The Orton-Gillingham Methodology: Adapted for a small group
by

Laura Bast

BA, Geography, Simon Fraser University, 2007
BEd, Simon Fraser University, 2008

PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION
In Special Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA
December, 2014

© Laurabast, 2014
Abstract

Educators have the difficult task of teaching to a variety of different types of learners. This project was focused on giving educators an intensive intervention for those students with specific reading disabilities who are not making progress. This manual was created by taking into consideration teachers' perceptions on phonics instruction as well as what they look for in reading intervention programs. This manual will be a teacher friendly resource that can be used with struggling readers who are not responding to other interventions.
# TABLE OF CONTENT

Abstract ii

Table of Contents iii

List of Tables v

Acknowledgement vi

Introduction

### Chapter One
- Introduction 1
- Significance of the Project 3
- Background of the Project 4
- Personal Location 5
- Purpose of the Study and Research Question 6
- Research Context 7
- Project Overview 7

### Chapter Two
- National Reading Panel Report 10
- Defining Explicit, Systematic Phonics 12
- Read Well Program 13
- Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program for Reading, Spelling and Speech (LiPS) 18
  - LiPS Research 19
- Guided Reading 21
- Orton-Gillingham Methodology 25
  - Orton-Gillingham Research 26
- Conclusion 30

### Chapter Three
- Research Project 32
- Methodology 32
  - Questionnaire Construction 33
  - Focus Group 33
  - Value of a Focus Group 33
  - Importance of a Moderator 35
- Data Collection and Analysis 35
- Manual Construction 36
- Conclusion 38
| Chapter Four | Data Analysis | 39 |
|             | Questionnaire Data | 39 |
|             | Quantitative Data | 44 |
|             | Qualitative Data | 46 |
|             | Focus Group | 47 |
|             | Adapted Orton-Gillingham Manual | 48 |
|             | Conclusion | 81 |
| Chapter Five | Reflection | 83 |
| References | 86 |
| Appendix 1 | Teacher Perception Questionnaire | 91 |
| Appendix 2 | Focus Group Questions | 95 |
List of Tables

Table 1: Responses to Question Five on the Teacher Survey
Table 2: Responses to Question Six on the Teacher Survey
Table 3: Responses to Question Three on the Teacher Survey
Table 4: Responses to Question Four on the Teacher Survey
Table 5: Responses to Question Seven on the Teacher Survey
Table 6: Responses to Question Eight on the Teacher Survey
Acknowledgements

This project has come out of my love for teaching and working with those students who are really struggling to learn. I have worked in the field of special education for 8 years and have seen so many teachers whose passion for teaching shine through in everything they do. I would like to dedicate this project to all of the educators that spend their time worrying about their students who struggle and finding ways to let them shine.

I would like to thank my husband, Dave and step-children, Max and Emily for supporting me through the process of going back to school to get my Master’s degree. I would also like to thank my brother, Alexander for putting up with my last minute editing requests and counselling me through the process as well as my sister in law Katherine who has always supported me in any task. Finally, a big thank you to my mom and dad. Without their constant support, I would have never gotten through school in general and certainly never gotten through a master’s degree. I try to understand students who struggle because I was one, my parents never gave up on me.

This project would not have been completed without the guidance of my supervisor Dr. Andrew Kitchenham. Thank you for your patience with my grammar, constant feedback and support. In addition, thank you to my committee members Johanna Laitinen and Dr. Sherry for taking the time and supporting this project.
Chapter 1: Introduction

In the classroom environment, it is common for educators to see a percentage of their students struggle with academic demands. Due to a wide spectrum of potential causes, it can be a complex problem-solving process to figure out the reason why a student struggles.

Environmental factors that can cause low academic achievement include issues such as poverty and complex trauma. Physiological factors can include diagnosis of disorders such as Attention Deficit Disorder or a learning disability.

Children who have a diagnosis of a learning disability may have difficulty with many aspects of school. Reading disabilities are most prevalent, with 80% of all diagnosed learning disabilities falling into the category (Allen, 2010). There are different theories as to the etiology of specific reading disabilities. A learning disability is commonly diagnosed by the IQ-based discrepancy criterion (Schmid, Labuhn, & Hasselhorn, 2011). According to the DSM-V, a learning disability is defined as a gap between a student’s academic ability or achievement and his or her actual capacity to learn (American Psychological Association, 2013). A learning disability is considered to be a neurological disorder which can manifest in a variety of ways including: auditory processing deficits, auditory and/or visual memory issues, expressive and/or receptive language delay and spatial orientation problems (Allen, 2010).

Students who have a reading disability may have difficulty with many aspects of the reading process. Impairment can be evident in one or more of the following academic areas: fluency, word recognition, reading comprehension, decoding and reading expression. Dyslexia is one common reading disability (Allen, 2010). The International Dyslexia Association defines dyslexia as,
A specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (International Dyslexia Association, 2013).

When a student is diagnosed with a reading disability, such as dyslexia, educators have the difficult task of finding an intervention that would be effective to meet that student’s specific needs. A common intervention suggested by parents and other advocacy groups is the Orton-Gillingham approach (O-G) (Rose & Zirkel, 2007). A common issue of students’ inabilities to read is a weakness in their phonemic awareness. Often the terms phonological awareness and phonemic awareness are used interchangeably. Phonological awareness describes the ability of a student to manipulate the sounds of language in a particular way (Winzer, 2008). Skills that demonstrate that a student has phonological awareness include rhyming, segmenting syllables and blending (Winzer, 2008). Phonemic awareness is a very specific subsection of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness describes a student’s understanding of individual sounds within words and the ability to work with those sounds when reading words (Winzer, 2008). The Orton-Gillingham methodology is one multisensory approach that is recommended for children who have a diagnosis of a reading disability.
Significance of the Project

There are numerous research-based literacy programs and approaches that have been created to meet the needs of students with reading disabilities. A high prevalence of reading disabilities makes it more likely for teachers to encounter children with this diagnosis in their classrooms. Educators need strategies and interventions to address the diverse needs of students who need remediation in reading. There is some controversy among educators as to an appropriate intervention to use with students with reading challenges.

The research in this project aimed to illustrate educators' perceptions and opinions about using phonics as an intervention with students who have a specific weakness in reading. A multisensory approach like Orton-Gillingham is considered by advocates to meet the specific needs of students with this diagnosis. There are manuals that adapt the Orton-Gillingham method for educators to use in whole classroom instruction such as, *What to Teach and How* (Zylstra & Lindsey, 2002) which gives information about how to implement instruction to a classroom of children, with all levels and abilities, according to the Orton-Gillingham methodology. However, I believe that there were no manuals that adapted the Orton-Gillingham approach specifically for a small group setting or that compiled the vast amount of resources for ease of use. A larger number of students could be reached if specialist teachers were able to use this approach in small-group learning assistance settings.

There is an intensive training process in order to become an Orton-Gillingham tutor which is why it is necessary to maintain standardization among tutors while they use this therapeutic intervention with students. Orton-Gillingham was designed to be taught in a one-on-one tutoring environment. A manual that shows specifically how to implement this intervention
in a small group setting would give some standardization and preserve the integrity of the approach.

In my personal experience, I have seen many reading intervention manuals that are onerous and difficult to follow. The following project is a clear, concise, and teacher-friendly resource which outlines how to implement the Orton-Gillingham approach in a small group setting (see Chapter 4). A draft copy of the manual was examined by a focus group in order to obtain feedback on the efficacy of the manual from an educator’s point of view. After collecting the data, I revised the manual taking into consideration participants’ feedback.

**Background of the Project**

Spruceland Traditional Elementary is a choice school within a rural BC school district. As a choice school, Spruceland Traditional adheres to traditional values and virtues. Although any students in the district can attend Spruceland Traditional, the catchment boundaries encompass a low-income neighbourhood. Spruceland Traditional has 14 divisions and 350 students. Out of this 350, 95 students are receiving English-as-a-Second Dialect (ESD) support and/or Learning Assistance and 50 students have a special needs designation (SPSS, 2013). As the resource teacher at Spruceland, I have the responsibility of being case manager for students who are receiving ESD and Learning Assistance as well as for the students with a special education designation. Above and beyond these numbers, there are a growing number of students who are on the list to have an assessment by the school psychologist.

The following project grew out of Student Support Team meetings in which we discussed results from psycho-educational assessments completed by the school psychologist. In the last year, many children at Spruceland Traditional have been diagnosed and designated as having a
learning disability as determined by Level C testing. The majority of these students have a learning disability, with a specific deficit in reading and, more specifically, in phonemic awareness. The school psychologist's most common recommendation is to give the student intensive intervention that is multisensory in nature, and focuses on phonemic awareness in a small-group environment. The Orton-Gillingham methodology is one approach that is commonly recommended by the school psychologists as an effective remediation.

**Personal Location**

For 10 years, I have been a certified Orton-Gillingham therapeutic tutor. In my experience as an O-G tutor, I have worked with numerous children with a variety of needs. All students had a specific deficit in the area of reading; some students had a diagnosis of a learning disability and others did not. The students I taught may have had average intelligence but had significant struggles in academic areas such as reading or math. As a teacher, I have specialized in learning assistance and special education for six years. During this time, I have consistently heard other educators' frustration over how to effectively teach students who continue to struggle despite intense interventions.

Through Resource Teacher meetings, I have heard from other educators that there is a need for intervention that focuses on phonological and phonemic awareness. There are many programs and approaches that colleagues believe are successful interventions for teaching reading to students with disabilities. Some of these programs include **LIPS, Read Well** and **Orton-Gillingham**. Throughout our education community, there is a long-standing discussion on whether phonics instruction is a valid approach for teaching reading, in general. When working with children who have deficits in phonological processing and alphabetic principles, an
intervention that is phonics-based is often considered promising practice. There is always a query about using the Orton-Gillingham method with these students who are not progressing.

In my limited experience, many Special Education teachers have been trained or have the desire to be trained in this method. The Orton-Gillingham method was created to work one-on-one with students. I believe that many teachers are hesitant to make it part of their teaching practice because they may be overwhelmed with adapting it to use in a small group, organizing the lessons and dealing with all of the manipulatives.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Question**

The purpose of this study was to illustrate what educators look for in a phonics-based reading intervention. There are a variety of research-based programs designed specifically to remediate reading for students who have reading disabilities. There are also phonics programs that are not necessarily backed by research but are widely used by teachers. This study attempted to highlight teacher opinions about what they believed was “best practice” when using phonics as a reading intervention in a Canadian context.

The central research question in this study was: What do educators look for when choosing a phonics-based literacy intervention? The following questions were answered by research included in this project;

1. What is the need for phonics-based instruction/intervention in early primary years?

2. How do educators choose a reading intervention? Is a program that has statistically-significant research behind it preferable? Or, do teachers take into consideration anecdotal evidence from other educators?
3. What do educators look for in a manual? What characteristics do they find effective and efficient for their interventions?

**Researcher Context**

For this study, I as the researcher, took the role as active researcher. As the researcher, I had the responsibility of administering the survey to participants and then collecting the data. I emailed a web-based questionnaire to the participants. After the completion of the survey, using a quantitative methodology, I coded and themed the data. The data from this survey illustrated teacher opinions on what they looked for when they chose phonics-based reading intervention.

As a part of this project, I created a manual that adapted the one-on-one Orton-Gillingham tutoring approach for small group instruction. Data from the first survey guided the manual creation. At a resource teacher meeting, participants examined the draft copy of the manual and participated in a focus group. The focus group had two sessions; the first one was a discussion and feedback about the manual. Data from the questionnaire provided information on how the manual could be changed to make it a more effective and user-friendly resource. After a revision to the manual, the second session involved the participants completing a questionnaire that examined how they felt about the revisions.

**Project Overview**

The following project will highlight educators' opinions on phonics intervention when planning for a student with reading challenges. It will also fill the claimed demand for a manual outlining the Orton-Gillingham methodology in the Prince George School District. In my opinion, this manual will help to standardize the adaptation of this approach for teachers using it in small-group environment while maintaining the integrity and efficacy of the methodology. If
there is a clear and concise manual, the Orton-Gillingham approach could be used efficiently in a small-group learning assistance environment as a reading intervention.

The next chapter of this project examines a sample of the literature on various phonological awareness interventions. Articles, manuals, chapters and websites will be examined to highlight the relationship between direct teaching of this method as well as other intervention programs, and the effect on reading ability of students with reading disabilities.

Chapter 3 of this project is a discussion of the research methods used in this study. The research methodology employed a cross sectional survey design. It involved 10-15 participants who were chosen using purposeful sampling. To illustrate opinions about how educators pick reading programs and interventions, I chose participants according to specific criteria. The sample included learning assistance teachers, resource teachers, teachers from primary grades and student support specialists. All participants had experience with putting reading interventions into place with struggling readers who had specific reading disabilities. The second part of the study was a focus group and had four to six participants. These participants were chosen according to the same criteria as the first survey group. Participants reviewed a draft copy of a manual and gave specific feedback. A second session of the focus group had participants look at a revision of the manual that took into account their feedback.

Chapter 4 of this project begins with a presentation and discussion of the data gathered from the participants and how those data were incorporated into the manual. The majority of the chapter includes a manual that outlines specifically how to teach the Orton-Gillingham method in a small-group environment. Taking into account feedback from participants, this manual strives to be a clear, concise teacher-friendly resource.
The last chapter provides insight gained from the research. It includes a discussion of my own reflections as well as suggestions for future research. It concludes with a brief discussion of recommendations for theory, practice, and Special Education.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

There is a large body of research in the area of effective interventions for children who have specific reading disabilities. Primarily, quantitative studies have been conducted on the efficacy of using a multisensory approach with a focus on phonics to remediate instruction for struggling readers. Although there is some qualitative research on this topic, research lacking and should be considered in order to delve deeper into uncovering educators' opinions regarding the role of phonics instruction in curriculum.

This literature review begins by examining two National Reading Panel reports. In the United States, a panel was assembled that is made up of a variety of professionals, who analyze current research and methodologies. In addition, due to the frequency in the literature and importance, the term explicit, systematic phonics is briefly defined and examined. To better understand the range of interventions, four common research-based remedial reading interventions are analyzed: the Orton-Gillingham methodology (O-G), the LiPS program, the ReadWell Program, the Guided Reading approach.

National Reading Panel Report

It is important to take National Reading Panel reports into perspective when examining what reading intervention educators should consider "best practice" for their students. The main purpose of the National Reading Panel is to critically evaluate and analyze the current research literature on reading (National Reading Panel, 1999). Reports created from the National Reading Panel, summarize findings about current research, analyze methodology on how students learn to read and suggest which interventions fit most appropriately. Unfortunately, the National Reading Panel only looked at reading literature and research from a United States context the results of
the analyses could be generalized to a Canadian context. The panel stresses that early
identification and intervention is important for students, therefore, valid and reliable assessment
tools need to be available. Reading instruction should not be the same for every student, but
rather take into consideration the different needs of each student. On a similar note, instruction
needs to be varied for students who have typical reading development as well as those who have
learning disabilities. There is a wide range of difficulties for children with learning disabilities
that can impact the reading process in different ways. The Panel suggests that students with
learning disabilities commonly benefit from an intervention that is structured, sequential and
multisensory in delivery. The Orton-Gillingham methodology adheres to those characteristics;
however, other students may need interventions that have a primary focus on comprehension
strategies. Due to this fact, it is very important for students to be screened by valid assessment
tools and subsequently, educators can choose interventions that suit their distinct needs.

For the purposes of this literature review and research study, the National Reading
Panel’s analysis of phonics instruction is of particular interest. In the National Reading Report
(2000), research was conducted to answer the broad question of whether systematics phonics
instruction is more effective than no phonics instruction. In order to analyze this, researchers
used literature that was published after the year 1970 and contained research regarding
systematic phonics, unsystematic phonics or no phonics instruction. All of the research studies
were comparison studies which had to have a control group and an intervention group.
According to the research analyzed, children who have reading disabilities are positively
impacted by phonics instruction. Systematic phonics instruction is beneficial for those students
who have the common deficit in decoding skills. The Orton-Gillingham Methodology and other
programs based on this methodology were examined in depth. For students who have difficulty
learning to read, examination of the research concluded that systematic phonics instruction does lead to significant gains in reading and spelling.

**Defining Explicit, Systematics Phonics**

In reviewing the extant literature on phonics instruction, the term *explicit, systematic phonics* is seen throughout the literature. According to the National Reading Panel report, effective instruction must be considered explicit and systematic (Mesmer & Griffith, 2005). If teachers are expected to choose an effective intervention, they first must understand the term *explicit, systematic phonics*.

Mesmer and Griffith (2005) attempted to define the term *explicit, systematic phonics*. In order to assist with this definition, the authors conducted a short survey which asked teachers their opinions on the subject. The word *phonics*, describes a language system in which symbols are connected with the sound they make. In an educational context, students are taught how to use this sound-symbol relationship in order to read whole words. Historically, the term *explicit, systematic phonics* has been commonly used to describe various phonics programs. After deconstructing the history of this phrase, the authors sum it up concisely. They argued that the term *explicit, systematic phonics* describes an approach that has direct instruction of a specific sequence *and* teaches decoding skills. The researchers sent out a questionnaire to 1000 primary teachers to illustrate how teachers perceive phonics programs. Out of the 1000 surveys mailed, 382 were returned and 362 were used in the study. The purpose of the survey was to find out teachers opinions about "best practice" when teaching phonics, as well as what techniques should be considered explicit and systematic. A high number of teachers felt that an explicit and systematic approach to phonics must be actively engaging for the student. With a responsive and
direct teaching approach, students should actively discover phonics. A short list of programs and approaches that teachers considered to fit these criteria were; making words, word sorts and phonics games.

According to the teachers in the previous study, their opinions about phonics instruction are consistent with the terms explicit and systematic. More qualitative research would have to be reviewed in order to give evidence that this is a common opinion among teachers. There are numerous reading programs that teachers must choose from when considering a reading intervention for students who are struggling. However, the theory that phonics instruction should be explicit and systematic will impact how educators choose an appropriate intervention program. There are many research-based phonics programs that fit this specific criterion.

Read Well Program

The Read Well program is a reading intervention for kindergarten to Grade 3. It directly teaches phonemic awareness through a progressive sequential approach (Cambium Learning, 2013a). Within each lesson there is direct instruction of the following skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension strategies. There are 38 units in total with each unit consisting of six lessons that focus on one new sound, while building on sounds taught in previous lessons. The first step in each lesson is the discovery of the new sound. Discovery is accomplished through teaching of a rhyming story which includes the new sound. Practice of the new sound occurs as students work through the decoding folder for each unit. The next activity is reading practice. Students read two passages each lesson, one is a dual reading with the teacher and one is independent. After the reading passages, students work through reading comprehension questions.
Read Well uses a variety of strategies in each lesson to help with retention; auditory discrimination, blending instruction, songs and rhymes to introduce new concepts. The structure of the reading material is unique. The reading passages begin with dual reading, where the teacher reads one part and the student reads another. Dual reading lets the students ease into the reading process, with the teacher sharing the task with them. This shared reading also allows for the books to have a higher interest level with rich vocabulary and content unlike other decodable passages.

Cambium Learning (2013a) provided a discussion about the apparent “best practice” regarding phonics instruction and intervention according to the National Reading Panel. From that discussion, the Read Well program is considered to meet the criteria to be considered systematic and explicit phonics instruction. Also on the website are research studies and pilot project evaluations of the Read Well program. In this literature review, five of the studies are discussed to give a snapshot of the efficacy of the program. All implementation of Read Well pilot programs and data tracking occurred in elementary schools in the United States.

Montgomery Alabama elementary school study. An elementary school in Alabama implemented the Read Well program for their core reading curriculum and for a remedial reading intervention (Cambium Learning, 2013b). Data from this study was collected from 2005 to 2009. Using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for baseline data and district benchmarks, data showed a positive increase in students who reached appropriate reading benchmarks. In 2005 when the project began, 39 to 57 percent of students were reaching appropriate benchmarks by the end of kindergarten. After the six years of implementation, 88 to 96 percent of students reached benchmarks by the end of kindergarten. The results in this study show evidence that Read Well does have a positive impact on reading progress. The authors
stated that it was used as both a core reading curriculum and remedial reading intervention. However, there was no breakdown of progress for typically developing students and those considered at-risk.

**Huntsville City school study.** In 2006, the Huntsville City School District in Alabama implemented the *Read Well* program in all 29 schools with kindergarten and grade one students (Cambium Learning, 2013c). This article highlights research from the two schools, Mountain Gap Elementary and Montview Elementary. These two schools had the lowest baseline reading scores in the district according to DIBELS results. In 2005, 43% of kindergartens from Mountain Gap Elementary scored at or above benchmark levels. After implementation of the *Read Well* program, 91% of participants were at or above benchmark reading levels. The second school in the study, Montview Elementary, had similar results. In 2005, baseline assessments showed that 33% of kindergarten students were at or above reading benchmarks. After the implementation of the Read Well curriculum, this jumped to 73% of all students being at or above reading benchmarks.

**Lee County public school.** A single-group posttest study was conducted in the Lee County Public School system that to examine the efficacy of the *Read Well* program (Cambium Learning, 2013d). The implementation of *Read Well* was a district wide initiative for all kindergarten and grade one students. Students received instruction via whole class as well as small group instruction for approximately 90 minutes a day, with an extra 30 minutes if they were struggling readers. The participant sample for the study was 4,132 students, with 55% that had a different ethnicity, 25% were ESL and 7% had a special needs designation. Educators used the DIBELS assessment, to determine that 78% of students fell into the at-risk category. In order to show student progress in reading skills after the intervention, researchers used scores
from the Standford Achievement Test Series-10th Edition (SAT-10). After 6 months of program implementation with kindergarten students, 84% of the participants fell into the meeting or exceeding range. When examining reading progress, it is difficult to gage efficacy unless there are long term results. If a student makes progress for one year, it does not mean that the progress will necessarily continue. This study did a follow-up with the kindergarten cohort the following year at the end of grade one. Average or above average reading scores were seen by all participants at the one year follow-up. This longitudinal data is needed in order to show the long term impacts of a specific program on reading progress.

**Tacoma public school.** In 2007, the Tacoma Public School district gathered statistics to show the efficacy of their new districtwide reading program, *Read Well* (Cambium Learning, 2013e). The program was piloted in the 2006-2007 school year. Statistics were collected from those years, as well as in 2008 so that longitudinal data could be gathered from the same sample of children. The *Read Well program* was considered by the Tacoma Public School district to meet the criteria as a systematic and explicit phonics instruction. During the 2006-2007 year, there were 2,367 kindergarten students and 2,314 students in grade 1, that participated in the Read Well initiative. Participants received *Read Well* instruction everyday for 90 minutes if they attended full day kindergarten and 45 minutes if they attended half-day kindergarten. After the first year of implementation, DIBELS data from the kindergarten cohort showed a 12 percent increase in the Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) and a 4 percent increase in the Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF). The grade one participants achieved a 29 percent improvement in Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) and a 20 percent gain in Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF). Reading research is needed in order to show the efficacy of a certain approach. Longitudinal data is important because it shows whether an intervention can produce progress that continues. There
were 1,163 participants involved in the longitudinal study. In the years 2006, 2007, and 2008, data from these participants was analyzed. At the conclusion of the first year of this study, participants had an increase of 19 percent on the DIBELS PSF. Participants that had two years of Read Well instruction showed an increase of 12 percent in DIBELS NWF. Participants saw an 11 percent increase in DIBELS ORF at the end of Grade 1. This longitudinal data showed that reading progress continued for the participants over a longer period of time.

**Mississippi elementary school.** In two Mississippi school districts, 144 students from three schools were selected to participate in a study regarding Read Well intervention (Cambium Learning, 2013f). Out of the 144 participants, 48 were in kindergarten and 47 were in Grade 1. Read Well instruction was given to students who were considered at-risk for reading challenges according to DIBELS, Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) and Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE). After intervention, according to the DIBELS, participants in kindergarten increased progress from their baseline assessment in Letter naming fluency (LNF) by six percent, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) by 47 percent and Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) by 20 percent. In order to see the efficacy of this approach, these percentages must be compared with the control group. Also from DIBELS data, control group participants decreased by 17 percent in LNF, had no change in PSF, and increased four percent in NWF.

Results from the grade one participants were similar to the kindergarten participants. Participants in the intervention group showed increases of 16 percent in PSF, an increase of 14 percent in NWF and an increase of 12 percent in Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). Compared to the control group, progress of the intervention group were significant. The control group showed no change in PSF, had a decrease of two percent in NWF and a decrease of 10 percent in ORF.
The examination of five studies conducted on the Read Well approach illustrate that this program is a research-based reading intervention that teaches skills needed for reading in a systematic and engaging way. Through analysis of the Read Well website as well as the program materials, this program is a comprehensive phonics-based resource and has a high ease of use for teachers.

**Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program for Reading, Spelling and Speech (LiPS)**

Another intervention that teaches phonemic awareness is the *Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program for Reading, Spelling and Speech (LiPS)* (Lindmood & Lindamood, 2011). This intervention was previously called the *Auditory Discrimination in Depth Program* (PASP) (National Reading Panel, 2000). The LiPS program teaches phonemic awareness through an oral-motor approach. It is based on direct instruction of the sound-symbol relationship through multisensory techniques where the students see, hear and feel the sounds they are producing. In the LiPS manual, there is a clear visual diagram that shows the interaction of the three key facets of the reading process that is central to this program: auditory processing, visual processing and language processing (Figure 1.1 The reading process, p. 2). Auditory processing explains phonemic awareness and word attack skills. Visual processing is orthographic processing and word recognition tasks. Finally, language processing is contextual reading and vocabulary development. All of these concepts are interconnected and are needed for reading competency. Central to the LiPS program is the concept of dual coding. Students learn necessary skills for phonemic awareness through feedback from hearing, seeing and saying the sounds. This is a similar theory to the Orton-Gillingham multisensory approach for teaching phonemic awareness. Both approaches use feedback from all senses in order to directly teach important skills.
**LiPS research**

The National Reading Panel Report considers the research conducted on using the LiPS program to be accurate and valid in showing the efficacy of this approach (National Reading Panel, 2000). Much of the research on the LiPS program has been conducted in the United States. However, McIntyre, Protz and McQuarrie (2008) gathered data on this approach within a Canadian context, in a Saskatchewan school district. The purpose of the research was to find out what impact the LiPS program had on students who were typically developing as opposed to those who were at-risk for learning challenges. The main purpose of the study was to see if intensive early intervention would help those students who were identified as at-risk. There were 277 grade one students and 16 teachers who participated in this study. All participants were from elementary schools in a rural Saskatchewan school district. The Kindergarten Screening tool and the Grade One Screening Tool were used to find baseline data. Both assessments were created by educators in this Saskatchewan school district to identify reading weaknesses and show long term reading progress. Data positively supports the research question in this study; will the LiPS program help to improve the reading skills of at-risk students. From the study, the LiPS program was considered to be effective in decreasing the level of reading failure in kindergarten and grade one.

The LiPS program was created for a very specific type of reading deficit. Kennedy and Backman (1993) conducted a study using the LiPS program with students who were diagnosed with severe learning disabilities. The participants received LiPS instruction in conjunction with another remedial reading intervention. There was another intervention group of 10 participants who also had severe learning disabilities, who only received the remedial reading intervention. Data showed that for the participants who received both interventions, they had significant
progress in the areas of phonological awareness and spelling compared to the participants who only received one intervention.

Comparison studies examine the research behind reading interventions. They not only give a snapshot of the efficacy of a certain intervention, but they provide data that shows how it compares to others. Torgensen et al (2001) conducted a study that involved 60 participants who had severe reading disabilities. The focus of this study was to compare two different remedial reading programs, the LiPS program and embedded phonics. At the time of the study, the LiPS program was called Auditory Discrimination in Depth (ADD). This program was edited, revised slightly and is now the LiPS program. Embedded phonics is an approach that teaches reading by focusing on the word level skills. The roots of this program are in rhyming, where words are taught according to similar beginning, middle and end sounds. Each participant received intervention for 50 minutes per day over a period of 8 weeks. Participants were randomly assigned to each group. Within the groups, participants were further ability grouped according to scores from the Lindamood Auditory Conceptualization Test as well as IQ scores and phonemic awareness assessment. Both the treatment group and control group made significant progress in the areas of comprehension, fluency and decoding skills. According to data from the Woodcock Reading Master Test-Revised, taken at the completion of the intervention, the participants that had the LiPS instruction showed significant growth in decoding skills. Unfortunately, they did not maintain that growth when assessed one and two years later.

The LiPS scope and sequence begins with basic skills and continues to build on those skills as the program progresses. The manual itself is clear and concise, with every lesson laid out in a way that is easy for teachers to follow and implement. Particularly helpful, is the script of each concept for instruction. There is information about how to handle corrections appropriately when
students make errors. Along with each lesson is a material list and direction for when to use the multisensory materials. Although LiPS instruction is comprehensive, the way that students discovery the sounds is teacher directed. For some students, this interaction of question and answer may be overwhelming and confusing. The research consistently shows improved progress with LiPS instruction in the area of word attack skills. It is a great approach for those students with specific deficits in phonemic awareness. However, in order to give students balanced reading instruction; this approach would have to be used in conjunction with other strategies in order to address fluency and comprehension.

**Guided Reading**

Guided Reading, a balanced literacy approach, is another way that educators given reading instruction as well as remediate for struggling readers. This approach has a focus on differentiating instruction by using leveled readers for instruction (Fountas & Pinnell, 2013). By using ability-based groups, this technique can meet each student’s specific needs whether they need remediation or enrichment. Students read books that are at their instructional level, which is the level where they will make the most progress. Literature at students instructional level, is ‘just right’ for them, not too easy and not too difficult. With the success and adoption of the guided reading approach through the educational community, Fountas and Pinnell teamed up with *Scholastic*, in order to continue the success of the approach (Scholastic, 2014). On the scholastic website, there is an excellent overview of the history of guided reading as well as a discussion about guided reading from a research-based perspective. According to this document, guided reading was created in response to other reading programs that may be considered more traditional. In 1996, Fountas and Pinnell introduced guided reading as a reading intervention that is a flexible approach and uses rich texts that is tailored to the diverse needs in the classroom.
This approach is often primarily used as small group instruction, but there are opportunities within it for whole group instruction as well as one-on-one support. Working off of the criticisms of traditional reading groups, Guided Reading instruction focuses on dynamic groupings of students that practice all of the skills that are necessary for competent reading. Phonological and phonemic awareness are taught within the context of each book. Students are taught to solve words, relying on their word solving strategies. Comprehension skills are directly taught and practiced through lessons. Students work on skills such as making connections, summarizing and inferring as they read at their level.

Iaquinta (2006) supported the efficacy of the guided reading approach. The main purpose of the article is to highlight how guided reading is an effective reading instruction which meets the diverse needs of students within the classroom environment. Iaquinta (2006) argues that guided reading is a researched-based, balanced literacy approach that is considered to be “best practice” for reading instruction. According to the National Reading Panel, balanced literacy approaches, like guided reading, should be used above others to teach students to read. Guided Reading has three main foundations: to improve fluency and comprehension, to meet the diverse needs of readers in the classroom and to construct meaning from text. Assessment is an important first step before proceeding with this small-group instruction. Benchmarks find students “just right” level and identify which group they should fit into. Iaquinta (2006) suggests that guided reading groupings work best if they are flexible and dynamic. The groups should periodically be changed around in order to keep up with the changing reading needs of students. The role of the teacher is integral to the guided reading process. As the lesson is carried out, the teacher’s job is to create students who discover the process of reading through prompting and direction.
Fountas and Pinnell (2013) compared the perceived efficacy of this approach or romance, with the actual reality of the approach. This comparison, coming directly from the creators of the approach, is an interesting analysis of why guided reading is perceived to be “best practice” and the actual efficacy of the approach. Relying on research, the authors argue that guided reading has been gaining popularity in the classroom setting and is used frequently as an instructional technique. One aspect that is integral to the guided reading process is the ability to create a learning environment for students with diverse abilities and needs. Fountas and Pinnell suggested that educators who have set up the guided reading approach have been romanced or charmed by the approach. When books are leveled, small groups are created and educators have a method, guided reading can run smoothly. However, the authors argue that educators need to understand the reality of how effective the approach is a typical reading program or as an intervention to remediate reading. A study was conducted on the guided reading approach in the United States and funded federally. This study involved 8, 500 participants from 17 different schools, kindergarten to grade 3. Using the DIBELS as benchmark data, fall and spring, researchers collected some interesting data on the reading progress of participants. Overall, in the first year of the program, students’ progress improved by 16 percent. The second year of implementation, students’ progress improved by 28 percent. Finally, in the third year of the program, students made gains of 32 percent. An important part of the guided reading process is ongoing training of the educators involved. The approach is successful because of the structured of the classroom set up and how instruction is given. However, setting up guided reading in the classroom can be a daunting task which many educators may find overwhelming.

When examining which instruction fits for students with specific reading disabilities, guided reading research is lacking in statistical evidence regarding phonics and phonemic
awareness. Guided reading is considered to be a balanced literacy approach, with much of the focus on comprehension skills. Kouri, Selle, and Riley (2006) conducted an interesting study that compared guided reading to a graphophonemic approach with students who had specific language impairment (SLI). Participants in this study were 21 students with typical language development and 14 who had specific language impairment. Researchers used the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals Third Edition (CELF-3) as well as the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) to find baseline data. This study is interesting because the researchers were consistent with each approach and how they dealt with corrective feedback.

In the graphophonemic condition, participants were cued and prompted through using their decoding and blending strategies when coming to an unknown word. In contrast, the meaning group, or guided reading group, was prompted according to the word in context. Miscues were handled at a break in passage rather than immediately during reading. All participants in each condition group read the same passage and comprehension was also assessed. Results showed that the graphophonemic control group had a higher rate of accurately correcting miscues than did the guided reading group. The authors concluded that using graphophonemic instruction with students with specific language impairment may be a more effective strategy than a meaning based system.

**Orton-Gillingham Methodology**

The Orton-Gillingham Methodology began with Samuel Orton’s theories of learning disabilities based in neurobiology (Gillingham & Stillman, 1997). Dr. Samuel Orton was a child neurologist in the early 20th century who conducted research into the causes reading disabilities (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). At that time, research into learning disabilities was just beginning and little was known about cause and prevalence (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). Orton had some
interesting theories about reading disabilities being neurobiological in origin (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). His two major theories about the cause of learning disabilities are now considered inaccurate, but at the time, it was a step in the right direction (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). Orton believed that learning disabilities were caused by deficits in two neurobiological aspects; reversals were created by information being processed in both hemispheres and *stereosymbolia* caused symbols to be twisted (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). Although current research has shown weaknesses in Orton’s original theories about learning disabilities, his research has greatly impacted the evolution of reading interventions. Multisensory instruction grew out of Orton’s theory that learning disabilities were caused by neurobiological factors. It was thought that an active, hands on approach using kinesthetic and tactile senses would create a link and therefore make phonological processing more efficient (Oakland, Black, Stanford, Nussbaum, & Balise, 1998). Anna Gillingham worked with Samuel Orton as he conducted his research (Gillingham & Stillman, 1997). Orton relied on Anna Gillingham to create instructional strategies for remedial reading intervention based on conclusions from his research (Gillingham & Stillman, 1997). The Orton-Gillingham methodology was the product of instructional strategies set out by Anna Gillingham and Bessie Stillman, which were based in Orton’s neurobiological theory (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). The Orton-Gillingham approach (O-G) is a multisensory, step by step, sequential intervention for teaching phonemic awareness (Lindsey & Zylstra, 2002). Each lesson contains multisensory instruction on: alphabet, penmanship, new sound, reading, sight word and composition. Using kinesthetic movements and tactile resources, students learn new skills to mastery before moving onto the next lesson.
**Orton-Gillingham research**

Although diverse in results, there is a large body of research on the efficacy of the Orton-Gillingham approach as an intervention for reading disabilities. Many schools around the world have adopted a multisensory learning philosophy for reading instruction. Ritchey and Goeke (2006) reviewed 12 research studies with experimental or quasi-experimental designs to determine the efficacy of the Orton-Gillingham methodology. Participants in these studies ranged from primary to college students. The authors state that there is a long standing disagreement on whether the Orton-Gillingham meets the criteria for a scientifically based reading program. The author's purpose for examining the research was to determine if this program in fact meets the requirements. They also compare this approach to other reading programs to examine its efficacy. Studies included in this examination were chosen if they were peer reviewed, studied a multisensory or Orton-Gillingham approach, were experimental or quasi-experimental designs and had a sample size of more than 10 participants. Through examination of research studies, the authors found evidence that the Orton-Gillingham approach is effective with struggling readers. However, they also found evidence that it may not be any better than other interventions. Although this approach has been used by educators for years, there is a lack of research that has any statistical significance that shows its effectiveness as an approach. Ritchey and Goeke call this a “practice to research gap” (p. 12). Due to the lack of research that is either peer reviewed or methodologically sound, it is difficult to find evidence that this approach is in fact effective over other research-based reading programs. However, examination of the studies in this article did highlight that in many studies show positive results were shown in the areas of word reading, word attack skills, decoding ability, spelling and comprehension.
Scheffel, Shaw and Shaw (2008) conducted a study in three schools which evaluated supplemental reading instruction through the Orton-Gillingham methodology. The Institute for Multi-Sensory Education (IMSE) has put together a reading program for primary students which is based on the Orton-Gillingham methodology scope and sequence. The participants in this study were first grade students from three different inner city schools. The participants were put into either a control or treatment group; 476 in the control group and 224 in the treatment group. Researchers used the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) in order to establish benchmarks three times a year; fall, winter and spring. The treatment group was split into three groups, two of the groups had low academics and one had average academics. The control group was split into nine groups, four of the groups had low academics and five of the groups had average academics. Both control and treatment groups received reading instruction for 90 minutes a day, with the treatment group receiving 30 extra minutes of instruction through the supplementary reading program. Teachers that participated were specially trained in the Orton-Gillingham method for the study so that implementation of the reading program was standardized. Responses from nine teachers were collected and analyzed from a survey. After analyzing this data, researchers found that all nine teachers were highly in favour of the multisensory, Orton Gillingham approach and they would recommend it to other educators as one way to remediate reading. Although many educators choose programs that have a strong body of research, word of mouth about interventions can also be a strong factor when settling on a reading remediation. Therefore, Scheffel, Shaw and Shaw (2008) argued that if teachers have used the Orton-Gillingham and witnessed results, their anecdotal perceptions and observations should be considered in addition to any statistical data on the approach. Data from this study
showed that when compared to the control group, the treatment group showed significant progress in the area of phonemic awareness and knowledge of the alphabet.

Although literature has outlined this as the best practice, there continues to be a debate regarding whether it is an appropriate method. According to *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), the Orton-Gillingham approach does not meet the criteria for being a scientifically-researched based methodology. The terminology used in the NCLB Act surrounding phonics instruction use the words "explicit, systematic phonics instruction." Allen (2010) argues that although peer-reviewed research is lacking on this method, the OG approach falls under the spectrum laid out by the language in the NCLB act. Further research could show the efficacy of this approach with struggling readers. Although critics suggest that scientific research behind this approach is weak, other literature has given anecdotal evidence as well as personal experience to support it as an effective intervention. Allen argues that this anecdotal evidence should not be ignored when examining the efficacy of the OG approach. This author concludes this article by stating that much more scientific research is needed on this topic, but through anecdotal evidence, it is an approach that has shown improvements in the reading ability of children with dyslexia.

Teachers have the difficult task of choosing classroom programs as well as interventions for those who struggle. When a child is diagnosed with a learning disability, parents often get more involved in their schooling to ensure they are receiving the assistance they need. Rose and Zirkel (2007) examined a history of court cases that focused providing appropriate intervention to children with special needs; specifically in this case, learning disabilities. In the United States, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) provides out guidelines for the education of children with special needs. According to this act, all children with disabilities should be able to access appropriate programming for their distinct learning needs and have an individualized
education program (IEP). Rose and Zirkel argued that parents who have chosen a multisensory Orton-Gillingham based instruction for their children who have reading disabilities see marked improvement. Although there is positive support from organizations and parents, educators have differing opinions about this type of approach. Although there is a lack of statistically significant evidence that supports the efficacy of Orton-Gillingham programs, it does not mean that the methodology should disregarded. Educators often use, and are advocates for programs that are not backed by statistically significant data. In the past 30 years, there have been numerous court cases where parents are fighting for their children to have Orton-Gillingham as part of their intervention within the school system because they believe it works.

The Orton-Gillingham methodology is used in many countries around the world. Kok Hwee and Houghton (2011) conducted a study with Singaporean students who had a diagnosis of dyslexia. The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of the Orton-Gillingham program on reading ability with students who have dyslexia. There were 76 participants elementary school students, all of which had a diagnosis of dyslexia by an educational psychologist. Each participant received Orton-Gillingham tutoring after their school day, two times a week for one-hour sessions. In addition to the children who participated, there were three teacher participants who were trained in the Orton-Gillingham approach. This study was a pre-test/post-test experimental design, in which the participants were assigned to 19 groups to receive instruction at various times during the year. A baseline was found through administration of The Word Recognition Test-Revised, The Schonell Graded Reading Test-Revised and The Salford Sentence Reading Test-Revised. The Word Recognition Test-Revised is given to students in order to assess their Word Recognition Age. After hearing a word read, the student must find that word, among other words in the test booklet. The Schonell Graded Reading Test-Revised
assesses a student’s visual oral decoding ability. The student reads as many words as they can on a word list until they make 10 consecutive mistakes. The Salford Sentence Reading Test-Revised assesses a student’s oral reading ability. The student orally reads a graded passage as well as a graded sentence list. The miscues during these tests are recorded and the student’s oral reading age is calculated. Due to the complexity of this study, researchers used a multivariate analysis of variance in order to determine participants’ gains. In two of the areas assessed, word recognition and word expression, this study showed Orton Gillingham instruction was successful and facilitated gains. Although there was noted progress in these areas, however, in sentence reading there were no significant gains.

Conclusion

Within the educational community, there has been a long-standing discussion on what kind of role phonics should play in reading instruction in the classroom. The purpose of this literature review was twofold: to illustrate what research outlines are important characteristics of phonics programs and to analyze a few widely-used phonics programs to conclude whether they fit with research-based criterion.

The National Reading Panel reports are a great resource for educators when they are analyzing what literacy approach to use in their practice. The reports are consistently updated and give research-based information regarding what literacy approach is appropriate for specific types of learning differences. According to the National Reading Panel, an appropriate reading intervention for students with specific deficits in phonemic and phonological awareness is one that encompasses explicit and systematic phonics instruction.
The term *explicit, systematic phonics* describes an approach that teaches phonics skills through a direct teaching methodology, which is sequential, structured and engaging for the student. According to the National Reading Panel as well as other research, phonics programs that fit into this criterion should be considered ‘best practice’. In this literature review, research from four programs or methodologies were analyzed: Read Well, LiPS, Guided Reading and the Orton-Gillingham approach. The research showed that these approaches do fit the criteria of being explicit and systematic.

Whether research informs teaching practice is each educator’s individual decision. More research needs to be conducted on teacher’s opinions of phonics as general approach in the classroom. Also, more information is needed on what specifically informs teachers’ practice and how they choose interventions to fit diverse needs when students have a specific deficit in reading.
Chapter 3: Research Project

There are thousands of instructional books and resources that outline phonics intervention. There are many manuals that are highly regarded by educators due to a variety of characteristics. This project includes a manual that outlines how to teach the Orton-Gillingham method in a small group environment. Before construction of the manual, a survey was conducted with a focus on illustrating teacher perceptions about phonics programs in general. This survey guided the construction of the manual. Following the construction of the manual, a survey was given to collect information and feedback on the completed manual for revisions.

In the following chapter, each section of the research study will be explained in specific detail. In the methodology section, I will discuss the type of research study, sampling procedure for participants and measurement tools. Next, data collection and analysis will be outlined in detail. Finally, there will be an explanation of how the manual for this project was constructed.

Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design. It involved 10 participants who were chosen using purposeful sampling. In order to illustrate opinions about how educators select reading programs and interventions, participants were chosen according to specific criteria. The sample included learning assistance teachers, resource teachers, primary teachers and student support specialists. All participants had experience with putting reading interventions into place with struggling readers who have specific reading disabilities.

The second part of the study was a focus group and had 5 participants. These participants were chosen according to the same criteria as the first survey group. Participants reviewed a draft copy of a manual and gave specific feedback.
In order to adhere to ethics, I began by getting consent from School District #57 to carry out the study with teachers. I contacted Cindy Heightman, principal of Curriculum and Instruction, with an overview of my proposal. Due to the very specific nature of the sample, teachers that meet the criteria were contacted via email, given a brief overview of the proposal and asked to be a part of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. All data collected was anonymous and shredded at the completion of the study. During the study, all data was stored in a locked cabinet. For this project, data were collected from a variety of sources. There were three sets of data given in order to collect information to improve the manual: a questionnaire, focus group and post-focus group.

**Questionnaire construction.** Each questionnaire for this study was created in consultation with my supervisor, Dr. Andrew Kitchenham. The first questionnaire used in this study mainly consisted of open-ended questions. It had 13 questions, both open-ended and closed-ended. Questionnaires were web-based, using Fluidsurvey, and emailed to participants. They had two weeks to return the questionnaire. Questions included the following topics: years of experience/area of teaching, perception of phonics based reading intervention programs, how they choose reading intervention programs and specifically what they look for in a teaching resource. The data collected from the questionnaire guided the construction of the manual. The manual was then given to a focus group for discussion. The first step in this research was to give participants a questionnaire that asked teachers opinions regarding phonics as an approach for reading, in general. This questionnaire contained 12 questions in total; 10 closed-ended questions and two open-ended questions.

**Focus group.** Many researchers use focus groups to carry out their research as they are regarded to have value as a research methodology for a variety of reasons (Wibeck & Dahlgren,
2007). By definition, a focus group is approximately 4 to 6 participants that meet to discuss a particular topic (Wibeck & Dahlgren, 2007). The purpose of focus groups is to gather information to understand perceptions and opinions from a selected group of people. The moderator’s job is to direct and guide the conversation during a session that is usually between 30 to 90 minutes in duration (Wibeck & Dahlgren, 2007).

After the construction of the manual, once it was in draft form, participants examined the manual in a focus group. The focus group consisted of 5 participants who were chosen using purposeful sampling according to specific criteria. Resource teachers, administration and early primary classroom teachers were given the manual to examine. The focus group occurred at Spruceland Traditional Elementary in the resource room. All participants were given an informed consent via email. During the focus group, participants were asked general and specific questions about the manual which guided the focus group discussion. The focus group lasted an hour.

**Value of a focus group.** The focus group methodology has many strengths and reasons why it is widely used by many researchers (Liamputtong, 2011). It is a qualitative methodology with a main focus of looking at attitudes, opinions and perceptions of a selected group of people (Kruger, 1994). Kruger (1994) argues that a more in depth analysis occurs with qualitative methodologies, such as focus groups, over quantitative methodologies. The relationship and interaction between researcher and participant’s produces good qualitative data and in turn valuable information (Kruger, 1994). Liamputtong (2011) suggested that focus groups are particularly valuable for two main reasons. The methodology lets researchers look at a group of diverse individuals and gain an understanding about what opinions they hold (Liamputtong,
An important part of a focus group is for the moderator to create a safe environment for participants to open up about their thoughts and feelings regarding a specific issue. Researchers can look at the different participants and gain insight into their interactions as well as how their specific opinions may be formed according to their circumstances (Liamputtong, 2011).

Liamputtong (2011) argued that it is a flexible methodology due to the ability to use it with a multitude of different sample groups and topics. During a focus group, researchers can gather information from participants in a non-pressure environment (Liamputtong, 2011). Rather than have to make decisions or come to an agreement, participants are simply discussing and stating their opinions on the topic being researched (Liamputtong, 2011). Greenbaum (2000) argued the most important strength of focus groups is that the participants are actively participating in the research process because they are watching the research occur.

Importance of the moderator. In focus group research, the role of the moderator is integral to the success of the focus group. The moderator has a variety of roles including but not limited to; consultant, planner, project coordinator, facilitator and analyst (Greenbaum, 2000).

Data collection and analysis

The teacher perception questionnaires and focus group data were analyzed using a qualitative methodology. The second focus group survey was analyzed using a quantitative methodology. First, the participants’ responses were segmented and coded. When the coding was complete, the codes were analysed and put into similar themes. Data from the examination of themes provided information regarding teacher perceptions of the manual and of the Orton-Gillingham approach in general. From the outcome of the surveys, teacher perceptions about using a phonic approach were highlighted. The data from the initial questionnaire also guided
manual construction. Data from the focus group provided input about the manual and showed how it can be adapted and changed in order to create an efficient resource for teachers.

**Manual Construction**

For this project, I created a manual which adapted the Orton Gillingham approach for delivery to small groups within a school setting. Orton-Gillingham is a structured sequential approach that has very specific training. It is an approach that could be used in a small group environment to assist many students who have specific phonemic processing deficits. However, a manual is needed to standardize a method of delivery in order to maintain the integrity of the approach. Orton Gillingham lessons are multisensory, structured and sequential (Lindsey and Zylstra, 2002). The multisensory nature of each lesson engages each sense by using kinesthetic and tactile strategies for better retention of the skills taught.

There are 10 main components of an Orton-Gillingham approach: sequencing, penmanship, alphabet, visual drill, auditory drill, dictionary, phonogram, sight words, composition and reading. For each of these components there will be a concise one page summary. Each lesson starts with learning a new sequence such as days of the week, colours of the rainbow or months of the year. During the alphabet section, students learn about the sequence of the alphabet through alphabet teams. There are four teams: a team, h team, n team and u team. This division into teams lets students work on the alphabet in manageable parts. In the next part, penmanship, students learn the formation of letters through direct modeling and tactile resources. Printing is learned using the visual representation of sky, grass, and ground. During the visual drill, students are shown flash cards of phonograms that they have been taught. Tactile mats are used throughout this drill when students make errors; they trace the letter as they say sound correctly. The auditory drill is when students listen to a sound said orally, identify it and write it down.
Spelling words with known sounds are practiced at this point in the lesson. Simultaneous Oral Spelling is an integral part of the O-G methodology. This allows students to make the sound to letter connection neurologically. The next section of the lesson is when students learn their new sound; in this program they call it new phonogram. The first task in this part of the lesson is to discover the new sound. Students use auditory discrimination of words said to discover their new phonogram. They then carry out various activities containing the new sound; blending practice, spelling and reading tasks. Within each lesson is a time for reading. Material is chosen at their instructional level, the level at which they can read passages with some support. Finally, a new sight word is taught. Sight words are considered “red letter” words, which means that they need to know them by sight. Through a number of multisensory methods, students learn what these words look like. Dictionary skills and writing skills are taught as needed. If a student needs these skills, they are worked into the lessons.

First, the manual explained each component in terms of methodology and teaching techniques. Behavioural expectations are also set out in this section. For example, in the penmanship section, behaviour expectations are that the student sit up straight, have their eyes and one hand on the paper, maintain a proper grip on the pencil, etc. Next, there is specific explanation on the sequence of the lesson. There is a materials list and instructions on how to use the materials for each step of the lesson. A multisensory methodology is central to the Orton-Gillingham approach. For educators that are new to this approach, the workload to create lessons can be overwhelming and stressful. For the multisensory component, the manual will include specific examples and pictures of what could be used as well as how to store these materials.
Conclusion

The central research question for this study was, "What do educators look for when choosing a phonics-based literacy intervention?" This study employed a cross-sectional survey design that consisted of 10 participants. All participants had experience with teaching reading instruction and remediating reading. A focus group was conducted in order to gather feedback on a draft manual. During a post-focus group, data were collected on how the participants perceived the changes to the draft manual that occurred according to their feedback. The focus group was guided by general and specific questions.

Data were collected from three sources: a teacher-perception questionnaire, focus group, and post-focus group. The teacher-perception questionnaire contained 13 questions in total. There were 11 closed-ended questions that were analyzed according to a quantitative methodology; specifically, averages and frequency counts. There were two open-ended questions that were analyzed according to a qualitative methodology.

The purpose of the conducting the focus group was to guide the construction of the manual. The manual adapted an Orton-Gillingham methodology for a small-group environment. Geared towards educators, the purpose of creating this manual was to give important information about this multisensory approach. The manual outlines materials needed and explains each section of the Orton-Gillingham tutoring hour.
Chapter 4: Data Analysis

In the follow chapter, data from research conducted will be examined. Data were collected from two sources: a teacher perception questionnaire and a focus group. The specific details of each measurement tool will be outlined as well as specific methodology used to analyze all data collected.

In order to organize the data from the teacher perception questionnaire, each response was given a value. To ensure answers stayed anonymous, participants were given a number from one to ten. There were nine questions that had the following values: strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). There were three questions that had the following values: very important (3), important (2) and not important (1). Those values were then put into an excel document and analyzed. The data was analyzed using single-item analysis. Specifically, the average and frequency counts for each questionnaire item were determined. Single-item analysis was the most appropriate measurement tool to use for this questionnaire. Since many of the questions are rating agreement or importance, it will give a clear and easy representation of this measure on each item of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire Data

Quantitative Data. Educators have a variety of different factors that influence how and why they choose a reading intervention. Table 1 shows participants responses to question five on the teacher questionnaire. When asked if researched-based approaches were of importance, nine out of ten of participants either agreed (n=4) or strongly agreed (n=5) that they would choose a program with strong statistical evidence that proves its efficacy. Table 2 shows participants responses to question six on the questionnaire. When asked if teachers choose programs or
strategies that colleagues have tried and found successful there was 100% agreement.

Throughout the literature and research on the subject of phonics programs and interventions, researchers often focus on whether the program is research-based. This data shows that there are other factors for teachers when choosing a reading program rather than solely basing their choice on research. This sample of participants showed that ideas and suggestions from their trusted colleagues is also an important factor in their decision making process.

Table 1

*Responses to Question Five on the Teacher Survey (n=10); all numbers are raw scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please respond to the following statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important that a reading intervention program is researched-based and has strong statistical evidence to its efficacy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

*Responses to Question Six on the Teacher Survey (n=10); all numbers are raw scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please respond to the following statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When choosing a reading intervention, I choose interventions or strategies that my colleagues have suggested or have had success with</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another important factor when educators choose an intervention is the specific characteristics of that program. One of the main purposes of this study was to gain information about what teachers generally looked for in a reading program. Table 3 shows participants responses to question three on the questionnaire. This question looks at general, big ideas or important characteristics that teachers look for in a reading intervention manual. Data gathered from this question will improve the proposed manual by guiding what to include and what to dismiss.
Table 3

Responses to Question Three on the Teacher Survey (n=10); all numbers are raw scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an educator, what is your opinion of the following statements about what characteristics you look for in a reading intervention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that is research-based</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that colleagues have mentioned was effective</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that has a phonetic and or phonemic approach</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multisensory or hands on instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A reading intervention based on a balanced literacy approach</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that contains materials that are engaging for students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceived important characteristics that were chosen to be examined included; a research-based intervention, an intervention that colleagues use, an approach that is phonetic/phonemic awareness focused, a multisensory approach, a balanced literacy approach and an intervention that is engaging for students. Overwhelmingly, ten out of ten (100%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they following characteristics were important; phonetic/phonemic awareness, multisensory or hands on instruction, balanced literacy approach and engaging materials. Teachers ranked these general characteristics as important and therefore, they will be incorporated into the manual.

Once a teacher settles on a specific approach, the first step in implementing the intervention is looking at the teacher’s manual. The classroom or learning assistance environment are such busy places, an approach that is easy to follow is integral. If instruction manuals are onerous and hard to follow, the intervention will be hard to manage and could be potentially discontinued in the classroom or small group. In order to highlight perceptions,
participants were asked to consider six main specific characteristics and rank them in terms of importance. Table four shows participant responses to question four on the teacher questionnaire.

Table 4

Responses to Question Four on the Teacher Survey (n=10); all numbers are raw scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>NI</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please rank specific characteristics that you look for in a manual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear layout</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to follow instructions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacklined masters of materials included</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration of different learning styles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These characteristics were; clear layout, easy to follow instructions, black lined masters, pictures, examples and consideration of different learning styles. Not surprisingly, ten out of ten participants ranked clear layout and easy to follow instructions as either important (n=2) or very important (n=8). When looking at the use of pictures in a manual, the results were more mixed. Eight out of ten participants ranked pictures as either very important (n=5) or important (n=3). Surprisingly, two out of ten participants ranked pictures as not important when choosing a manual. During a teacher’s career, they are constantly looking for resources to use for their lessons whether it is worksheets, crafts, or manipulatives. For black lined masters, nine out of ten participants (90%) ranked it as very important (n=6) and as important (n=3). The last characteristic that participants ranked was consideration of different learning styles.

Differentiated learning is a common theme when looking at what is considered ‘best practice’ within the classroom. Participants agreed with this theory, with nine out of ten participants ranking it as very important (n=6) or important (n=3). The results from this questionnaire data
show this sample of teachers place high importance on the specific characteristics chosen to examine. The characteristics that participants placed importance on will be incorporated into the manual. These include: clear layout, easy to follow instructions, pictures, black lined masters, examples and consideration of different learning styles.

The central purpose of this study was to examine teacher’s opinions of phonics instruction in general and what place it should play in reading instruction. Table 5 shows participants responses to question seven on the teacher questionnaire.

Table 5

*Responses to Question Seven on the Teacher Survey (n=10); all numbers are raw scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For each statement, please choose what accurately describes your opinion on using phonics for a reading instruction in general</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics should only be used as an intervention for struggling readers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction should be given to all children who are learning to read</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction should never be used when teaching reading</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overwhelmingly, 100% of participants disagreed (n=6) or strongly disagreed (n=4) that phonics should never be used when teaching reading. When looking at phonics in general instruction, nine out of ten participants agreed (n=6) or strongly agreed (n=3) that phonics intervention should be given to all students. Interestingly, one participant disagreed with this statement. When asked if phonics should only be given to students who struggle with reading, 100% of participants disagreed with this statement. This data shows that this sample of participants had the opinion that phonics should be a part of general classroom reading instruction. These brief results also illustrate that there may be a demand for a program which is based on systematic phonics for classroom instruction. A program such as Orton-Gillingham could be preferable for
many teachers. This perceived need, therefore, supports the creation of a manual geared towards classroom teachers, learning assistance teachers or educational assistants.

Table 6

*Responses to Question Eight on the Teacher Survey (n=10); all numbers are raw scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For each statement, please choose what accurately describes your opinions about phonics instruction being used for remediate reading intervention.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics should always be a large part of a remediate reading intervention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics should be a small part of a remediate reading intervention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics should never be a part of a remediate reading intervention</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another main purpose of this study was to illustrate teacher’s perceptions about phonics as a remedial reading intervention for those students with specific learning disabilities. Regular classroom reading instruction is one issue, remedial reading instruction can be quite different. Although sometimes, specialist reading teachers are responsible for giving some reading instruction, it often falls on the classroom teacher. As for the importance one should place on phonics, the data shows that it varies when looking at remediating reading instruction with six out of ten participants saying it should be a large part. Table 6 shows participants responses to question eight on the teacher questionnaire. Responses to the statement that phonics should never be a part of remedial reading were expected. Overwhelmingly, ten out of ten participants either disagreed (n=6) or strongly disagreed (n=4) with this statement. Therefore, this sample of collectively participants has the opinion that phonics should play a part in remedial reading instruction.

*Qualitative Data.* For the teacher perception questionnaire, there were two questions that were analyzed using a qualitative methodology. To begin the coding and theming process, I first
went back to my central research question of the study; what do educators look for when choosing a phonics-based literacy intervention? More specifically, these questions on the questionnaire were trying to uncover educators’ opinions on using a phonics-based literacy program in their teaching practice. To organize this data, using an excel spreadsheet; I first created a table that had two columns, one for each question. I input the ten participants responses into the table so that all responses would be on one page and visually easy to analyze.

If participants agreed to the question “An Orton-Gillingham approach is an appropriate intervention to use with struggling readers”, they were asked as a follow up to explain specifically why they agreed. The specific of this question was to find out educators perception about the Orton-Gillingham approach as an intervention. Participants 2, 5, 6 and 7 had no answer to this question. It is unclear if the lack of response is because they disagreed with the statement or if they missed the question completely. There was an option to choose strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. All participants that missed this question also answered that they had no knowledge of the Orton-Gillingham approach. One assumption about this missing data is that the participants disagreed to the question, failed to click the disagree button and then subsequently did not believe they needed to explain their answer. Through the coding process, one major theme that became evident was trust in professional opinion. One participant stated that “trusted colleagues tell me that they have had good success with this approach”. This theme was prevalent as four out of six participants mentioned that through conversations with colleagues they have learned that Orton-Gillingham is an effective intervention. Codes that lead to a minor theme were; highly successful, structured approach, found success, appropriate intervention and effective. This minor theme was successful intervention. One participant states, “I have heard through colleagues that this reading intervention is highly successful”.
The second question analyzed asked teachers opinions on what they consider to be ‘best’ practice when choosing an intervention for a student who has a specific learning disability. The question was “when choosing a reading intervention for a student who has a specific reading disability what do you believe is the most effective strategy, please explain”. Participant number two and five did not give an answer to this question. The following codes became apparent through analyzing this question; identifying specific needs, differentiated learning, diagnostic assessment and numerous different programs. These codes lead to one major theme: Differentiated instruction. Participants identified differentiated instruction as one of the most important factors when planning for a child with a specific learning disability. According to many of the participants, selecting a program that suits the students’ specific needs is first step in any effective intervention. Out of the eight responses, five of the participants mentioned tailoring the intervention to the specific needs of the student. After finding the major theme and looking at the other codes, a minor theme emerged. Many participants had answered with specific interventions that they thought were important; decoding, comprehension, phonetic/phonemic awareness and daily reading. Two minor themes that emerged were balanced literacy approach and phonological awareness. Three out of eight participants specifically stated phonological awareness and decoding skills were the most effective strategies. One participant stated clearly that a balanced approach was extremely important in their classroom practice. They mentioned that a balanced approach means “knowing my student, identifying their needs and providing a balanced approach between decoding and comprehension”.

Focus Group

In order to gather data on the perceived efficacy of this manual, a draft manual was given to 5 participants. The focus group ran for one hour and was held at Spruceland Traditional
Elementary in the resource room. The participants were asked specific questions only to guide conversation and get them back onto topic during the session. The participants had many positive comments when asked what generally they liked about the manual. All participants agreed that it was visually appealing and they really liked the photos that accompanied the text throughout the manual. One participant mentioned that she thought that the manual preloaded the students well, the sections on setting expectations and setting the climate gets the children involved in their own learning.

Along with the positives, participants gave excellent constructive criticism of the manual. One participant said that some of the expectations were worded in a negative way and should be worded more positively. The Orton-Gillingham approach is a lot to explain, therefore, participants felt like the manual should be more specific with some details. For example, there should be more explanation as to what the teacher does and what the student does during lessons. There is a lot of terminology that is specific to the Orton-Gillingham approach. One participant mentioned that she was very confused by all of the terminology when it was used during the lessons. The feedback was the existing terminology list should include more terms as well as pictures would be helpful for each definition. Along this similar topic, participants felt as if the examples throughout the manual needed more explanation. Terms that were used, needed to be more consistent throughout the manual. For example, two words for a similar manipulative should not be used interchangeably, like tactile surface and tracing mat. When the participants were asked what they specifically would add to the manual, each person gave something different. These things included; a table of contents, an appendix with specific examples of resources, a link of websites for extensions, a sample lesson plan and a diagnostic assessment.
One main purpose of having a focus group to examine the manual was to get feedback on what population of educators a manual like this should be geared towards; for example, classroom teachers, learning assistance teachers or educational assistants. The consensus between participants was that this manual was laid out step by step and would be effective when implementing the approach. Furthermore, all participants agreed that the approach needed to be implemented by one consistent person on a daily basis in a small group environment. This probably would work best as a small group pull out from the learning assistance teacher or an educational assistant. One participant mentioned that she would be too overwhelmed implementing it in the classroom with all of the distractions occurring all the time. Another participant stated that he would definitely use the methodology and incorporate the principals of the approach into his current daily lesson planning.

**Adapted Orton-Gillingham Manual**

The data collected and analyzed impacted and guided the revision of the manual. The first chapter of the manual is an introduction to the Orton-Gillingham methodology. This chapter first defines what a multisensory approach should look like. Important aspects of the approach are explained; scope and sequence and diagnostic assessment. The scope and sequence of the approach as well as a diagnostic assessment are both included in appendix A. Since this approach can be so in-depth, chapter one also outlines important terminology that will be used throughout the manual. During the revision, this section was edited added more terms and made the definitions more specific. This is a fast paced, sequential approach that has a lot of information to teach within an hour. Chapter one also outlines important information about room setup, resources, setting expectations of both teacher and student as well as how to communicate those expectations.
Chapter two outlines what specific materials are needed for each section of the lesson. There is a material list and labeled pictures for the following sections of the Orton-Gillingham lesson; focus work, alphabet, visual drill, auditory drill, phonogram and sight word. In the focus group, participants liked the pictures that accompanied the explanation but wanted labels for the pictures to make it clearer. During the revision, labeled were added to all pictures to explain what they were.

Chapter three is the lesson planning portion of the manual. Each section of the lesson is explained in detail and includes a material list as well as specifics of the sequence of the lesson. The main sections of the total tutoring hour are; focus work, alphabet, visual drill, auditory drill, phonogram lesson and sight word lesson. The focus work part of the lesson begins the tutoring hour by grounding the students and gets them ready to learn. This can be any activity that brings them into the group setting allowing them to get settled such as dot to dots, colour by numbers or overlearning of previous learned skills. Alphabet is the next portion of the lesson where students learn the sequence of the alphabet. If students have mastered the alphabet, they are taught other important sequences such as days of the week and/or months of the year. During the visual drill section of the lesson, students practice recognizing a letter or a group of letters and saying the corresponding sounds that have been taught and are known to them. The auditory drill has students practice listening to known or learned sounds and printing the corresponding letter or letter sounds. The next section of the lesson is when students learn their new phonogram. They use many multisensory techniques to learn this new sound. The sight word portion of the lesson teaches the students a new sight word. These words are called ‘red letter’ words because you are not able to sound them out. The last thing in the lesson that the students will do is review all of the new concepts that they have learned.
Feedback from the focus group highlighted the need for a more comprehensive appendix.

There are three appendixes; appendix A is the Orton-Gillingham scope and sequences, appendix B is a diagnostic assessment and appendix C is a sample lesson plan for the tutoring hour.
Orton-Gillingham Tutoring Hour
Adapted for Small Group Instruction

"I hear and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand" - Chinese Proverb

This manual has been produced to give interested educators specific ideas on how to adapt the Orton-Gillingham approach for delivery to a small group within a school setting.
Resources that complement and enhance teaching in a small group have been suggested. Pictures of resources that have been used successfully have been included.

The Orton-Gillingham approach is direct instruction in a "total language hour". This manual gives instruction for each integral part of this approach:

- Focus work
- Penmanship
- Alphabet
- Visual Drill
- Auditory Drill
- Phonogram
- Sight Word

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Orton-Gillingham Approach

- Multisensory
- Scope and Sequence
- Important Terminology
- Room Set-Up
- Resource Placement
- Communicate the Expectations
- Setting the Climate
Chapter 2: Materials Needed

- Focus Work
- Alphabet/Penmanship
- Visual Drill/Auditory Drill
- Phonogram/Sight Words

Chapter 3: Orton-Gillingham Lesson

- Focus Work
- Alphabet
- Penmanship
- Visual Drill
- Auditory Drill
- Phonogram Lesson/Rule lesson
- Sight Words

Appendix A  Complete Scope and Sequence

Appendix B  Diagnostic Assessment
Introduction to Orton-Gillingham Methodology

Multisensory

- The Orton-Gillingham methodology is known for its highly multisensory nature of the lessons.
- A multisensory approach is highly engaging for students, particularly for those who may struggle with learning.
- However, an approach such as this can be overwhelming due to all the "stuff" that you need to make, buy and have!

Scope and Sequence

- The scope and sequence of the Orton-Gillingham approach is an important part of the program’s success. As a sequential approach to teaching phonics, each lesson builds on the next.
- There are 120 lessons in total
- See Appendix A for the complete scope and sequence

Diagnostic Assessment

- The first step before beginning instruction is to conduct a short diagnostic assessment on the students' skills.
• See Appendix B for a complete diagnostic assessment.

### Important Terminology

- **Language Keys Drill Deck** ("LKDD deck")
  - A deck of cards that includes all the phonograms on them with the corresponding key pictures on the back.

- **Tactile surface**
  - Material that is soft or has a lot of texture can be made into mat.
  - Textured paper
  - Rice/sand box. Put a bright colour of paper on the bottom so the students can see what they have created.

- **Tracing mat**
  - A textured piece of fabric or paper that the students can use to trace on with their finger.

- **Key Object**
  - For each new phonogram taught, there should be a key object to show the student. This is a physical object that represents the new phonogram. For example, a toy apple for the phonogram a.

- **Sky, Grass, Ground**
  - A method of teaching penmanship with three coloured lines; brown for the ground, green for the grass and blue for the sky.
  - Using the **sky, grass, ground** system promotes formation while students are learning to print.
Record page
- A worksheet for students to practice and reinforce the skills that they learned in the lesson.

Room Setup
The students are in this room for a specific program - this setting needs to reflect organization:
- Rectangular table
- Chairs at appropriate height for all members of group
- Slim cushions for back and seat

Resource Placement
- At each students place, on the back of their chairs, tape a Ziploc bag with a tracing mat, pencil and eraser. These are resources used consistently throughout the lesson.
- Focus activity - not all students arrive at the same time
  - have a focus activity at each spot.
  - Explain this activity at the end of the previous lesson. Each student should be able to meet with success (a small booklet of easy focus activities can be made for each student).
- Table should be clear at all times since resources will be continuously past around
- Have all material on a small table or bin beside the table the students are using.
- Keep student's LKDD together on a ring on a hook set up where they can reach it with their tracing mat. Show them how to put their new card on the ring
• Seat students on the left of the teacher that may be more capable students. By the time each student has completed a short task and it has moved to the end or the right of the table therefore students sitting at the far right there have watched the process and will be more primed the task efficiently.

Communicate the Expectations

• Using language they understand, discuss the rules of the group with the students
  -Example. Please walk to the room
• Demonstrate how to sit in the chair—Have a visual of appropriate posture.
• Hands can be placed in lap or "bunny hands on the table"
• Model how to make eye contact and look at resources
• After completion of each lesson – students will silently line up. Ask 2 questions of each student about the lesson (this is their ‘ticket out the door’)

The most important thing is to foster self-esteem and confidence in a quiet learning environment. If they are challenged in small ways, they will meet with success. Setting up routines and expectations are integral to the Orton-Gillingham approach.
Expectations of Student and Teacher

- Expectations should be taught in a direct and explicit manner before starting the Orton-Gillingham sequence. Write the expectations on chart paper so that you can refer to them quickly or they can serve as a non-verbal reminder to the students during lessons.

Expectations for students

- Clear voices when speaking
- Specific way in which to 'say the story' during phonogram lessons
  - Example, o says /o/ for octopus
- Clip consonants
  - Example, b says /b/ NOT /buh/!
- Correct mat tracing -- tracing to be accurate and neat
- Discuss appropriate ways to use manipulatives.
  - Manipulatives can easily become toys. Discuss with students that these are tools for their learning.

Teacher's Phrases/Corrective feedback:

- "Watch how my lips move when I say this"
- "Listen to my voice"
- Elbows don't belong on the table, thank you
- "Please sit up properly, thank you"
- If a behavior is not helpful, say “show me that you’re ready to learn” thank you.

Minutes make a difference, if you don’t waste them, students won’t either.
Rules of the OG small group need to be demonstrated and modelled because if every student knows what is expected they will actually remind each other and the group becomes quite cohesive. Saying 'thank you' after every directive shows respect and it actually works
Setting the Climate

- Before beginning any instruction, it is important to set the climate with your new students.

- Orton-Gillingham is a multisensory, sequential approach for remediating reading. Students should first be taught what multisensory means and why it is important for their learning. It is important that the students are directly taught this concept, before beginning the program.

- In this program, the students use four of the main senses consistently in order to learn the concepts (VAKT. V=Visual, K=Kinesthetic, A=Auditory and T=Tactile).

Lesson Idea

- Create a multisensory board that students can put each of the senses onto while they are learning about it.

Need:
- A picture or cut out of a student
- The 5 body parts that correspond with senses (eye, ear, tongue, hand, nose). These objects should have velcro on them so that the student can manipulate them and stick them to the example.
Chapter 2: Materials Needed

Materials Needed

- For this highly multisensory approach, there are many different materials needed for each section of the 1 hour lesson.
- Organization is key to make this approach manageable and efficient.
- A binder and bin system can be helpful for organizing each lesson. Label one bin for each part of the lesson except for the phonogram lesson (Focus work, Alphabet, Penmanship, Visual Drill, Auditory Drill, Sight Word)
Alphabet

Explain:

- Alphabet is the portion of the lesson where students learn the sequence of the alphabet.
- Emphasis is put on learning the sequence in alphabet teams.
- During this time, after students have mastered the alphabet, students should also be taught important sequences. For example, the days of the week, months of the year and seasons.

**Alphabet teams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials**

- Alphabet letter manipulatives. Put together 5 or 6 different ways to teach alphabet teams, dependant on the number of students in your group
- Record page.
- Pencil

**Lesson:**

(1) Instructor will introduce alphabet team.

(2) Instructor will give the students their own set of manipulatives. Students will work with their manipulatives to put alphabet team in order.

(3) Students will complete record page.
• For the phonogram section of the lesson, create a binder with plastic inserts to place each part of that lesson.
• The next few pages will outline what specific materials you will need for each part of the lesson.

Focus Work
• Focus work should be independent practice of skills to promote focus and engagement at the beginning of the lesson. Focus work can be pen and paper tasks or working with manipulatives.
• The following are some ideas of what could be used for the focus work section of the lesson;
  - Dot to dot (Letters or numbers)
  - Mazes
  - Colour by letter
  - Review work from previous lessons; alphabet teams, phonogram, sight word, printing practice.

Alphabet
Alphabet teams can be taught in a variety of ways. The four teams are: a-g, h-m, n-t, and u-z. Some ideas include;
  • Magnetic letters on a baking tray
  • Alphabet teams written on objects that can be manipulated;
    - Lego
    - Velcro letters
    - Bingo chips
Penmanship
- Model of each letter of the alphabet
- Manipulatives that the students could use to create the letter; wiki sticks or play dough.
- Laminated sky, grass, ground mats
- White board erasers (you can use socks)
- Pencils
- Record page.

Visual Drill
- Emoji
- Tactile surface
  - Tracing mat: Material that is soft or has a lot of texture can be made into mat.
  - Textured paper
  - Rice/sand box. Put a bright colour of paper on the bottom so the students can see what they have created.
Auditory Drill

- Language Keys Drill Deck (LKDD deck)
- Record page.
  *The following sections are needed on the record page;
  - Known phonograms (10 to 15 lines)
  - Words (5 to 10 words)
  - A line for sentence

Phonograms

- Language
- Tactile
- Key word
  Ex. An
  - Blending mat- to practice the new sound by blending into words with beginning and ending sounds.
- Reading words- words that contain the new sound
- Phonogram Record page

Blending Mat

Phonogram Record Page
• Tactile surface or Tracing mat
• Red letter cards
• Sight Word Record Page.

Chapter 3:
Lesson Planning
Focus Work

Explanation:

- In ability groupings, often students are coming from different rooms for their Orton-Gillingham session.
- For a smooth transition it helps to have an activity on the table at their spot to have them engage immediately.
- This focus work is based on overlearning of recent concepts learned in previous lessons.

Materials

The following are some ideas for focus work. The activities will be dependent on the specific student.

- Pictures to draw (3) objects
- ABC colouring sections-this relates to the alphabet section of the lesson.
- Felt board with velcro word attachments. Create words with previous learned phonograms.
- Dot to dot
- Colour by numbers

Behavioural Expectation

- Focus on task until the last person was seated and group is ready to start. The task does not have to be completed.
Explaination:

- Alphabet is the portion of the lesson where students learn the sequence of the alphabet.
- Emphasis is put on learning the sequence in alphabet teams.
- During this time, after students have mastered the alphabet, students should also be taught important sequences. For example, the days of the week, months of the year and seasons.

**Alphabet teams**

```
abcdefg
hijklm
nopqrst
uvwxyz
```

Materials

- Alphabet letter manipulatives. Put together 5 or 6 different ways to teach alphabet teams, dependant on the number of students in your group
- Record page.
- Pencil

Lesson:

1. Instructor will introduce alphabet team.
2. Instructor will give the students their own set of manipulatives. Students will work with their manipulatives to put alphabet team in order.
3. Students will complete record page.
Visual Drill

Explanation:

- Student practices the visual drill by recognizing and verbally saying 'known' or learned phonograms.

Materials:

✓ Language Keys Drill Deck (LKDD deck)
✓ Tactile surface for tracing (Example, tracing mat, sand box, textured paper)

Lesson:

(1) Students will sit across from instructor with their tactile surface in front of them.

(2) Instructor will show students one card at a time and student will say the sound out loud.

*IF the student gets the sound incorrect

Corrective feedback: "Say the story 3x as you trace on your mat (model the story)"

➤ This card then goes back into the pile in order for the student to see it again and try to say it appropriately.

Auditory Drill
Explanations:

- During the auditory drill, students are practicing listening to 'known' or learned sounds and writing them on a record page. Spelling is called Simultaneous Oral Spelling (SOS).
- The phonograms and spelling words chosen for this activity should come from previous lessons.

Materials:

- ✓ Learning Key Drill Deck (LKDD deck)-for instructor to read from
- ✓ Record page
- ✓ Pencil

Lesson:

(1) Instructor will hold the LKDD deck say sound.

- Remind the students "Listen, repeat and sound as you spell".
- Students will say the sound and write it on their record page

(2) Instructor will read spelling words to the student.

- Remind the students "Listen, repeat and sound as you spell".
- Students will say the word and write the sound on their record page
- During the Phonogram portion of the lesson, students will learn a new sound.
- They already went through the discovery process of this new sound in the alphabet portion of the lesson.

Materials

✓ LKDD deck card for new phonogram
✓ Different key word objects (For example, a toy apple for a says /a/)
✓ Tactile surface (For example, tracing mat, sand box or textured paper).
✓ Reading words (containing the new phonogram)
✓ A story to read
✓ Record page

Lesson

(1) Introduction to new phonogram
- Instructors will show students the card and key object for the new phonogram. Teach story.
  - Example: a says /a/ for apple.
- Students will trace the phonogram 3x on their tactile surface and say the story.

(2) Blending Mats
- Students will practice blending their new phonogram with beginning and end sounds.

(3) Reading Cards
- Student(s) will read words off of cards. They can do this together or take turns.
- Place cards in the middle of the table for review.

(4) Phonogram Record Page
- Students will practice the sound by writing it 3x on the record page
- Instructor will give 5 to 10 spelling words that the students will write down.

(5) Reading
- A story for the student to read

(6) Overlearning activity
- This activity closes the phonogram portion of the lesson. It can be anything that provides the students with an opportunity to practice what they have just learned in a fun and engaging way.

Sight Words

Explanation
• A sight word, or red letter word, is a word that must be recognized as a whole by naming the letters rather than being decoded.

Materials

✓ Red letter cards
✓ New sight word on a card
✓ Sight word record page

Lesson

(1) Hand out sight word manipulatives

**Make enough sets of manipulatives so that each student can try something different.

• Students will discover the sight word by building it with different manipulatives

(2) Sight Word Record Page

• Students will complete a record page with their newly learned sight word

Sample Lesson Plan
- The following is a one page sequence of the lesson with the materials needed for each section. See Appendix C for a complete sample lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5 Mins | Focus Work                      | ✓ Focus work activity  
|        |                                 | ✓ Pencil/eraser                                       |
| 5 Mins | Alphabet or Sequence            | ✓ Alphabet letter manipulatives. 5 or 6 different activities  
|        |                                 | ✓ Record page.  
|        |                                 | ✓ Pencil/eraser                                       |
| 10 Mins| Penmanship                      | ✓ Model of proper formation of letter/phonogram  
|        |                                 | ✓ Laminated sky, grass, ground mats  
|        |                                 | ✓ Wipe off markers and erasers (socks work great!)  
|        |                                 | ✓ Penmanship booklets: sky, grass, ground  
|        |                                 | ✓ Pencil (golf pencils or smaller pencils promote a proper grip) |
| 10 Mins| Visual Drill                    | ✓ Language Keys Drill Deck (LKDD deck)  
|        |                                 | ✓ Tactile surface for tracing                       |
| 10 Mins| Auditory Drill                  | ✓ Learning Key Drill Deck (LKDD deck)-for instructor to use  
|        |                                 | ✓ Record page                                       
|        |                                 | ✓ Pencil                                            |
| 15 Mins| Phonogram lesson/New rule       | ✓ LKDD deck card for new phonogram  
|        |                                 | ✓ Different key word objects                        
|        |                                 | ✓ Blending mat                                      
|        |                                 | ✓ Tactile surface                                   
|        |                                 | ✓ Record page                                       
|        |                                 | ✓ Reading words (containing the new phonogram)      |
| 5 Mins | Sight word or Composition       | ✓ Red letter cards  
|        |                                 | ✓ New sight word on a card                          
<p>|        |                                 | ✓ Sight word record page                            |
| 2 Mins | Overview of learned concepts    |                                                      |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 Mins</th>
<th>Focus Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|         | - When students come into the room they will sit down at their seat and complete a colour by letters page. | ✓ Focus work activity  
|         | ✓ Pencil/eraser |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 Mins</th>
<th>Alphabet or Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|         | (1) Introduce alphabet team.  
The “a” team (a, b, c, d, e, f, g)  |
|         | (2) Work with manipulatives (Letter Tiles)  
Students will work with letter tiles putting ‘a team’ together in the correct order.  |
|         | (3) Complete record page.  
Students will write the ‘a team’ in the correct order.  | ✓ Alphabet letter manipulatives. 5 or 6 different activities  
|         | ✓ Record page.  
|         | ✓ Pencil/eraser |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 Mins</th>
<th>Penmanship (Letter h)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|         | (1) Model printing  
Show student a model of the letter (h)  
Teacher will model how the letter is formed on a sky, grass, ground template.  |
|         | (2) Practice on tracing mats  
Students will trace ‘h’ 5x.  |
|         | (3) Written practice  
On the sky, grass, ground practice page, students will practice printing ‘h’ | ✓ Model of proper formation of letter/phonogram  
|         | ✓ Laminated sky, grass, ground mats  
|         | ✓ Wipe off markers and erasers (socks work great!)  
|         | ✓ Penmanship booklets: sky, grass, ground  
|         | ✓ Pencil (golf pencils or smaller pencils promote a proper grip) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 Mins</th>
<th>Visual Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|         | (1) Show LKDD deck of known sounds.  
Known sounds: a, m, s, n, sn, sm, f, st, lt, fl  |
|         | (2) Student says the sound. If student gets it incorrect, trace 3x and say the sound. The card goes back into the deck. | ✓ Language Keys Drill Deck (LKDD deck)  
|         | ✓ Tactile surface for tracing |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 Mins</th>
<th>Auditory Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) While holding the LKDD deck say each sound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for the student.

(2) Read spelling words. Student will write down spelling words and a sentence on record page from “known sounds” (a, m, s, n, sm, sn, f, t, st, lt, fl)

Spelling Words (5 to 10 words): fat, man, snap, sip, tan.
Sentence: The fat man liked to sip the pop.

15 Mins  Phonogram lesson

(1) Introduction to new phonogram (h says /h/ for horse).
(2) Blending Mats
- Students will blend words with the beginning sound ‘h’
(3) Reading Cards
(4) Phonogram Record Page
- Students will complete the record page for ‘h’.
- Practice printing h 3x
- Practice writing words that start with h.
- Spelling Words (5-10 spelling words). ham, hat, hop, him, he.

(5) Reading
- Students will practice reading words that start with ‘h’.
- Reading words

(6) Overlearning activity.
- Prepare a game that looks at the sound /h/

5 Mins  Sight word or Composition (sight word I)

(1) Hand out sight word manipulatives
(2) Sight Word Record Page

2 Mins  Overview of learned concepts

✓ Record page
✓ Pencil

✓ LKDD deck card for new phonogram
✓ Different key word objects
✓ Blending mat
✓ Tactile surface
✓ Record page
✓ Reading words (containing the new phonogram)

✓ Red letter cards
✓ New sight word on a card
✓ Sight word record page
### Appendix A

General Orton-Gillingham Sequence Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 to 10</th>
<th>11 to 20</th>
<th>21 to 30</th>
<th>31 to 40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a-short vowel</td>
<td>o-short vowel</td>
<td>e-short vowel</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>'v'nk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s (sm, sn)</td>
<td>r (fr, scr, cr, pr, tr, spr, str)</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>qu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>u-short vowel</td>
<td>'v'ck</td>
<td>ch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-short vowel</td>
<td>g-hard sound</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>sh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t (st, lt, fl)</td>
<td>syllable concept</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>'v'ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>Rule: Buzz off Miss Pill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l (sl, lt, fl)</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Basic punctuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p (sp, spl, pl, mp, pt)</td>
<td></td>
<td>y /i/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>51 to 60</td>
<td>61 to 70</td>
<td>71 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-Ce</td>
<td>Possessives</td>
<td>'c'le syllable</td>
<td>ir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffix concept</td>
<td>v-e syllable</td>
<td>ur</td>
<td>R controlled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ar</td>
<td>'v'ct</td>
<td>Soft c concept</td>
<td>ow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oa</td>
<td>'v'dge</td>
<td>oo</td>
<td>ge final rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>er</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>oi</td>
<td>Vcc long vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'v'tch</td>
<td>final e rule</td>
<td>Prefixes</td>
<td>ea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ay</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>Soft g concept</td>
<td>ew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common suffixes</td>
<td>aw</td>
<td>Vowel team</td>
<td>wa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1-1 Doubling rule</td>
<td>ea</td>
<td>ou</td>
<td>ey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open syllable</td>
<td>ai</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>oy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 to 90</td>
<td>91 to 100</td>
<td>101 to 110</td>
<td>110 to 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ou</td>
<td>ie</td>
<td>au</td>
<td>i, tu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ch</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>arr 'v'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war</td>
<td>igh</td>
<td>ue</td>
<td>ou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syllable div</td>
<td>gu</td>
<td>wor</td>
<td>ar'v'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-e</td>
<td>ou</td>
<td>qua, alk, alm</td>
<td>quar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo</td>
<td>er 'v'</td>
<td>ear</td>
<td>ei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>eigh, ei</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>augh vs. ough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al</td>
<td>err'v'</td>
<td>que,igue</td>
<td>et</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final y rule</td>
<td>ui</td>
<td>gue</td>
<td>eu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silent letter</td>
<td>2-1-1 doubling rule</td>
<td>our</td>
<td>rare spellings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Diagnostic for OG group participation:

- The purpose of this diagnostic has a few main goals. It helps determine how well the student takes instruction, information about eye hand skills and ability to track print. Most importantly, it encourages the student to develop a relationship with the instructor.
- The exercise should be below the student's frustration level and informative. This is not a teaching time. It needs to be done one on one with each individual student.
- Assign a simple number system to get an idea of where they fit in the group, such as, 1, understands, 2, needs help, 3, isn't meeting expectations

INTRODUCTION:

Give a simple explanation of Multisensory learning. SEEING, HEARING, FEELING.

ALPHABET:

Materials:

- Manipulatives for the Days of the week/Months of the year
  
  *For example.* Days of the week on pieces of paper that students can velcro onto a piece of paper in the appropriate order.

Questions: Can students sing the sequence of the alphabet properly? Can they put the alphabet in order?

- Students will sing the alphabet
- Students will put the alphabet in order using manipulative letters
SEQUENCING:

Materials:

✓ Manipulatives for the Days of the week/Months of the year
  
  For example. Days of the week on pieces of paper that students can velcro onto a piece of paper in the appropriate order.

Questions: Do students understand basic sequences such as the days of the week or months of the year?

- With manipulatives, students will put the days of the week/months of the year in order.

PENMANSHIP:

Materials:

✓ Paper
✓ Pencil

- On a piece of paper, ask students to print small letters of alphabet and based on how they do with this ask for capitals. Stop if they cannot do this.

VISUAL:

Materials:

✓ LKDD Deck (“sound cards”)

- Mix up sound cards in the deck (LKDD deck) and show them one by one to the student. Put the sounds they know in a “known” pile and ones they don’t in an “unknown” pile
AUDITORY:

Materials:
✓ Scope and Sequence (Appendix A)
✓ Piece of paper
✓ Pencil

• From the scope and sequence (Appendix A), say the sound to the student. Student will write the sound down.
• Start with Lessons 1 to 20. Depending on how the student is doing, discontinue as they begin to show frustration.
• During this exercise the student can again put a line down if they aren’t sure of the correct answer.

SIGHT WORDS:

Materials:
✓ Dolch Sight words

• Use the Dolch sight words that are below the expected level. The Dolch sight words are in the following levels; pre-primer, primer, grade 1, grade 2 and grade 3.

PHONETIC WORDS:

Materials:
✓ 10 to 20 phonetic words on cards (dependent on students ability and level

• Students will show what reading skills they have by reading 10 to 20 phonetic words. This will show if they have phonetic and blending skills. By now they have done quite a lot in the diagnostic. Also, have a phrase and sentence with pictures of both.
COMPOSITION:

Materials
✓ Interlined workbook
✓ Pencil
✓ Journal topic

- Students will have a journal topic. They can either come up with this on their own, or be given one. They will write 3 lines on their topic.

READING EXERCISE:

*Levelled reading assessment.

Instructors can use what is available to them;

- PM Benchmarks
- Reading A to Z Assessment
- DRA assessments
Conclusion

The central research question of this study was, “What do educators look for when choosing a phonics-based literacy intervention?” Data was collected to illustrate this from three sources; a teacher opinion questionnaire, a focus group and a post-focus group.

The teacher opinion questionnaire asked a variety of questions regarding educator’s opinions on using phonics as a reading instruction. There was a high agreement between participants that phonics should always be a part of general reading instruction as well as a part of remedial reading intervention. These results answer one of the research questions, that there is indeed a need for a phonics-based instruction or intervention program in early primary years.

Another research question posed that was answered from the questionnaire data was “how do educators choose a reading intervention?” To further this question there was a query about whether research-based approaches were preferred, or if teachers counted on their trusted colleagues to suggest an approach that they have found effective. Results showed that teachers want both; a research-based program and one that colleagues have found success with. Data showed that teachers placed importance on a variety of specifics when choosing a program. The six main characteristics were all ranked important or very important by six out of ten participants. These characteristics included; clear layout, easy to use instructions, engaging materials, pictures, blackline masters, and differentiated instruction. Although participants strongly supported programs that were strongly based on research, they also trusted colleagues and used programs that had anecdotal evidence to back up its success.
Evidence from the research study conducted showed that there is a demand for a phonics-based program. The manual created to meet this demand is an adaptation of the Orton-Gillingham approach for a small group setting. In order to create an effective manual, a focus group was given the manual and asked for their feedback. The manual was edited according to the focus group feedback in order to make it an efficient and teacher friendly resource.
Chapter 5: Reflection

When I started this project, my goal was to create a teacher friendly resource from the Orton-Gillingham methodology that was adapted for a small group environment. Working as a Resource Teacher for eight years, I perceived that there was a demand for a sequential phonics-based program for those students with specific learning disabilities who were not responding to interventions. Orton-Gillingham is a multisensory, sequential approach that is often recommended to remediate reading for students with specific learning disabilities. This approach is comprehensive but can be overwhelming and onerous to carry out. My hope was to create a resource for learning assistance teachers that was easy to follow and explained how to carry out this approach within the small group environment. Typically, Orton-Gillingham is taught in a one-to-one session, but I believe it can be very successful and reach many children who struggle when taught in a small group setting.

Throughout my educational community, I have heard the controversy over the use of phonics to teach reading. Personally, I do believe in phonics instruction as both an early reading strategy in primary grades as well as an intervention for struggling readers. However, I wanted to understand how my colleagues felt about this issue and furthermore and how they choose a phonics program to use in their classrooms. Reading research studies is one approach; I wanted to get to the bottom of this issue by finding out what my colleagues thought.

After creating this resource, I realized that it could also be used for newly-trained tutors who are using the approach one-on-one. Although this is not the audience for whom the manual was intended, I now can see that it would be helpful for tutors who are using the
approach as it was created. Using the Orton-Gillingham approach can be overwhelming in the beginning to implement. Although there are resources that help tutors to carry out this approach, I believe that the manual that I created could be another good option for tutors.

After going through the process of conducting my focus group, I realized that classroom teachers may not be the most appropriate audience for a manual like this one. Participants from the focus group suggested that they could see this program working with one designated person who would carry out the approach, because the classroom teacher would have difficulty carrying the program out consistently. This designated person could be an educational assistant or a learning assistance teacher. However, by listening to the conversation between participants, I began to see how aspects of Orton-Gillingham can be incorporated into the teachers existing practice. Teachers could use the Orton-Gillingham methodology and lesson plan in order to teach different lessons that they already carry out such as penmanship, letter/sound recognition, and sight words. I can see that teachers could do this with every part of the Orton-Gillingham lesson sequence if they were excited about the approach.

This project did what it intended to do: find out educators opinions on phonics instruction and how they choose phonics programs. The data illustrated that this sample of teachers wanted a reading approach that was both research-based and had been used by colleagues. There was a high agreement of participants that phonics should be a part of both typical classroom reading instruction and remedial reading. The data from the study impacted the creation of the manual by getting opinions on what teachers think are important
characteristics. I feel that the data from the questionnaire as well as the focus group helped create a stronger manual.

Literacy is so important for all students and more important for those with specific reading disabilities. The outcome of this project was the creation of a manual that will help educators with their important goal of teaching children how to read. More specifically, it will give educators a tool to use with those students who need intensive intervention for a variety of reading challenges.
References


Reports of the subgroups. Retrieved from


Scholastic (2014). Research-based guided reading as an instructional approach. Retrieved from


Toronto: ON: Prentice Hall.
Teacher Perception Questionnaire

1) Please indicate how many years of teaching experience you have.

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20+ years

2) Please indicate if you have any specialties.

- Learning Assistance
- Special Needs/Support teacher
- Music Teacher
- Literacy
- Behaviour Specialist
- Other, please specify...

3) As an educator, what is your opinion of the following statements about what characteristics you look for in a reading intervention?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that is researched-based</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that colleagues have mentioned was effective</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that has a phonetic and/or phonemic awareness focus</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multisensory or hands on instruction</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A reading intervention based on a balanced literacy approach</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An intervention that</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
contains materials that are engaging for students

4) Please rank specific characteristics that you look for in a manual according to importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear layout</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to follow instructions</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacklined masters of materials included</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration of different learning styles</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5) Please respond to the following statement.

It is important that a reading intervention program is researched-based and has strong statistical evidence to its efficacy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6) Please respond to the following statement.

When choosing a reading intervention, I choose interventions or strategies that my colleagues have suggested or have had success with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7) For each statement, please choose what accurately describes your opinion on using phonics for a reading instruction in general.
8) For each statement, please choose what accurately describes your opinions about phonics instruction being used for remediate reading intervention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonics should only be used as an intervention for struggling readers</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction should be given to all children who are learning to read</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics instruction should never be used when teaching reading</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9) Please rank the following strategies for importance that you believe are useful for struggling readers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decoding Strategies</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sight Word Intervention</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Reading</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Alouds</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10) Orton-Gillingham is a step by step, multisensory approach for teaching phonetic and phonemic awareness to children who struggle with reading. Please choose the option that describes your understanding of the approach most accurately.

- I am an Orton-Gillingham tutor
- I have attended workshops that generally outline Orton-Gillingham
- I know nothing about Orton-Gillingham
- I know a lot about the Orton-Gillingham Methodology and how instruction is given according to this approach

11) Please respond to the following statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Orton-Gillingham approach is an appropriate intervention to use with struggling readers.</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you answered 'strongly agree or agree' to the previous question, please explain.
APPENDIX B- FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1) Please tell me a few specific things that you linked in the manual

2) Please tell me a few specific things that you would change

3) Is there anything that you would add to the manual?

4) Could you incorporate a program like this into your classroom practice?

5) Is there a need for a program like Orton-Gillingham for struggling readers? AND is there a need for a manual like this?

6) What audience do you think would be most appropriate for a manual like this? Learning assistance teachers, O-G tutors, etc?