



# Glossary

**Alphabetic Principle** A writing system design principle that associates units from the limited set of phonemes of oral languages with units from the limited set of letters of the alphabet, yielding a highly productive alphabetic writing system. Knowledge of the alphabetic principle is awareness that written words are composed of letters that are intentionally and conventionally related to phonemic segments of the words of oral language.

**Big Books** Oversized books that offer opportunity to share the print and illustrations with a group of children in ways that one might share a standard sized book with just a few.

**Environmental Print** The print of everyday life, which is all around us. Examples of environmental print include street signs, signs on businesses within the community, food labels in the grocery store, etc.

**Letter Knowledge** The knowledge that a child has about the letters of the alphabet; which includes the order and names of the letters, their associated sounds, and that the same letters can look different (upper and lower case letters, different fonts, etc.).

**Literacy** This includes reading, writing, and the creative and analytical acts involved in producing and comprehending texts.

**Onset and Rime** Parts of spoken language (larger than phonemes and smaller than syllables); the initial consonant sound of a syllable is the onset (the onset of cat is c-) and the rime is the syllable part containing the vowel with the sounds that follow the vowel (the rime of cat is – at).

**Phoneme** The smallest aspect of spoken language that makes a difference in the meaning of words; English has about 41 phonemes.

**Phonemic Awareness** The conscious awareness that language is composed of separate sounds or phonemes. It involves blending, segmenting, and manipulating of phonemes.



**Phonics** An instructional approach that focuses on how the sounds of spoken language are represented by letters and spellings. Phonics involves print.

**Phonological Awareness** Knowing that oral language has structure that is separate from meaning; attending to the sub-lexical structure (i.e., structure within words) of oral language, e.g., “beg” has one syllable and three phonemes, “egg” has one syllable and two phonemes.

**Predictable Books** Pattern books with predictable language structures. Predictable books use repetitive language and/or episodes, scenes, and sequences.

**Print Awareness** The understanding of the functions, uses, and nature of print.

**Syllable** A word part that contains a vowel or a vowel sound (in spoken language).

**Word Recognition** In reading; identifying as known words those that have been decoded or processed as whole words and associating the known words with their meaning and use in language being read.