

Expanding the Meager Knowledge of Words
Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals: Part 2

“The moment of truth is the moment of input...How well you access it depends on how well you stored it in the first place. How do you become more savvy about the way you remember things? Have a good system.” Dr. Larry Squire, in *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals: part 2*, inside front of book.

The teacher’s language must set the EXPECTATION that the child will know/use this word tomorrow. She must also build ANTICIPATION of the first letter, next letter, etc. as the child is learning a new word.

1. The teacher assembles the word with magnetic letters, deliberately placing one letter after the other, as the child watches. She puts her finger under the first letter and does a slow check, reading the word.
2. The teacher hands the MLs to the child one at a time. Child assembles the word. (A model of the word may be visible if this support is necessary.) Teacher asks the child to anticipate the “first letter” and “next” by saying “Are you thinking what is the first letter?” as she hands the first letter to the child. “Are you thinking what letter is next?” After the child has constructed the word, the child is directed to put finger under the first letter and slow check. (Teacher supports as needed.)
3. Teacher writes the word in large letters on the chalkboard. Child is guided to trace the chalk letters with his finger, saying the word slowly. (Teacher guides finger to starting point of each letter, if needed for efficient letter formation.) Child is directed to slow check.
4. Teacher erases the word, leaving enough chalk residue for a barely visible model. “Write *went*. What did you write?”
5. “ You’re learning the word *went*. Write *went*. Do you need to see *went*? Are you thinking what is the first letter?” Child writes *went* (with model if needed.) “What did you write?” Child slow checks.
6. Repeat previous step, with emphasis on writing without model. (If child hesitates, Teacher quickly provides model – chalk or MLs.)
7. Repeat. Child writes word on chalkboard. Child reads, slow checks word.
8. Teacher quickly shows a page from a recent book with this word. “Find *went*.” Child is directed to read sentence including the new word. “Yes, you can read *went* and you can write *went*. Will you know *went* tomorrow?”
9. Perhaps later in the same lesson, teacher asks child to go to chalkboard or white board to write *went*.