

Figure 4.2: Ehri's Phases of Word-Reading Development

The Prealphabetic Phase

- May try to remember some words by incidental visual characteristics.
 - **yellow, elephant, kangaroo**
- May treat words as pictograms and make a direct association to meaning.
 - **Crest = toothpaste**
- May think the length of word is equivalent to meaning.
 - **caterpillar** is a longer word than **snake**

The Early Alphabetic Phase

- Identifies first consonant in word; needs to learn to segment all sounds.
- Relies on letter names to derive the sound-symbol match; needs to learn sounds and letter names, and the difference.
YEL = will WOHU = watch
- Confuses similar words such as **horse** and **house**, **lake** and **like**; needs to decode the whole word, left to right, with sound-symbol links.

Later Alphabetic Phase

- Can sound out regular one-syllable words; can increase speed of whole word recognition once decoding is accurate.
- Phoneme awareness is well established.
- Phonetic spelling is a fine art; can represent almost every sound with a logical letter choice.
- Should progress to spelling patterns, words with more than one syllable, meaningful parts of words, and basic sight vocabulary.