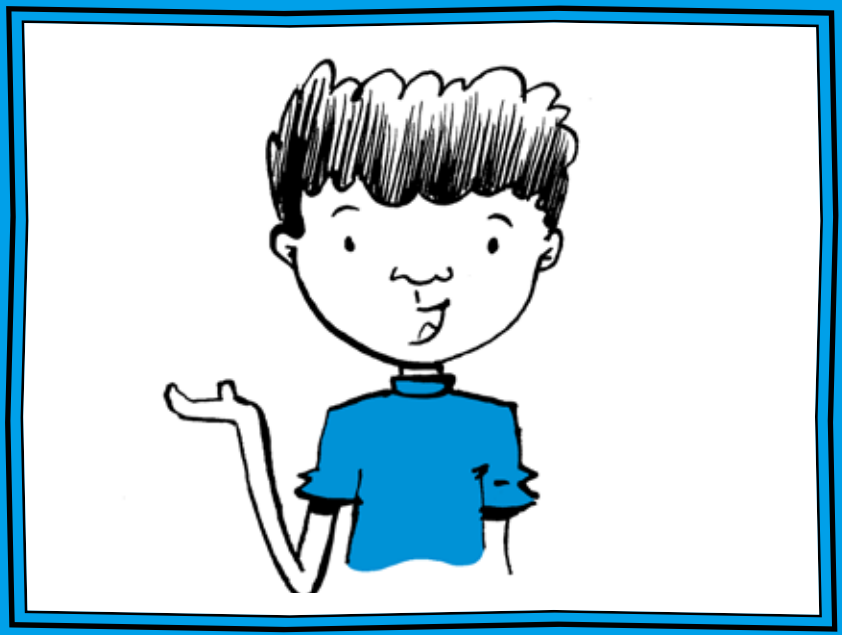
BEST READING! Phonics

A reading program developed by Cathy Jackson

Teacher Guide



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Illustrated by Graham Ross

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GENERAL TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Teach the sounds and words listed with each booklet before reading the stories. Do not teach the whole alphabet beforehand. It is better to teach and repeat/reinforce the sounds of a few letters, then use them to read/make words. Once the child is sure of them, introduce new ones.

Go at the child's pace. Stay on a booklet and its activities for as long as is needed before introducing new sounds and words. Make two packs of word activities: one is theirs to use at home, the other is theirs for use at school.

SOUNDING OUT

When teaching the sounds, avoid adding the sound "uh" after the consonants. Use a short sound: "b" not "buh", c not cuh, d, ff (say sound for longer, so you don't say 'uh'), g, h (short breath out), j, k, ll, mm, nn, p, rr, ss, t, v, w, y, zz. This will make it easier to slide the sounds together to create words: '**c-a-n**' rather than '**cuh-a-nuh**'. With 3-letter words, slide the first two sounds together, stretch out the vowel, and pop on the last consonant: caa n. Then, say the word you hear: can. Use the same two first letters and pop on the last sounds of similar words: caa t, cat; caa p, cap.

LIST OF READING STRATEGIES AS CHILDREN PROGRESS:

#1 Always do a picture walk of the story to get an idea of the content. Before you read each page, look at the picture for clues.

#2 Sound out the letters and slide the sounds together; listen for the word. (caa t, cat)

#3 Chop up longer words using your letter sounds. (pic/nic)

#4 Look for known words within the new word. (sandwich)

#5 If the word is very difficult, and you have looked at the picture for clues, skip the word and read to the end of the sentence. Think of the context of the sentence, and what word (with that starting

letter) would make sense. Reread the sentence, trying your new word.

#6 Sometimes, you might guess at a word and continue reading. Listen to yourself when you are reading aloud. Does it make sense? (The 'tail' man ran past me.) Stop if the sentence doesn't make sense; go back and figure out which word might make better sense. (The 'tall' man ran past me.)

#7 Reading aloud very quickly does not mean you are a better reader. Read as if you were talking. Read with expression. Emphasize words that are in **bold** print, CAPITAL letters, or are underlined. Look at the end punctuation; change your voice if there is a question mark or an exclamation mark.

#8 As you read more stories, you might be able to read the new word without knowing what it means. (The cat slinked into the room.) Read the sentence before and after it to see if that will help. Look at the picture and ask an adult for the meaning if you are still unsure. Use it in the next story you write; make it your word!

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Letter/Sound Activities:

#A Staple small pictures together that start with that sound, with the letter as the cover. Say each word/sound.

#B Using those pictures and letters glued onto hardcard, make puzzle cards with the picture on the top half and cut to fit that letter on the bottom half.

#C Make 2 Magic Boxes with 2 different letter cards resting on top of each box. Have cards with the picture on one side and the letter on the back (but upside down). Mix the 2 groups of cards, with picture side up. The child says the name of the picture and what the starting sound is and places it in the corresponding Magic Box to check if that letter is correct. Start 2 piles: cards that need practise and cards that don't need practise. (This is all 'Practice Time', not 'right' or 'wrong' time.)

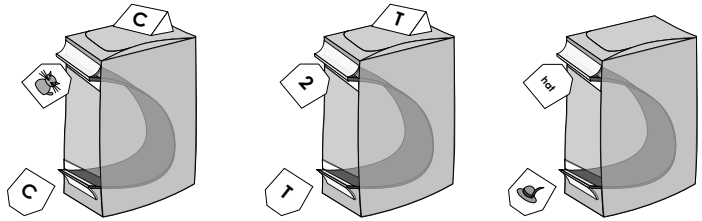
MAGIC BOX

Preparation: Make a 'Magic Box' so students can work

independently. Start with a small rectangular cardboard box (an empty snack/sandwich bag box, a Kleenex tissue box…) Cut a 2 cm slit at the top of one side and another at the bottom on the same side. Cut a strip of construction paper the width of the side with the slits. Make sure it is longer than the box is tall.

Tape one end of the paper to the outside top of the box, above the top slit. Slip it through the top slit, curve it, and pull it through the bottom slit so that it makes a curved slide inside the box.

Tape the other end to the outside bottom of the box. Tape the sides of the paper to the sides above the top slit and below the bottom slit. Create cards with a word on one side and the matching picture upside down on the other side. They should be a size that fits easily through the slits. Cover the box with construction paper. Print Magic Box on one side.



Game play: Each card, with the word side up, goes into the top slit of the box after being read. It slides down the curved paper slide to come out through the bottom slit, showing the matching picture. (Cut the corners off the top on the word side to make it look like a thick arrow. This helps the student hold the card so that the word is not upside down, and also shows which end goes into the slit.) Gently remind the students that there is no need to try and peek at the picture before attempting to read the word. This is is an independent Practise opportunity with no 'right' and 'wrong' piles. There is a 'know it' pile and a 'practise' pile. It encourages metacognition: 'what I know' and 'what I don't yet know'.

Tips: Create one Magic Box for all sets of cards of the 5 vowels. Use 3-letter words: consonant, vowel, consonant. The student can use 1 bag of cards to practise 1 vowel. As they learn another vowel, the 2 sets can be mixed. When all 3-letter words are known, make a 6th bag of consonant blend 4/5-letter words (such as: black, fist, tent, frog, trunk…) When the children can read all the words, the cards can be used to practise spelling by reversing the process. They hold the card with the picture side up, spell it aloud (or write the word on a separate paper), then slide the card into the box to check the spelling.

MEMORY GAMES

Word/Picture Cards Matching: (Use index cards and cut them in half for the word/picture match.)

Preparation: Create your own game by matching words to pictures. Make doubles of 2 Word Cards (can, cat) and doubles of 2 Picture Cards (a can of beans/soup, a cat). Place the 8 cards face down in two rows of 4, one row for each set. (I cut curves along the top of the picture set, so they are distinct in their row, or use 2 different colours for each set.) As students improve, you can make singles of 3 words and pictures (cat, can, cap). Whenever you feel a reinforcement is needed, draw some new cards: (mat/bat/hat), (mop/map/cap), (hen/cat/kid), (dog/duck/hen).

Game play: Turn over a random card from the Word Card row. Say the word and place it face up in its spot. Turn over a card from the Picture Card row and place it face up in its spot. If they match, repeat the word and put both cards to the side in a 'finished' pile. If they do not match, say both words aloud, try to remember where they are, and then turn them face down again. Turn another Word Card over, face up, and then turn a Picture Card to try to match it. Do not flip both cards simultaneously.

Tips: Have masking tape or a label sticker on the baggie (holding the cards) with the word and the picture drawn beside it, so that the student can check when they are unsure. They will know when they don't need to refer to it, and will stop on their own.

Have only one 'finished' pile so there is no competition between students. If students struggle to turn over the cards, bend up a corner of each card while it is facing downward to make it easier to grip. It is important the student reads the words aloud. Using their eyes, voice, and ears reinforces reading.

MEMORY WORD CARD MATCHING GAME (Use index cards and cut them into thirds for word cards.)

Play the same matching game with sight words that need to be recognized and cannot be drawn. Instead of having Picture Cards, use a second stack of identical Word Cards. (said, you, the, said, you, the). This activity can be used to replace flashcard practice.

SPELLING WITH LETTER CARDS

Make small cards for individual letters that are being taught, and spell short words. Example: c, a, n, p, t. Let students make some words first. Then adult can say: "Use your letters to make the word: pan. Change those letters to make the word: nap." (Continue with making: pat, tap, can, cat.)

REARRANGING SENTENCES

Preparation: If students are memorizing the story, ask them to point to certain words on the page: "Point to the word **cat**". "Point to the word **can**…" Take one or two short sentences from the story. Print individual words on cards. Spread them out of order.

Game play: Have students rearrange the words to put the sentences back together. If guidance is needed at first, write the sentences on masking tape or a label on the baggie that holds the cards.

MISSING LETTER IN A WORD OR MISSING WORD IN A SENTENCE

Create short 3 letter words with the vowel missing so that the student fills in the needed letter to correspond to an attached picture. Later, write short sentences (using short vowel words) on the board with vowels missing. The students enjoy the challenge of solving itthem – they also use context to figure out the correct sound needed. Write sentences on the board with a word missing. They will use context to solve them. Have them create their own sentences with a word missing and exchange with a partner. (Their reading, printing, spelling, and grammar are all needed in that creation!)

PASSWORD

Preparation: Tape a difficult word to the door frame. Students must read the word before leaving the room. Tape 2 words, switch the order.

BODY SPELL

Preparation: Write out a short list of three-letter words on the board. Place three chairs side by side, in front of the board, facing the class. A Sample List: can, pan, tap, nap, fan (Different shaped letters are mixed to focus sizing of letters when reading and printing: short, long, tall letter groups).

List the letter shapes in groups on the board (of the ones they know so far):

Short letters: a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z

Long letters: g, j, p, y, q

Tall letters: b, d, f, h, k, l, t

Game play: Select 3 students. Each student represents a letter of the word. If the letter has a short shape, the student sits on the chair with feet tucked up off the floor. If the shape is long, the student sits on the chair with feet on the floor. If the letter shape is tall, the chair is turned around and the student kneels tall on it. Eventually, students can be in groups of 3 and make up their own words for the class to guess. (The class suggests many words before getting the correct one – therefore, much more spelling is going on!) Print all their suggested words in a list, discussing if it fits the shape of the 3 students. Say "Good word!" for all attempts.

MELTING SNOWMAN MYSTERY WORD GAME (Good for lunchtime or snack time)

Draw a snowman on the board: 1 large bottom snowball, 1 middle one, 1 smaller one on top, 2 sticks for the arms, 1 hat, 2 eyes, 1 nose, 1 smile, 3 buttons, 1 scarf. Choose a mystery word. On the board, draw a line for each letter _ _ _ . When a student guesses a correct letter, print it on the line. If an incorrect letter is guessed, start to erase one part of the snowman and print that incorrect letter in another row so that it is not suggested again.

Tell the students that every word has a vowel, so they should start with guessing a vowel – it encourages knowing the 5 vowels… List those on the board. There can be 14 incorrect guesses. Make longer words as they learn more letters/sounds.

PRINTING: In order to teach the best grip of a pencil, place it on the table with the tip facing the student. Ask them to pick it up close to the edge of the paint near the tip by using only their thumb and index finger. While still holding it, have them use their other hand to rotate the eraser end up toward their hand until it rests on the web between the thumb and index finger. The middle finger supports the pencil underneath. The last 2 fingers curl into the palm.

Do not start printing in alphabetical order; go by the letter shapes as that letter/sound is being taught. Start at the top curve with letter **c** for all the curved letters: c, o, a, d, g, e, q, s. Start at the top for all straight letters: I, l, t, n, m, r, i, u, b, f, h, j, k, p, v, w, x, y, z.

Writing "**I can**". Teach that all straight letters start from the top and are drawn down to the line (like rain). In this way, they know the bottom line is where to stop. For the curved letters, start with the letter **c**, making sure to curve it from the top and around down to the line, then up a bit so that there are hooks at each end. This will make all curved letters so much easier.

For **a**, start like **c**, continue into the **o** shape, then draw a straight line down to the bottom without taking the pencil off the paper.

For the **n**, start from the top and make a short line down to the bottom, go back up the line and curve it over to come down again, without taking the pencil off the paper. (Pretend that you're going down the path to visit a friend, oops you are at the wrong house; you have to go back up the path and curve over to go down the next path to next door. You have to stay on the path back up to the

top and not cross into their front yard…)

For the **m**, you go to 2 wrong houses, before finding the right one!)

Other letters related to the **c** shape: **d** starts like **c**, continues straight up from the bottom curve to go higher than the circle, then falls back down to the bottom on the same path. It's like **a** with its hand up in the air – "I know the answer, teacher!"

The letter **g** is letter **a** that continues the straight line down below the bottom and curves – it's the **a** going fishing (Letter **q** goes fishing the other way).

For letter **e**, make a horizontal line and make a letter **c** around it without taking the pencil off the paper – you are making a table, then jumping over the table and under it.

The r, n, m, h all start at the top to make a line, go down to the bottom, then travel back up the line to curve at the top – only halfway up for letter **h**.