**Letters vs. phonemes video Transcription**

Most people- even a lot of teachers we work with- as you know, will confuse the idea of a letter with the idea of a sound because we have a problem in English. We have 26 letters and forty to forty-four speech sounds to spell those, so, of course you must use letter combinations to spell some of them, and then we have several spellings for some sounds and several sounds for some spellings, so you know if we count the number of sounds in “shoe” there are two: /sh/ and /oo/ even though there are four letters.

Many adults, if I ask them to tell me the number of sounds in the word “six”, will tell me that there are three; they'll go /s/i/cks but the way I count those sounds is /s/ /i/ /ck/ /z/.

The way I would prove that is that sick has three sounds, and if you add a /z/ to the end of sick, you get six but it's confusing because we use three letters for four sounds. That's a revelation to a lot of people but it's the most critical underlying skill that will help the children learn to read and spell.