

# THE NATURAL PHONICS PRIMER

## WITH BLEND PHONICS

An Effective Chalkboard Approach to Teaching  
Rudolf Flesch's Phonics Exercises  
with Hazel Loring's Blend Phonics Technique

*(The Universal Safety Net for Literacy)*

LOOK AT ALL THE LETTERS THE RIGHT WAY, AND NO GUESSING!

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## STAGE I: BEGINNING (LIFT OFF)

### STEP 1: THE FIVE SHORT VOWELS AND ALL CONSONANTS SPELLED WITH ONE LETTER AND CK: EXERCISES 1 - 12

**Exercise 1:** a as in apple 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 ham jam jazz lag lap mad man map mass mat nap Nat pad  
Pam pan pass pat rag ran rap rat sad Sam tag tan tap van wag yam [am an as has]

**Exercise 2:** e as in egg

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 3:** *Review 1*

**Exercise 4:** i as in igloo

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 its]

**Exercise 5:** *Review 2*

**Exercise 6:** o as in octopus

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 7:** *Review 3*

**Exercise 8:** u as in umbrella

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 9:** *Review 4*

**Exercise 10:** *c* as in cap (with a, o, u), *k* as in kit (with i, e)

cab can cap cat cob cod cop cot cub cuff cup cut

keg kid kill kiss kit

**Exercise 11:** *ck* as in duck

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

**Exercise 12:** *Review 5*

**STEP 2: CONSONANTS SOUNDS 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 milk silk sulk; **lm:** film; **lp:** gulp, 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:** bulbs; **lks:** milks sulks; **lms:** elms;

**lps:** gulps helps; **lts:** melts; **mps:** camps jumps pumps; **nds:** hands mends; **nts:** hints pants;

**pts:** tempts; **sks:** asks masks; **sps:** lisps; **sts:** dusts nests rests

**Exercise 15:** *ng* as in **ring**, *nk* as in **pink**, *sh* as in **fish**, *x* as in **fox**, *ngs* as in **rings**,

*nks* as in **winks**

**ng:** gang hang king long ring rung sing song wing winks

**ngs:** lungs bangs

**nk:** dunk ink Hank junk link mink pink rank sink sunk tank bank

**nks:** winks

**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

**Exercise 16:** *Review 6*

**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:** black blend blink block; **cl:** clamp clap click clip club clump;

**fl:** flag flap flash flint flip flock flop; **gl:** glad glint; **pl:** plot plum plump; **sc:** scat scamp;

**sk:** skip; **sl:** slack slap slick slink slip slot; **sn:** snag snip snap; **sp:** span spick spill spit;

**st:** stab stem stick stop stub; **sw:** swell swept swig swim' **tw:** twig twin; **spl:** splash splint

**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 19:** *Review 7*

**Exercise 20:** *qu* as in **quack** *th* as in **thick**, *th* as in **th**at, *wh* as in **wh**en,  
*squ* as in **squint**, *thr* as in **thrill**

**qu:** quack quick quill quilt quit quiz

**th:** broth cloth moth smith thank thick thin thing think with thump

**th:** that them then this

**wh:** whack when whiff whim whip whisk

**squ:** squint

**thr:** thrash thrift thrill thrush

**Exercise 21:** *ch* as in **cherry**, *tch* as in **patch**

**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 22:** *Review*

**Exercise 23:** Two-Syllable Words

ad·dress bas·ket bath·tub bell·hop big·gest buck·et buck·skin can·not cash·box cat·fish cat·nip  
chick·en chip·munk cros·sing dan·gling den·tist dish·pan dog·sled dust·pan end·less ex·it  
fish·pond fros·ting gob·lin gum·drop hand·bag hatb·ox hel·met hill·top hot·dog hub·cap kit·chen  
lap·dog lap·top lem·on lip·stick lock·et lon·gest mag·net mas·tiff mis·tress mus·tang nap·kin  
pad·lock quick·sand rab·bit ring·let rob·in sand·bag ship·ment shop·ping spir·it stock·ing sun·set  
tem·pest tin·smith tom·cat top·notch trash·can un·fit up·set van·ish vis·it viv·id [sev·en up·on]

## STAGE II: INTERMEDIATE (EARTH ORBIT)

### STEP 3: VOWEL SOUNDS SPELLED WITH TWO OR THREE LETTERS.

#### EXERCISES 24 - 39

**Exercise 24:** *ee* tree *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 deer feed feel feet flee free green keel keep meet need peek peep queen  
screen seed seek seem seen sheep sheer sheet speech steel steer street sweep sweet team three  
tree weed week weep wheel

**ea:** beach bead beak beam bean beast cheap cheat clean clear dear dream ear east fear flea gear  
heap hear heat leaf lean leap meat near neat peach peal preach reach read reap scream seal  
seam seat speak spear squeak steal steam stream tea teach team veal weak wheat year yeast  
zeal

**-e:** be me we

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

**ee:** beef beets breed cheek cheer 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:** Long *oo* as in moon, Short *oo* as in book

**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* as in car, *a* as in pa and 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* as in fork

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 worn

**Exercise 29:** *er* as in **her**, *ir* as in **first**, *ur* as in **nurse**

**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 curl fur furl hurl hurt purr spur surf turn

**Exercise 30:** *oi* as in **oil**, *oy* as in **boy**

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

**oy:** boy cloy coy joy Roy toys Troy

**Exercise 31:** *ou* as in **house**, *ow* 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* as in **Paul**, *aw* as in **draw**, *all*, as in **ball**, *alt* as in **malt**, *alk* as in **walk**

**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 talk walk

**Exercise 33:** *Review 9*

**Exercise 34:** *ai* as in **aim**, *ay* as in **day**, *air* as **chair**

**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 died dried 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* in *goat*, *oe* as in *toe*, *old* as *gold*, *olt* as in *colt*, *oll* as in *roll*, *ow* as in *low*, *o* as in *so* (long  $\bar{o}$  spellings)

**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  
[own]

**o:** go no so

**Exercise 37:** *ew* as in *new*, *ue* as in *glue* (blue-blew, flew-flue-flu, due-dew)

**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 38:** *Review 10*

**Exercise 39:** Two-Syllable and Three-Syllable Words

a·gree·ment al·ways an·noy a·round Au·gust a·way aw·ning ban·jo be·longs birth·day book·let  
bor·row bur·glar but·ter·fly car·toons class·room Co·lum·bus com·plain con·fess coun·ter  
dis·cov·er Eas·ter e·lec·tric en·joy·ment Es·ki·mo fel·low flow·ers gar·den·er good·ness  
ham·bur·ger Her·bert her·self Jef·fer·son jew·el·er kan·ga·roo lan·tern leap·frog mail·box  
Mex·i·co Mon·day mus·tard New York No·vem·ber num·bers oat·meal par·don pun·ish·ment  
rail·road rain·coat re·peat re·ply re·turn Sa·tur·day scar·let sea·gull sea·port Sep·tem·ber sha·dow  
sheep·ish short·ness show·ers smar·test snow·ball steam·boat sun·beam Sun·day swal·low  
tea·spoon Thurs·day toast·er tow·er Tues·day un·der·stand un·ties un·true west·ern win·dow  
yel·low yes·ter·day [ne·ver un·der my·self]

**STEP 4: THE FIVE LONG VOWELS: (VCE, CV/VCC, Y=/Ē/).**

**EXERCISES 40 – 50**

**Exercise 40:** a\_e 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\_e as in name (continued); are as in care; e\_e, as in Eve and here

**a-e:** base care case date flame frame gale glade grade grape grate lake lane mate same  
sane save tale wade wake

**are:** bare blare dare fare flare hare mare rare scare share snare spare square stare

**e-e:** Eve here Pete Steve

**Exercise 42:** i\_e 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;  
fin → fine

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 43:** *Review 11*

**Exercise 44:** o\_e 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 45:** *Review 12*

**Exercise 46:** u\_e 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 fuse June Luke lute mule mute prune pure Rube rude  
rule tube tune use.

**Exercise 47:** *Review 13*

**Exercise 48:** ing

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

bed·ding beg·ging bet·ting brim·ming bud·ding buz·zing can·ning dab·bing dig·ging dip·ping  
drum·ming fib·bing fit·ting grab·bing hug·ging let·ting lick·ing nag·ging pad·ding pur·ring  
quit·ting rub·bing run·ning sag·ging set·ting ship·ping shop·ping shut·ting sip·ping sit·ting  
skim·ming skip·ping sled·ding slip·ping sob·bing spel·ling spin·ning stab·bing stir·ring stun·ning  
tip·ping top·ping trim·ming tug·ging whip·ping

a·ping ca·ring di·ning fa·ding fi·ling fir·ing ga·zing gra·ting ho·ping li·ning na·ming ra·ting ra·ving  
sca·ping sha·ring sli·ding ta·ping wi·ping



**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

Bet·ty Bil·ly Bob·by bod·ies bun·ny can·dies car·ried chil·li·er co·zy dad·dy dai·ly dir·ti·est diz·zy  
fifth fog·gy for·ty fuss·y glad·ly gra·vy han·di·ly hard·ly hur·ries i·vy ju·ry kit·ty la·dies like·ly  
Mar·y mud·dy na·vy near·ly nut·ty par·ty Peg·gy pen·ny pret·ty pup·pies room·i·er sad·ly scur·ried  
sha·dy sil·li·est six·ty sleep·i·ly snap·py sun·ni·est thirst·y thir·ty twen·ty ug·li·er ug·ly wit·ty

**Exercise 50:** *Review 14*

## STAGE III: ADVANCED (MOON LANDING)

### STEP 5: SPECIAL ENDINGS. EXERCISES 51-59

**Exercise 51:** *ed*: /ĕd/ as in added or rested /d/ as in filled /t/ as in jumped

/ed/: ad·ded coun·ted mat·ted need·ed point·ed rest·ed seat·ed shout·ed pot·ted

/d/: aimed boiled buzzed called canned charmed crawled filled followed growled nagged pinned  
planned played robbed rolled rugged sailed slammed sneezed squeezed trailed wheeled  
wicked

/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 52:** *Review 15*

**Exercise 53:** *er* as in ladder, *le* as in table

**er:** bet·ter big·ger black·er clat·ter cob·bler din·ner dip·per dres·ser drum·mer farm·er flic·ker  
glim·mer ham·mer help·er jug·gler jump·er lad·der let·ter ped·dler pep·per plat·ter print·er  
rock·er rub·ber shop·per skip·per slip·per snick·er trig·ger tumb·ler up·per win·ner

**le:** a·ble an·gle an·kle ap·ple ban·gle Bi·ble bot·tle brit·tle can·dle cat·tle crack·le crip·ple cud·dle  
driz·zle fid·dle fiz·zle fumb·le grum·ble guz·zle han·dle hob·ble hum·ble jin·gle jun·gle ket·tle  
la·dle lit·tle man·gle med·dle mud·dle nee·dle prat·tle puz·zle rid·dle sad·dle set·tle sick·le  
sim·ple sin·gle siz·zle snug·gle ta·ble tac·kle tan·gle un·cle

**Exercise 54:** *Review 16*

**Exercise 55:** *ce, ci, cy* as in ace, city, fancy

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

**ce:** ace a·dvice Al·ice bra·ces Bruce cell cent cen·ter chance choice con·cert danced dan·ces face  
fa·ces fence fen·ces forced France glance glanced Grace gro·cer·ies lace mice mince no·tice  
of·fi·cer ounce oun·ces pace par·cel peace place pounce pounced prince prin·cess race raced  
rice ser·vice since slice sli·cing sliced space spaced spruce traced truce twice voice

**ci:** bounc·ing ci·der cinch cin·der cin·ders cir·cle cir·cus ci·ti·zen cit·y fenc·ing Fran·cis ic·ing  
minc·ing pen·cil

**cy:** fan·cy mer·cy lac·y Nan·cy

**Exercise 56:** *ge gi gy dge dgi dgy* as in *age, magic, gym, fudge, budging, smudgy*

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

**ge:** age bulge cab·bage cage change changed charge dam·age dam·aged dan·ger fidg·et·y forge  
gar·bage gem Gene gen·tle·man gen·tly George Ger·man germs hin·ges huge lar·ger ledge  
lodge man·ag·er Marge nudged nud·ges or·ange pack·age page rage pas·sage pi·geon stage  
strange strang·ers tinge urge ur·gent wage wages

**gi:** char·ging en·gine en·gi·neer gin·ger mag·ic

**gy:** en·er·gy gym gyp·sy stin·gy

**dge:** badge bridge dodge edge fudge gad·get grudge hedge mid·get pledged ridge sledge wedge

**dgi:** bud·ging nud·ging

**dgy:** smud·gy

**Exercise 57:** *Review 17*

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

**se:** a·muse be·cause cheese choose close closed dose ex·cuse fuse hose noise nose pause please  
pleased poise praise raise rise rose rouse ruse sup·pose tease tense these those vase wise

**si:** a·mu·sing sup·po·sing

**sy:** dai·sy eas·y nois·y pan·sy po·sy ros·y

**the:** bathe breathe broth·er fath·er gath·er lath·er loathe moth·er oth·er rath·er wheth·er with·er

**thi:** see·thing soo·thing teeth·ing

**Exercise 59:** *Review 18*

## STEP 6: IRREGULAR SPELLINGS. EXERCISES 60 – 72

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

**b:** climb comb crumb debt doubt dumb lamb limb numb plumb·er thumb

**g:** gnarled gnash gnat gnaw gnome gnu

**k:** knack knave knee kneel knelt knew knife knit knit·ting knob knock knot know known  
knuck·les

**t:** bris·tles bus·tle cas·tle chris·ten fas·ten gris·tle ha·sten hus·tle jos·tle lis·ten nes·tle of·ten rus·tle  
soft·en this·tle whis·tle

**w:** sword wrap wreath wreck wrench wrest wres·tle wretch wretch·ed wring wrist writ·ten wrong  
wrote

**Exercise 61:** Silent *gh, h, l*

**gh:** ought: bought brought fought ought sought thought

aught: daugh·ter caught naugh·ty slaugh·ter taught

igh: bright fight flight fright night right high knight light light·ing might might·y plight  
sigh sight slight tight height

eigh: eight eight·een eight·y freight neigh·bor sleigh weigh weight

ough: though

aigh straight

**h:** hon·est ghost hon·or hour John school Tho·mas

**l:** calf calm folk half palm yolk

**Exercise 62:** *ph* as in **phone**, *gh* as in **rough**

**ph** = /f/: al·pha·bet au·to·graph el·e·phant hy·phen neph·ew or·phan pam·phlet phar·ma·cy Phil  
Phi·lip phone phoned pho·no·graph pho·to pho·to·graph phrase proph·et Ralph  
tel·e·graph tri·umph tro·phy

**gh** = /f/: cough cough·ing e·nough laugh laugh·ing laugh·ter rough rough·ly tough tough·er

**Exercise 63:** *Review 19*

**Exercise 64:** *Review 20*

**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 break·fast breath dead deaf death dread·ed feath·er head health health·y  
leath·er meant heav·en heav·i·er heav·y in·stead read read·y spread spread·ing stead·y  
sweat sweat·er threads tread treads wealth wealth·y weath·er

*ear* = /ûr/: earth heard learn pearl search

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

**ie**: be·lief bel·ieve bel·ieves brief brown·ie Char·lie chief field fiend fierce grief niece piece  
pier pierce priest shield shriek shrieked siege thief thieves yield

**ui**: bruise fruit fruit·ful juice nui·sance suit

**u**: aw·ful bash·ful bull bul·let bush butch·er care·ful cheer·ful cush·ion full grate·ful hand·ful  
help·full·y pud·ding pull push push·ing put tear·ful waste·ful

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

**wa**: re·ward wan·der wan·der·ing want war·den warm warm·er warn warn·ing wash wash·ing  
watch watch·ful wa·ter war

**swa**: swamp swan

**wor**: word words work work·er world worm worms wor·ries wor·ry worse wor·ship worst worth

**qua**: qual·i·ty quan·ti·ty

**squa**: squash

**wha**: what

**ou**: coun·try coup·le cou·ples cour·age cous·in cous·ins cur·i·ous dan·ger·ous dou·ble  
e·nor·mous fa·mous gen·er·ous gor·geous jeal·ous mar·ve·lous ner·vous se·ri·ous touch  
touch·y trou·ble young young·er

**Exercise 68:** *Review 21*

**Exercise 69:** *ci, si, ti* as in *special, pension* or *vision, station*;  
*su* as in *treasure*; *tu* as in *nature*; *xi* as in *anxious*.

**ci:** de·li·cious gra·cious pre·cious so·cial spe·cial sus·pi·cious vi·cious

**si:** ex·pres·sion man·sion pen·sion per·mis·sion

**si:** oc·ca·sion, vi·sion, tel·e·vi·sion

**ti:** ac·tion ad·di·tion at·ten·tion cau·tious ed·u·ca·tion ex·cep·tion fic·tion frac·tion frac·tions  
men·tion men·tioned na·tion pa·tient ques·tion sta·tion va·ca·tion va·ca·tions

**su:** mea·sure plea·sure trea·sure u·su·al

**tu:** fu·ture mix·ture na·tural na·ture pic·ture pic·tures

**xi:** an·xious

**Exercise 70:** *-ive* as in *active*; *-or* as in *doctor*; *-ance* as in *importance* *-ence* as in *influence*,  
*o* as in *come, some*

**ive:** ac·tive at·ten·tive cap·tive de·tec·tive na·tive pas·sive pos·i·tive

**or:** ac·tor ac·tors con·duc·tor doc·tor el·e·va·tor fa·vor fla·vor ra·zor sail·or tail·or trait·or  
vis·i·tor

**ance:** ap·pear·ance im·por·tance per·for·mance

**ence:** con·fi·dence in·flu·ence pref·er·ence prov·i·dence res·i·dence pre·fer·ence

**come:** be·come com·ing in·come wel·come

**some:** hand·some some·how some·one some·thing some·times tire·some

**Exercise 71:** *Review 22*

**Exercise 72:** Three-Syllable and Four-Syllable Words

ac·ci·dent af·ter·noon a·ma·zing A·mer·i·can as·par·a·gus at·trac·tive awk·ward·ly ba·na·na  
ban·is·ters be·gin·ning blue·ber·ries but·ter·fly Cin·der·el·la com·mit·tee con·ver·sa·tion  
cor·rec·tion De·cem·ber de·ci·sion de·moc·ra·cy dic·tion·ar·y dif·fi·cul·ty E·liz·a·beth e·mer·gen·cy  
em·per·or en·ter·tain ex·chang·ing ex·ci·ting ex·claim·ing fam·i·ly fash·ion·a·ble fa·vor·ite  
Feb·ru·ar·y go·ril·la ho·li·day im·pa·tience im·pos·si·ble in·de·pen·dence in·no·cence in·vi·ta·tion  
Jan·u·ar·y jeal·ous·y lec·tur·er li·ber·ty me·di·cine mer·chan·dise mis·er·a·ble Mis·sis·sip·pi  
mu·si·cian mys·ter·i·ous news·pa·per or·di·nar·y pas·sen·gers pee·vish·ly per·fec·tion per·ma·nent  
prac·ti·cal pres·i·dent quiz·zi·cal re·fresh·ments res·tau·rant sec·re·ta·ry sel·fish·ly sud·den·ly  
sur·pris·ing sur·roun·ded Thanks·giv·ing threat·en·ing thun·der·storm to·ge·ther to·mor·row  
trans·por·ta·tion un·der·neath un·der·stand un·hap·pi·ness Val·en·tine va·nil·la vin·e·gar  
Wash·in·gton won·der·ful

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

Step 1: **Ex. 1:** 42 words; **Ex. 2:** 33 words; **Ex. 4:** 43 words; **Ex. 6:** 27 words; **Ex. 8:** 33 words;  
**Ex. 10:** 17 words; **Ex. 11:** 26 words. (220 total)

Step 2: **Ex. 13:** 47 words; **Ex. 14:** 55 words; **Ex. 15:** 50 words; **Ex. 17:** 51 words; **Ex. 18:** 54 words;  
**Ex. 20:** 32 words; **Ex. 21:** 45 words; **Ex. 23:** 52 words. (388 total)

Step 3: **Ex. 24:** 92 words; **Ex. 25:** 32 words; **Ex. 26:** 56 words; **Ex. 27:** 42 words; **Ex. 28:** 29 words;  
**Ex. 29:** 43 words; **Ex. 30:** 23 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:** 84 words. (675 total)

Step 4: **Ex. 40:** 62 words; **Ex. 41:** 41 words; **Ex. 42:** 60 words; **Ex. 44:** 49 words; **Ex. 46:** 22 words;  
**Ex. 48:** 71 words; **Ex. 49:** 82 words (350)

Step 5: **Ex. 51:** 77 words; **Ex. 53:** 77 words; **Ex. 55:** 71 words; **Ex. 58:** 62 words. (287 words)

Step 6: **Ex. 60:** 62 words; **Ex. 61:** 52 words; **Ex. 62:** 31 words; **Ex. 65:** 46 words; **Ex. 66:** 49 words;  
**Ex. 67:** 56 words; **Ex. 69:** 41 words; **Ex. 70:** 44 words; **Ex. 72:** 79 words. (461)

There are 2,372 separate words in the *Natural Phonics Primer with Blend Phonics*.

Document created by Donald L. Potter: 5/13-14/04. Revised 5/18/12 and 1/22/22.

The Review Exercises below 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 quickly with accuracy indicates mastery of previous phonics elements. The Reviews serve as Benchmarks to determine if the students have mastered the material they have been taught and are ready for the next step. **No teaching can be said to have taken place until learning has been demonstrated.**

While not absolutely necessary to the success of the program, I highly recommend the use of the two *Phonovisual Charts*. The organization of the Vowel Chart and Consonant Chart make it easy for children to develop the kind phonics knowledge necessary to mastery Flesch's Exercises with ease.

I generally write the words one at a time for the students to copy and sound out. This will correct any deficiencies in their handwriting and guarantee that they can sound out and spell the words **before** beginning the timings. Be sure the student can also **spell** the word in writing and with oral letters.

Hazel Loring's advice to use the words in oral sentences is VERY important as it ties the **meaning** with the word so when the student sees the words they automatically think of the meaning.

Once all the words in an Exercise have been taught with the Blend Phonics Technique, the students should begin daily timings with the *Natural Phonics Primer* until their reach their minimum calibrated speed for their grade level. [http://donpotter.net/pdf/flesch\\_exercises.pdf](http://donpotter.net/pdf/flesch_exercises.pdf)

## Natural Phonics Primer Review Exercises

By Donald L. Potter

September 21, 2006

### STAGE I: LIFT OFF

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

**Review 1** – Exercise: 3: Mixed Short Vowels \_a\_ and \_e\_. – 65 Words

Ann bag bat bed beg bell Ben bet dad Dan den Ed egg fan fat gas ham hen am jazz jet lag 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 yam 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 lag 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 ham hen him hip hit hog hop hot jam jazz Jill Jim job lag 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 k, c, and ck. – 74 Words

back bed bet cab can cap cat cob cod cop cub cuff cup cut dad deck 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 Rick rob rock sack set sick suck sum tack ten tick Tim Tom top tuck van web wig yell yet

#### Step 2: Consonant Sounds Spelled with Two or More Letters

**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 jump jumps kept lift limp lips Max melts mend mends mint mist mush must ox pest  
plot press pump rest ring rashes scamp scrub self sells send sing skip sled song spring stem  
step stick stop strip stub sulk sunk swim tank tent test tops truck trust vest winks

**Review 8** – Exercise 22: qu th 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

## STAGE II: EARTH ORBIT

### Step 3: Vowel Sounds Spelled with Two- and Three-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 – 89 words.

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 cheer 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, CV/VCC, --Y = /Ē/

**Review 11** – Exercise 43: a\_e, e\_e, i\_e – 90 words

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

### STAGE III: MOON LANDING

#### Step 5: Special Endings

**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 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 midget cabbage ginger  
bouncing bridge passage nudge truce manager face forge grocer grocery 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 6: Irregular Spellings

**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 praises 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

## **Six Step Sequence for Teaching *The Natural Phonics Primer***

after Rudolf Flesch

### **STAGE I: BEGINNING (LIFT OFF)**

- I. The five short vowels sounds and all consonants spelled by one letter and ck.  
Exercises 1 – 12
- II. Consonants sounds spelled with two or three letters.  
Exercises 13 – 23

### **STAGE II: INTERMEDIATE (EARTH ORBIT)**

- III. Vowels sounds spelled with two or three letters.  
Exercises 24 – 39
- IV. The five long vowel sounds: (Signal e, open/closed syllables, y=/ē/). Exercises 40 – 50

### **STAGE III: ADVANCED (MOON LANDING)**

- V: Special Endings. 51 - 59
- VI. Irregular Spellings. Exercises 60 – 72

# Detailed Instructions

## for Teaching the Natual Phonics Primer

After Rudolf Flesch

### STAGE I: BEGINNING (LIFT OFF)

#### Step One: The Five Short Vowels and 21 consonants spelled by one letter and ck.

##### 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.

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*. (*y*et, *g*ym, *b*aby, *b*y)

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.

#### Step Two: Consonants sounds 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: *ct* as in *fact*, *ft* as in *lift*, *lf* as in *elf*, *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*, *trashcan* *frosting*, *lemon*, *napkin*, *rabbit*, *chicken*, *locket*, *wicked*, *robin*, and so on. Exercise 23.

## STAGE II: INTERMEDIATE (EARTH ORBIT)

### Step Three: Vowels sounds 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*, *curlieue*, and *Easter bonnet*. Exercise 39.

**Step Four: The five long vowel sounds: (vce, cv/vcc, y=/ē/): 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.)



### STAGE III: ADVANCED (MOON LANDING)

#### Step Five: Special Endings. Exercises 60 – 72

Next comes **Step Five**: 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 Six Irregular Spellings. Exercises 60 – 72

Now you are through with the fifth step. Johnny has learned to read and write practically all the words that follow *some* rule.

The **sixth 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.

## **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 Blend Phonics Technique

## 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 from the [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) website and at [www.blendphonics.org](http://www.blendphonics.org). 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 using the Blend Phonics technique.

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 ensure 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. Then we add another consonant to form a word which the child uses in a verbal sentence 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 Blend Phonics 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.

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 eighth 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."

Isabel L. Beck in her 2006, *Making Sense of Phonics The How's and Why's*, recommends **successive blending** (also called **cumulative blending**) because it is less taxing on the short-term memory. She says, "A strong advantage of the **successive blending chain** is the precise information available to the teacher in locating an error. If a child makes an error while performing the chain, the teacher knows where the error is – that is, which link in the chain is incorrect. With this kind of precise information, the teacher can give the child a direct prompt... The availability of precise information enables the teacher to go right into where the problem is and deal with it. This is in contrast to simply knowing that a child didn't read *black* or *set* correctly." Beck's method is essentially the same as *Blend Phonics*.

## Note from Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter

March 23, 2014

This document has been on the [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) website since May 5, 2004. It has gone through quite an evolutionary process over the years. It was an attempt, and a successful one at that, to teach Rudolf Flesch's 72 Exercises with Hazel Loring's Blend Phonics Technique.

I now have a whole page chocked full of valuable information on teaching Flesch's program.

I have taught Flesch's Exercises to enough children since 2003 to know that it is highly effective with all age groups.

Flesch's **Message** was vehemently attacked, and his **Rhetoric** was castigated as too severe; but his **Method** was never taught to a controlled population on a scale sufficient to satisfy scientific method. I am convinced that it would have weathered any true scientific investigation. Nevertheless, it **was taught** by tens of thousands of parents to their children with evident success. I once called Flesch's daughter, who confirmed that her dad taught all his children to read with his method. Another line of evidence that impresses me is that original *The Victory Drill Book* was used from 1970 till 2009 (when the order of lessons was changed) in many private schools with outstanding success. The original VDB was virtually Flesch's Exercises with sentences added. I know that because I talked on the phone to Gus Enderlin III in 1998 and had a fruitful email exchange with him in 2003. He was responsible for the minimum calibrated speeds.

Document created by Donald L. Potter, 5/15/04, Odessa, TX. Revised 10/27/04. Corrected 12/29/05. Minor corrections 1/23/06. Exercise 61 revised 3/31/06. Minor Corrections 5/8/06. Further minor revisions were made on 9/12/06, 9/28/06, and 10/15/06. Twenty-two Review Lessons added 9/21/06. Some extensive corrections were made on 5/18/12. Minor revision 3/16/2014. Indication of the Review Exercises was added on 3/23/2014. One very minor formatting change on 4/13/20. After 16 years of continual use, I can say for certain that Rudolf Flesch's 72 Exercises are among the most complete and powerful ever published. A few corrections on October 28, 2021. On November 22, 2021, I divided Step 5 into two steps, making a total of 6 Steps. On January 20, 2022, I made updates and corrections after a computer crash and recovery. More revisions on March 4, 2022.

Here is a link to my Rudolf Flesch Audio page, where you will find everything necessary to teach the method successfully.

[http://donpotter.net/education\\_pages/flesch\\_audio.html](http://donpotter.net/education_pages/flesch_audio.html)

Be sure and have the students spell the words from dictation wither in writing or orally. If their handwriting is not good, the phonics teacher will have to teach proper manuscript handwriting. My *Shortcut to Manuscript* is an excellent free program with written and video support.

Once the words have been taught with the Blend Phonics technique, the students should begin the *Natural Phonics Primer* timings following the guidelines for the minimum calibrated speed for page mastery for the student's grade level.

I highly recommend using the **Phonovisual Charts** for teaching the sound-to-symbol correspondences (**PG** = phoneme-to-grapheme correspondences).

## The Wisdom of Rudolf Flesch Concerning Reading Instruction

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

“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 worksheet.” (Preface x).

### Extracts from

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

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” (122).

“If you use phonics as *the* method of teaching reading, you’re 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” (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. (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*” (98).

HOMESCHOOL: To begin with, give Johnny first aid. Since he won’t be taught phonics-first in school, teach him phonics at home.

Don’t tell me you can’t do it. It’s only the look-and-say educators who have blown this thing out of all proportion and have made the teaching of reading seem like going to the moon. Actually, it’s quite simple. All you need is a series of step-by-step exercises plus time and patience. Millions of nineteenth century Americans taught their children to read the same way with the aid of the famous little Webster’s Blue-Backed Speller. Tens of thousands of mothers and fathers have done it successfully with the help of my book *Why Johnny Can’t Read – And What You Can Do About It* (Harper & Row, 1955).

Of course, you can. So can your parents, your older children, your twelve-year-old babysitter (if she has been taught to read phonics-first.). I’ve taught each of my six children that way, and each before he or she entered school, and those were among the happiest and most satisfying experiences of my life. It’s an unforgettable moment when a child first discovers the key to the “secret code.” (10-11)

OVERCOMING DUMBING-DOWN: However, even if you teach your Johnny successfully at home, he’ll still be exposed to poor education at his look-and-say school. He’ll go to school with lots of children who can’t read. He’ll learn from textbooks that were “dumbed down” one, two, or more grades. He’ll attend featherweight courses tailored to educational cripples. If possible, get him out of there and into a phonics-first school. The number is growing, and if you’re lucky, you’ll find one not far from your home. (11)

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

I was motivated to look closer at Flesch’s *72 Exercises* because of a phone conversation with Mr. Edward Miller (3/11/03), who used Flesch’s phonics-first method to help students overcome 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. Mr. Miller 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](http://www.donpotter.net) website. Mr. Miller passed away in June 2009.

Dr. Rudolf Flesch was born on May 8, 1911 in Vienna, Austria and passed away on October 5, 1986 in New York, New York.

# Three Basic Principles for a Successful National Literacy Campaign

Dr. Rudolf Flesch, author of  
*The Art of Clear Thinking* and *Why Johnny Can't Read*

The steady and seemingly inexorable decline of our literacy is a great national tragedy. We, the richest country in the world, are educationally dropping down among the world's poorest nations. Soon we'll be unable to carry on the daily work that needs to be done by educated people, or even find jobs that call for simple ability to read and write. I foresee an influx of thousands of Japanese engineers overseeing the work of thousands of robots on assembly lines.

What we need at this critical point in our national life is a gigantic national literacy campaign.

Of course, many Third World countries, and others, have had their literacy campaigns, such as the famous Cuban campaign of 1960-61, which raised the national literacy rate from 75 to 94 percent within nine months.

We can do even better than that – if we put our minds to it and use our tremendous resources for the job. After all, we are the nation that got to the moon, and wiped out polio and measles.

However, if we carry out a literacy campaign, we can't expect to do the job in nine months like the Cubans. Why? Because the Cubans were faced with the relatively easy job of teaching reading and writing to their illiterate peasants, who had never gone to school. We, on the other hand, have to teach millions of people who can't read because their schools tried to teach them the wrong way. They have been infected with the highly potent virus of look-and-say and have become addicts to the pernicious habit of word-guessing. To become literate, they must kick the habit. The job of teaching them to read must be combined with a program of thorough detoxification, which gets harder and harder the more years of look-and-say teaching they've been exposed to. Therefore, what took Cubans nine months will take us at least two years.

Aside from that unfortunate time lag, what we'll be able to do is prodigious. As a nation, we are born for this kind of job. There is no limit to what can be done. It will be an even more glorious adventure than going to the moon.

However, our national literacy campaign will be successful only if it sticks to three basic principles.

**First**, the American people must realize that we have an enormous national problem on our hands. We desperately need a national literacy campaign, and we need it now.

**Second**, people must understand that in the United States illiteracy is caused by the virus of look-and-say teaching. Our prevailing teaching methods and materials must be seen as what they are – national enemies like the viruses of measles and polio.

**Third**, our literacy campaign must be fought strictly with the weapons of intensive phonics. Any materials or methods that lead to addictive word-guessing must be banned from our classrooms and libraries.

As long as we stick to these three basic principles, we'll make our coming literacy campaign a glorious success and we will become the best-educated nation on earth.

This "abstract" was taken from the January 1983 edition of *The Reading Informer*, published by the *Reading Reform Foundation*. I am not sure who prepared the "abstracts." I assume it was most likely the editor, G. K. Hodenfield. Here it is 2012 and Flesch's proposed National Literacy Campaign is still on the launch pad. Fortunately, there is enough fuel in our Phonics Launch Vehicle to get us to the destination, and could do it in two years with Flesch's 72 Exercises.

## Progress Chart for Natural Phonics Primer Video Lessons

Step	Exercise	Sound-to-Symbol Association	Viewing
<b>Introduction</b>	001 NFP	Foundation for Phonics and Suggestions for Instruction	
<b>Step 1</b>  Five Short Vowels, 20 Consonants & ck	01 NFP	Short a b d f g h j l m n j p r s t v w y z	
	02 NFP	Short e	
	04 NFP	Short i	
	06 NFP	Short o	
	08 NFP	Short u	
	10 NFP	c k	
	11 NFP	ck	
<b>Step 2</b>  Cons. Blends & Cons. Digraphs	13 NFP	Ending Consonant Blends	
	14 NFP	Ending Consonant Blends ending in s	
	15 NFP	ng, nk, sh, x, ngs, nks.	
	17 NFP	Beginning Consonant Blends	
	18 NFP	Beginning Consonant Blends with r	
	20 NFP	qu th wh squ thr	
	21 NFP	ch tch	
23 NFP	Two-Syllable Words (cvvc)		
<b>Step 3</b>  Vowel Sounds Spelled with 2 or 3 letters	24 NFP	ea as in meal, e as in he	
	25 NFP	ee ea as in meal, e as in he continued.	
	26 NFP	oo as in moon, book	
	27 NFP	ar a as in pa, ma	
	28 NFP	or	
	29 NFP	er ir ur	
	30 NFP	oi oy	
	31 NFP	ou ow as in cow	
	32 NFP	au, aw, all, alt, alk	
	34 NFP	ay ai air	
	35 NFP	ie as in ie, y as by, ye as rye, ind as in mind, ild as wild	
	36 NFP	oa, oe, old, olt, oll, ow as low, o as in so	
	37 NFP	ew, ue	
39 NFP	Two-Syllable and Three-Syllable Words		
<b>Step 4</b>  The Long Vowels (v_e, cv/vcc, y=/ē/)	40 NFP	a as in name	
	41 NFP	a as in name (continued), a as in care, e as in Eve and here	
	42 NFP	i as in fine and fire	
	44 NFP	o as in bone and more	
	46 NFP	u as in tune and cure	
	48 NFP	ing	
	49 NFP	y, ies, ied as n hurry, hurries, hurried	
<b>Step 5</b>  Special Endings	51 NFP	ed (ĕd, t, d)	
	53 NFP	er le	
	55 NFP	ce, ci, cy	
	56 NFP	ce, ci, cy	
	58 NFP	se, si, sy as in cheese, rising, rosy	
<b>Step 6</b>  Irregular Spellings	60 NFP	Silent b, g, k, t, w	
	61 NFP	Silent gh, h, l	
	62 NFP	ph as in phone gh as in rough	
	65 NFP	ea as in break, head, and learn	
	66 NFP	ie as field, ui as in fruit, u as in put	
	67 NFP	wa swa wor qua squa wha ou as young and famous	
	69 NFP	ci, si, ti: special, pension, vision, station, action, su treasure tu nature	
	70 NFP	ive as in active <b>or</b> ance ence come some	
72 NFP	Three-Syllables and Four-Syllable Words		

KEY WORDS  
FOR TEACHING THE SHORT VOWELS,  
SINGLE-LETTER CONSONANTS AND CONSONANT DIGRAPHS

*Short Vowels*

A a	<u>A</u> pple	<u>A</u> lligator
E e	<u>E</u> gg	<u>E</u> lephant
I i	<u>I</u> nk	<u>I</u> gloo
O o	<u>O</u> x	<u>O</u> strich
U u	<u>U</u> mbrella	<u>U</u> ncle

*Consonants*

B b	<u>B</u> all	<u>B</u> ed
D d	<u>D</u> oor	<u>D</u> og
F f	<u>F</u> ish	<u>F</u> ork
G g	<u>G</u> um	<u>G</u> ate
H h	<u>H</u> and	<u>H</u> ouse
J j	<u>J</u> ack-in-the Box	<u>J</u> ump-Rope
L l	<u>L</u> amp	<u>L</u> eaf
M m	<u>M</u> oon	<u>M</u> ouse
N n	<u>N</u> ose	<u>N</u> est
P p	<u>P</u> icture	<u>P</u> ear
R r	<u>R</u> ing	<u>R</u> ose
S s	<u>S</u> un	<u>S</u> aw
T t	<u>T</u> able	<u>T</u> ent
V v	<u>V</u> ase	<u>V</u> iolin
W w	<u>W</u> indow	<u>W</u> agon
Y y	<u>Y</u> ard	<u>Y</u> awn
C c	<u>C</u> up	<u>C</u> ap
K k	<u>K</u> ite	<u>K</u> itchen

*Consonant Digraphs*

Sh sh	<u>S</u> h <u>o</u> e	<u>S</u> h <u>a</u> dow
X x	<u>B</u> o <u>x</u>	<u>F</u> o <u>x</u>
Qu qu	<u>Q</u> ue <u>en</u>	<u>Q</u> uar <u>ter</u>
Th th	<u>T</u> h <u>o</u> rn	<u>T</u> h <u>i</u> stle
Wh wh	<u>W</u> h <u>i</u> p	<u>W</u> h <u>i</u> stle
Ch ch	<u>C</u> h <u>a</u> ir	<u>C</u> h <u>a</u> in

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE  
OF THE NATURAL PHONICS PRIMER

**Stage I: Beginning (Blending & Spelling)**

(Blast Off)

**Step One:** The five short vowel sounds and all consonant sounds spelled by a single letter and ck. *Exercises 1 - 12*

**Step Two:** Consonant sounds spelled with two or three letters. *Exercises 13 – 23*

**Stage II: Intermediate (Independent Reader)**

(Earth Orbit)

**Step Three:** Vowel sounds spelled with two or three letters. *Exercises 24 – 39*

**Step Four:** The five long vowels: (vce, cv/vcc, y = /ē/). *Exercises 40 – 50*

**Stage III: Advanced (Advanced Reader & Speller)**

(Moon Landing)

**Step Five:** Special Endings. *Exercises 51 – 59*

**Step Six:** Irregular Spellings. *Exercises 60 – 72*

## Three Concept and Four Skills Necessary For Any Student to Read and Spell Well

<i>3 Concepts</i>	<i>4 Skills</i>
<p><b>1.</b> 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters can spell a sound ....</p> <p>up     - <u>u</u>            tea    - <u>ea</u>            earn  - <u>ear</u>            weigh - <u>eigh</u></p>	<p><b>1.</b> Segmenting</p> <p>lad = /l/ /a/ /d/</p>
<p><b>2.</b> Some sounds can have several different spellings.....</p> <p>feet  - <u>ee</u>            team - <u>ea</u>            chief - <u>ie</u>            she  - <u>e</u>            happy - <u>y</u>            taxi  - <u>i</u></p>	<p><b>2.</b> Blending</p> <p>/l/ /a/ /d/ = lad</p>
<p><b>3.</b> Some spellings can represent many different sounds.....</p> <p><u>ch</u>ip  <u>sch</u>ool            ma<u>ch</u>ine</p>	<p><b>3.</b> Phoneme Manipulation</p> <p>at → <u>h</u>at (addition)  <u>h</u>at → at (deletion)            pa<u>t</u> → pa<u>n</u> (substitution)</p>
	<p><b>4.</b> Multi-syllable</p> <p>hotdog = hot-dog            professional = pro-fes-sion-al</p>

Adapted from an Online EBLI workshop with Nora Chahbazi in 2017.

**Segmenting** = Spelling Words: Pulling sounds apart.

**Blending** = Sounding-Out Words (decoding/reading): Pushing sounds together.

**Phoneme Manipulation** (Phoneme Efficiency) is a necessary condition for Orthographic Mapping and Sight Word acquisition. Phonics is a necessary, and usually sufficient cause for its development, although some students may require targeted practice in phoneme manipulation.