

The Natural Phonics Primer™ With Blend Phonics

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Step 1: The five short vowels and all consonants spelled with one letter: Exercises 1 - 12

Exercise 1: a b d f g h j l m n p r s t v w y z

Ann bag bat dad Dan fan fat gas had hag ham jam jazz lap mad man map mass mat nap Nat pad
Pam pan pass pat rag rap rat sad Sam tag tan tap van wag [am an as has ran]

Exercise 2: e

bed beg bell Ben bet den Ed egg get hen jet leg less let men mess Ned net peg pen pet red sell set
Ted tell ten web well wet yell yes yet

Exercise 4: i

bib big Bill bin bit did dig dip fib fig fill fit hill him hip hit Jill Jim lid lip mill miss nip pig pin
rib rip sin sip Sis sit Tim tip wig will win zip [his if in is it]

Exercise 6: o

Bob boss dog doll Don dot fog God got hog hop hot job log lot mop moss nod not pop pot rob
sob Tom top [off on]

Exercise 8: u

Bud bug bun bus but buzz dull fun fuss fuzz gum gun Gus huff hug hum hut mud Muff mug
mutt nun nut puff pup rub rug run sum sun tub tug [up]

Exercise 10: c k

cab can cap cat cob cod cop cot cub cuff cup cut
keg kid kill kiss kit

Exercise 11: ck

back buck deck Dick dock duck hack Jack kick lack lick lock luck neck Nick pack pick rack
rock sack sick sock suck tack tick tuck

Step 2: Consonants and consonant combinations spelled with two or three letters. Exercises 13 – 23

Exercise 13: ct ft lb lf lk lm lp lt mp nd nt pt sk sp st

ct: fact; **ft:** gift sift; **lb:** bulb; **lf:** elf self; **lk:** bulk silk sulk; **lm:** film; **lp:** help; **lt:** belt felt
mp: bump camp damp dump hump pump; **nd:** and band bend bond end fond pond sand send
nt: bent tent went; **pt:** wept; **sk:** ask desk dusk; **st:** best fast fist must nest pest rest rust test vest
west zest

Exercise 14: bs cks ds ffs gs lls ms ns ps ts cts fts lbs lks lms lps lts mps nds nts pts sks sps sts

bs: ribs tubs; **cks:** ducks; **ds:** beds; **ffs:** cuffs; **gs:** bugs digs pigs wigs; **lls:** bills hills pills sells;
ms: hums; **ns:** buns fins guns hens; **ps:** cops cups hops lips rips sips tops;
ts: bats cats cuts hats mats; **cts:** acts facts; **fts:** gifts lifts; **lbs ...;** **lks:** milks sulks; **lms:** elms;
lps: gulps helps; **lts:** melts; **mps:** camps jumps pumps; **nds:** hands mends; **nts:** hints pants;
pts ...; **sks:** asks masks; **sps:** lisps; **sts:** dusts nests rests

Exercise 15: ng nk sh x ngs nks

ng: gang hang king long ring rung sing song wing
nk: dunk ink junk link mink monk pink rank sink sunk tank bank
sh: ash cash dash dish gash hash hush lash mash mush rash rush sash wish [shall]
x: ax box fix fox Max mix next ox six tax wax
ngs: bangs lungs
nks: winks

Exercise 17: bl cl fl gl pl sc sk sl sm sn sp st sw tw spl

lump – plump, tub – stub, lap – flap, lamp – clamp, win – twin, lad – glad, lip – clip
pan – span, lock – block, lend – blend, lack – slack, lint – splint, camp – scamp, well – swell,
nap – snap, lap – clap, pit – spit, lip – slip, link – blink, lash – splash, lock – flock,
pick – spick, wept – swept, lash – flash, pill – spill, lip – flip, lick – slick

bl: blendblink block; **cl:** clamp clap click clip club clump; **fl:** flag flap flash flint flock flop
gl: glad glint; **pl:** plot plum; **sc:** scat; **sk:** skip; **sl:** slack slap slick slink slip slot; **sn:** snag snip
sp: span spick spit **st:** stab stem stick stop stub; **sw:** swell swig swim **tw:** twig twin **spl:** splash

Exercise 18: br cr dr fr gr pr scr spr str shr tr

rat – brat, rub – scrub, rip – grip, ring – bring, rink – drink, rag – brag, rust – crust, rip – strip
rim – brim, rip – trip, rug – drug, ramp – cramp, rust – trust, rap – strap, ring – string,
rash – crash, rush – brush, rug – shrug

br: brand brat brim bring brink brisk brush; **cr:** crab crack cramp crank crash crest crush crust
dr: drab drank dress drill drink drip drug drum; **fr:** Fran frank Fred fresh frills frock frog;
gr: grand grill grin grip grunt; **pr:** prank press print prompt; **scr:** scrub; **shr:** shrimp shrub
shrug; **spr:** spring; **str:** strap string strip strong; **tr:** tramp trap trick trot truck trust

Exercise 20: qu th wh squ thr

qu: quack quick quill quilt quit quiz
th: broth cloth moth smith thank that them then thick thin thing think this with thump
wh: whack when whiff whim whip whisk
squ: squint
thr: thrash thrift thrill thrush

Exercise 21: ch tch

ch: bench branch bunch chap chat check chest chick chill chin chink chop chum chunk clinch
crunch hunch lunch much pinch punch quench ranch rich such trench which

tch: catch clutch crutch ditch fetch hitch itch latch match notch patch pitch sketch snatch stitch
stretch switch witch

Exercise 23: Two-Syllable Words

address basket bathtub bellhop biggest blinker blister bucket buckskin catnip chicken chipmunk
crossing crossings dangling dentist kitchen lapdog lemon lipstick lobster locket longest mastiff
mistress mustang napkin padlock privet quicksand rabbit redskin ringlet robin shopping slipper
spirit stocking sunset tempest tinsmith tomcat topnotch unfit upset vanish vivid whiskers wicked
winter zipper

Step 3: Vowels and vowel combinations spelled with two or three letters.

Exercises 24 - 39

Exercise 24: ee ea as in meal e as in he

steel – steal, seem – seam, meet – meat, peel – peal, peek – peak, week – weak, deer – dear
flee – flea, team – team

ee: bees creep deep feed feel feet free green keel keep need peep queen queer screen seed seek
seen sheep sheer sheet speech steer street sweep sweet three tree weed weep wheel

ea: beach bead beak beam bean beast cheap cheat clear dream ear east fear gear heap hear heat
leaf lean leap near neat peach preach reach reap scream seal seat speak spear squeak steam
stream tea teach veal wheat year yeast zeal [clean]

-e: be me we

Exercise 25: ee ea as in meal e as in he (Continued)

ee: beef beer beets breed cheek deed fleet keen meek reed see sleep speed steep weeds

ea: cheat cream deal each eat Jean gear heal mean meat peas squeal team treat

-e: he she

Exercise 26: oo as in moon, book, and poor

oo: bloom boom boost boot booth brood broom coo cool coop drool droop food fool hoop loop
moo mood moon noon pool roof room root scoop shoot smooth snoop soon spook spool
spoon stool stoop too tool tooth troop zoo

oo: book cook crook foot good hood hoof hook look nook poor shook soot stood took wood
wool

Exercise 27: ar; a as in pa, ma

arch ark arm art bar bark barn car card Carl cart charm chart dark darn dart far farmhard
harm harp jar lard lark ma march mark marsh pa park scar scarf shark sharp smart spark
star starch start tar yard yarn

Exercise 28: or

born cord cork corn for fork form fort horn lord north or porch pork port scorch scorn short
snort sort sport stork storm sworn thorn torch torn work worn

Exercise 29: er, ir, ur

er: Bert clerk her herd hers jerk perch stern

ir: birch bird birth chirp dirt fir firm first girl shirk shirt sir skirt squirm squirt stir third thirst
twirl whirl

ur: burn burr burst church churn curb curlfur furl hurl hurt purr spur surf turn

Exercise 30: oi, oy

oi: boil broil coil coin foil foist hoist join jointloin moist oil point soil spoil toil

oy: cloy coy joy Roy toys boy

Exercise 31: ou, ow as in cow

ou: bound cloud couch count crouch flour foul found grouch ground hound loud mouth ouch
our out pouch pound pout proud round scout shout snout sound sour south spout sprout stout
trout

ow: brown clown cow crown drown fowl frown gown growl how howl now owl town

Exercise 32: au, aw, all, alt, alk

au: fault fraud haul launch Paul

aw: bawl brawl claw crawl dawn draw drawn flaw hawk jaw law lawn paw raw yawn

all: all ball call fall hall wall

alt: halt malt Walt bald

alk: chalk walk

Exercise 34: ai, ay, air

ai: aim bait braid brain Cain chain drain fail faint faith frail gain grain hail jail lair maid mail
main paid pail pain paint plain quail quaint raid rail rain sail saint snail stain strain tail trail
train vain wail wait

ay: bay bray clay day gray hay jay lay may pay play ray say slay spray stay stray sway tray way

air: air chair fair hair pair stairs

Exercise 35: ie as in pie, y as in by, ye as in rye, ind as in mind, ild as in wild

ie: cries die dieddried flies fried lie lies pie tie tied

ye: rye

y: by cry dry fly fry my shy sky sly spy try why

ind: bind blind find grind kind mind rind

ild: child mild wild

Exercise 36: oa, oe, old, olt, oll, ow as in low, o as in so

oa: boast boat coach coal coast coat coax croak float foam goal goat groan load loaf loan oak oar
oath oats road roam roar roast soak soap soar throat toad toast whoa
oe: foe goes hoe Joe toe woe
old: bold cold fold gold hold old scold sold told
olt: bolt colt jolt
oll: roll scroll stroll toll
ow: blow bowl crow flow glow grow grown growth low mow row show slow snow throw tow
o: go no so

Exercise 37: ew, ue

ew: blew brew chew clew crew dew drew flew Jew new news pew screw slew stew strew strewn
threw
ue: blue cue due flue glue hue Sue true

Exercise 39: Two-Syllable and Three-Syllable Words

agreement always annoy around August away awning banjo belongs birthday booklet borrow
burglar butterfly cartoons classroom Columbus complain confess counter discover Easter electric
enjoyment Eskimo flowers gardener goodness hamburger Herbert herself Jefferson jeweler
kangaroo lantern leapfrog mailbox Mexico Monday murderer mustard New York November
numbers oatmeal pardon punishment railroad raincoat repeat reply return Saturday scarlet
seagull seaport September shadow sheepish shortness showers smartest snowball steamboat
sunbeam Sunday swallow teaspoon Thursday toaster tower Tuesday understand unties untrue
western window window yellow yesterday [never under myself]

Step 4: The five long vowels. Exercises 40 – 59

Exercise 40: a as in name

cap – cape; past – paste; gap – gape; rat – rate; pan – pane; back – bake; fad – fade;
Sam – same; mad – made; lack – lake; snack – snake; quack – quake; at – ate; hat – hate
tap – tape

ape ate bake blade blame blaze brave cake came cane cape cave chase crate Dave daze drape
fade fake fate flake game gate gaze grave haste hate haze Jane Kate lame late made make male
mane name pane pave plane plate rake rate safe sale shake shame shave skate slate slave snake
spade stale state take tame tape taste trade waste wave

Exercise 41: a as in name (continued); a as in care; e as in Eve and here

a-e: ape bare base blare cake came cape care case cave dare date fare flake flame flare frame
gale game gaze glade glare grade grape grate hare haste hate here Jane Kate lake lame lane
male mare mate name pane pave rake rare safe sale same sane save scare shame share
shave skate slate snare spade spare square stare tale tame tape wade wake
e-e: Eve Pete Steve

Exercise 42: i as in **fine** and **fire**

pin – pine; rip – ripe; win – wine; lick – like; Tim – time; dim – dime; shin – shine; spin – spine; kit – kite; bit – bite; fill – file; rid – ride; mill – mile; sit – site; Dick – dike

bike bite bride chime crime dike dine drive file fine fire five glide gripe hide hire hive kite life like lime line live Mike mile mine pike pile pipe pride prize quite ride rime ripe side site size slide smile spike spine spite stride strike stripe swine swipe tide tile time tire vine while whine white wide wife wine wire

Exercise 44: o as in **bone** and **more**

not – note; cop – cope; mop – mope; rob – robe; smock – smoke; hop – hope

bone broke choke chore coke cone cope core dome dote doze drove froze globe grope grove hole hope joke lobe mole mope more note poke pole robe rode Rome rope scope score shore slope smoke snore sole sore spoke stole stone store stove stroke throne tone vote woke wore

Exercise 46: u as in **tune** and **cure**

cut – cute; tub – tube; us – use; purr – pure; duck – duke; cub – cube

brute crude cube cure cute duke fluke flute June Luke lute mule mute nude prune pure Rube rude rule tube tune use

Exercise 48: ing

hoping – hopping; scraping – scrapping; filing – filling; liking – licking;

bedding begging betting brimming budding buzzing canning dabbing digging dipping drumming fibbing fitting grabbing hugging letting licking nagging padding purring quitting rubbing running sagging setting shipping shopping shutting sipping sitting skinning skipping sledding slipping sobbing spelling spinning stabbing stirring stunning tipping topping trimming tugging whipping

aping caring dining fading filing firing gazing grating hoping lining naming rating raving
scraping sharing sliding taping wiping

Exercise 49:

y, ies, ied as in **hurry**, **hurries**, **hurried**

y, ier, iest, ily as in **happy**, **happier**, **happiest**, **happily**

candy – candies; story – stories; fairy – fairies; pony – ponies berry – berries; baby – babies; party – parties; lady – ladies; carry – carries – carried; hurry – hurries – hurried; happy – happier – happiest – happily; funny – funnier – funniest – funnily

Betty Billy Bobby bodies bunny candies carried chillier cozy daddy daily dirtiest dizzy fifth foggy forty fussy gladly gravy handily hardly hurries ivy jury kitty ladies likely Mary muddy navy nearly nutty party Peggy penny puppies roomier sadly scurried shady silliest sixty sleepily snappy sunniest thirsty thirty twenty uglier ugly witty

Exercise 51: ed (ed, ed = /d/, ed = /t/)

/ed/: added counted matted needed pointed rested seated shouted potted

/d/: aimeded boileded buzzeded calleded canneded charmeded crawleded filleded followeded growleded naggeded pinneded
planneded playeded robbeded rolleded ruggeded saileded slammeded sneezeded squeezeded traileded wheeleded
wickeded

/t/: baked balked blessed boxed cracked crashed dropped fished fixed fussed hatched helped
hissed hitched huffed hushed jerked jumped kissed leaped marched matched mixed parked
patched pinched preached puffed scratched scuffed skipped smoked snapped sniffed
splashed stacked stitched stopped stuffed trapped tripped whipped wiped wished

Exercise 53: er, le

er: bigger blacker clatter cobbler dinner dipper dresser drummer farmer flicker glimmer hammer
helper juggler jumper ladder letter peddler pepper platter printer rocker rubber shopper
skipper slipper snicker trigger tumbler upper winner

le: able angle ankle apple bangle better Bible bottle brittle candle cattle crackle cripple cuddle
drizzle fiddle fizzle fumble grumble guzzle handle hobble humble jingle jungle kettle ladle
mangle meddle muddle needle prattle puzzle riddle saddle settle sickle simple single sizzle
snuggle table tackle tangle uncle [little]

Exercise 55: ce, ci, cy

pack - pace; truck – truce; peak – peace; lack – lace – lacy; slick – slice – slicing

ce: ace advice Alice braces Bruce cell cent center chance choice concert danced dances face
faces fences forced France glance glanced Grace groceries mice mince notice officer ounce
ounces parcel peace place pounce pounced prince princess race raced rice service since sliced
space spaced spruce traced twice voice

ci: bouncing cider cigar cinch cinder cinders circle circus citizen city fencing
Francis icing mincing pencil

cy: fancy mercy lacy Nancy

Exercise 56: ge gi gy dge dgi dgy

rag – rage; bug – budging; dog – dodge; hug – huge; egg – edge; smug – smudgy

ge: age bulge cabbage cage change changed charge damage damaged danger fidgety forge
garbage gem Gene gentleman gently George German germs hinges huge larger ledge lodge
manager Marge nudged nudges orange package page rage passage pigeon stage strange
strangers tinge urge urgent wage wages

gi: charging engine engineer ginger magic

gy: energy gym gypsy stingy

dge: badge bridge dodge edge fudge gadget grudge hedge midget pledged ridge sledge wedge

dgi: budging nudging

dgy: smudgy

Exercise 58: se, si, sy as in cheese, rising, rosy, the, thi as in other, bathing

se: amuse because cheese choose close closed dose excuse fuse hose noise nose pause please
pleased poise praise raise rise rose rouse ruse suppose tease tense these those vase wise

si: amusing supposing

sy: daisy easy noisy pansy posy rosy

the: bathe breathe brother father gather lather loathe mother other rather whether wither

thi: seething soothing teething

Step 5: Irregular Spellings. Exercises 60 – 72

Exercise 60: Silent b, g, k, t, w

b: climb comb crumb debt doubt dumb lamb limb numb plumber thumb

g: gnarled gnash gnat gnaw gnome gnu

k: knack knave knee kneel knelt knew knife knit knitting knob knock knot know known knuckles

t: bristles bustle castle christen fasten gristle hasten hustle jostle listen nestle often rustle soften
thistle whistle

w: sword wrap wreath wreck wrench wrest wrestle wretch wretched wring wrist written wrong
wrote

Exercise 61: Silent gh, h, l

gh: ought: bought brought fought ought sought thought

auht: daughter caught naughty slaughter taught

igh: bright fight flight fright night right high knight light lighting might mighty plight
sigh sight slight tight height

eigh: eight eighteen eighty freight neighbor sleigh weigh weight

ough: though

aigh: straight

h: honest ghost honor hour John school Thomas

l: calf calm folk half palm yolk

Exercise 62: ph, gh as in rough

ph: alphabet autograph elephant hyphen nephew orphan pamphlet pharmacy Phil Philip phone
phoned phonograph photo photograph phrase prophet Ralph telegraph triumph trophy

gh: cough coughing enough laugh laughing laughter rough roughly tough tougher

Exercise 65: ea as in break, head, and learn

ea = /ā/: bear bears break breaks great pear pears steak swear swears tear wear

ea = /ē/: bread breakfast breath dead deaf death dreaded feather head health healthy
leather meant heaven heavier heavy instead ready spread spreading steady sweat
sweater threads tread treads wealth wealthy weather

ear = /er/: earth heard learn pearl search

Exercise 66: ie as in field; ui as in fruit; u as put

ie: belief believe believes brief brownie Charlie chief field fiend fierce grief niece piece
pier pierce priest shield shriek shrieked siege thief thieves yield

ui: bruise fruit fruitful juice nuisance suit

u: awful bashful bull bullet bush butcher careful cheerful cushion full grateful handful helpfully
pudding pull push pushing pussy put wasteful

Exercise 67: wa swa wor qua squa wha ou as in young and famous

wa: wander wandering want warm warmer warn warning wash washing watch watchful water
(reward war warden)

swa: swamp swan

wor: word words work worker world worm worms worries worry worse worship worst worth

qua: quality quantity

squa: squash

wha: what

ou: country couple couples courage cousin cousins curious dangerous double enormous
famous generous gorgeous jealous marvelous nervous serious touch touchy trouble young
younger

Exercise 69: ci, si, ti as in **special**, **pension**, **vision**, **station**, **action**; su as in **treasure**;
tu as in **nature**

ci: delicious gracious precious social special suspicious vicious

si: expression mansion occasion pension permission television

ti: action addition attention cautious education exception fiction fraction fractions mention
mentioned nation patient question station vacation vacations

su: measure pleasure treasure usual

tu: future mixture natural nature picture pictures

xi: anxious

Exercise 70: ive as in active; or; ance, ence, come, some

ive: active attentive captive detective native passive positive

or: actor actors conductor doctor elevator favor flavor razor sailor tailor traitor visitor

ance: appearance importance performance confidence influence preference providence
residence preference

come: become coming income welcome

some: handsome somehow someone something sometimes tiresome

Exercise 72: Three-Syllable and Four-Syllable Words

accident afternoon amazing American asparagus attractive awkwardly banana banisters
beginning blueberries butterfly Cinderella committee conversation correction December decision
democracy dictionary difficulty Elizabeth emergency emperor entertain exchanging exciting
exclaiming family fashionable favorite February gorilla holiday impatience impossible
independence innocence invitation January jealousy lecturer liberty medicine merchandise
miserable Mississippi musician mysterious newspaper ordinary passengers peevishly perfection
permanent practical president quizzical refreshments restaurant secretary selfishly suddenly
surprising surrounded Thanksgiving threatening thunderstorm together tomorrow transportation
underneath understand unhappiness Valentine vanilla vinegar Washington wonderful

Number of Different Words in the Regular Exercises – Not Counting Reviews

Ex. 1: 36 words; Ex. 2: 33 words; Ex. 4: 37 words; Ex. 6: 25 words; Ex. 8: 32 words;
Ex. 10: 17 words; Ex. 13: 46 words; Ex. 14: 53 words; Ex. 15: 50 words;
Ex. 17: 43 words; Ex. 18: 54 words; Ex. 20: 32 words; Ex. 21: 45 words; Ex. 23: 51 words;
Ex. 24: 75 words; Ex. 25: 31 words; Ex. 26: 56 words; Ex. 27: 42 words; Ex. 28: 28 words;
Ex. 29: 43 words; Ex. 30: 22 words; Ex. 31: 45 words; Ex. 32: 32 words; Ex. 34: 66 words;
Ex. 35: 34 words; Ex. 36: 72 words; Ex. 37: 26 words; Ex. 39: 81 words; Ex. 40: 62 words;
Ex. 41: 66 words; Ex. 42: 60 words; Ex. 44: 49 words; Ex. 46: 22 words; Ex. 48: 63 words;
Ex. 49: 51 words; Ex. 53: 79 words; Ex. 55: 66 words; Ex. 58: 52 words; Ex. 60: 62 words;
Ex. 61: 52 words; Ex. 62: 31 words; Ex. 65: 49 words; Ex. 67: 56 words; Ex. 69: 41 words;
Ex. 70: 44 words; Ex. 72: 78 words.

A total of 2,491 words. Words in [brackets] are Dolch List words that are regular but not in Flesch. They are not counted in the above statistics.

Document created by Donald L. Potter, 5/13-14/04

The Review Exercises were included on September 21, 2006. The Review Exercises have proven very valuable in classroom and tutoring instruction. My experience using the Review Exercises and those of my fellow *Natural Phonics Primer*[™] Instructor, Paul Lukawski, convinced me that the Reviews are of great value. The Reviews serve the important function of allowing the students to practice discrimination between phonics elements previously studied. Ability to read the Reviews rapidly indicates mastery of previous phonics elements.

Natural Phonics Primer™ Review Exercises

By Donald L. Potter

September 21, 2006

Step 1: Five Short Vowels and All Consonants Spelled with One Letter

Review 1 – Exercise: 3: Mixed Short Vowels _a_ and _e_. – 64 Words

Ann bag bat bed beg bell Ben bet dad Dan den Ed egg fan fat gas hag ham hen am jazz jet lap leg less let mad man map mass mat men mess nap Nat Ned net pad Pam pan pass pat peg pen pet rag rap rat red Sam sell tag tan tap Ted tell ten wag web well wet yell yes yet

Review 2 - Exercise 5: Mixed Short Vowels _a_, _e_, and _i_. – 89 Words

Ann bag bed beg Ben bet bib Bill bin dad Dan den did dip Ed fan fat fib fill fit gas get hag ham hen hill him hip jam jazz Jill Jim lap leg less let lid lip mad man map Mat men mess mill miss nap Ned net nip pad Pam pass pat peg pet pig rag rap rat red rip sad Sam sat sell set sin sip sis tag tan tap Ted tell ten Tim tip wag web well wet wig will win yell yes yet zip

Review 3 – Exercise 7: Mixed Short Vowels _a_, _e_, _i_, and _o_ – 90 Words

Ann bag bed bell Ben bib Bill bin bit boss Dan Den did dig dip dog Don fan fat fib fig fill fit fog got hag ham hen him hip hit hog hop hot jam jazz Jill Jim job lap let lid lip log lot mad mass men mess miss mop moss nap Nat Ned net pad Pam pat pen pet pin pop pot rap rat red rib rob set sip Sis sit sob tag tan Ted tell tip top van wag web well wig will yell yes yet zip

Review 4 – Exercise 9: Mixed Short Vowels _a_, _e_, _i_, _o_, and _u_ – 89 Words

Ann bed beg bell bet bib big bit Bob boss but buzz dad Dan den dig dip dog doll Ed egg fib fig fill fog fun fuss fuzz gas got Gus hen hip hit hot hug hum jam jazz jet Jill let lid lip map mass men mill moss mud muff mug nap Nat Ned net nip nod pad pan pass pat pet pup rat rib rip rob sell set sip sob sum tan tap Ted tell ten Tim tip top tug web well wet wig win yell yet

Review 5 – Exercise 12: Single Letter Consonants /k/ as c and ck. – 74 Words

back bed bet cab can cap cat cob cod cop cub cuff cup cut dad deck Dick dig dock duck egg fib fun fuzz hack him hop hot Jack jet Jill keg kick kid kill kiss kit let lick lip lock log luck mass men moss mud Nick pack pad pass pick puff rack red rob rock sack set sick suck sum tack ten tick Tim Tom top tuck van web wig yell zip

Step 2: Consonant Blends and Consonant Digraphs

Review 6 – Exercise 16: Ending Consonant Blends and Consonant Digraphs – 87 Words

acts ask ax bangs bed belt bent best bills box bulb bulk camp cash cats cuffs desk digs dish ducks dunk dusk dust dusts elf facts fish fix fond fox gang gifts gulps ands hang hats hint hints hump hunt hush jumps kept lamp land last left lend lift list long lump lungs mash mats Max melt milk mint mix mush nests next pest pills ponds rest ribs rips rung rush sand sash sells six sulks sunk tank tent test vest wax west wigs winks wish zest

Review 7 – Exercise 19: Beginning and ending Consonant Blends and Digraphs - 88 words

acts bats belt bend bent bills blend brand brat bugs bump buns crash crib dash digs drank drift drum dump dust fact flash flock fox Fran frill gang gifts glad grill grip gulps hands help hints hums hunt jumpjumps kept lift limp lips Max melts mend mends mint mist mush must ox pest plot press pump rest ring rushsash scamp scrub self sells send sing skip sled song spring stem step stick stop strip stub sulkssunk swim tank tent test tops truck trust vest winks

Review 8 – Exercise 22: qu th wh squ thr ch tch - 89 words

ash ask bangs block branch brat brink bugs bump camp chick chink chop chunk clamp clap clip crack crib cuffs damp dash dress drift drunk facts fins flap flint frog gang glad grip grunt gulps hills hints hops hunt ink jump kept lend lifts long lumps masks melt mend milk mink mist monk moth much mush nest notch patch pond prompt punch quench ring sand scat shrub sing sketch sled slip slot snag spit step stop strap strip stub switch tax test that thrash thrill trip wax wept whisk

Step 3: Vowels Spelled with Two-Letters

Review 9 – Exercise 33: ee, ea, e, noon, book, ar (a) or, er, ir, ur, oi, oy, ou, ow, au, aw, all, alt alk.

arch ball bar beach beam beast birch bloom boom boost booth bound brawl broil charm chart chirp cloud coo cool cork crook curl down draw drawn drown farm fault fear fir foil for fort found frown fur girl gown ground hound how jar jaw join joy lark launch leaf loin lord ma march moist moon near or ouch our Paul paw peach pout proud reap roof salt seek shark sheep snout soot spook spout squeal star steam stir storm street sweet talk thaw toil torn veal wall week wheat

Review 10 – Exercise 38: oo, ar, or, er, ir, ur, oi, oy, ai, ay, ou, ow, air; ie (pie), y(by), ye (rye), ind, ild, oa, oe, old, olt, ow (low), o (so) ew, eu - 90 Words

snort bay soak boil herd colt hoe ail main churn spear toe coal snow scorch porch stroll coat mind shy sail south cry say spoil beer sleep art pa shirk cloy mow toast soon blind neat Bert train roar broom grain droop stoop halt brain drew wild quaint point he weed squall news throat jolt thirst throw out lies sold twirl hard keel owl woe bark Walt chain bait roach stall tar find may coin trout hall Carl stood flew boot doe grow malt roll count hear bald fowl taunt

Step 4: Long Vowels: VCE

Review 11 – Exercise 43: a_e, e_e, i_e

cake fine cape blaze gate hike fake shade flake mine slave mane fare drape fade time sane tale lane glide care gaze lime bite dine pike quake whale shine stare while hide came glide pride fare plane pipe hive whine stripe file here tape Pete Mike line dive smile gave site shame ape ride wade pine frame prize kite share lame plate white dike vine chase hive trade five bake spite tire crime case tide waste wide wife shave haste rare Eve like daze Kate Steve flame snake drive lake

Review 12 – Exercise 45: Long vowel a_e, e_e, i_e – 90 Words

shine fire paste Jane made gale broke grate tile quite grope grave Rome smoke spire life bride tame size score note chime male gape save hide base make spine blade date pave safe hike hole robe shore dote name mare late drove grove sale globe bone haze bike swine grape twine game spike wine take dime taste slide cane slate tame skate grade rode dare strike swipe rake glide pile glare coke wave lobe choke mate Dave square mole spade chore scope throne cake poke cone cape line pine vine

Review 13 – Exercise 47: a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e: - 90 Words

wake name cane pole Rube base rude quake make lane drove haste slave cure spine blade whine globe shave file cone fate side sore cape state store tone prize stone mine use tube drive gaze stove froze dime pane glide site swipe pike tame pride cave late cute date line wide fare lame pile glare pine shine coke kite shade stale ripe sane cube came grove pave chase safe fluke live core fine hive waste whale snore vine hole robe lobe haze fire rake Luke rope mope case rime tune

Review 14 – Exercise 50: ing, y (hurry), ies, ied, ier, iest, ily – 80 Words

gladly dizzy bodies whipping skipping fifty filling bedding varied brimming budding buggy hurries Mary trimming Betty grabbing wiping Peggy sandy dipping juries fading lazily stirring begging fairies slipping silly napping letting chillier bunnies badly shortly ugliest hungrier muddy ferried empty Jimmy fibbing daddy scrappy setting rubbing sledding countries hopping sobbing digging running staring sadly crazy puppies married foggy navy filing thirty candies Billy hugging parties wittily pony berries fitting messy lady dandy matting paring cutting fishy sixty armies cherries jelly

Review 15 -Exercise 52: ed, __y...: 80 Words

digging scrappy blessed pinned smoked sobbing clipping running married patched chilly begging trailed fished scuffed varies Betty soaked carry seated licking liking witty trimming fibbing hurries kitty whipping stacked stopped silliest sixty hopping played happily needed penny letting shortly hoping sniffed buggy muddy stories puppies dizzy wiped rubbing setting slammed candies furry jelly wheeled planned greeted liked sitting quitting Sally boiled empty nutty spinning bedding striped badly stretched skipped filled stirring budding stepped sagging scraping scratched matted happiest lazily buggies

Review 16 - Exercise 54: er, le, ing ed, ies.: - 80 Words

trigger shouted spotted meddling Peggy sunnier Bible uncle noodles staring dresser angling growled riddle ankle gladly sledding follower drumming fishy rugged dropper boxer kicking jumped hungrily parking puzzles padded candies fitting whittle bitter tested luckier stamped puffy glimmer puppies pointer tackles buzzer tables splashed matched preacher dipping winner berries lining trapper sadder called shutters thundering betting robed crashing fussy dreamy happily bunnies crippling kisses drizzly baby supper kindly sickly snapped missing sizzle crackers reaching handy sandy rubbing aided speedily fiddler

Review 17 - Exercise 57: ce, ci, cy, ge, gi, gy, dge, dig, dgy : 80 Words

pencil truce page midget lodge Gene fudge danger stage service pledge mincing braces gypsy fringe citizen fancy chance gentle cider age George ice edge slice office package pace racing change peace advice bulge space notice magic Bruce badge Marge wages cigarette cabbage ginger bouncing bridge passage nudge truce manager face forge grocer ledge gym sledge ridge fidget dancer judge circus spice cinch Nancy rice ace force garbage gadgets voice gentleman strangest singe princess center Grace grudge lace circle choice smudge

Review 18 -Exercise 59: se, si, sy, the-thi (other, bathing): - 81 Words

pledge bridge lather suppose wise closing danger dose bother chances manager braces sledge judge rage gem mincing easy nudge since notice cheese icy circle center amuse vase whether pause excuse peace stage germ ledge nose damage mice cents concert breathe twice glances France pleased cabbage service passage wither grace ridge those vice father lacy rice the grocers stingy teasing bulging stranger fidgety races Gene pencil roses ounce charged packages mercy icing edgy spaces Germans dancing wedge badge forge gypsy officer

Step 5: Irregular Words

Review 19 -Exercise 63: silent b, g, k, t, w, gh, h, l, ph, gh (rough) – 80 Words

phone straighten wreck plumber often daughter hasten gnu wrestle alphabet wreath tight answers
coughs eighteen frightened soften wretched highest knack palms climber knaves laughing
knocking knots wrist crumbs though knitting wraps knife castle enough knew fought hyphen
bright school write gnashing caught ghost jostle autograph balm fasten right half light Ralph
lightning written thigh Johnny hours whistle orphan knights nestle slight mighty Philip swords
christened eight gnarled thistles gristle brought wring telegraph calf kneel weight bristles night
sight Thomas honest

Review 20 – Exercise 64: same as Review 19 – 80 Words

prince magic because phonograph bathe though officer huge fencing sleigh wages pamphlet
Rosy noisy cigars wrote hose calm engine bouncing smudge known teething gnat Bruce raise
spicy prophet hedge fancy spruce choice wrong these Alice parcel elephant urgent soothing
dodge ace ought knob comb sought citizen praise bought uses wrest lodge limb age fudge
naughty fight dumbest midnight knuckles Ralph doubt debt face rough truce numb laughter
gentleman fringes gadget circus rather gnomes noise taught large honor weigh George ginger

Review 21 - Exercise 68: ea (break), head, learn, ie (field), ui (fruit), u (put),
wa, swa, qua, squa, wha, ou (young) – 80 Words

pierce field bread quarter thieves priest worth gorgeous worse ready yield swan
dangerous thread instead marvelous spreading brief couple break worst Charlie want deaf
touches heavy dead wealthy brownie what pier great curious pieces learned belief bears
gratefully steady leather nervous dreadful squander shrieks thief handful death juice wars siege
cousin squash awkward worship weather heaven watery quality young wandering troubles
fruitful butcher trouble swear cheerfully swamp careful jealous enormous putting fruit awful
heard world warned nieces suit pudding country

Review 22 – Exercise 71: ci, si, ti, su, tu, ive or (er), ance, ence, come, some
80 Words

active addition anxious attention auction breath bruise bull casual Charlie chief confidence
cushion delicious doctor earth expensive expressions featured fixtures flavors fraction fully
future generous gracious greatness grief handsomely healthy importance janitor lonesome
mansion meant measured mentioned mixture motor native naturally nuisance outcome passive
patience pearls pension performance permission pleasures positively preference providence
pulling pushing questions razor residence shield somehow something sometimes station steak
sweaters sweating tear tiresome traitor tread treasury usually vacations vicious vision visitors
warning wasteful watches wealthy

Five Step Sequence for Teaching *The Natural Phonics Primer* after Rudolf Flesch

I. The five short vowels and all consonants spelled by one letter.

Exercises 1 – 12

II. Consonants and consonant combination spelled with two or three letters.

Exercises 13 – 23

III. Vowels and vowel combinations spelled with two or three letters.

Exercises 24 – 39

IV. The five long vowels. Exercises 40 – 59

V. Irregular Spellings. Exercises 60 – 72

Step One: The Five Short Vowels and all consonants spelled by one letter.

Exercises 1 – 12

Teach the vowel letters *a, e, i, o, u* and their short sounds. The classic way of doing this is to show the student each letter with a picture of a familiar object. (As you realize, the names of the letters *A, E, I, O, U* are not the short vowel sounds but the long vowel sounds. Since this is apt to confuse the student perhaps it is better not to teach him the alphabet until a little later.)

With the five short vowels, teach the student the following seventeen consonants: *b, d, f, g, h, j, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, w, y, z*. Again, you might use pictures like bell for *b*, a doll for *d*, a fish for *f* and so on. Teach the “hard” sound of *g* as in *girl* and don’t confuse him with words like *gem* or *gingerbread*. (He’ll learn those much later.) Similarly, teach him only the *s* that sounds like *ss* and not the *s* that sounds like *z*. Teach him only the consonant *y* as in *yes, yet, and yesterday*, and not the *y* vowel that sounds like *i*.

To fix these twenty-two sounds and letters in Johnny’s memory, let him read *and write from dictation* as many one-syllable words as possible that contain these sounds. (Use words that begin with the vowels or with any of the consonants and end with *b, d, g, ll, m, n, p, ss, or t*.) This first step is tremendously important because Johnny must learn, once and for all, that words are written by putting down letters from right to left, and that they are read in the same direction. Exercises 1 – 9.

After Johnny has gone through *pup, Sam, him, Bill, pad, run, bib, tub, web, Ted*, and so forth, and has reached the point of reading these words without trouble, given him one more simple consonant sound – the sound of *k*. Explain to him that before *a, o, and u* this sound is spelled *c*, but before *e* and *i* it is spelled *k*. *After* a short vowel it is usually spelled *ck*. Exercises 10-12.

II. Step Two: Consonants and consonant combinations spelled with two or three letters.

Exercises 13 – 23

Now Johnny has reached the second step: combinations of consonant sounds. Those at the end of words are easier for him than those at the beginning of a word. So start him with two-letter consonant combinations at the end of words: *ft* as in *lift*, *lk* as in *milk*, *lm* as in *elm*, *lp* as in *help*, *lt* as in *belt*, *mp* as in *lamp*, *nd* as in *hand*, *nt* as in *tent*, *pt* as in *kept*, *sk* as in *desk*, *sp* as in *lisp*, *st* as in *nest*. Exercise 13.

At this point explain Johnny the rule about the letter *s* as the end of a word: After the consonants *f*, *k*, *p*, and *t*, it stands for the hissing *ss* sound, but after all other sounds it stands for the *z* sound. Exercise 14.

Next, teach him the following consonant combinations at the end of words: *ng* as in *ring*, *nk* as in *pink*, *x* as in *fox*, *sh* as in *fish*. Exercise 15. Exercise 16 is a Review of ending consonant combinations (ending consonant blends).

Next, take up consonant combinations at the beginning of words. Here is your list: *bl* as in *blink*, *br* as in *brag*, *cl* as in *clash*, *cr* as in *crack*, *dr* as in *drink*, *fl* as in *flag*, *fr* as in *frog*, *gl* as in *glad*, *gr* as in *grab*, *pl* as in *plug*, *pr* as in *press*, *sc* as in *scamp*, *sk* as in *skip*, *sl* as in *sled*, *sm* as in *smack*, *sn* as in *snap*, *sp* as in *spill*, *st* as in *stamp*, *sw* as in *swim*, *tr* as in *trip*, *tw* as in *twin*. Then there is *scr* as in *scrap*, *shr* as in *shrimp*, *spl* as in *splash*, *spr*, as in *spring*, and *str* as in *stretch*. To teach the student these sound combinations, give him words that become other words when a second consonant is put in front: *lap* and *slap*, *ring* and *bring*, *rug* and *drug*, *nip* and *snip*. Johnny will like reading aloud words like *snack*, *crack*, and *plop*. Exercises 17 and 18. Exercise 19 is a Review of these beginning consonant combinations.

Next, take some other consonant sounds and combinations at the beginning of words: *qu* as in *quack*, *wh* as in *whiff*, “voiced” *th* as in *that* and “unvoiced” *th* as in *thick*. Exercise 20. Then take the *ch* at the beginning of a word and the *tch* at the end. Exercise 21. Exercise 22 is a Review of all consonant combinations.

Now Johnny is through with the second step. He can read or write from dictation all regularly spelled words that contain any consonant and any of the five short vowels. There are also a number of two-syllable words you can give him at this point: *basket*, *redskin*, *frosting*, *lemon*, *napkin*, *rabbit*, *chicken*, *locket*, *wicked*, *robin*, and so on. Exercise 23.

Step Three: Vowels and vowel combinations spelled with two or three letters.

Exercises 24 – 39

Next, Step Three: Teach Johnny vowels and vowel combinations spelled with two letters. First, the *ee* sound, spelled *ee* as in *sheep* or *ea* as in *meal*. This is your chance to tell Johnny about words that sound alike but are spelled differently to distinguish between different meanings, like *meet* and *meat*, *feet* and *feat*, *see* and *sea*, *flee* and *flea*. (He'll like learning these pairs and make a game out of it. Tell him also about the words rhyming with *ee* but spelled with only one *e* – *be*, *he*, *me*, *she*, *we*.) Exercises 24 and 25.

Next teach Johnny the *oo* sound – short as in *book* and *look*, or long as in *moon*, or *spoon*.

Exercise 26.

The *ah* as in *car*, *park*, *lark*, and *pa*, *ma*. Exercise 27.

The *or* as in *lord*, *fork*, *born*. Exercise 28.

The *er* sound as in *bird*, *hurt*, *her*. Exercise 29.

The *oi* sound as in *oil* and *boil*, *toy* and *boy*. Explain to Johnny that it's usually *oi* inside a word and *oy* at the end. Exercise 30.

The *ou* sound as in *house* and *cow*. Again, explain to him that it's usually *ou* inside a word and *ow* at the end. Exercise 31.

The *au* sound, usually spelled *au* in the middle as in *Paul* and *aw* at the end as in *raw*. This is the point to teach Johnny the spellings *all*, *alt*, *alk*, as in *hall*, *salt*, *talk*. Exercise 32. Exercise 33 is a Review of Exercises 24 – 32.

The *ai* sound, usually spelled *ai* inside a word and *ay* at the end. Teach Johnny also the slightly different sound in *air*, *pair*, *fair*. Exercise 34.

The long *i* sound spelled *ie* and *y* as in *pie*, *dry*, *my*, *shy*. Take this opportunity to teach Johnny words like *mind*, *kind*, *bind*, and *mild*, *wild*. Exercise 35.

The long *o* sound spelled *oa* as in *boat*, *oe* as in *toe*, *ow* as in *blow*, or simply *o* as in *go*, *so*, and *no*. Tell Johnny about such words as *old*, *hold*, *sold*, and *bolt*, *colt*. Exercise 36.

Finally, the long *u* sound spelled *ew* as in *new* or *ue* as in *true blue*. Don't forget pairs like *flew* and *flue*, *dew* and *due*. Exercise 37. Exercise 38 is a Review of Exercises 24 – 37.

By now, Johnny has a tremendous reading and writing vocabulary. He can also figure out a long list of two-syllable and three-syllable words like *oatmeal*, *mailbox*, *swallow*, *sheepish*, *murmuring*, *sunbeam*, *untrue*, *leapfrog*, *murderer*, *bamboo*, *cartoon*, *grandfather*, *hamburger*, *restlessness*, *flamingo*, *kangaroo*, *curlicue*, and *Easter bonnet*. Exercise 39.

Step Four: The five long vowels. Exercises 40 – 59

Next comes Step Four: The long vowel sounds, spelled *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*. The easiest way to teach Johnny these is to show him the effect of a silent *e* added to a word. In other words, teach him to read and write *fad* – *fade*, *pet* – *Pete*, *pin* – *pine*, *rob* – *robe*, *cut* – *cute*. (If he has learned the alphabet by now, tell him that the silent *e* “makes the letter say its name.”) Exercises 40 – 47. (Exercise 40 long *a*, Exercise 41 long *a* and long *e*; Exercise 42 long *i*; Exercise 43 Review; Exercise 44 long *o*; Exercise 45 Review; Exercise 46 long *u*; Exercise 47 Review.)

After Johnny has learned the silent *e*, show him that the syllable *ing* will also make the vowel sound long: *rate* – *rating*, *file* – *filing* and so on. Explain to him the important rule that if you want to keep the vowel short in such *ing* words, you have to double the final consonant before adding *ing*. For example: *bedding*, *shipping*, *trapping*, *humming*, *brimming*, *trimming*. Exercise 48.

Next teach Johnny final *y* as in *lady*, *rainy*, *handy*. Show him that the double-consonant rule applies here too, as in *nutty*, *sunny*, and *foggy*. Explain to him that the plural of *lady* is spelled *ladies*, of *body*, *bodies*, and so on. Tell him about *lazy*, *lazier*, and *laziest*. Exercise 49. (Exercise 50: Review of Exercises 48 and 49.)

Next, take up the ending *ed*, again with the double-consonant rule, as in *matted*, *rugged*, *robbed*. (Note: *ed* can have the sounds of *ed*, *d*, or *t*.)

Then, final *er* and *le*, again with the double-consonant rule as in *rubber*, *trigger*, *settle*, *middle*. Exercise 53. (Exercise 54: Review of Exercises 48 – 53.)

Finally, teach Johnny *ce* as in *rice*, *ge* as in *age*, *se* as in *cheese*, and *the* as in *loathe*. Give him pairs like *pack* and *pace*, *hug* and *huge*, *bath* and *bathe*. Exercise 55. Give him also some examples of *dge* as in *badge* and *hedge*. Exercise 56. (Exercise 57: Review of Exercises 55 – 56.)

Step Five: Irregular Spellings. Exercises 60 – 72

Now you are through with the fourth step. Johnny has learned to read and write practically all the words that follow *some* rule. The fifth step will be easy for him. He'll learn words in *sion* and *tion*, words in *igh*, *ought*, and *aught*, silent *k* as in *knife*, silent *w* as in *write*, silent *t* as in *whistle*, silent *l* in *calf*, silent *g* in *gnu*, words like *head* and *bread*, *word* and *worm*, *chief* and *thief*, *break* and *steak*, and so on.

And that's all. Everything else will come to Johnny automatically, because he can now read anything.

It took me five pages to set down the phonic method of teaching Johnny to read. Complicated you say? I don't think so. I (Rudolf Flesch) have seen six-year-olds getting the hang of it in a few months.

Anyway, it's not a question of speed. The point is that this method is *guaranteed*. A child who has been taught this way can read. Millions of children taught the other way can't.

Reading Wisdom of Rudolf Flesch

Extracts from

Why Johnny Can't Read and what you can do about it (1955)

and

Why Johnny Still Can't Read: A New Look at the Scandal of Our Schools (1980)

“To my mind, a remedial reading case is someone who has formed the **habit of guessing** instead of reading. ... You see, remedial reading cases are harder to teach than first-graders for the simple reason that they already have four or five or six years of guessing behind them. It usually takes at least a year to cure them of the habit. **There wouldn't be any remedial reading cases if we started teaching reading instead of guessing in the first grade**” (18).

“The Hegge-Kirk *Remedial Drills* are what I finally used with Johnny” (19).

“CONCERNING SPELLING: Reading and spelling are two sides of the same thing, and trouble starts as soon as you separate the two. The only way to teach reading is by teaching spelling *at the same time* (33). ... They do so because their whole-word training makes a tremendous difference in their **mental habits**. Anyone who has started with phonics in first grade goes through life reading every single word he reads letter by letter. He does this fantastically fast, and quite unconsciously, but nevertheless he does it. Every time he reads *miracle*, he *sees* the *a*; every time he reads *definite*, he *sees* the second *i*. No wonder he knows how to spell these words; he simply can't read without taking in every single letter. He has done this since he was six years old and he never in his life read a single word, by just taking in its general shape and guessing what it might mean. ... But our schools, as I said before, train our children in just that – word guessing.. They can't read; they can't spell. Not only that, they can't even *learn* how to spell properly because they have been equipped with **mental habits** that are almost impossible to break – except by starting all over again from scratch and relearning to read and write English with phonics” (42)

“The *Blue-Backed Speller* was a fourteen-cent medicine that cured you of illiteracy. Nobody dreamed of criticizing it as wrong unscientific or inefficient” (46).

“The value of phonics can only be proven when it is taken seriously and taught systematically” (65).

“A normal child is ready and eager to learn to read because it is mankind's most fascinating game... The fun in reading lies in the great game of deciphering a hidden meaning – just as the fun of writing lies basically in the game of encoding a message” (74).

Quoting the British schoolmaster, Mr. Winch, Flesch reflects, “The argument for the look-and-say method is tainted by **the limited-adult view of the child-mind**. Our own psychological processes are put into the child, diminished in strength, but similar in form. We are getting old and worn, many of us. We do not like the mechanical acquisition of new things; it is hard for us; so we say children do not like it. As a matter of fact, they do. Repetition bores us; so we say it bores the young child. As a matter of fact, he loves it” (75).

CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF PHONICS REVIEW: “Miss Hletko explained to me that it was the usual practice to work through the Hay-Wingo primer during the first year and to review it in the second and then again in the third year” (101).

“IF YOU TEACH READING WITH PHONICS: 1. If you teach reading with phonics (regardless of the particular method used), student achievement in all subjects will be, on the average, one grade higher than the national norm. 2. If you teach reading with phonics, you will have no cases of “non-readers.” 3. If you teaching reading with phonics, you will produce students with a habit of wide reading” (208f).

HOME SCHOOLING: “Although you may not think so, my main purpose in writing this book is not to criticize and attack the doctrines of educators. What I am really interested in is a book that will be of practical help to parents. ... Of course, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. By far the best thing you can do is to teach your child to read before he ever *gets* into the habit of word guessing. My advice is, teach your child yourself how to read – at the age of five. (110) ... Probably the process will *not* take a whole year. Remember that so far in this book I have talked about classroom teaching. Now I am talking about private, individual tutoring at home – the most speedy and efficient method of teaching there is. (112) ... Then you’ll be faced by a problem hardly any American parent has any more: the problem of how to quench your child’s thirst for books. But it’s not really a difficult problem: just give him the books parents usually read aloud to children of his age. And later, as he grows up, give him the books children of his age have always liked: fairy tales, mythology, adventure stories, Stevenson, Mark Twain, Poe ... he’ll be all right. **Just turn him loose in the public library, and let him take over his own education**” (113).

REMEDIAL READING CASES: “To begin with, let’s try to **isolate Johnny from his word-guessing environment**. While he is in school, that is difficult or almost impossible. So the best thing will be to work with him during the summer vacations. Let him **stop all reading** – all *attempts* to read. Explain to him that now he is going to learn to how to read, and that for the time being, books are out. All he’ll get for several months are lessons in phonics. ... This, incidentally, is important. Take him fully into your confidence and explain to him exactly what you are trying to do. Tell him that you are going to do something **new** with him – something entirely different from what his teachers did in school. Tell him that this is *certain* to work. Convince him that as soon as he has taken this medicine he will be cured. ... Start him on the phonics lessons. Give him either this book or the only other book of that type that I know: *Remedial Reading Drills* by Thorleif G. Hegge, Samuel A. Kirk, and Winfred D. Kirk. Go with him through the Exercises, one by one, always making sure that he has mastered the previous one before you go on to the next. ... Only when you are through – or almost through – with the drills and exercises, start him again on reading. At first, let him read aloud to you. Watch like a hawk that he doesn’t guess a single word. Interrupt him every time he does it and let him work out the word phonetically. He’ll never learn to read if he doesn’t get over the word-guessing habit” (115).

“We mean phonics as a way to learn to read. We mean phonics that is taught to the child letter by letter and sound by sound until he knows it – and when he knows it he knows how to read. We mean phonics as a complete, systematic subject – the sum total of information about the phonics rules by which English is spelled. ... We say, and we cannot be budged, that when you learn phonics, in our sense of the word, you learn how to read. We want our children taught this particular set of facts and rules, because we know that this and only this will do the job” (121). “Systematic phonics is one thing, unsystematic is another. Phonics is simply the knowledge of the way spoken English is put on paper. ... Among other things, this means that there is an end to phonics. Phonics is something a child can master completely, once for all, with the assurance that he has covered everything there is. ... There are a known number of items to be mastered and when he is through he knows how to read. You are a teacher, Mrs. Smith. You *must* know that when there is an end to the book, when he knows that at the bottom of page 128 he will be

through. So and so many pages covered, so many pages covered, so and so many still to go. There is a concrete goal. Talk about motivation – what better motivation could there conceivably be than that knowledge that at the end of page 128 *he will have learned how to read?*” (122).

LEVELED READERS: “There should be no such thing as reading levels. Once a child knows how to read, he reads. He doesn’t have to spend hours circling consonants on a worksheets” (Preface x).

WHEN TO START: “Four- and five-year olds, far from being “unready” for reading, may be at the exactly right age for learning writing and reading quickly and painlessly” (*Why Johnny Still Can’t Read*, 122).

“If you use phonics as *the* method of teaching reading, you teach children the alphabet code. You do this step by step, in easy stages. At each step, you give the children plenty of material to practice on. When you teach them the short *o*, you give them a hundred words or more with short *o* to read aloud again and again until the pronunciation of the short *o* has become fully automatic. You do the same thing with short *u* and *ch* and *th* and *igh* and *ou* and *mps* – through the whole inventory of 181 items until it’s all firmly fixed in the pupil’s subconscious mind. Sounding out and blending practicing – there is no other way. It’s like practicing scales on the piano or practicing driving until you’re good enough for the road test” (*Why Johnny Still Can’t Read*, 75).

1980 REFLECTIONS: “There are two schools of thought about how to teach children to read. One is called “intensive phonics” or “systematic phonics” or, more recently, “decoding” or “code emphasis.” In this book to avoid confusion, I’ll call it “phonics-first.” The other is called the “look-and-say” or “whole-word” or “sight-reading” method or – so help me – “psycholinguistic.” I’ll use “look-and-say.” ... I said in my first book that phonics-first worked splendidly and should be used in all schools, while look-and-say was wretchedly poor and should be abandoned at once. ... Unfortunately my advice fell on deaf ears. With heart-breaking slowness, phonics-first crept into some 15 % of our schools, but an estimated 85 percent of them still stick to old discredited look-and-say. ... The results of this mass miseducation have been disastrous. America is rapidly sinking into a morass of ignorance. (*Why Johnny Still Can’t Read*, 1)

SIGHT WORDS: “The point is that the whole issue of sight words comes up only because the look-and-say people insist they must immediately have the children reading stores. Dumb stories, inane stories, but stories there must be, otherwise the child is “bored” and lacks “motivation.” The phonics people go ahead and teach children to read, relying on the sheer thrill of learning the alphabet code – one of the great wonders of the world – to fascinate the children until they can hardly wait to be told that *u* makes *yoo*” (*Why Johnny Still Can’t Read*, 98).

These pages were typed by Donald Potter in an effort to become a better informed reading teacher, and to share with others the wisdom of Rudolf Flesch. 3/14/03.

I was motivated to look closer at Flesch’s *72 Exercises* because of a phone conversation with Mr. Ed Miller (3/11/03) who uses Flesch’s phonics-first method to help students with whole-word dyslexia. Mr. Miller explained to me that he works with two students at a time, one on either side of him. He has one student read the first two columns, Ed reads the middle column, and the other student reads the two columns on the right. I immediately began to try Mr. Miller’s procedures in my Instructional Resource Class and witnessed significant improvement in the students’ word processing strategies. Ed is the author of the *Miller Word Identification Assessment* (MWIA) which is an instrument for detecting and measuring whole-word dyslexia. It available for free download on the Education Page of the www.donpotter.net web site.

Rudolf Flesch's *Instructions*

Summarized by Mr. Donald Potter

Preliminary Step: Learn the letters for which the sounds stand.

1. Start with the sounds of the letters. Teach Johnny to make the sound of the letter when you point to the letter and to point to the letter or write the letter when you make the sound. The sound to be learned is always the beginning sound of the two words pictured.

Take as much time as seems necessary for the preliminary work; a five-year-old may well spend several weeks at it. Be patient: it will pay off later on. Don't aim for perfection. Rather, make sure Johnny realizes that letters stand for sounds and is reasonably good at connecting the right sound with the right letter.

Then, and only then, start Exercise 1

2. Whenever Johnny is stumped by a word in the exercises, let him work it out for himself. Tell him to sound out the word. If he can't, let him look up the letter that is puzzling him and refresh his memory of its sound by naming the two pictures aloud. Let him do this as often as necessary until he is perfectly sure of the sound of the letter.
3. Explain to Johnny carefully that there is a small letter and a capital letter for each sound. However, concentrate on the small letters first. Difficulties with capital letters can be straightened out later.
4. Use the exercises to teach writing and spelling as well as reading. You will probably be tempted to go ahead with the reading and slight the writing and spelling. Try to resist that temptation. Ideally, Johnny should learn to read and write each of the exercises at the same time. Let him write each of the words from dictation. It is well worth taking the extra time.
5. There is a large amount of repetition in the exercises, and 22 of the 72 exercises are reviews. However, that doesn't mean that doing each exercise once is enough. Do each one of them until Johnny can read and write each word in it without the slightest hesitation. When you have done all the words horizontally, from left to right, do them vertically. Do them from right to left. Do them from bottom up, diagonally, and picking words here and there at random. Make as sure as you can that Johnny can really read all the words.
6. Do the exercises in the exact order in which they are printed. Otherwise you'll defeat your purpose.
7. Watch out for signs of word guessing. Whenever Johnny does any guessing, insist on his sounding out the words and, if necessary, look up the letter sounds.

Hazel Loring's System of Blend Phonics

For Teaching any Synthetic Phonics Method

In 1980 Hazel Loring published a powerful instruction manual entitled *Reading Made Easy for First Grade with Blend Phonics* – available for FREE download on the www.donpotter.net web site. It was her belief that most reading failures were caused by the perfectly normal and very common tendency of many children to look at words from right to left. She wrote that when a child sees a word as a whole, he or she has no way of knowing in which direction it should be looked at until the correct direction is shown. Each child will look at it in whatever direction his/her tendencies dictate. Her method of blend phonics was an instructional technique that can be used with **any** phonics method. It is especially useful for whole-class instruction. I have created *The Natural Phonics Primer with Blend Phonics* to help teachers teach Rudolf Flesch's phonics course published in his 1955 masterpiece - *Why Johnny Can't Read and what you can do about It* - to large classes of beginning readers.

Loring writes, "**Directional guidance is inherent in the system of blend phonics.** First we show the student the initial consonant in isolation and teach its sound. ... Next we show the student the vowel grapheme and teach its sound. *Then we blend the two sounds together* before adding the next consonant. There is no way for the child to go except from left to right, and with enough practice an automatic left to right habit is acquired. Then, to insure comprehension, it has been my practice to have the student use the complete word in a *verbal* sentence."

"Directional guidance is also inherent in spelling and writing. They are the other side of the same coin and much practice should be given in all three skills: spelling, writing and reading, reading and more reading."

"The format of the lessons consists in taking a regular word and building it up phonetically as a class exercise. Then a child is called on to use it in a sentence."

"Blend phonics is just about the easiest lesson to teach that can be imagined. No preparation is needed (except to have at hand a copy of the groups of words as given in the LESSON PLANS); no papers to correct for this phase of the reading lesson; no compulsory test to be given. The children themselves do most of the work by making up sentences, and thus they learn by doing. It's easy; it's inexpensive and it works!"

"In our first lesson in blend phonics (or word building) we teach the sound of a consonant, then a short sound of a vowel. The child is taught to look at these letters **from left to right** (IMPORTANT) as they are presented to him one by one and as the sound is blended. They we add another consonant to for a word which the child uses in a verbal sentences to insure comprehension.

"The great advantage of this technique is the fact that the child has received directional guidance and has been taught, step by step, to look at the word from **left to right**. This is extremely important because many children have a normal, natural tendency to look at words from right to left. When shown the word as a whole, they may not see what the teacher sees. If shown the word ten the child may see n-e-t. Such reversals cause serious confusion when the child is shown whole words as in the case of the look-say method which incorporates no detailed directional guidance."

"After making the blend, **ba**, add the letter **t** to form the word **bat**. Have the child make up a verbal sentence using the word bat. If necessary, use leading questions to help the child think of a sentence."

Sample Lesson

THE TEACHER SAYS

The name of this letter is **b**.
It says /b/

The name of this letter is **a**.
It's the short sound of /ă/

Blend /b/ and /ă/

Now we will add the letter **t**
that says /t/

What is the word?
(Pronounce it with the class)

CLASS: bat

Johnny, if you have a ball, what do you
do with it?

JOHNNY: I hit the ball with the bat.

THE TEACHER WRITES

b

a

ba

bat

Once the class has been taught to sound-out the words in an Exercise with the *Blend Phonics technique*, they should practice reading the words in Dr. Flesch's 72 Exercises in *Why Johnny Can't Read and what you can do about it*. I have reproduced the exercises and enlarged them so that the students can read them from an overhead. I highly recommend this effective method of whole-class instruction. I also recommend that students go through the Exercises every year through at least the sixth grade.

Concerning when to start reading stories, Flesch wrote in *Teaching Johnny to Read* (Grosset & Dunlop, Inc., 1956), "Johnny should not read anything else until he has done about 50 of the 72 exercises. After that point, he may start to read stories and other reading matter that interests him. Be sure, however, to let him read these stories aloud to you, so that you can correct mistakes. Let him sound out words and stop him from word guessing."

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