

Scholastic Phonics Readers™

Product Overview

Scholastic Phonics Readers are designed to provide children in grades PreK-2 with early reading success through independent, sound-controlled reading materials and systematic phonics instruction. This scientifically proven product, which can be used to supplement any comprehensive reading program or as a separate phonics course, consists of:

- Research-based instructional strategies that focus on phonemic awareness, the sound-letter connection and high-frequency words.
- Engaging stories that motivate young children to read and give them constant repetition and practice with sounds and words taught.

Instructional Content

The explicit, systematic instruction that is provided with **Scholastic Phonics Readers** helps students develop foundational skills that are necessary to become independent, skilled readers and writers.

Phonemic Awareness

- Teachers present oral blending, segmentation, discrimination, and wordplay activities.
- Children listen to and reproduce the sounds they hear in words.

Phonics

- The six introductory lessons focus on concepts of print, a-b-c recognition, and common letter reversals.
- Lessons 1-36 focus on all consonants and short vowel sounds.
- Lessons 37-72 focus on digraphs, diphthongs, consonant clusters, and long vowel spellings.
- Each lesson provides formal, sequential dictation practice to develop encoding and writing skills based on phonics learned.

Fluency

- Students build fluency by listening to the teacher read a story or listening to or reading along with an audiocassette.
- To increase oral reading fluency rate, children reread the stories chorally, with partners, or independently.

Vocabulary

- Lessons introduce students to high-frequency words that appear in the **Phonics Readers** and that are important in constructing natural-sounding text.
- Each **Phonics Reader** focuses on a new set of high-frequency words and incorporates elements and words that have been previously taught.

Comprehension

- Once a **Phonics Reader** is completed, the teacher asks questions that focus on the students' understanding of the story.
- Each lesson provides sample questions requiring responses that help children attach meaning to their reading.
- Children are exposed to new genres and subject matter by reading the program's books.

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Instructional Design

Because they incorporate a systematic introduction and review of sounds/letters, **Scholastic Phonics Readers** can be used as independent reading materials and instruction to supplement any comprehensive reading program.

During each week of instruction, the teacher presents two lessons and the children read one **Phonics Reader** with each lesson. The lessons are two-days long and consist of the following sections:

- Develop Phonemic Awareness—The teacher says a sound or sounds in a word and the children repeat, complete the words, or respond according to other directions.
- Connect Sound/Symbol—The teacher introduces the sounds and phonograms and writes them on the chalkboard. The students repeat, list words with the same sounds, and blend words. High-frequency words are introduced and discussed.
- Read the Story—The class previews the **Phonics Reader**, and the teacher reads it aloud while the students follow along. Students read in groups and independently.
- Dictate and Write—The teacher dictates words and sentences, and the students write them on a sheet of paper. The teacher reviews correct answers.
- Assess Reading—The teacher asks children questions to assess their understanding of the story.
- Writing Extension—The children make letter cards, dictate stories, or participate in other word-building exercises.

On the fifth day of the week, children assemble the black-and-white versions of the two **Phonics Readers** covered during the week and take them home to share with their families.

Assessments

While using **Scholastic Phonics Readers**, teachers have many opportunities to observe and informally assess children's developing phonemic awareness, phonics, and writing skills. In addition, three formal assessments are provided. These are cumulative in nature and are to be used after **Phonics Readers** 12, 24, 36, 48, 60, and 72. As a student reads aloud the words and sentences in the assessment, the teacher records his or her attempts, corrections, errors, and passes. The child is also asked to write various words and sentences. The program also provides a Mid-Year Phonemic Awareness Assessment and Mid-Year Phonics Assessment.

Screening

Teachers give the assessments in sequence until the child receives less than 80% mastery. The student should begin instruction in that set of **Phonics Readers**.

Diagnostic

Anecdotal remarks recorded by the teacher during assessments provide valuable insights on a student's potential problem areas. For example, if a child blends *big* for the word *dig*, he or she might need additional instruction for differentiating *b* and *d*. If a child passes on several high-frequency words, the teacher may need to focus on these during individual or small-group sessions.

Progress Monitoring

Teachers can keep all the program's formal assessment results in the child's portfolio to monitor learning gains. In addition, a Running Record, developed by Marie Clay, can be taken every six weeks. A child reads aloud a book; the teacher records what is read and analyzes his/her miscues and self-corrections. If a child is not reading at 94% or greater accuracy, the child is not at the appropriate instructional level.

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Motivation and Engagement

Playful stories, age-appropriate themes, and colorful illustrations engage readers. In addition, riddles and hidden pictures in each book motivate children to continue reading. The systematic instruction provided with the program allows children to read with success and without frustration. Student interest is maintained through guided practice, independent reading, audiocassettes, sound-spelling cards, and alphabet /phonogram transparencies.

Intervention Strategies

The **Scholastic Phonics Readers'** informal and formal assessments allow teachers to calculate what percentage of words students can read accurately, analyze the type of errors they are making, and use the data to determine which books are right for an individual, a group, or for independent reading. Those students who are attempting to read books at a higher level than their ability can go back to an earlier **Phonics Reader**. Teachers then reteach from that point on all the lessons and stories in sequence.

The program accommodates children with different learning styles by presenting lessons and practice through visual and auditory means. Audiocassettes of books and alphabet/phonogram transparencies for pocket charts are available. Teachers can review words in brief fast-paced lessons for inattentive children. Children acquiring English benefit from strong visual clues provided in the illustrations and the slow, steady introduction of new vocabulary. In addition, thirty-six readers are available in Spanish with a systematic introduction of the sound-letter correspondences and phonics patterns in the Spanish language.

Home-School Connection

Each **Phonics Reader** has an associated black-and-white version that students can bring home to share with their families. Parents receive a letter that explains the take-home books' purpose and suggestions for their use. For example, children can make a library out of take-home books, and parents can read the books aloud while encouraging their child to identify key words in the story. Teachers can also send home copies of children's writing and stories the class dictates during the writing extension portion of the lesson.

Professional Development

The **Scholastic Phonics Readers** *Teacher's Guide* presents specific instructional strategies to help students develop their phonemic awareness, connect sounds with symbols, and learn how to read high-frequency words. Dictation and writing techniques are also offered. Lesson plans give reading options, ideas for writing extension activities, and suggestions for text comprehension assessment. The book also discusses assessment approaches and ways to include families in their children's reading development.

The **Scholastic Phonics Readers** program is supported by the *Scholastic Red* facilitated online course, "Putting Reading First in Your Classroom." The course lessons cover strategies for teaching the five essential elements of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This professional development solution provides:

- Instant access to research and theory.
- Video modeling of research-based practices.
- Interactive simulations that allow for practice of skills and strategies.
- Structured feedback, collaboration and ongoing support.
- Materials that can be immediately used in the classroom.