Rated “C” or Higher
Session Norms

• Silence your cell phones
• Check and respond to emails during scheduled breaks
• Be an active participant
• Do not hesitate to ask questions
Session Goals

• Understand the importance of phonology and how it affects learners

• Identify what a sound wall is and why we use them to support student learning

• Review the phonemes and their qualities

• Learn to plan and prepare for the use of sound walls with strategies and activities
Phonology
The Importance and How It Affects Learners
Phonological Deficits

When children struggle to read, it is most often a deficit within the phonological processing part of the brain.

- Segmenting sounds
- Blending sounds
- Manipulating sounds
- Phonological working memory
Phonology is the mental Velcro with which we attach graphemes.

Phonemes are mental parking spots for a grapheme.

You cannot represent a phoneme if you have no awareness of it.

If you do not know the phonology of a word, you will have a hard time accessing that word and filing it in your lexicon.

Phonology is the mental Velcro with which we attach graphemes.
Word Walls
What We Are Used To...
Turn and Talk

Respond to the questions below with your table. Record your responses on a post-it note and add it to an anchor chart near you.

Elect someone from your table to share your thoughts.

1. How are word walls currently used at your support schools?

1. How could word walls be better utilized to support student learning?
A word wall is organized alphabetically using all 26 letters of the alphabet. We generally place sight words, high frequency words, and content/Tier 2 words under each letter based on the first letter of each word.
As teachers, we know and understand all the different spellings of sounds, and so we place the words under the letter a word begins with because we can locate the words that way. This isn’t the case for students. If students do memorize a word, they are able to read and spell only that word. The process does not help students learn to read new, unfamiliar words.

Working with word walls is print to speech. We find the print/letter first and then we match the sound. Our language is speech to print. We hear speech sounds before we learn to match the sounds to a particular letter or letter patterns.
Traditional Model

Aa
Avion
Anestezija
Alternator
Antika
Astronomija
Astal

Bb
Baba
Banja
Beba
Bina
Brada

Cc
Carica
Carević
Ceponica
Cigla
Crep

Čć
Čanak
Časa
Čamac
Česma
Čelo

Đđ
Džak
Džarati
Džep
Džip

Synonym-Antonym Model (Content-Area Specific)

Our Math Vocabulary

Total
Calculate
Add +
Subtract −
Even 2, 4, 6, 8...
Odd 1, 3, 5, 7, 9...
Correct
True 1+1=2
False 1+1=3
Remove
Deduct
Inaccurate
Take

Total
Calculate
Add +
Subtract −
Even 2, 4, 6, 8...
Odd 1, 3, 5, 7, 9...
Correct
True 1+1=2
False 1+1=3
Remove
Deduct
Inaccurate
Take

Like
Equal
Equivalent
Comparabile
Same
Different
Contrasting
Beginning
Front
Initial
First
Over
High
Above

Overhead
Over
Over

End
Final
Above

Below
Beneath
Underneath

Beneath
Down
**Content-Specific Model**

- Aa
  - addition: 12 + 3 = 15
  - addend: 3 + 2 = 5
- Bb
  - base ten
  - bar graph
- Cc
  - clock
  - counting: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...
  - cone
  - circle
  - cylinder
- Dd
  - dinosaur
  - distance
  - direction
- Ee
  - Earth
  - electricity
- Ff
  - fossil fuel
  - friction

**Note:**

Content-specific word walls can be done many different ways. Based on space available, you can choose to have a wall for each content area, or you can color-code by one. Use a key if you color-code!

---

**Morphology Word Wall**

- Greek Roots
  - graph
  - write
  - fract
  - break
  - cent
  - hundred

- Latin Roots
  - mother
  - auto
  - self
  - bio
  - life

- Affixes
  - prefixes
  - suffixes

- Roots
  - many
  - full of
  - -ful
  - -er
  - more

- Prefix
  - multi-
What Is a Sound Wall?
What Is a Sound Wall?

• A sound wall is set up according to the articulation of speech sounds (arranged by sounds made in the front of your mouth moving to the back of the throat).
• They approach things from a learner's viewpoint rather than a teacher's viewpoint.
• Sound walls help anchor learning to teach letter-sound knowledge using articulatory gestures.
• They attach phonemes to orthographic patterns (this has everything to do with print).
What Is a Sound Wall?

- A sound wall supports students by focusing on the articulation of sounds/phonemes and the various letter or letter patterns that represent the sounds/phonemes in words.

- This is important because when we hear language, we hear words as whole units.
SOUND WALL

WWW.THRIVEEDSERVICES.COM

Delilah Orpi, 2021
Sound Wall Basics

Sound walls focus on phonemes and articulation:

• Hearing sounds in words
• Articulatory gestures or the "mouth movements"
• Sounds last a short time and disappear as soon as they are heard
• Mouth positions are tangible and can be felt, viewed in a mirror, and analyzed by learners (Ehri, 2014)
Word Walls vs. Sound Walls: Activity

With the cards provided, sort the characteristics of word walls and sound walls utilizing the knowledge gained thus far.

Word Wall

Sound Wall
## Word Walls vs. Sound Walls: Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Wall</th>
<th>Sound Wall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Organized A-Z, alphabetical</td>
<td>• Organized by speech sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher's point-of-view</td>
<td>• Student's point-of-view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Print- Speech</td>
<td>• Speech- Print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dependent upon teacher support</td>
<td>• Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focused on letters</td>
<td>• Focused on phonemes and articulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focused on one word</td>
<td>• Focused on transfer of skills to multiple words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Should I Use A Sound Wall?
Teach students explicitly to hear the individual phonemes in the words they hear in language.

Assist students in producing the individual phonemes in words.

Support students in recognizing how their mouth looks and feels when producing sounds, it helps connect speech to print.

Organize words by sounds to help young students connect phonology and orthography.

Assist students in anchoring letter-sound knowledge and articulatory gestures.
Why Should I Use A Sound Wall?

• Students need an accurate depiction of speech to print.
• Each element can be learned like multiplication tables or chemistry charts.
• Our language is more understandable if it is organized by sound.
Why Is a Sound Wall Better For Decoding and Encoding?

• Grouping words by their sounds is an effective strategy for teaching reading and spelling.

• Students learn that one sound can be made using different graphemes, and it helps to teach spelling patterns.

• In 2000, The National Reading Panel found that explicitly teaching phonemes was a critical component of effective reading and spelling instruction.

• "Without awareness of the speech sounds that letters represent, one cannot match letters to sounds and read unfamiliar words." (Louisa Moats)
Benefits Of a Sound Wall

• Supports explicit instruction of phonics
• Builds orthographic mapping
• Provides consistent review of sounds
• Gives visual reference for students in the classroom
• Improves spelling and decoding
Sound Production

Review of Sounds and Their Qualities
## Consonant Phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Glottis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stops</strong></td>
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<td>Voiced</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nasals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fricatives</strong></td>
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<td>/s/</td>
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<td><strong>Glides</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liquids</strong></td>
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Stops

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- Made with one burst of sound
- Unvoiced: vocal cords disengaged
- Voiced: vocal cords engaged

**cat**
### Nasals

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>/ng/</td>
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</table>

- Articulated with air stream directed through the nose
Is it *n* or *ng*?

Let's Try It!

/ŋg/

/n/

/ŋg/

/ŋg/
### Fricatives

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- Hissy sounds
- Audible friction is created when the air is forced through small spaces in the mouth during articulation
- Continuants: can be said until one runs out of breath
- Unvoiced: vocal cords disengaged
- Voiced: vocal cords engaged
## Affricates

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- Combine features of stops and fricatives
- Made with tongue pulled a little farther back and placed on the hard palate on the roof of the mouth
- Different from fricatives because they stop air before releasing it
- Unvoiced: vocal cords disengaged
- Voiced: vocal cords engaged
Glides

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- Have vowel-like qualities and combine with vowels readily
- Always followed by a vowel phoneme that literally glides right into that vowel
Liquids

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<td>/l/</td>
<td>/r/</td>
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- Slippery consonants to describe, imitate, produce in isolation, or separate from vowels that precede them
- float in the mouth
- influence vowels that come before them
- pronunciation changes somewhat according to the sounds that surround them
Vowel Phonemes
Vowel Valley Video
What was Your Aha Moment?

Choose ONE of the THREE choices below to share out your aha moment.
1. Add a sticky note to an anchor chart near you with an aha moment.
2. Add an additional comment to an already existing one.
3. Use an exclamation mark to show that you agree with something stated or you find it interesting.

Ex. I really loved how it is set up in a v-shape to represent how the chin moves throughout each pronunciation.
Sound Wall
Plan and Preparation
# Things to Consider When Planning & Preparing a Sound Wall

- Identify a space for the sound wall.
- Determine the materials needed to build the sound wall.
- Choose how the sound wall will be organized and displayed.
- Devise a plan for revealing new sounds.
- Establish a time during the day to interact with the sound wall.
Identify a Space

Questions to Consider:

✔ Is the location easily accessible for both my students and me?
✔ Will this location be readily available for daily teaching?
✔ Do I have a large enough space to place both a consonant and vowel wall in my class?
✔ What materials can I use to incorporate a smaller sound wall in my room?
✔ Will I have to rearrange materials already on the wall to accommodate this space?
Determine the Materials Needed

Questions to Consider:

✔ Do I have cards with keywords for consonants and vowels?
✔ How will I lay out my consonant sound wall? Clusters? Horizontal line?
✔ Do I want to include pictures to help students?
Choose The Layout

Questions to Consider:

✔ Do I have a program with an explicit, systematic scope and sequence?

✔ Am I going to cluster the consonant sounds?

✔ Does my plan include a v shape for the vowel sounds?
Devise a Plan for New Sounds

Questions to Consider:

✔ Will I place cards on the wall prior to teaching the sounds?
✔ Should I turn untaught sounds over until explicitly taught?
✔ If sounds are not yet covered explicitly, will they be visible to students the whole time?
Introducing a New Sound

1. Introduce one sound at a time.
2. Do not introduce similar sounds in sequence.
3. Display only the sounds you have taught.
4. Add words with the different spellings of that sound, but only the spelling patterns students have learned.
5. Use the sound wall for quick daily review.
6. Show students how they can use the sound wall as reference for reading and writing.
Introducing a New Sound

- What are my lips doing?
- What are my teeth doing?
- What is my tongue doing?
- What is my voice doing?
- How is the air flowing?
Establish a Time for Daily Review

✔ Have I thought about when I will introduce new sounds?
✔ How will I introduce the sounds using the sound wall?
✔ Will the students place the sound on the sound wall or will I?
✔ What will my plan be to review the sounds on the sound wall? Will this be sporadically during the day, a part of your literacy block, or a part of a morning routine?
Daily Review for Sound Walls
• Point to all the sounds on the consonant chart and ask students to repeat them after you.
• Point to all the sounds on the vowel chart as you say them and ask children to repeat each sound.
• Determine the differences in sounds, if applicable.
• Use the sounds to determine spelling choices that have been introduced.
• Ask questions.
Take-Away Time!

Respond to the questions below with your table. Be prepared to share your thoughts.

1. How are the students actively engaged during the sound wall review?

1. What is an additional way to engage students with sound walls?
Using a Sound Wall
Implementation Strategies and Activities
Activity #1: Speech-Sound Guessing Game

• Students imitate the sounds and/or look in a mirror to answer questions about the sound wall.

Which sound is made with the lips—/p/ or /k/?
Which sound is made with the mouth wide open—/ŏ/ or /w/?
Which sound is made with the tongue between the teeth—/f/ or /th/?
Activity #2: Picture Sorts

• Engage students in picture sorts with confusing sounds.

/p/

/b/

Dahlgren, M.E., 2020
Activity #3: Roll a Sound

- Students roll the die or number generator and spell words containing the sound rolled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>frog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>puff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity #4: Flashlight Fun

• Turn out the lights.
• Repeat the poem “Flashlight, flashlight, oh so bright. Shine a sound with your light.”
• Shine the flashlight on a sound from the sound wall.
• Have the students state the sound, spellings, and the attributes.
When students ask how to spell a word...

- Ask them to segment the sounds in the word and ask them to find the sound they are struggling with on the sound wall.

- Example: When a student asks how to spell "meet," ask them to find the /ē/ and look at the choices for spelling that sound.
Scaffolding Strategies

When students struggle to read a word…

• Point to the spelling on the sound wall and ask them what they know about that spelling.

• Example: If a student stumbles on the word “night” while reading, point out the *igh* and direct them to the long *i* card on the sound wall. What do we know about this spelling *igh* and the sound it represents?
Reflection
Key Takeaways

Do not be afraid to begin!

Make it a learning experience for everyone.

Keep the focus on the phonemes rather than the graphemes.
Reflection

Take a few minutes to personally reflect on the new knowledge you have gained from today’s presentation.

• What is something new you learned about sound walls?

• What is one takeaway from today’s presentation that will support you in your coaching practices?
Questions?
Resources


Resources


• https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/how-to-teach-a-new-sound/#:~:text=The%20%2Fm%20sound%20is%20produced,come%20out%20of%20the%20nose.
### Strong Readers Strong Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statewide public awareness campaign promotes literacy, particularly among PreK-3 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign aims to equip parents and community members with information and resources to help children become strong readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit <a href="http://strongreadersms.com">strongreadersms.com</a> for more information!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Amy Baker
Literacy Coach
abaker@mdek12.org

Jennifer West
Regional Literacy Coordinator
jennifer.west@mdek12.org