# Filling in the Gaps: Instruction for 4th grade ELLS



Sarah Wingler Florida State University Panama City

College of Education

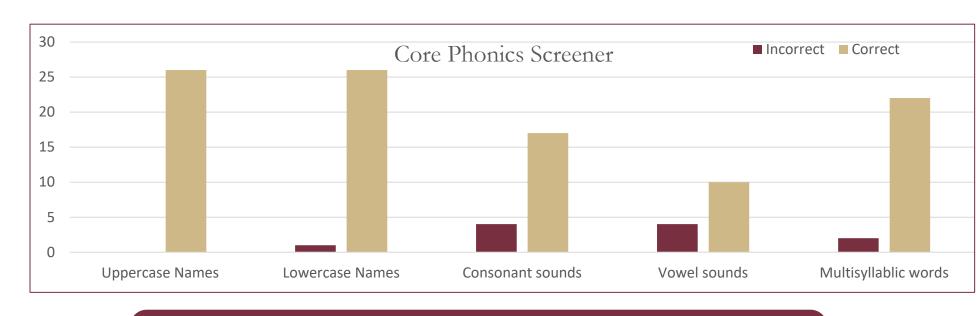


## Introduction

Phonics knowledge and instruction are important because they help students decode unfamiliar words by understanding how sounds and letters work together. This skill boosts reading fluency, spelling, and comprehension, laying the groundwork for stronger overall literacy. The project develops a Data-Based Instructional Plan (DIP) using assessment data to identify strengths and gaps to guide instruction. Targeted interventions address specific learning gaps for students and aim to improve students' academic success.

## Participant

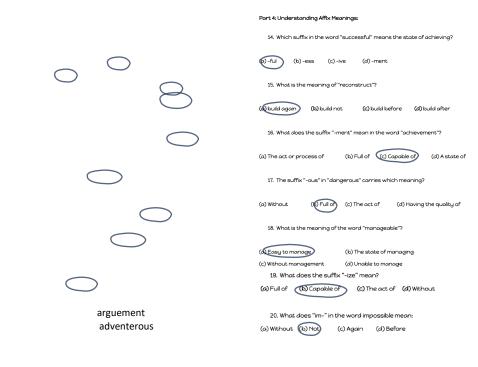
- Student is a fourth-grade male from Columbia.
- His native language is Spanish
- His English proficiency is stronger in listening and reading, than speaking and writing.



## Research Question

Does phonics instruction in advanced suffixes improve fluency, spelling, and reading comprehension in a 4th grade English Language Learner?

## Pre-Intervention



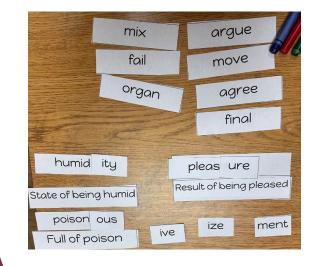
- Administered assessments such as: Core Phonics and Spelling Inventory to identify areas of need.
- Administered self-made pretest featuring target intervention skill. (advanced suffix patterns based on assessments).
- Design 5 targeted intervention lessons based on results of pretest.

### Intervention

#### Lesson sequence:

- Phonemic Awareness: Segment and blend base words and suffixes.
- Phonics: Blend and read base words with targeted suffixes.
- Fluency: Read a connected text with the targeted suffixes and answered comprehension questions.
- Encoding: Wrote complete sentences using targeted suffix phonics skills

#### Lesson Activities:



**Phonics** 

It was the day of the big nature scavenger hunt, and the fourth-grade class could hardly wait. Everyone was active and excited as they packed their backpacks and lined up to head into the forest park.

Before the hunt began, their teacher, Mr. Kim, gave them one important rule: "Stay on the trail. Some areas have poisonous plants, and wandering off could be dangerous."

The class was split into teams. Maya and her friends were determined to win. They had a plan and even brought a handdrawn map to help them organize their route. But just ten minutes in, Maya noticed something: the map was gone!

An argument quickly broke out. "You had it last!" Zoe said. "No, I gave it back to you!" Maya replied. Mr. Kim came over and helped them calm down. "Let's solve the problem, not fight about it," he said.

While searching for the missing map, they saw another team's science project along the trail. It showed a bubbling mixture made from baking soda and vinegar, placed inside a safe, protective plastic box. "We can use that idea in class next week!" Maya said.

Suddenly, a gust of wind blew a piece of paper toward them. It was their map! It had been stuck under a rock. Everyone laughed in relief and quickly got back on track.

Even though they didn't win the scavenger hunt, their teamwork, quick thinking, and creative problem-solving made them proud. Mr. Kim reminded them, "Sometimes what feels like a failure leads to something even better."

As they walked back, they watched the movement of birds flying above the trees and agreed it had been the best adventure yet.

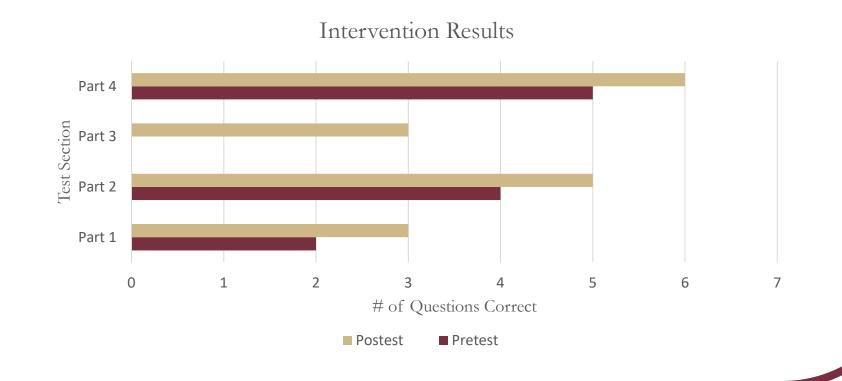
Fluency

Projections admidity Pleasure
electricity protective absument
thought my brothers
creative mind could
drow something reall
amazing but he draw
something even i can
something even i can

Encoding

## Post Intervention

- Administered posttest on targeted intervention skill.
- Student identified and encoded target phonics skills with 90% accuracy.
- Student maintained 100% of already mastered content.



## Next Steps

#### Lessons Learned:

Synthesizing data to identify student needs.

Progress monitoring to track the progress of skills

Identifying differentiated activities based on student interest.

#### Next Steps:

Reinforce sound-spelling correspondences (i.e. prefixes)

Continue to develop encoding skills

Proceed to the next developmental spelling stage

## References

Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. R. (2016). Words their way: word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction. Sixth Edition. Pearson.

Honig, B., Diamond, L., Gutlohn, L., & Cole, C. L. (2018). *Teaching reading sourcebook* (3rd ed.). CORE; Arena Press.