

How to teach blending

Method 1

'Decode and blend'

"Say the sounds and read the word."

/m/ /a/ /t/ → "mat"

m a t
┆ ┆ ┆
└───┘

Learner says the sounds in the word one at a time, pointing to each sound. Then he/she moves finger under the whole word, blending all the sounds into the word.

Method 2

'Stretch and blend'

"Stretch the sounds and push them together to read the word."

"mmmmaaat" → "mat"

m a t
┆ ┆ ┆
└───┘

Teacher points to the first letter/sound, asking learner to say the sound and stretch it until the finger reaches the next sound in the word. Teacher moves finger under the whole word, as learner blends all the sounds into the word.

Method 3

'Add and blend'

"Blend the first two sounds, then add the next sound."

m a
┆ ┆
└───┘
"ma"

m a t
┆ ┆ ┆
└───┘

"ma" + "t" → "mat"

Teacher conceals third letter/sound. Teacher moves finger under the first two sounds and asks the learner to blend just two sounds, e.g. "m"+"a" = "ma". Teacher repeats 'ma'. Teacher reveals last letter/sound and asks learner to add 't'. Teacher points under the whole word as learner reads 'mat'.

Greater load on working memory

Lesser load on working memory