

Incremental Rehearsal Directions – Flashcards

(Begin with lower-case, high-frequency letters)



1. Go through all the letter flashcards with the student to determine which letter sounds the student knows. Say, ***“I’m going to show you some letters. I want you to tell me the SOUNDS the letters make.”*** Put the letter sound flashcards the student knows in one pile (“Known” pile) and put the letter sound flashcards the student does not know in another pile (“Unknown” pile).



2. Begin the intervention with one “Unknown” letter sound flashcard. Say the letter sound aloud and have the student repeat the letter sound while looking at the flash card.



3. Add one “Known” letter sound flashcard. Once the student is able to answer each letter sound card within 2 seconds, add another “Known” letter sound flashcard.

(If the student does not know any letter sounds, use a flashcard of something the child does know, for example, have them name the color of colored flashcards)



4. If at any time the student says an incorrect answer, or takes more than 2 seconds to respond, say the letter sound, and then have the student say the letter sound. (For ‘m’, you would say, *“This makes the sound, <mmm>, what sound does this letter make?”*)



5. Repeat this process until the ratio is 1 “Unknown” to 9 “Known” flashcards. (You may do as few as 5 known flashcards if you feel the student needs a smaller group of flashcards at a time.)



6. Once the student answers all these letter sound correctly within 2 seconds, the 1st “Unknown” flashcard becomes “Known”.



7. Take out the first “Known” flashcard added to the rehearsal activity and add a new “Unknown” letter sound flashcard.



8. Repeat this process in 5 minute sessions until all “Unknown” letter sounds become “Known” letter sounds that the student can say within 2 seconds.



9. Use frequent, authentic praise for the student’s effort (i.e., nice job, you got it, good work).

- You can reward the student’s work by doing a fun activity afterwards, or with a sticker or some little toy the student would like. This may help motivate the student to complete the activity, since it is a repetitious activity.

**The 9:1 “Known” to “Unknown” ratio of flashcards is important for the student to feel success while building reading skills, as well as to reinforce the student’s knowledge of the earlier letter sounds he or she learned.

Flashcard Sequence (adapted from Burns 2005).

first unknown, known
first unknown, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known, known, known
first unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known, known, known, known

Note – Continue process till the unknown is answered correctly and then it becomes a known, and a second unknown is selected and the process is repeated

second unknown , known
second unknown , known, known
second unknown, known, known, known
second unknown, known, known, known, known
second unknown, known, known, known, known, known
second unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known
second unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known, known
second unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known, known, known
second unknown, known, known, known, known, known, known, known, known, known

Note – Continue with third, fourth and all subsequent unknowns.

Brief Description:

A student is presented with flashcards containing unknown items added in to a group of known items. Presenting known information along with unknown allows for high rates of success and can increase retention of the newly learned items, behavioral momentum and resulting time on task. Research shows that this technique can be used with sight/vocabulary words, simple math facts, letter names, and survival words/signs. In addition, this technique could be used for other facts, such as state capitals or the meanings of prefixes or suffixes, etc.

References:

This intervention has a substantial literature base supporting its effectiveness for enhancing fluency.

Burns, M. K. (2005). Using incremental rehearsal to increase fluency of single-digit multiplication facts with children identified as learning disabled in mathematics computation. *Education and Treatment of Children, 28*, 237-249.

Joseph, L.M. (2006). Incremental rehearsal: A flashcard drill technique for increasing retention of reading words. *The Reading Teacher, 59*, 803-807.

Tucker, J. A. (1989). *Basic flashcard technique when vocabulary is the goal*. Unpublished teaching materials. University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Chattanooga, TN: Author.