Phonics Too©: The E Book

A Beginning Reading and Writing Program with Phonics Too

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1. All Children Can Be Able and Enthusiastic Readers

From parents in the home to the President in the White House, reading is everyone's first priority. As the President has said: "Because I believe every child can learn, I intend to ensure that every child does learn." Former Secretary of Education Richard Riley highlighted the seriousness and importance of the National reading problem: "All students will read independently and well by the end of the third grade."

Reading is a national right—the right to read. For, indeed, a child's success in school and in the world of work depends on the ability to read and read well, as well as the ability to write and write well. With this program all children will become able and enthusiastic readers and writers.

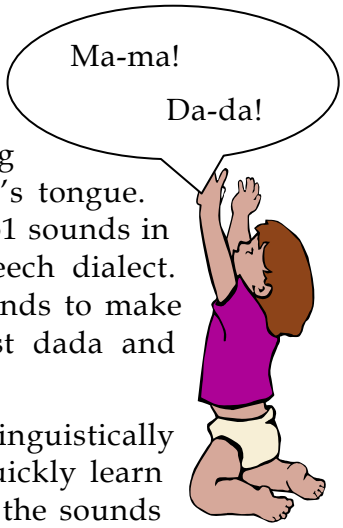
This book is dedicated to this proposition that all children have the right to read and write, and teachers and parents have the right to affordable and high quality teaching materials.

Let's get started!

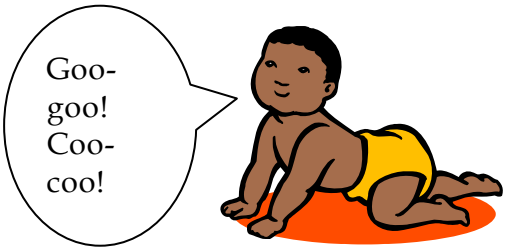
2. First Things First: Pre-Readiness

Before we begin, let's get some of the first things first about how children grow and develop. The first step is to take a close look at the pre-readiness stage of development.

Sounds



Children come into the world capable of making the sounds of every language in the world. As they listen and respond, they quickly lock onto the sounds of those speaking around them. These are usually the sounds of their mother's tongue. There are not many of these sounds. The program identifies 51 sounds in the general American speech dialect. Children use these 51 sounds to make words from the very first dada and mama.



Children are linguistically specific wizards. They quickly learn to shape oral words from the sounds that they use. Even severely limited human beings can be expected to learn the oral language at an early age. This gift of language specificity allows almost all children to learn quickly to read and to write the printed symbols for these sounds. When the children are ready, the reading and writing will flow, just as easily as the oral language flowed.

Therefore, the program does not teach sounds. Children already know these. The program helps children see the relationship between the oral sounds that make words and the written symbols (letters) that represent these sounds and words in writing. The chil- dren come with great knowledge and aptitude in using sounds and making words. The program builds on this ability, leading children naturally into reading and writing through the recognition of written symbols and written words. Some programs deal with more or less than 51 sounds. However, the following 51 symbols present the most useful representation. They will be organized this same way throughout the program and called the Expanded Teaching Alphabet (ETA):

Āa Aa Bb Cc Dd Ēe Ee Ff Gg Hh

Īi Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Ōo Oo Pp Rr

Ss Tt Ūu Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz er sh

ch th th wh oo oo oi ur or ou/ow

qu aw/au air ar ear ing ang ung ong

a, e, i, o, and u have two sounds each. The one with the line over it sounds like the name of the letter

Words and Naming

Not only do children bring an entire repertoire of sounds to the experience, but they also bring a large vocabulary of words learned from their earliest days. The program capitalizes on these two wonderful features: sounds that children make and words that children know.

Shortly after birth, a child begins to learn the names of everything in the world around—*cat*, *bed*, *pig*, *hot*, *run*, *jump*, etc. Perhaps you've seen your child joyously going from object to object and calling names. The program carefully selects words which children know and which also contain the sounds that relate to the written symbols. Working from these two—words and sounds—that the child knows, sense is given to the written symbol or letter. The sounds and letters are in the context of

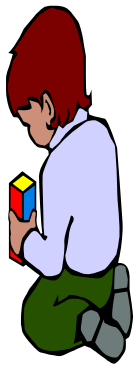
words. The words are in the context of a sentence. The sentences are in the context of readings or writings. Remember that your child learned to talk in the environment of others talking, not in isolation, sound by sound.

The words selected are words common to the child's vocabulary; yet, as the program progresses, the lessons become more interesting and challenging. In all, there are 40 words used to introduce the sounds and the corresponding written symbols or letters. The 37th lesson includes four words: *sing*, *sang*, *sung*, and *song*.

Lesson Words Used In The Program			
cat	sun	feather	saw
bed	jump	wheel	dog
pig	lemon	moon	chair
hot	volcano	book	heart
run	ax	oil	tears
ape	yo-yo	turtle	ring
eagle	zipper	horse	sing
kite	fish	unicorn	sang
window	child	house	song
cute	three	queen	sung

3. How You Can Help During Pre-Readiness

Adults and older children can do many things during the pre-readiness stage to help children progress. These activities, listed here, can be included in any child's pre-readiness period. If you have found the software is too difficult for the child, try these activities to encourage development:



- Point at the pictures in a reading book and name the objects.
- Call out the names of things seen while going down the road.
- Name parts of categories such as, body parts, kitchen utensils, animals, birds, etc.
- Associate printed and oral names and pictures in the manner of picture dictionaries.
- Draw objects, and name them.
- Play games like "who can name the most things in the room."

Painting, Drawing, and Motor Activity

In one dimension, early childhood is an egocentric world of play and motor activity. Broad and fine motor control, eye-hand coordination, and spatial and linear relationships form constructs as the child builds, paints, draws, and interacts with self, others, and the environment. All of these contribute to structures necessary to read and write. Attempts should not be made to short-circuit these early activities by rushing to early reading. If your child has difficulty with making letters, it is a sure sign that more effort should be directed toward these broad and fine motor activities:

- Build with wood blocks, Lego blocks, alphabet blocks, paste and paper, etc.
- Paint with large materials like clay, finger paint, and big brushes.
- Attempt large geometric figures: circles, squares, and triangles.
- Play target games with large balls and bean bags.
- Climb, curb walk, run, skip, hop, and jump.

Oral Language Activity and Syntax

By at least an average age of four years old, most children will have mastered the syntax of their native language. They will be able to use the elements of this syntax with great complexity. Nouns, verbs, gerunds, infinitives, clauses, and phrases—all of these and more—are in their linguistic arsenal. This power allows them to speak in complex ways at early ages. It also allows them at a very early age (an average of five years old) to construct thoughts using words, creating a facility with language-borne thought. Therefore, pre-readers can construct narratives, arguments, and descriptions as they use oral words and sentences in their everyday lives. Thoughts are formed with language and spoken from the inside out.

Drilling in the rudiments of grammar will be no help at all. In fact, it will hinder the natural acquisition of the syntax of the language as it is acquired in the context of those around the child making and using these natural formulations. Remember, your child is a language specific being.

As with the other aspects of the program, there are many things that can be done to encourage the development of oral language and the syntax that goes with it:

- Encourage interactive speaking with adults and children.
- Carry on conversations in an adult manner (no baby talk or infantile syntax).
- Playact episodes of stories or imagination.
- Give many occasions for children to explain themselves (What do you mean? What do you think?).
- Allow children to make up their own endings to stories.
- Do not label things: nouns, adjectives, etc.

Imaginary Writings

Very early in the process of learning to read and write, children often playact writing by scribbling or by striking a series of computer keys. They will place imaginary meaning to these writings. Sometimes, they will even pretend they are reading a lengthy story. Other times, it will be their names that they are writing. You should encourage such imaginary writings. It is through this play activity that children learn the purpose of writing and the general notion of how it is done. Once they "get the idea," the rest will follow in due course.

Saying and Writing What Is Thought

Oral language is the basis for all reading and writing. Early on, as we have seen, the child has mastered the sounds of the language, an extensive oral and mental vocabulary, a complicated syntax that organizes the language, and the ability to construct thoughts with this language and express them. During the pre-readiness period, parents can do a great deal to encourage the transfer from expressing thoughts orally to writing them. These activities will help encourage saying and writing what is thought. What begins as oral activity easily transfers to written activity when children become ready:

Encourage playacting and imitations and, perhaps, help the child write a script. Make up stories and tell or write them. Write or say (record) letters and notes to family members.

Let the parent or coach take dictation for the child who cannot yet write. Sometimes a more mature child can help take dictation. Always have the student try to read back these written constructions.

Reading and Writing Is the End of Pre-readiness

When the pre-readiness period is over, children will read and write. Children will transfer into the ready stage at different times: some will be five years old; others, six; others, seven or even eight. Until they can pursue reading with comfort, continue the pre-readiness activity. Given the chance, all will succeed!

4. There Is No Set Age for Reading Readiness

Perhaps the greatest contributor to the failure of American children to read and write is the widespread notion—it is almost a matter of the collective consciousness of the entire nation—that every child must read by the age of six. However, research finds that children are ready to read at very different ages: some at four, some at five or six, and still others at seven or eight. As a parent, it is helpful to notice the direction in which our best research points.

Only Half Are Ready to Read at Six

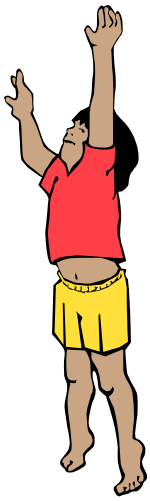
For almost 50 years we have known that by age six only 50 percent of first graders are ready to read, and most of these ready students are girls. It does not mean that girls are going to be more successful, although some may be. It does not mean that boys will always be behind. It does mean that if the school places the "at six" expectation on students, that the school program may very well pass by almost 50 percent of the students, moving them quickly—by the second grade—to remedial programs and away from developmental programs. From my experience, I will say that children passed over in this fashion become the 36 percent below basic on the fourth grade National Assessment. In a nutshell, when the school is ready, the child is not; when the child is ready, the school is not. Unless we change, an American dilemma is in the making. Tragically, 36 percent of our children this year, and the next, and the next, as far as the calendar can reach, will never be effective and enthusiastic readers and writers. Do not let your child be trapped in this collective inadequacy. The malady is not only epidemic, it is systemic.

5. Literacy Includes Reading and Writing

The National Research Council (NRC), in *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children,* March 18, 1998, identified three elements of reading that children need: letters, sounds, and reading for meaning. To these elements, the program adds composing—writing in letters the words and ideas in the mind. In talking of the NRC report, former Secretary of Education Richard Riley said: "The study clearly defines the key elements all children need to become good readers. Specifically, kids need opportunities to learn letters and sounds and how to read for meaning. . . . All children need these three essential elements in order to read well and independently by the end of the third grade." The *Reading, Writing, and Phonics Too* program would also add "and to write (compose) well and independently by the end of the third grade." Certainly, children are to read for meaning, but they are also to write to make meaning.

This program relies on the power of the child's facility with language to move beyond making sounds and reading words and sentences to the place where students can compose their own writings. Each lesson concludes with the opportunity to write. Students should be encouraged to write at the end of each lesson, even if the writing is simple or even nonsensical. The idea is to get the flow going and keep it going. Do not keep the child out of the lessons because of difficulty with the writing. It may be slow, even difficult, at first. With effort and encouragement, it will improve quickly. In the early lessons, using oral composition is good and normal as a lead-in to written composition.

6. The Vision



The *Reading, Writing, and Phonics Too* vision follows the national effort to ensure that all students are able and enthusiastic readers. Not only does the program use the tools—phonics, phonemic awareness, common sound/spelling relationships, integration with literature, etc.—but it also delivers lessons to facilitate the efforts of parents, teachers, and most importantly, children themselves, in this most important process of teaching and learning to read and write.

Recommendations for Use and the Challenge

All but the exceptional few children can become able and enthusiastic readers and writers. To meet this challenge, a school or home should allow the student a half hour per day in school or at home for pursuing the program as designed. The program is effective when used for acceleration in kindergarten and prekindergarten for those students who are ready. It may also be used effectively for recovery in second and third grades and in homes, labs, and resource rooms.

This book encourages and guides the home and school in giving the students a helping hand. This section of the book is for teachers, parents, caregivers, and other coaches. What is included here is a brief overview of how the home/school connection works.

Getting Started: First Your Child Will Need a Helping Hand

Since the purpose is to help your child to be an able and enthusiastic reader and writer, it is important to proceed within the capabilities of the child, respecting the pace with which your child can proceed. Please read this section of the book before you begin with the student lessons. As you enter the student lessons, you will serve as the child's coach. Look to this early part of the book to help you under-stand the program. Work the first two lessons to learn the main opera-tions. Once you learn these, you can easily coach your child.

Pointing and Reading

The program may be enjoyed by children at various levels of readiness. If it is clear that your child is not ready to enjoy the lessons at their presentation level, you may proceed in two ways. You may skip to the next section of this book and follow the pre-readiness suggestions. Or you may allow the child to proceed through the lesson, allowing the child to respond orally. This will work in every case except for the printing lesson. Even the writing lessons can be accomplished by creating oral compositions.

Your child will be ready when the routines of the lessons are easy to manage without frustration—frustration to you and/or to the child. As with all early reading

coaching, you will point and say the responses yourself. Next, have the child point and you say the responses. Next, you point and have the child say the response. To avoid frustration with this last step, prompt the child freely when it is that child's turn to respond. This activity is the same as when the child points to words on the printed page in a storybook, and you read the words from the printed page. The part on pre-readiness will have other helpful clues for a child not yet ready to read.

Following the Program

Students should follow the program as it is written. Encourage your student to stay in the activities until all the work is complete. The lessons, which center on 40 lesson words with the 51 sounds that the lesson words introduce, build on one another. The better the mastery of one word and its sounds, the easier it will be to read as the readings get more difficult. The last step in each lesson gives students opportunities to print and write. The more writing, the better it will be, and the better the reading will be. Getting the flow going and keeping it going is the idea! In the beginning, some children may struggle to write the first word, *cat*. Encourage them by having them read their own writing, even if it is just letters, one word, or perhaps, even nonsense writing. Once children can construct words from the sounds and letters within their own heads, they will always be literate. A word of caution is that there will be a tendency to skip words that the students already know by sight. Resist this tendency. The phonemic awareness and the sound/letter correspondence necessary to attack yet other words are embedded in each lesson. Skipping through the program short-circuits the building of word attack skills.

Sharing the Readings and Writings

Once students have progressed to the end of the first word and sound lesson, "cat," they have the opportunity for writing their own words. When this happens, the writings become a portfolio of writings. Two advantages occur for the students. They can read their own writings and reread the readings—for example, the "cat" readings of the first lesson.

One sign that students are on the route to good reading is when they can read back to you what they have written. It does not have to be exactly correct in the beginning. The idea is that they understand that the written letters and words represent oral sounds and words. Mind to page, or page to mind—these are opportunities to see the connection. Even make-believe reading from a printed page will help. Have the students try to read everything they write, even pretend writing.

Extension Activities

As early as possible, create extension activities that lead the student to relate the work in the book to work on other forms of the printed page. Integrating these activities into everyday life can be very helpful and lots of fun. Try some of the

following extension activities. Some are more difficult than others. Provide all the helping and prompting that you want to. Remember, if you or the student are frustrated, the activity is too hard. Save that activity until the student is older.

- Help write and read the grocery list.
- Help read the TV guide.
- Start a scrapbook and/or photo album with written or typed captions.
- Start a journal of writings and drawings, perhaps only drawing at first.
- Write and leave notes for one another; at first, just a word like, "Hi!"
- Write down reminders even if you have to help read them.
- Read directions on cans, packages, and recipes out loud.
- Write, illustrate, and read letters, cards, and notes to family members.
- Read road signs and billboards.
- Play alphabet games: "Who can find the letter a, b, and so forth? Of course, x, y, and z are very hard to find."
- Read cereal boxes and play the games on them.

7. An Overview

The program functions around three organizational features: the learning tree and tree house metaphor, the integrated literacy system, and the features and functions of the lessons.

The Learning Tree of Sounds and Tree House of Words Metaphors

The learning Tree of Sounds and Tree House of Words metaphors are the entry point for each lesson for the students. These set the environment for fun and adventure for the students. The students enter the park, see the tree, and enter the tree house. As students learn new sounds, the sounds hang from the learning tree.

Letters and New Sounds Hang from the Learning Tree

As the student starts the program, the learning tree is empty. As the student learns the association of sounds (phonemes) with letters (graphemes), the sounds, represented by English alphabet letters, hang from the tree. When the student points and says or as you point and say these letters and sounds, the student hears each of 51 general American sounds. The result is an interactive learning tree that makes the 51 sounds using single or combination letters. The first page shows an empty tree. By the time the student gets to *sing*, *sang*, *sung*, *song* in the last lesson, the tree is full of the 51 sound/letter combinations. The letters, with their sounds, remain on the tree until the end of the program and are excellent for review and practice.

New Words—Written and Pronounced—Build the Word Wall

As the student progresses and masters each lesson, the word in that lesson with the embedded sound is used to build the Word Wall. The words remain in the wall until the end of the program and make an excellent review and practice site. Again you and the student will share pointing and saying the words. You both may also point and sound the words on the Tree of Sounds.

The adding of the letters and their sounds to the Tree of Sounds, and words and their sounds to the Word Wall increases the sense of suspense, reward, and accomplishment. As the program progresses, the student finds that the Learning Tree and the Word Wall are active summaries of what has been learned, each growing larger as lessons are completed. In this way the tree and the Word Wall add the new sounds and the new words just learned in the previous lesson. Each new lesson starts with a review of the previous lesson's word and sound.

The Tree House Teaches Three Lessons

Once the student is inside the tree house, you will teach principles and lessons about the new word and review the words already learned in previous lessons. The tree house is the primary teaching page of the book. You will point and say the letters of the new word. For example, you will point and say *cat—c a t—cat*. You will have your student point and say *cat—c a t—cat*. The student should repeat this until *cat* is mastered. Next, point to *cat* at the top of the blackboard and say *cat*. Have your student point to *cat* at the top of the blackboard and say *cat*. You will repeat this process for each of the lesson words when they are introduced. As you and your student proceed through the book, you will be instructed to teach specific principles such as, long and short vowels, silent *e*'s at the end of words, and sight words which use the sounds of the lesson word.

8. Features and Functions

The program relies on the principles of the Expanded Teaching Alphabet (ETA) for its theoretical framework in structuring sound (phoneme) and letter (grapheme) correspondence. As we have seen, this alphabet uses 51 letter combinations to represent the 51 sounds necessary for beginning reading and writing of English. The program then places these sounds in 40 lesson words with real sound/letter correspondence. Next, it places these lesson words into two reading experiences, showing the phonemes, graphemes, and words, in real reading context. Then students create writings using the lesson words with their embedded phonemes and graphemes. The program uses printing to teach handwriting and to review the letters, sounds, and words. Emphasis in the spelling, pronunciation, and reading functions is on decoding. Emphasis in the writing and printing functions is encoding. Once young students can write, they can always read. The functions and features include the Expanded Teaching Alphabet (ETA), the 40 lesson words, and the 51 sounds.

The 40 Lesson Words

The system is constructed around 40 words that students should already know orally or can easily learn orally. These 40 words contain the 51 sounds used to get students to read and write the words that they use easily when speaking. Of course, children have been using the sounds orally since birth and constructing words with them since their first year. Beginning at an average age of three, they have named the objects common to their world. At an average age of four, they have become masters of the oral syntax of their language. And at an average age of five, they are able to use their language to construct thoughts and speak those thoughts to those around them in very dynamic and exciting ways. In addition, by the fifth or sixth year, children already know that books have words and that words have letters. These students know the difference between writing and drawing and in which way a book is right side up. Many students will easily memorize the lesson words, but it is important that they do not skip any. The lesson words and sounds are the building blocks to reading and writing unknown words. Now the students capi-talize on this wonderful linguistic versatility and early childhood experience to read and write. The program is integrated in six ways:

- The 40 lesson words are embedded in stories and poems.
- The 51 sounds are embedded in the 40 words.
- Letters (graphemes) represent sounds with the English alphabet letters.
- Students write (handwriting) using these same sounds, letters, and words.
- Students write (compose) using these same sounds, letters, and words.
- Students generate a large and dynamic set of new words which they can read and from which they can construct new writings.

Literature Includes the 40 Lesson Words

Two reading selections introduce each of 40 words in context. You will begin by pointing and reading each word and each line of each selection in its entirety and line by line. Then point and say as the student says the words and the lines with you. Next have the student try to point and say the words and lines. Prompt the student as much as you like, but have the student say the words with you. Focus on the lesson word. The reading follows the spelling and pronunciation lessons; and, therefore, the student should know the lesson word without difficulty.

40 Words Represent 51 Sounds (Phonemes)

The 40 words introduce each of 51 sounds (phonemes) in context. The Tree of Sounds at the beginning of each lesson shows the letters of the sounds, and the student is to point to the sound and say it. The new word just studied goes on the Word Wall, where the student will point to it and say the new word. This program uses 51 sounds; other programs may use some other number of sounds. As new words are

introduced, their letters are added to the Tree of Sounds, where they remain and can be reviewed throughout the rest of the program.

Letters (Graphemes) Represent the 51 Sounds

As discussed previously, the program follows the tradition of the Expanded Teaching Alphabet (ETA). This alphabet represents sounds with the same English letters and names that students use in reading and writing. The idea is to avoid the confusion that comes when the phonics system and the alphabet system are different. In some cases, more than one letter will represent a sound—such as, *air*, *th*, *ch*, *oi*, *oo*—to mention only a few. *Ing*, *ang*, *ung*, *ong*, as in *sing*, *sang*, *sung*, and *song* are special cases where hard-to-say sounds are separated. Therefore, the program treats each of them as a single sound: *ing*, *ang*, *ung*, *ong*. The program grouped these sounds and words together.

Lesson Words with the Sounds As Introduced			
cat—c, a, t	sun—s	feather—th	saw—aw (au)
bed—b, e, d	jump—j, m	wheel—wh	dog
pig—p, i, g	lemon—l	moon—oo	chair—air
hot—h, o	volcano—v	book—oo	heart— ar
run—r, u, n	ax—x	oil—oi (oy)	tears—ear
ape—long a	yo-yo—y	turtle—ur	ring—ing
eagle—long e	zipper—z, er	horse—or	sing, sang, song, sung—
kite—k, long i	fish—f, sh	unicorn	ang, ong, ung
window-w, long o	child—ch	house—ou (ow)	
cute—long u	three—th	queen—qu	

The Expanded Teaching Alphabet is ideal for meeting both the "phonemic awareness" and the "common sound-spelling relationships in words." (The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) The system also meets the requirements of "letters, sounds, and reading for meaning."

The Student Writes (Composing) Using These Sounds, Letters, and Words

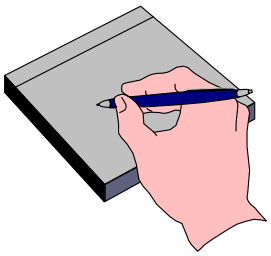
James Britton of the University of London and a leading expert on the oral and written language of young children has said of writing, "Get the flow going and keep it going." The program integrates the sounds, letters, and words learned into the students' written composition. The program also uses writing to reinforce these letters and words.

The generative nature of composing allows the student to create a repertoire of hundreds of new words by going through the program. The program encourages the student to write words and sentences using words as they sound. Some students may begin by writing only the letters of the sounds they have learned. Teachers and coaches should encourage but not force the writing. Since the writings are in the portfolio, the student can always go back and do more elaborately what was done before. The program reserves spelling and grammar rules for an age-appropriate time after the writing is flowing. However, the program does provide enough of the conventions to get the writing flow going—periods at the end of sentences and capitals at the beginning, for example. In summary, the coach should give as much time as possible to the writing process. Learning to write is a fast track to reading proficiency. Writing always enables reading.

After the writings are in the portfolio, the coach should encourage the student to continue to improve, edit, and proofread each one. Reviewing the previous words on the Word Wall and reviewing the previous writings in the portfolio are excellent introductions to new word lessons. The program encourages age-appropriate writing by showing words, syntax, and punctuation in reading activities, editing and self-editing work, and maintaining a portfolio of progress. This guide deals with assessment of writings in the section called Authentic Assessment.

The Student Writes (Handwriting) Using These Sounds, Letters, and Words

The program integrates the sounds, letters, and words into the student's handwritten composition and into the student's handwriting practice. The coach or teacher is encouraged to have the student write (compose) in order to strengthen composition and writing skills. The handwriting pages have a background like primary printing paper. The student may print on printing paper and look at the page for help. Primary printing tablets may be purchased at discount stores at affordable prices.



The Student Generates a Large and Dynamic Set of New Words

The student generates a large and dynamic set of new words. From these new words, the student can read new works and construct new writings. In this way, the program integrates the words learned with the general vocabulary growth of the student. The generative nature of the program makes it a vocabulary building program of huge dimensions. As the student does the exercises, new words are created by associating words that sound the same or rhyme. The power of rhyme, which students enjoy, creates the recognition of hundreds of more words. The writing activities encourage creating new words. The readings themselves generate a stream of new words to be added to the student's vocabulary, to be used in the other readings, and to be used in speaking and writing. The writing page uses the same primary printing paper background, allowing the student to use the writing page for support.

9. The Integrated Literacy System

The program for beginning readers is an integrated literacy system. This means that the application of letters, sounds, and reading and writing for meaning are extended into all areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This can be illustrated by reviewing each of the seven pages that make up each lesson. Each lesson has the following interactive pages.

The Review Page

The first page of each lesson—the Tree of Sounds and Word Wall—is the review page. This review page places each sound with its letter(s) on the tree. By pointing and saying the sounds of the letters, the student reinforces the sound/letter correspondences, thus associating the letters just learned with the sounds made from infancy. Written graphemes are associated with the appropriate oral phonemes. The students may make the sounds and point to the written letters. You may coach the student by saying the sounds as they are pointed to. This page also places each word just learned on the Word Wall. The student may continue to say the word orally while seeing it in print and hearing it said by the coach. In this way speaking, listening, and writing skills are utilized.

The Teaching Page

The teaching page, page two, always introduces the lesson word. The word is pointed to, said, spelled, and said again. The student, who has seen the word and letters and said the word and names of the letters, should now be instructed to point and say all of the words and letters. The student sees and says. The student leaves the page knowing how to read the word and the previous words learned.

The Spelling and Pronunciation Page

The spelling and pronunciation page, page three, begins with the lesson word appearing and being spelled in print, and pointed to and spelled letter by letter. Then the word appears a second time, where it appears letter by letter, but, this time, each letter should be sounded letter by letter. Exceptions, like the silent *e*, should be pointed out. Again the student is allowed to say the sounds but point to the letters. This should be repeated until the student masters the sounds of the letters. The student will learn the pronunciation of the word associating the sounds (phonemes) to the letters (graphemes). The sounds of each letter are embedded in the lesson word.

The Reading Pages

Pages four and five are reading pages. The student finds the lesson word with its embedded sounds now embedded in reading of stories or poems. Each reading is read through by the coach from its beginning, pointing and saying each word and line. Next, each line is pointed to and read word for word. The student repeats the process and may need considerable prompting to get through each story or poem.

It is important to attempt to read each line all alone, but the coach should always intervene with prompts to avoid frustration. The letters and sounds are embedded in words; words are embedded in the readings.

The Handwriting Page

The handwriting lesson on page six is constructed around the letters of the lesson word. This page simulates primary printing paper, and the student can refer to the page as the handwriting lesson is completed on real paper. These printing pages may also be placed in a portfolio, which will be useful in monitoring the student's progress in eye-hand coordination, fine muscle control, and writing dexterity.

In addition, the ease with which letters can be made is an indication of how fast the student can progress through the reading and writing lessons.

The Writing Page

On the writing page, the last page of each lesson, ask the student to follow the instruction to write the lesson word and to generate other words that are similar. As the lessons progress, the writing prompts become more and more challenging and generative. Lesson words generate other words. These words generate sentences. The sentences generate writings and compositions of the student's own creation. This page simulates primary printing paper, and the student can refer to it while writing on the real paper.

Summary of the Integrated Literacy System

These seven pages illustrate the degree to which the system integrates spelling, pronunciation, reading, writing (composing), and printing (handwriting). As the students move through the pages of each of the 37 lessons, the power of phonics and phonemic awareness will create effective and enthusiastic readers and writers.

10. You Are the Teacher

As the teacher, your main function will be to point and say letters, sounds, words, and sentences at the appropriate time. You will be prompted during some lessons to present rules and techniques. These will be made clear for you and will be illustrated at the appropriate time. Your prompts are in balloon form. The balloons are familiar for their use in cartoons—a form that children universally understand to represent the written equivalent of oral speech.

The prompts quickly give students the idea that speaking can be written down; writing can be read; and reading can be spoken. Teaching the *er* in *zipper* illustrates how you will be coached: "double the *p* in *zip* and add *er*."

The Blackboard

The blackboard is your main teaching tool. All new words appear on the blackboard letter by letter with their spelling. All words already learned remain on

the blackboard throughout the program for review. The new word is added to the top of the blackboard.

Hootie Owl

The ever present Hootie Owl—teacher aide and your helper—brings coaching tips and enrichment readings to the students. His readings include *The Zigzag Way* and *How So Many Turtles Got in the Park Pond.*

Individualizing

The program allows the teacher and coach to maintain control over placing students in the program and pacing students through the program. Having each student in the right place and making sure they are not moving too fast or too slow are the keys to individualization. If properly placed in the program and paced through the program, all students can master the material of the program. It is very important that less mature students, or students who are challenged in different ways, have time to go through the program slowly, completely, and entirely. These students are some of the greatest beneficiaries of this program.

Coaches may allow students not yet ready to read to go through the entire program. Students may listen as coaches point and say (students may point and coaches may say) letters and words, and read the stories and poems, pointing as they say each word. Students may attempt the writing and printing pages and use oral composition for the writing lesson. It is important to remember that reading readiness occurs for students at different times from the fourth year until the seventh year. As we have seen early, it helps coaches to remember that, of the beginning six year olds, only half are ready to read—mostly girls. Students not ready in kindergarten can go through this program orally and still return to it as a six or seven year old and be successful in reading the selections and composing the writing lessons. The program provides that:

- The student can proceed at an individual rate.
- At a minimum level, the student can point and you can say the words and sentences while the student repeats them.
- At the maximum level, responses in writing are individual and at the highest level.

Student Prompts

Students have prompts throughout the program. Anytime new functions or ideas are introduced, you will read the instructions to the students. These helps are displayed in written and graphic form. The teacher will tutor or show each student when changes occur. These written prompts introduce new phonetic principles. *Eagle* is a good example, since it shows a silent *a* in the middle of the word and a silent *e* at the end of the word. Usually the silent *e* at the end signals a long vowel in the word; in this case, *e*. You will read for Mat who gives the general instruction and Hootie Owl

who is specific in his coaching and readings. Prompts use print in balloons and graphics to instruct the students.

Mat prompts students at the beginning of each writing. These prompts take the form of sentence starters, initial word and sentence generators, picture prompts, story prompts, and references to the art and literature of the lesson. A collage of artwork is often presented with the writing page. Coaches should encourage students to make whatever effort they can to get started. In the beginning, it may be no more than the sound/letter correspondence or the words learned in the lesson. Coaches should always accept what is made and remember that these are the very first efforts for some students. Coaches should also feel free to give their own prompts for the writings. Oftentimes firsthand, individual knowledge is just what is needed to get the flow of writing going.

11. The Home/School Connection

This program has a tightly woven home/school connection. The program provides the parents or caregivers with the program electronically in Phonics Too® and in this book form. The coach's manual for the multimedia version and this book aid parents and significant others in helping their students with readiness and initial reading. This is the essential connection in order to dramatically improve the reading of preschool and primary school students. Since teachers and school personnel have responsibility for many children and many subjects, it is difficult to spend much time with a single student. However, a parent devoting 25 minutes a day to these activities with a child can make a profound difference at the point when the child is ready to read and write.

Supplementary Activities for the School and Home

Frequent reading is always important to emerging readers. The object is reading and writing. Therefore, once your child is moving through the lessons with relative ease, it is important to extend reading into other areas. Storybooks, magazines, newspapers—all of these and others—are appropriate sources of reading materials for children. The idea is that reading becomes a common activity in daily life. It is important that both mothers and fathers read to, read with, listen to, and otherwise participate in the reading activities of young children. The following checklist will help you rate your child's reading opportunities and environment:

- Does your child see you reading?
- Does your child have a number of good early childhood reading books?
- Do you read to your child often (three times a week or more)?
- Do you allow your child to read to you often?
- Does your child have a public library card?

- Do you subscribe to early childhood magazines?
- Does your child have a quiet, well-lit place to read?
- Do you refer to studious people with derogatory names like "egghead" or "bookworm"?
- Are you patient when your child is not ready to do what you expect?
- Are you patient when your child does not do what others of the same age are doing?
- Do you encourage them in what they can do?
- Remember that children reach their maturity for reading at different ages: four, five, six, seven, etc. Be ready when they are.

Pointing and Reading

As soon as your child begins to move through the program, start pointing and reading. Older siblings, classmates, and other coaches can do this for the child in your absence. However, it will be best if you allow the child to read to you word for word from within this book or from a favorite book as they are able. The important thing is for the child and coach to do this reading together. It also creates a good situation for you to measure progress. In crowded schoolrooms, this can be accomplished with teacher assistants, volunteers, or other children in the class as well as with the teachers themselves.

12. Special Attention to Writing (Composing)

The child's writings form a portfolio of earliest writings, useful now and to be treasured for years. When measuring progress, remember to review the entire portfolio.

Composing and Writing

Literacy is the combined skills of reading and writing and understanding what is read and written. Writing in this case is composing, not copying and not handwriting. As you encourage your child to write, do not encumber the situation with overconcern about mechanics. According to the great teacher, Sybil Marshal, a child writing is no more an adult writing than a tadpole is a frog. Here are some things you can do to get the flow of writing going and keep it going:

- Encourage the child to attempt all the writings at the end of each word lesson.
- Encourage the child to read all writings to you, even if they make them up as they go.
- Make positive, not negative, comments, no matter how juvenile the writings appear.
- Extend writing and composing activities to writings in nonteaching situations.

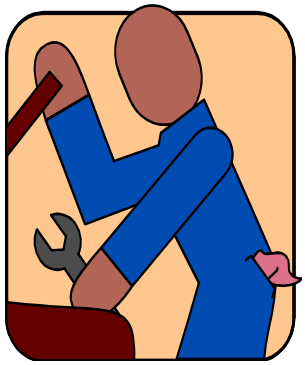
- Give your child experiences to write about.
- Provide the child with audiences for the writings: family, friends, and playmates.
- Provide avenues for publishing the writings: homemade books, scrapbooks, home newspapers, etc.
- De-emphasize errors in spelling and mechanics; proofreading can be taught after the writing is flowing.

Experience, Speak, Read, and Write to Learn

The aim of literacy is independent learning. In this sense, students experience to learn, speak to learn, read to learn, and write to learn. The more opportunities the child receives in all these areas, the more the learning and the better the learning. No effort will substitute for proper parenting or caregiving.

13. Troubleshooting

My Child Is Not Ready



A common dilemma of parents occurs when they discover that their child is not ready to do something that other children their age are doing. Reading is one of the best examples of this. The expectation is for children to be ready to read at five or six years old. In actuality, many children do not read until seven years old or even older. Maturation times are different for each child. There are many influences on child development. Girls seem to mature faster than boys. First-born children seem to be more precocious. Children from language-enriched environments do better then those who are language-deprived. If your child does not easily accommodate this program, move to the pre-readiness activities described in this book. Be patient and supportive with the child. If you grow discouraged or think something is amiss, see the *Seeking Help* topic that concludes this part, *13. TROUBLE-SHOOTING.*

My Child Can't Make Some of the Sounds

It is common for children to have difficulty with some sounds. Point and say the sounds with your child. Let the child watch your lips as you make the sounds. Treat exceptions to normal speech very calmly. They usually go away. Again, if you become discouraged, seek the avenues of help available. See *Seeking Help* at the end of this part.

My Child Has Trouble with Spelling, Mechanics, and Usage

Spelling, mechanics, and usage involve arbitrary rules, established to bring uniformity to the printed page. A great deal of schooling will be spent

mastering these conventions that are most commonly used by proofreaders. With young children, it is best to let them spell phonetically, as they hear the sounds. Spelling, punctuation, and correct forms of usage will be taught later. There are over 800 different and variant spellings in English. Most of these will be accommodated by the students over time. All of us can remember our own experiences with words, such as *island* or *eight*.

My Child Cannot Touch-Type

If your child uses a typewriter or computer, do not force the child to touch-type. Although it is useful, it is not essential to either reading or writing. Do not make the typing an end in itself. At the appropriate time, a good touch-typing program can be installed on a computer.

Seeking Help

In the final analysis, you may need help. You may suspect that your child has a real problem preventing the reasonable development a parent might expect. Public school districts are required by law to provide testing and other services to children three years old and older. Your pediatrician or family doctor can also refer you to the appropriate individual or agency for proper diagnosis and/or treatment. If you suspect any abnormality at all, you should seek this public or private assistance.

14. Authentic Assessment Features

This program presents two portfolios for authentic assessment of student progress. Each portfolio has 37 examples of real student work from which to make judgments. The writing portfolio and the printing portfolio will easily demonstrate the maturity level of the student.

The program recommends an informal approach where the observations are used more for process monitoring than for summative decisions. To strengthen coaches and teachers in this difficult area, the program strongly recommends that they review *Principles and Recommendations for Early Childhood Assessments*, The National Education Goals Panel, Washington, 1998.

The Writing Portfolio

The writing portfolio is an important element of literacy development. The portfolio offers an opportunity to assess 37 initial writings and compare students' progress against their own record. The device is not only an excellent authentic assessment tool, but it is also an excellent way to communicate student progress to others.

Students who are proficient in writing and constructing their own writings will seldom have trouble reading writings of their own or of others. Included in this effort is an opportunity to construct meaning by the students from within the students' own minds. The more often this is done, the easier it becomes. Parents will long cherish this record of their child's earliest writings.

The Printing Portfolio

The printing portfolio will offer 37 longitudinal examples of the student's printing. Improvement in fine motor control, eye-hand coordination, and letter and word construction will show progress and reveal areas where help can be given. For example, if the student has difficulty constructing shapes, more work may be assigned making straight lines and circles—the building blocks of letter construction. If the student has difficulty with the size of the letters and words, gross activity may be called for—big letters and shapes on larger areas, such as chalkboards or flip chart size paper.

First Compositions and Handwritings

First compositions and handwritings are a record of the emergence of the thought structures known as concrete classifying, ordering, and transforming. These structures and the abilities enabled by them allow young readers to organize the sounds and words used orally and to see how they correspond to written letters and words as they are used in written material. Once this transition to concrete classifying, ordering, and transforming occurs, the student can easily become a reader and writer who is able to encode (write) and decode (read). This transition occurs rapidly in most cases. The 37 handwritings and 37 compositions become a wonderful record of this powerful event. Whether this program is in school or at home, parents and caregivers should receive the portfolios. This most amazing and cherished record of the child's growth and development will endure far beyond childhood.