

**A Study of the Irregular Words Taught  
With Their Spelling-Families in  
Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics**

A Study in Common Sense Instruction  
and  
High-Level Pedagogical Efficiency

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## **Irregular Words in Each Skill Level of Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics**

- Level 1:** Deck 1: Cards 1 – 36, Lessons 1 – 14, *First Reader 1*.  
**Phonics Skills:** short *ă*, single letter consonants, ck, qu  
**Irregular Words:** was,
- Level 2:** Deck 2: Cards 1 – 36: Lessons 15 – 28, *First Reader 2*.  
**Phonics Skills:** *ă*, *ě*, *ĩ*, *õ*, *ũ*, ph, th  
**Irregular Words:** cell, sell, off/of, dog, son, ton, won, bull, pull, full.
- Level 3:** Deck 3: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 29 – 37; *First Reader 3*.  
**Phonics Skills:** Consonant digraphs: sh, ch wh; you, I, we, he she, they, are, have were, contractions .  
**Irregular words:** wash, bush, push, what.
- Level 4:** Deck 4: Cards 1 - 18, Lessons 38 – 39; *First Reader 4*.  
**Phonics Skills:** Two-Syllable, short vowel words.  
**Irregular Words:** No irregular-words.
- Level 5:** Deck 5: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 40 – 49, *First Reader 5*.  
**Phonics Skills:** al, all, Consonant blends: ng, ing, er, Final Consonant Blends  
**Irregular Words:** wand, want.
- Level 6:** Deck 6: Cards 1 - 18, Lessons 50 – 71, *First Reader 6*.  
**Phonics Skills:** More final consonant blends, 2-Syllable words w/consonant blends; Initial Consonant Blends  
**Irregular Words:** bald, calf, half, talk, walk, halt, malt, salt, watch, once, swan, swamp.
- Level 7:** Deck 7: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 72 – 86, *First Reader 7*.  
**Phonics Skills:** Long *ā* spellings, au/aw, ar.  
**Irregular Words:** ache, are, have, said, again, against, height, aunt, wear, ward, warm, warmth, swarm, warn, warp, wart, quart, dwarf, wharf.

**Level 8:** Deck 8: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 87 – 100, *First Reader 8*.

**Phonics Skills:** Long vowel ē spellings. Sentences

**Irregular Words:** knee, kneel, [been], [be, he, me, we, she], [sweat, threat], [sweater, realm, dealt], [bear, pear, tear, wear, swear], [dead, head, lead, read, bread, death, breath, deaf, meant], [steak, break, great], [there, where], were, eye, friend, receive, [money, any, many], busy, key pretty, knife, [isle, aisle], [give, live].

**Level 9:** Deck 9: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 101 – 117, *First Reader 9*.

**Phonics Skills:** ough, gh=f, Long vowel ō spellings, long and short oo, ow, ou; oy, oi; Long vowel ū spellings.

**Irregular Words:** though, soul, [come, some], [one, once, none, done], gone, [lose, whose], [move, prove], [dove, love, glove, shove]. broad, [source, court, course], owe, know, [dough, though], known, [cost, lost], [two, too, two], [do, who, you, youth], [young], [soup, group], [boor, poor, moor], [door, floor], [flood, blood], touch, wound, [rough, tough, enough], doubt, [four, pour, tour, your, fourth, mourn], youth, sure, sew, through.

**Level 10:** Deck 10: Cards 1 - 18, Lessons 118 – 128, *First Reader 10* & *First Reader 11*.

**Phonics Skills:** er/ir/or/ur/ear, -le, ph-f, ci/ti/etc, mb, silent h, wr, st-s/ft-f, ch-k/ps-s, y = ĭ

**The 151 Irregular Word Taught in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics* Arranged in Alphabetical Order**

ache again against aisle any are aunt

bald be bear bee blood boor bread break breath broad bush busy

calf cell come cost course court

dead deaf dealt death do dog done door doubt dough dove dwarf

enough eye flood floor four fourth friend full.

give glove gone great group

half halt have he head height

isle

key knee kneel knife know known

lead live lose lost love

malt many me meant money moor mourn move

none

of off once one owe

pear poor pour pretty prove pull push quart

read realm receive rough

said salt sell sew she sweat shove some son soul soup source steak sure  
swamp swan swarm sweater

talk tear there though threat through ton too touch tough tour two

walk wand want ward warm warmth warn warp wart was wash watch we  
wear swear were wharf what where who whose won wound

you young your youth

## Words with Untaught Phonics Elements in Each First Reader in Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics System

**First Reader 1.** Deck 1: Cards 1 – 36, Lessons 1 – 14,

**Phonics Skills:** short *ă*, single letter consonants, ck, qu

**Untaught Words:** No untaught words.

**First Reader 2.** Deck 2: Cards 1 – 36: Lessons 15 – 28,

**Phonics Skills:** *ă, ě, ĭ, ō, ů, ph, th.*

**Untaught Words:** No untaught words

**First Reader 3:** Deck 3: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 29 – 37;

**Phonics Skills:** Consonant digraphs: sh, ch wh; you, I, we, he she, they, are, have were, contractions .

**Untaught Words:** No untaught words.

**First Reader 4:** Deck 4: Cards 1 - 18, Lessons 38 – 39.

**Phonics Skills:** Two-Syllable, short vowel words.

**Untaught Words:** No untaught words.

**First Reader 5:** Deck 5: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 40 – 49.

**Phonics Skills:** al, all, Consonant blends: ng, ing, er, Final

Consonant Blends. (“We have inserted some words with vowel sounds and consonant blends that have not been taught but which are easily decoded. These words are added to ease the flow of the narrative.”)

**Untaught Words:** *to, for, go, no, al-so, so.*

**First Reader 6:** Deck 6: Cards 1 - 18, Lessons 50 – 71.

**Phonics Skills:** More final consonant blends, 2-Syllable words w/consonant blends; Initial Consonant Blends

**Untaught Words:** *orange, colors, be-gan, hurt, their.*

**First Reader 7:** Deck 7: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 72 – 86.

**Phonics Skills:** Long *ā* spellings, au/aw, ar.

**Untaught Words:** *chased, our, mirror, maybe, only, friend, white, pizza, cheese, grow, or, forests, almost, because, elsewhere, unrolled, property, family, into, heed, forth, into, more.*

**First Reader 8:** Deck 8: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 87 – 100.

**Phonics Skills:** Long vowels ē and ī spellings. Sentences.

**Untaught Words:** *open, pleased, home, goodbye, smile, no, two, trained, wanted, country, predict, forest, who, people, were, turning, turn, our, burns, revolving, around, going, would, mouse, Rambo, most, some, bathrobe, mother.*

**First Reader 9:** Deck 9: Cards 1 – 18, Lessons 101 – 117,

**Phonics Skills:** ough, gh=f, Long vowel ō spellings, long and short oo, ow, ou; oy, oi; Long vowel ū spellings.

**Untaught Words:** *known, Christmas, parents, repeat, ro-ping, parked, knock, piano, vi-o-lin, canned, chopped, refine.*

**First Reader 10:** Deck 10: Cards 1 - 18, Lessons 118 – 128,

**Phonics Skills:** er/ir/or/ur/ear, -le, ph-f, ci/ti/etc, mb, silent h, wr, st-s/ft-f, ch-k/ps-s, y = ĭ.

**Untaught Words:** No untaught words.

# Order of Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Lessons Correlated with the Blumenfeld First Readers

Prepared by Donald L. Potter  
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## Lessons for First Reader 1

1. Short **a**; consonants **m n, s, t, x**
2. Initial consonants **S, m, h, s, t**
3. Review Sentences
4. Consonants **d, D, w**
5. Alphabetic word building
6. Short **a** sentences; punctuation
7. Word building with short **a**; consonant **l**
8. Consonants **l, b, c, g, f, j, l, n**
9. Review of short **a** words
11. Consonant digraph **ck, qu**
12. **a** as a word
13. Sentences
14. Nonsense syllables with short **a**

## Lessons for First Reader 2

15. Short vowels **a, e, i, o, u**
16. Short **e** words
17. Short **e** sentences
18. Nonsense syllables with short **e**
19. Short **i** words; **f** as **ph**
20. Short **i** sentences
21. Consonant digraph **th**
22. Sentences
23. Short **o** words
24. Short **o** sentences
25. Plurals **s, es,** and **'s**
26. Sentences
27. Short **u** words.
28. Short **u** sentences
- 28a. Consonants **b** and **d**

## Lessons for First Reader 3

29. Consonant digraph **sh**
30. Consonant digraph **ch**
31. Consonant digraph **wh**
32. Review of **sh, ch, wh** words
33. Sentences
34. Verbs **to be** and **to have** (**you, I, we, he she, they, are, have were**)
35. Sentences with **to be** and **to have**
36. Contractions
37. Sentences with contractions

#### Lessons for First Reader 4

- 38. Two-syllable, short vowel words
- 39. Sentences with two-syllable, short-vowel words

#### Lessons for First Reader 5

- 40. **a** as in **all**; sentences
- 41. Consonant blend **ng, ing** words
- 42. Sentences with **ing** words
- 43. Final consonant blends **nd, nt**
- 44. Sentences
- 45. Final syllable **er; er** words and sentences
- 46. Final consonant blends **nk, nc, nch**
- 47. Sentences
- 48. Final consonant blends **ct, ft, pt, xt**; sentences
- 49. Final consonant blends **sk, sp, st** sentences

#### Lessons for First Reader 6

- 50. Final consonant blends **lb, ld, lf, lk**
- 51. Final consonant blends **lm, lp, lt**
- 52. Final consonant blend **mp**
- 53. Final consonant blend **tch**; sentences
- 54. Final consonant blend **dge, nge**
- 55. Final consonant blend **nce, nse**
- 56. Review of words with final consonant blends
- 57. Two-syllable words with consonant blends
- 58. Initial consonant blends **bl, br**
- 59. Initial consonant blends **cl, cr**
- 60. Initial consonant blends **dr, dw**
- 61. Initial consonant blends **fl, fr**
- 62. Initial consonant blends **gl, gr, gw**
- 63. Initial consonant blends **pl, pr**
- 64. Initial consonant blends **sl**
- 65. Initial consonant blends **shr, sm, sn**
- 66. Initial consonant blends **sp, spl, spr**
- 67. Initial consonant blends **st str**
- 68. Initial consonant blends **sw, sc, sk, scr**
- 69. Initial consonant blends **tr, thr, tw**
- 70. Words with consonant blends
- 71. Sentences

### Lessons for First Reader 7

72. Long **a**
73. Long **a** as **a-e**
74. Sentences
75. Long **a** as **ai**
76. Sentences
77. Long **a** as **ay** and **ey**
78. Sentences
79. Long **a** as **ei** and **eigh**; sentences
80. Review of words with long **a** spellings
81. Long **a** homonyms
82. Two-syllable words with long **a** syllables
83. Vowel spellings **au** and **aw**
84. Sentences with **au** and **aw** words
85. **a** as in **ma** and **car**
86. Sentences

### Lessons for First Reader 8

87. Long **e** as **ee**
88. Sentences
89. Long **e** as **ea**
90. Sentences
91. Long **e** as **ee**
92. Long **e** as **ie**; sentences
93. Long **e** as **y**
94. Sentences
95. **ies** in verbs and plural nouns
96. Review of long **e** words
97. Sentences
98. Long **i** as **I, y, ie, uy**; sentences
99. Long **i** as **i-e**; sentences
100. Long **i** as **igh**; sentences

### Lessons for First Reader 9

101. Spelling forms **ough** and **ough**
102. **f** as **gh**
103. Long **o** as **o-e**
104. Sentences
105. Long **o** as **oa**; sentences
106. Long **o** as **ow**; sentences
107. Long **o** as in **old**; sentences
108. Common irregular words, sentences
109. **oo** as in **good, food**
110. Sentences
111. **ould** sounding as **ood** in **wood**; sentences
112. **ow** and **ou** as in **cow** and **ouch**
113. Sentences
114. **oy** as in **boy**; **oi** as in **oil**; sentences
115. Long **u** as **u-e**; sentences
116. Long **u** as **ue** and **ui**; sentences
117. Long **u** as **ew** and **eu**; sentences

## Lessons for First Reader 10

- 118. **er, ir, or, ur, ear**; sentences
- 119. Words ending in **le**; silent **t**; sentences
- 120. **f** as **ph**
- 121. **sh** as **ti, ssi, ci, ce, sci, xi, su, ssu**; **zh** as **si, su**; **ch** as **tu, ti**; sentences
- 122. **n** as **kn**
- 123. **m** as **mb**; **t** as **bt**
- 124. Silent **h**
- 125. **r** as **wr**
- 126. **s** as **st**; **f** as **ft**
- 128. **y** as short **i**

## Note from Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter

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This study was prepared to determine the number of irregular words taught in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Primer* in their appropriate spelling-families. This is the best way to deal with irregular words because students are able to store and retrieve the spellings and their sounds quickly when they are purposefully stored in closely associated locations in the brain. Also students quickly come to realize that English spelling is systematic with only a relatively few and easily mastered anomalies.

Notice that many words usually taught as sight-words because of supposed phonics irregularities are not include in this list of irregular words because they are properly taught as regular words in Mr. Blumenfeld's Comprehensive Phonics System.

This is essentially a spelling approach to teaching reading. It was the method of choice for over 200 years, before the locust of look-and-say method swept through the land, devouring literacy among our youth, and turning us into a second rate national in literacy. With wide adoption of *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*, America can quickly regain world dominance in literacy. If the goal is "total linguistic function" (speaking, reading, writing, and spelling), then Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics is the reading method of choice.

The "Untaught Words" in the *Blumenfeld First Readers* are included as an investigation into the number and type of words that have been inserted into the stories to add the flow of the narrative, and establish their phonetic structures and decoding requirements. It is to be carefully noted that the few "untaught words" simply serve the purpose of moving the narrative along and in no sense contribute to the guessing habit.

Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics can be purchased at

<http://chalcedon.edu/store/Education/alpha-phonics-a-primer-for-beginning-readers/>

More information on phonics and Mr. Blumenfeld's contribution to our understanding of the process of acquisition high levels of literacy can be found on my website.

One particular of the spelling approach to teaching reading is the contribution to the early development of reading fluency. Ronald P. Carver discusses this in-depth in his scholarly book, *The Cause of High and Low Reading Achievement*. The theoretical and practical advantages of this approach are discussed there.

Blumenfeld's *First Readers* are available in a handy 6 x 9 book. It is available on Amazon as *First Readers Anthology*.

[www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net)

