exercises in the building blocks of reading and spelling

Reversals

PDFs

ease into reading
Reversals

"Is it bog or dog?

Is it did or bib or bid?

Contents
b d p q reversals  Page 2

VAS Link
56% of beginning reading words contains one or more reversible letters or words. Also contains hints and tips  Pages 3 & 4

Level 1 - Visual Matching
Includes the importance of correct letter formation  Pages 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9

Auditory Confusion
Common b d p Auditory Confusions including d/t - dip read as tip / pin read as bin  Pages 10 & 11

Matching sounds to symbols
matching the sound of ‘b’ with the letter shape ‘b’ - Includes word reversals  Pages 12 & 13

Rational for remediation of b d p q confusions

FIX b/d/p/q confusions whenever you find them. DON’T wait for them to 'fix themselves' over time. I know many adults who still suffer residual stress whenever they encounter words containing b or d. As q is always with a 'u' the p/q confusion does not tend to persist as long as the b/d confusion.

Letter reversals happen at 3 levels. The first of these is the visual matching level. The child who can't see the difference between 'b/d' or 'p/q' cannot be expected to match a sound to a symbol if the recognition of the symbol is not stable. Use stage 1 cards until no longer required.

The second level of confusions occurs between sounds such as 'b' & 'p', this must be addressed before you can expect symbol-to-sound (reading) or sound-to-symbol (spelling) mastery (the student reads 'big' as 'pig' or writes 'pan' as 'ban').

Use the Sound Strips to address the sound confusions (2nd level) , for eg. b/p d/t b/d etc.

You cannot teach sound-to-symbol or symbol-to-sound until you address the above problems.

The 3rd level involves matching sounds-to-symbols and symbols-to-sounds.

Error examples: ban/pan bog/dog dip/tip etc. Just by considering these examples you can begin to appreciate the confusion many young readers encounter in their first year.

Use the 'Auditory Confusion Cards' from the main part of the KIT to address any Stage 3 problems.

Visual confusion between p & b or p & d is an ‘inversion’ and indicates a more severe level of difficulty.

Note that our brain naturally reverses & inverts the same object, otherwise we could not recognise a chair as a chair when it fell over.

The letters b d p & q are all the same shape.
The dig dad wolf...

Links between VAS and b d p q confusions

You are right to be concerned about b/d/p reversals - up to 56% of beginning reading words contains one or more of these letters. That means the young reader with this difficulty stumbles on every second or third word or so.

VAS stands for 'Visual Attention Span'. It is the number of symbols a student is able to process at a glance. As with other aspects of growth in young children, VAS is developmental. The young learner has less capacity in visual short-term memory than an older learner, that is, they process fewer symbols in a word than an older learner.

If the young learner is encouraged to 'whole word process' (a visual approach to reading words) he/she will be limited by their VAS level, which varies between individuals. Some children begin school with a higher VAS than others. Children with a low VAS will struggle and their attempts are likely to be inaccurate. Couple this with b/d/p confusion and you may find the error rate will double, for example, the child may 'guess' that the word 'blind' is 'bid' but add a b/d/p confusion and they may guess 'did' or 'bib' or 'did'. For a detailed explanation of VAS refer the web site listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>dad</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>bd</td>
<td>Dd qu</td>
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</table>

| bed |

| Dd |

| qu |

Hints and tips

✓ Knowing that 'small b' is like 'capital B' without a 'hat' can help.

✓ Use the (Bb) tile on the next page to demonstrate this. Complete the tracing task.

✓ As 'q' is always with a 'u' the p/q confusion does not persist as long as b/d confusion.

✓ The (bed) image is stable. The 'bat & ball' or 'drum & stick' crutches are not reliable, students, particularly those with sequencing problems, often forget the order - ('stick & drum' or 'drum & stick' ???)

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✓ The (bed) image is stable. The 'bat & ball' or 'drum & stick' crutches are not reliable, students, particularly those with sequencing problems, often forget the order - ('stick & drum' or 'drum & stick' ???)
Introduce capital B with lower case b. "Put your pencil on the dot - trace down - up - around and around. "Put your pencil dot - trace down - half way up - and around.

There is another little trick you may like to try with younger students who exhibit p/q confusion. Cut out the graphic below and sit it on the work-table for the student to refer to at any time.

Tell the student "This is 'Peter Postman'. He delivers letters into the post boxes. Now he always starts at the margin and walks in the same direct as you make your pen go when you write. The important thing is that he needs to look where he is going. Only a 'Silly Postman' would walk backwards trying to post letters!"

Margins are a great convention. It was a sad time when they went out of fashion. Students find it comforting to know exactly where to begin writing. This also holds true for letter formation. Make sure that the letter is always scribed in the same way - this aids recall - so much so that it can prevent letter reversals from occurring in the first place. For remediation it is vital. The student must begin on the dot and make a downward stroke unless otherwise indicated.
LEVEL 1 - VISUAL MATCHING

- This level is purely visual - at no time is ‘sound or name’ of the letter used.
- Choose a ‘target letter’ (b d / p q / b d p q ) on the table.
- Under it place card 1 (b d only) 2 (p q only) 3 (b d p q) 4 (words bid did dip pip bib bip)
- Say “Put a line under all the letters that look exactly like this one (point to target)

You can add a ‘timer’ to the task once the student has demonstrated accuracy.

Cut the ‘target letters’ into separate tiles

Use these ‘target letters’ for cards 1 2 & 3 - in that order.

1- b & d
IMPORTANCE OF LETTER FORMATION

- It is just as easy to learn the correct letter formation as an incorrect formation.
- A correct formation makes the transition to running writing a breeze.
- If a letter is formed the same way every time it becomes a consistent habit.
- Children who don't have to think how a letter is formed are free to process more important factors such as spelling and expression.
- Correct letter formation is also instrumental in avoidance or correction of b d p q reversals.

Consistent letter formation uses the ‘haptic’ or ‘proprioceptive’ pathway and is vital part of a multi-sensory approach to reading and spelling.

Use the chart below the same way as the chart above but this time have the student ‘trace’ the ‘target letter’ / ‘target word’ using the correct letter formation.
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</tbody>
</table>
3 - b d p & q

q d p b b q p q d q
b p q b d d p q b p
p d q b p p d b q b
b b q p d d p d d q

d b p p b q d p q q
q d b b p p q d b p
q b d d q q p d b b
p b d q p q b d q d
Card 4 of Visual Matching. Cut the ‘target words’ into separate tiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bib</th>
<th>bid</th>
<th>bip</th>
<th>did</th>
<th>dip</th>
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<th>pip</th>
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<td>bid</td>
<td>bib</td>
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</table>
LEVEL 2 - AUDITORY MATCHING

Before you begin ... check for confusion

- This level is matching letter sounds within words.
- Choose a ‘target word’ (from those below) & place it on the table.
- Check for auditory confusions - the most common are:
  a) ‘pin’ read as ‘bin’ or ‘rib’ as ‘rip’ (p/b confusion)
  b) ‘den’ read as ‘ten’ or ‘sad’ read as ‘sat’ (d/t confusion). If there are no problems ...
- Say “Put a line under all the words that look exactly like this one (point to target)
You can add a ‘timer’ to the task once the student demonstrated accuracy.

Cut the words into separate tiles. Have the student read them several times to identify any p/b or d/t confusions. Check spelling response to the same words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pin</th>
<th>bin</th>
<th>rib</th>
<th>rip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>den</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>sad</td>
<td>sat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If a confusion is identified, refer to the Auditory Confusion cards to address this problem prior to continuing
- It is likely that the student who confuses these sound will experience confusions with some other sounds
- Auditory confusion can occur due to:
  a) the wearing of grommets (this does not happen to all children).
  b) dialects
  c) CAPD (Central Auditory Processing Deficit). This is a more serious problem. Please follow this link for an explanation: [http://www.vaslearningcentre.com](http://www.vaslearningcentre.com)
- This difficulty has to be addressed before any Phonics can be taught.
You will see that half of the auditory confusion lists involve d, b & p. You will find these exercises very helpful in sorting out any auditory confusion you detect in your student. I repeat that, as half of all words encountered by the beginning reader will contain a, b, d or p - some words, as you have seen from the Visual Matching stage, contain 2 of these letters! - bad dad pad pip dip bib bip pod did pup pub dud bud bed pep bop .......

Never rush the process of working through b, d, p, q confusions.

Make sure your student achieves visual mastery before moving on.

Make sure your student then masters the sounds and can clearly distinguish between the sounds of p from b, b from d and d from t.

Read the ‘hints’ in the Auditory Confusions PDF

Only when these have been addressed are you ready to move on to matching the letter with the appropriate sound.

As you will now realize, there is more to this problem than first meets the eye. It is little wonder that it hangs around for so long in older students, who may have had visual or auditory matching problems that weren’t addressed. Sadly these students, having long-term confusion, experience resistance to remediation - intensive work is the last thing you want to do - a casual, almost offhand approach works best in order to combat the high stress/anxiety they have built up over the years. Give them an explanation of what causes b, d, p, q confusion. I explain it in this way ...

"Ah, an over-efficient brain. Think about it. Someone devised 26 letters to attach sounds to. Unwisely this person chose to use the same symbol 4 times and just face it in different directions."

"Your brain is set up to see things from all angles. This allows you to recognize a chair even if it is knocked over. Your brain is super-efficient at this and it does this with b, d, p & q - it recognizes the same shape at astonishing speed."
A word on Consolidation STRIPS

The ‘Consolidation’ Strips (found in the ‘Appendix 2’ PDF) as they cover these PDF Card Sets:

- Auditory Confusions
- Common Confusions
- Name-Sound Confusions
- Reversals

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The Appendix 1 PDF contains many additional arrays you can use to practice aspects of all of the PDFs - Print only what you need for your student. If you build your kit up gradually you will tend to use it more. Printing out all of the PDFs at once may be a tad overwhelming. Supposing you lose the PDFs? You can download again from the web site at any time.

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Use the same card arrays you used with the visual matching but this time SAY the letter sound.

Next - use the ‘word’ cards ...

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SAY the word & have the student:

a) underline the word

b) trace the word using the correct letter formation

As well as the confusing words given in the visual matching cards there are also reversible words such as nap / pan - tip / pit - but / tub etc. There is an array for these on the next page.

b d p q confusion is more common in high school students than you may think.
WORD REVERSAL CARDS

✤ Say “Find the word ‘tub’ there are 3 of them. Put a line under them.
✤ Say “Find the word ‘tap’ there are 3 of them. Trace the words as you find them.
✤ You can make this a timed response till the student achieve automaticity.

bin pat tip mad but dam
nib pit tub tap tip pat
mad dam bin but nib dam
tap nip pin nib tip bin
pit pat but pit tap mad

tap dam nip mad pin tub
nib tub pat bin nip but
pin map tap dam tip pat
but tub pin nib tub but
pat tap nip nib dam bin

✤ This task demands both visual and auditory mastery as well as sequencing.