

**Multisensory** (continued from front page)

also be based on those already learned. Concepts taught in VōWac are **systematically reviewed** to strengthen memory.

VōWac instruction involves **direct instruction/teaching** of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction. The teacher never infers nor takes for granted that a concept is learned.

Each VōWac unit allows the teacher to become adept at prescriptive or individualized teaching. The lessons are based on careful and **continuous assessment** of the individual's needs. The content presented must be mastered to the degree of automaticity.

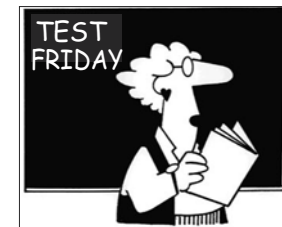
VōWac includes both **synthetic and analytic instruction**. Synthetic instruction presents the parts of the language and then teaches how the parts work together to form a whole. Analytic instruction presents the whole and teaches how this



can be broken down into its component parts.

VōWac, an acronym for Vowel Oriented Word Attack Course, was originally created and written by Mary Gomer, a student of the Orton philosophy and a true tenet of Dr.

Orton's work. Orton-Gillingham is the structured, sequential multisensory teaching of written language based upon the constant use of association of all of the following - how a letter or word looks, how it sounds, and how the speech organs or the hand in writing feels when producing it. Children also learn the common rules of the English language such as the final *e* rule and when to use *-ck* and *-tch*. Older students learn a variety of syllable patterns and common prefixes and suffixes, followed by Latin and Greek word parts.



"Class, I've got a lot of material to cover, so to save time I won't be using vowels today. Nw lts bgn, pls trn t pg 122."

make an *s* sound?

- If I'm going to add *-ness* to a word that ends in *n*, do I drop the *n* already in the word?
- What's the 1 - 1 - 1 rule?
- Why is *permitted* spelled with two *t*'s while *trumpeted* is spelled with only one?
- When should I use *-ible* and when should I use *-able*?
- Why do I drop the silent *e* in *noticing* but keep it in *noticeable*?
- Why do words like *happy*, *bossy* and *funny* have doubled consonants?

This article is available in its entirety on our web site, [www.vowac.com](http://www.vowac.com).

1. The key to this doubling dilemma involves knowing stressed syllables. In words of two or more syllables ending with a consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC), you double the final consonant before a suffix ending with a vowel when the last syllable is stressed. Hence, *permit* becomes *permitted*. If the CVC syllable before the suffix is not stressed, you typically do not double the final consonant. Hence, *blanket* and *barrel* - words in which the first syllable is stressed, not the syllable preceding the suffix, become *blanketed* and *barreling*.

## "Trace, Copy, Recall" – Spelling Practice

Create a chart like this with three or four spelling words you want to learn:

TRACE	COPY	RECALL

Fold the "RECALL" section over so that only the first two columns are visible:

TRACE	COPY
farm	
crumb	
twist	

Then say the word to yourself. Trace it in the first column, saying the letters as you trace, and repeat the word. You may want to add a little rhythm or cadence into it. ("FARM F - pause - A - pause - R-M - FARM!"). Keep in mind, the goal is to remember how to spell the words, not successfully follow these specific directions.

While the rhythm, sound and feeling are fresh in your mind, flip the paper over. Say the word and spell it out - the same way, saying each letter. The old adage applies: Practice makes perfect (or permanent in the case of spelling).

If it is a difficult word for you, place it in the list more than once. Once you develop this strategy, you may want to trace and copy two words. Try to

# Multisensory Teaching – Just the Facts

## VōWac uses Orton-Gillingham based approach

Multisensory teaching is simultaneously visual, auditory, and kinesthetic-tactile to enhance memory and learning. Links are consistently made between the visual (what we see), auditory (what we hear), and kinesthetic-tactile (what we feel) pathways in learning to read and spell.

Margaret Byrd Rawson, former President of the Orton Dyslexia Society, said it well: "Dyslexic students need a different approach to learning language from that employed in most classrooms. They need to be taught, slowly and thoroughly, the basic elements of their language - the sounds and the letters which represent them - and how to put these together and take them apart. They have to have lots of practice in having their writing hands, eyes, ears, and speaking voices working together for the conscious organization and retention of their learning."

Teachers who use this approach teach children to link the sounds of the letters with the written symbol. Children also link the sound and the symbol with how it feels to form the letter or letters. As students learn a new letter or pattern (such as *s* or *th*), they carefully trace, copy, and write the letter(s) while saying the corresponding sound. The sound may be made by the teacher and the letter name(s) given to the student. Students then read and spell words, phrases, and sentences using these patterns. Teachers and their students rely on all three pathways for learning rather than focusing on a "sight-word" (memory method), a "tracing method," or



"phonetic method" alone.

There is a growing body of evidence supporting multisensory teaching. Current research, much of it supported by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), converges on the efficacy of explicit structured language teaching for children with dyslexia [VōWac's layman terms: Research clearly points to the effectiveness of explicit, direct step-by-step instruction]. Young children in structured, sequential, multisensory intervention programs, who were also trained in phonemic awareness, made significant gains in decoding skills. These multisensory approaches used direct, explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships, syllable patterns, and meaning word parts. Studies in clinical settings showed similar results for a wide range of ages and abilities. \*

\*This article is excerpted from a Fact Sheet published by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) © 2000. The article Multisensory Teaching, was written with the assistance of Marcia Henry, Ph.D. and can be found in its entirety on the IDA website ([www.interdys.org](http://www.interdys.org)) along with other Fact Sheets on topics related to dyslexia and related disorders.

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Reading Skills Plus was created by Gwelda J. Carlson, M.A. Carlson's 25+ years of teaching experience and background in Orton-Gillingham lends credibility to this effective curriculum. She may be contacted at [gjcarlson@windstream.net](mailto:gjcarlson@windstream.net).

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