SESSION 16
(3 days)

Chunking and Fluency

What Do I Wish to Accomplish in this Session?

- Explain that “Chunking” is a strategy used to improve memory performance
- Teach students to read in thought units and become less reliant on having to think about every word
- Have students learn how they can increase their reading rate without compromising their Comprehension
- Add humor to the session by trying unique techniques for accelerating reading and widening eye span
- Work on reading fluency by using choral exercises
- Have students put all handouts in their Forever File
- Continue Vocabulary Development

What Materials Are Needed?

DAY ONE

- Attention Grabber Picture:
- YouTube video explaining the Chunking Technique: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLAhtaYWhBk

- YouTube exercise for warming up your eyes for reading http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GSsFhx_sWw

- Show Sentences Chunked in Normal Conversation (INSERT 16-A) on the board
- Copies of Widening Your Eye Span and Chunking (INSERT 16-B) for each student
- Story of Harry the Dirty Dog for chunking “listening” practice: http://www.storylineonline.net/harry/fullscreen_yt.html

- Copies of Eye Exercise and Fun Online Activity (INSERT 16-C) for each student (Students can take this home)
- At-home chunking practice website: http://college.cengage.com/collegesurvival/watkins/learning_companion/1e/students/timed_reading.html

DAY TWO

✓ Attention Grabber Picture:
✓ YouTube video: Another accelerated/speed reading technique – upside down reading!
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCyFbOFBtSg

✓ Copies of Columbus and the Egg story (INSERT 16-D) for each student and later for use on the board
✓ Spreeder website for speed reading the Columbus and the Egg story:
  http://www.spreeder.com/app.php

✓ Copies of Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take The Garbage Out (INSERT 16-E) for each student

DAY THREE

✓ Attention Grabber Picture:
✓ Copies of Bleezer’s Ice Cream (INSERT 16-F) for each student
✓ YouTube video: Chunking used as a Memory Technique
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDbAYMUXpcA

✓ Vocabulary List
Discussion and Details – Day One

- Discuss the Attention Grabber Picture – that **CHUNKING** (vocabulary word) is a strategy that has you separate words into thought units when reading versus reading one word at a time. It can increase reading speed, accuracy, and expression – or **FLUENCY** (vocabulary word).

- Now read the definition of chunking “word by word” to show students how painful and hard it is to listen to it and comprehend.

- Play YouTube video introducing chunking technique: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLAhtaYWhBk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLAhtaYWhBk)

- Show YouTube video on warming up your eyes for reading: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GSsFhx_sWw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GSsFhx_sWw)

- Have students write 1, 2, 3, 4 on their own sheet. Now, as the teacher, call out 8 to 10 series of the numbers 1-4. Now let a few students call out a few series of 1 through 4 numbers. Now you are ready to read! (This is great to use any time before reading!)

- Show and discuss Sentences Chunked in Normal Conversation (**INSERT 16-A**) on the board.

- Hand out Widening Your Eye Span and Chunking (**INSERT 16-B**) for each student and read it with the students – chunking your reading as you go along. After you are done, have them FOCUS THEIR GAZE on the middle of the page and discover their own eye span.

- Survey the class for who has an eye span of 10, 9, 8, 7, etc.

- If you want to practice, you can have students chunk the exercise, putting little marks where you naturally stop and start throughout the page.

- Discuss Peripheral Vision (**PERIPHERY** is a Vocabulary Word!). As an example, test one student’s peripheral vision by standing next to him at his desk and slowly move backward, having the student tell you when he can’t see you anymore. Let the students pair up and test each other for a few minutes.

- Now have students watch and listen to a story most of them probably know from their youth – “**Harry the Dirty Dog**” read by Betty White. Have them listen carefully for how she reads in chunks: [http://www.storylineonline.net/harry/fullscreen_yt.html](http://www.storylineonline.net/harry/fullscreen_yt.html)

- Hand out Eye Exercise and Fun Online Activity (**INSERT 16-C**) for each student. Read the top section together and practice it with students.
• Show students this website on the board: 
  http://college.cengage.com/collegesurvival/watkins/learning_companion/1e/students/timed_reading.html

• Challenge students to take this sheet home with them and practice online with the website – doing timed reading exercises that share how many words they read per minute and test them on comprehension.

• **End class with some comic relief.** Show the YouTube video from the TV show, *The Ellen Show*. Have students listen to how the girl naturally chunks to read as quickly as she does:
  http://youtu.be/sinh-Mn-_RI
Discussion and Details – Day Two

- Discuss the Attention Grabber Picture – why is it upside down and was it easy or hard to read? This picture is fun – it has students starting off with a laugh as they attempt to read the upside down writing. This leads into the introduction of another speed reading technique that can also increase comprehension...reading upside down!

- Review the concept of chunking and have class stand and do eye span exercise from the day before (stretch hands out to the side, thumbs up, airplane style, shift eyes back and forth while keeping head still).

- Now show another accelerated/speed reading technique on YouTube – reading upside down 😊: *(The speaker refers to the use of the AEIOU technique...we haven’t discussed that, but explain to the students that it is when you read the words on the paper while saying “AEIOU” out loud. In doing so, your eyes get trained to read the words and immediately send the message to your brain about what you are reading – not sending it first to your vocal cords.)*
  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCyFbOFBtSg

- Hand out Columbus and the Egg story (INSERT 16-D) for each student for more chunking discussion. For fun, have them try to read the first paragraph upside down like what they just watched! (You can also have them say AEIOU as they read the paragraph.)

- Now have the students use their pencils and chunk the Columbus and the Egg story by putting a slash mark (/) where they pause. Give everyone about 5 minutes to do this.

- Now do some fun speed reading of this story on this website:
  
  http://www.spreeder.com/app.php

  Paste the Columbus and the Egg story into Spreeder. With SETTING, adjust the speed (wpm) and the number of words chunked at one time; 3-5 words is advised for this.

- When done playing with the Spreeder site, ask some questions for comprehension:
  
  Is this definitely a true story?
  Did everyone appreciate Columbus for what he had done?
  What was the opinion of those who resented Columbus?
  How did Columbus respond to their remarks?
  Did everyone succeed at the task Columbus gave them regarding the egg?
  How did he make it stand?
  What is his final remark to the group?
NOW WE MOVE into the section on FLUENCY and CHORAL READING.

- Ask the class to define FLUENCY (Vocabulary Word).

- Discuss FLUENCY and CHORAL READING. Fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. Choral Reading is where an entire group or small groups repeatedly read the same text aloud to become more fluent and increase content comprehension.

- Hand out Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out (INSERT 16-E) and read it aloud to the students while they follow along silently. Next, have them go through on their own and underline any words they don’t understand. Discuss the meaning of these words. Here are some words that are apt to be asked about by the students: scour, withered, gristly, cellophane, blubbery, rancid.

- Now have everyone read through the selection aloud in unison one time.

- Now assign one line per student, with the whole class taking the left over lines. Begin with line 1 student and have each student read aloud until the story is completed. HAVE STUDENTS USE INFLECTION and a STRONG voice so the whole class can hear each line.

- Have students share this funny poem with family members!
Discussion and Details – Day Three

- Revisit the Fluency concept by looking at the Attention Grabber Picture, which opens conversation about Fluency. Also ask how many students have been doing chunking and/or eye span exercises. Finish Day Two if you ran out of time.

- Hand out Bleezer’s Ice Cream (INSERT 16-F) for each student.

- As the teacher, read the entire piece aloud for the class.

- Now have students pair up. Have the pairs practice their two lines - assigning them as numbered and broken out on the sheet (allow some to read twice if need be). It may be helpful for them to underline their lines. The students must practice reading it together in unison, NOT each taking a line.

- After about 5 minutes of practicing, read the poem aloud chorally, with each group reading their section in order. Emphasize again, using INFLECTION and a STRONG, SOLID voice.

- Now have a fun food discussion – talk about the different types and see how many in the class have tried some of the items mentioned.

- Continue with Vocabulary Development: CHUNKING, PERIPHERY, FLUENCY

- Explain how chunking can be useful in everyday life as a memory technique by showing this YouTube video:
  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDbAYMUXpcA

- Have students discuss the use of chunking items and using acronyms. Have them share 4 common foods their family buys at the grocery store and make their own words from the first letter. Discuss how acronyms can be used in core classes to remember lists of things (this is leading us into the upcoming sessions).

  For example, HOMES to remember the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior
How sentences are chunked in normal conversation or effective reading

• Tiny pause between subject and verb
  
  *Every woman / in the world wants to be beautiful.*

• Pause with comma after an opening clause or phrase.
  
  *Hopefully, you will be on time for the job.*

• Pause before and after a prepositional phrase.
  
  *Every door / in the house / is wide open.*

• Pause with a comma in a compound sentence.
  
  *She wants the keys to the car, / and her mother lets her have them.*
Widening Your Eye Span and Chunking

When you focus on a word in a sentence, you will notice that you can still see the other words beside it and those at its top and bottom. An average person can normally see one to three inches on the sides of the eyes when the gaze is focused. Often this is 3 to 4 words at a time. This is the eye span. Some people have larger eye spans but most people can still develop this.

To check your own eye span, use this piece of reading material. Have a pencil ready too. Set the reading material on the table in front of you, then focus your gaze on the middle of the page. Once you have focused your gaze, mark the areas of the page that you can still see clearly using your right and left hand pointer fingers. This is your eye span. Circle your eye span with your pencil.

In developing your eye span for faster reading, be careful not to force your eyes to see a lot when it cannot do it yet. Work with what it can do for the moment. Straining your eyes will not do you any good and will not help you in speed reading. You need good eyesight to be a good speed reader.

Once you have a good grasp of how many words you can clearly see then it’s time to integrate comprehension into this. This is the method called "chunking". The key to chunking is reading and remembering the words you see in your eye span. You need to remember the words you read to understand the meaning of the whole text when you continue to your next fixation.
FUN ACTIVITY/EXERCISE AT HOME TO WORK on CHUNKING TECHNIQUE, EVALUATE READING SPEED, and BUILD EYE MUSCLE FLEXIBILITY

DID YOU KNOW THAT widening your peripheral vision is an important part of developing speed reading skills? When you enhance your peripheral vision, you'll see more of the words horizontally to the left and right of your central focus, as well as those above and below that focus. Exercising your eyes to enhance your peripheral vision can help to increase reading speed.

Here's an Eye Muscle Flexibility Exercise to try:

To start, sit or stand and focus your vision straight ahead. Next stretch each hand out to the side like you used to do when pretending you were an airplane. Stick each thumb up towards the sky and hold that pose.

Now, keeping your head straight, move your eyes to the right until you can see your thumb. If you can't quite see it, just stretch your eyes as far to the right side as you can. Then glance to the left while making sure you keep your head still and facing straight ahead. Continue glancing right to left and left to right nine more times. Repeat the sequence of 10 glances to each side for a total of three sets. That's it!

If you want to have fun practicing your chunking and comprehension, visit this website:

http://college.cengage.com/collegesurvival/watkins/learning_companion/1e/students/timed_reading.html

Once there, click on the first Timed Reading Exercise to try it out, then select from topics that interest you. Before you click on each Exercise, try to ask yourself questions about the title - predict what it might be about. Once you read the story, click on finish and it will tell you how many words per minute you read. Then answer the comprehension questions and see if you were reading to comprehend, or need to slow down a touch. Keep practicing 😊

For fun, challenge a parent and see how fast they read and comprehend.
Columbus and the Egg

Story Source: Public Domain, adapted by Center for Urban Education
By James Baldwin (Adapted) From Thirty More Famous Stories Retold.

This is a story about Columbus, the explorer who “discovered” America. We have put “discovered” in quotation marks because actually other people already lived on the continent long before Columbus made his voyage in 1492. This is a story about what might have happened long ago when he was back in Spain. Is it accurate, did it really occur? That’s not known, but it is a story that could have happened. Stories such as this are passed from generation to generation and sometimes are based on facts.

When Columbus came back from his trip to the Americas, many people praised him. He was made an admiral, he had made a remarkable voyage despite many challenges. People said what a great thing he had done, discovering the Americas. However, not everyone appreciated him, there were some who were jealous of all the adulation.

One day Columbus was at a party that a Spanish gentleman gave in his honor. People were saying, “What a great discovery you have made!” Several persons were present who resented this great admiral’s success. They were proud and conceited, and they very soon began to try to make Columbus uncomfortable.

“You have discovered strange lands beyond the seas,” they said, “but what of that? We do not see why there should be so much said about it. Anybody can sail across the ocean; and anybody can coast along the islands on the other side, just as you have done. It is the simplest thing in the world. All you need to do is sail West, that’s not a remarkable feat.”

Columbus made no answer; but after a while he took an egg from a dish and said to the company: “Who among you, gentlemen, can make this egg stand on end?”

“That’s impossible,” the host replied. “You would need to be a magician to do that.” One by one those at the table tried the experiment. When the egg had gone entirely around and none had succeeded, all said that it could not be done, it was defying gravity.

Then Columbus took the egg and struck its small end gently upon the table so as to break the shell a little. After that there was no trouble in making it stand upright.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “What is easier than to do this which you said was impossible? It is the simplest thing in the world. Anybody can do it - AFTER HE HAS BEEN SHOWN HOW!”
Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take The Garbage Out - by Shel Silverstein

1  Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout
2  Would not take the garbage out!
3  She’d scour the pots and scrape the pans,
4  Candy the yams and spice the hams,
5  And though her daddy would scream and shout,
6  She simply would not take the garbage out.
7  And so it piled up to the ceilings:
8  Coffee grounds, potato peelings,
9  Brown bananas, rotten peas,
10  Chunks of sour cottage cheese.
11  It filled the can, it covered the floor,
12  It cracked the window and blocked the door
13  With bacon rinds and chicken bones,
14  Drippy ends of ice cream cones,
15  Prune pits, peach pits, orange peel,
16  Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,
17  Pizza crusts and withered greens,
18  Soggy beans and tangerines,
19  Crusts of black burned buttered toast,
20  Gristly bits of beefy roasts…
21  The garbage rolled on down the hall,
22  It raised the roof, it broke the wall…
23  Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,
24  Globes of gooey bubble gum.
25  Cellophane from green baloney,
26  Rubbery blubbery macaroni,
27  Peanut butter caked and dry,
28  Curdled milk and crust of pie,
29  Moldy melons, dried-up mustard,
30  Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,
31  Cold french fried and rancid meat,
32  Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.
33  At last the garbage reached so high
34  That finally it touched the sky.
35  And all the neighbors moved away,
36  And none of her friends would come to play.
37  And finally Sarah Cynthia Stout said,
38  “OK, I’ll take the garbage out!”
39  But then, of course, it was too late…
40  The garbage reached across the state,
41  From New York to the Golden Gate.
42  And there, in the garbage she did hate,
43  Poor Sarah met an awful fate,
44  That I cannot right now relate
45  Because the hour is much too late.
46  But children, remember Sarah Stout
47  And always take the garbage out!
CHORAL READING

Choral reading is an important strategy for developing reading fluency because when students practice reading together, less fluent readers learn to follow those who are more fluent. It is a very powerful tool, especially when used with poetry which lends itself exceptionally well to the technique.

Bleezer's Ice Cream by Jack Prelutsky

1. I am Ebenezer Bleezer,
   I run BLEEZER'S ICE CREAM STORE,

2. there are flavors in my freezer
   you have never seen before

3. twenty-eight divine creations
   too delicious to resist,

4. why not do yourself a favor,
   try the flavors on my list:

5. COCOA MOCHA MACARONI
   TAPIoca SMOKED BALONEY
6. CHECKERBERRY CHEDDAR CHEW
   CHICKEN CHERRY HONEYDEW
7. TUTTI-FRUTTI STEWED TOMATO
   TUNA TACO BAKED POTATO
8. LOBSTER LITCHI LIMA BEAN
   MOZZARELLA MANGOSTEEN
9. ALMOND HAM MERINGUE SALAMI
   YAM ANCHOVY PRUNE PASTRAMI
10. SASSAFRAS SOUVLAKI HASH
    SUKIYAKI SUCROTASH
11. BUTTER BRICKLE PEPPER PICKLE
    POMEGRANATE PUMPERNICKEL
12. PEACH PIMENTO PIZZA PLUM
    PEANUT PUMPKIN BUBBLEGUM
13. BROCCOLI BANANA BLUSTER
    CHOCOLATE CHOP SUEY CLUSTER
14. AVOCADO BRUSSELS SPROUT
    PERIWINKLE SAUERKRAUT
15. COTTON CANDY CARROT CUSTARD
    CAULIFLOWER COLA MUSTARD
16. ONION DUMPLING DOUBLE DIP
    TURNIP TRUFFLE TRIPLE FLIP
17. GARLIC GUMBO GRAVY GUAVA
    LENTIL LEMON LIVER LAVA
18. ORANGE OLIVE BAGEL BEET
    WATERMELON WAFFLE WHEAT
19. I am Ebenezer Bleezer,
    I run BLEEZER'S ICE CREAM STORE,
20. taste a flavor from my freezer,
    you will surely ask for more.
chunking – strategy where words are read in thought units versus one at a time. This can increase reading rate and memory performance

Sentence: When the students used the chunking strategy, they increased their speed and fluency when reading.

periphery - the external boundary of an area

Sentence: For safety reasons, the students were told not to leave the periphery of the school.

fluency – the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression

Sentence: The student read with such fluency that everyone’s attention was captured.