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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does my child have to know the alphabet before I start teaching?

Children don't have to know the alphabet letter names to read, they need to know SOUNDS. This program teaches a child to identify and say the sounds. After the child has mastered the sounds, letter names are introduced in later lessons.

Why the “funny” print and it’s not in alphabetic order?

The print (and all features of the program) used to teach children to read is very purposely designed to make learning as easy as possible.

The sound-symbols order of introduction– sequence – was done to provide maximum discrimination (symbols that look different from each other and sound different)–this makes it easier for children to learn and master more quickly. The order of introduction of sound-symbols was designed to have children learn sounds that when combined (blended) would produce the maximum number of words, which are then placed into stories, as soon as possible.

Not only is the sequence different from alphabetic order, but most notably the configuration of the symbols is different:

a is taught since it is the symbol used most often in reading (books, online, forms, etc.) and “a” can easily be discriminated from d, p, q; while “**ɑ**” can easily be confused with d, p, and q by beginning readers. “**ɑ**” is used rarely in reading material, but is the handwriting version.

d and **b** have different configuration of the oval part

h and **n** have different stem lengths to make it easier to tell apart

Long vowels are shown with macron (bar over symbol) to discriminate from short vowels.

Letters are combined that produced one sound: **th, sh, wh, ch**.

Only lower-case letters are taught (except the word **I**) so a child does not have to learn to identify both the lower and upper cases in the beginning. Most words that we read are lower case print. Capitals are introduced in later lessons.

The book provides transition to “regular” print later in the program.

The Sound Writing exercises at the end of lessons is provided for more practice in saying and recognizing sounds and was not designed to be a handwriting lesson. If your child does not have the eye-hand coordination yet to use pencil and paper, you may omit this exercise and practice sounds another way (see supplementary material).

What if my child already knows sounds?

Start from lesson 1 and go through all six exercises to check that your child can correctly pronounce sounds and say continuous sounds for at least 3 seconds. Even though your child may know sounds, you should also be sure to check performance on the other pre-skills (blending—*Saying the Sounds* exercises and Say It Fast) taught in the lesson. If your child is proficient on all exercises, you may rapidly go through many lessons at a time using lots of encouragement and praise: “Wow, you went through that whole lesson in 5 minutes; you’re doing great! This is pretty easy for you, so I bet you could zoom through another lesson. Let’s give it a try, OK?” Continue teaching lessons rapidly until you have used your allocated 15-20 minute period. Then teach and correct at an accelerated pace as time allows during the next periods. Once your child is challenged and makes errors (needs more corrections), teach at a regular rate. Always include praise for working hard and for first-time correct responding and stay positive during corrections.

How do I hold my child’s attention?

Children usually will reflect the parent’s (or instructor’s) attitude. However, it is counterproductive to try to teach a child who is too young and does not want to learn to read. On the other hand, if your child asks to learn, then you may start to teach even a young child. To be actively engaged with your child during lessons, you must be very well practiced in following the scripted exercises and techniques BEFORE you teach so that you can present lessons quickly while also monitoring your child. In this way you can stay positive and animated in your interactions, especially important when your child makes errors. Always include praise for working hard and for first-time correct responding and stay positive during corrections. You may also consider whether or not you want offer at the end of a teaching period a tangible reward such as stickers, stamp, or stars on a chart for working hard and/or completing a lesson.

Should I really teach for 20 minutes a day?

It’s always wise to base instructional decisions on the child’s responses and behavior. At the beginning of the program the lessons are short and may not take 20 minutes to complete, but later lessons will take longer. If your child is becoming fatigued and inattentive after 20 minutes (or less), stop teaching and continue the next day with a short review, then complete the lesson. If your child is still working hard and enthusiastic after 20 minutes, it’s a good idea to take a break, then continue to complete the lesson if your child really wants. Another option is to complete the lesson at another time of the day. You may also decide to split up a lesson and teach at two separate times during the day. You may also decide how many days a week to teach—it is not necessary to teach every day, but it is good to have a consistent schedule.

Will it work if I use the book to teach more than one child or even a small GROUP? See link below:

<http://startreading.com/training-videos-for-groups/>

To set up for **SUCCESS** to teach **one child or more**, follow these guidelines:

Use a consistent schedule-20 minutes a day or split up time for a younger learner.

Practice the sound-symbol relationships (see “Videos” page and book p. 17)

Learn about particular features of the scripted lessons

Practice a lesson, including corrections before teaching a child.

(See demonstrations and training on “Videos” page.)

Follow script and bring to life by presenting lessons with enthusiasm and naturally quick pacing to maintain attention.

(See demonstrations and training on “Videos” page.)

Make sure child can see book or watch your mouth as indicated in script.

Monitor child’s responses by watching her fingers, mouth, and eyes.

Express your personality with non-scripted praise to child (e.g. good eyes on the book, great job sitting tall, fantastic job sounding out that word without stopping between the sounds).

Correct errors immediately in a positive way by modeling the correct response, repeating task with the child until child is successful, have child independently repeat task until firm.

Confirm and reinforce working hard; specifically praise correct responses

With two or three children, all of the above and in addition:

Seat children so that they can see you and the book and that you can monitor all of them easily.

Briefly state clear, positive expectations-for behavior and performance for each exercise.

Share one book, use more than one book, write tasks on the board, or project lesson on board for exercises when children should touch a letter, a word, or the story.

Give turns in unpredictable order to children.

Monitor to be sure that child is attending when it is the other’s turn.

Praise another child when one displays minor inappropriate or inattentive behavior.

Give individual turns at the end of each exercise.

With more than three children, all of the above and in addition:

Use book(s) for exercises that require children to see material, project book on board, or write tasks on board—ahead of scheduled teaching time.

Obtain 100% group responses without leads for every exercise and correct non-responding.

Use clear signals for each group response (to ensure that children are initiating their own responses, not copying the first to respond).

Hand drop; when children are looking at you

Visual-pull-out-touch, loop, slash; on book

Auditory-snap, clap, tap-when children should be looking at their material

Praise specifically at the end of exercise, 100% correct group response, and especially first-time correct.

Give individual turns at the end of exercises to check firmness.

If you have a question that has not been addressed, please feel free to email Dr. Phyllis Haddox: teachyourchild100ez@gmail.com.