Robonic Phonics

OBJECTIVE: To help students internalize sound relationships with spatial relationships and to strengthen phonemic awareness and the use of individual phonemes (sounds) to build words using only auditory clues.

PROCEDURE: Select 3 students to become the Robonic Phonic Machine. They do this simply by standing in a line, placing the computer "button" card around their neck and crossing their arms. (Put out their arms like a Frankenstein monster and then bend at the elbows crossing the arms leaving elbows even with shoulders) With students facing away from the class, whisper a sound in each child's ear that they will produce loudly when you gently pull down on their arms. You may want them to whisper it back to you to make sure it is correct.

Example: to the first student whisper the sound /b/, to the second student whisper the long sound of /a/ and to the third student whisper the sound of /k/. Turn students around to face the class and pretend to turn on a magical robot machine (make some noises, turn some imaginary knobs etc...) then ask the class if they are ready to hear what the phonics robot has to say. Gently push down the first students arms and they should produce the 'b' sound, continue with the second and third students in sequence. Ask the class what word the phonics robot is trying to say. Class should respond with "bake". Now make some imaginary adjustments to the first student, explaining that you are going to adjust the first sound in the phonics robot and whisper the sound /l/ to that student or select a different student completely for that position. Repeat the procedure of having the robot produce sounds. Ask the class what word the robot said now. Response "lake"

Then summarize what happened. "I had the word bake but when I changed the first sound from /b/ to /l/ I made the word lake." Now adjust the last sound by changing it to /t/. Repeat the entire procedure with explanations of changing the last sound to make the word "late".

Continue with any number of changes, selecting new students to be the robot and making sure to emphasis, first, middle, last and eventually building up to activities where the students can predict what the robot will say if you change certain sounds in certain places. The goal being that the students can begin to manipulate sounds independently without the visual aid of the robot.

Suggestions for words can be found in the Stevenson Letter Clue Teacher's Manual.