

INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

This is a 120-lesson phonics curriculum designed to teach your child to read. Reading isn't easy, but it is essential. You are your child's first and best teacher. You've already taught them so many things, and now you will help them learn to read. By the end of this curriculum, your child will know all the major phonics rules—the rules that help them read. They'll go from reading simple words like "am" in the first lesson to more complex words like "gymnasium" in the final lesson, with hundreds of words in between.

I created this curriculum so that every parent can teach their child to read. This can't be a lost skill for this generation, and you are making a huge difference in your child's life by teaching them to read. Once your child has completed this book, please pass it along to someone else who can teach their child to read, or donate it to a little free library in your community.

You can also find a free version of these lessons online at readtoyourkid.com, sherlockhomeschooling.com, or littlehousekindergarten.com, where you'll find many other free resources for home education and reading.

Happy learning!

Hannah Ward, M.Ed.

What You Need to Get Started

All you need to teach your child to read is this book and some simple books to read to them as they learn. There are recommendations in the following pages, but you can use any books you want. The important part is that they see that words are everywhere, and books are just one way to explore them. We want them reading everything as quickly as possible.

Who Can Teach a Child to Read?

Anyone who can read can teach a child to read using this method.

Who Am I?

My name is Hannah Ward. I'm a mother and an English teacher. I've taught English to students at every stage of education from children in preschool all the way up to adults at the university level.

I am a TESOL International Association-certified English teacher, and I hold a Master of Education degree in Education Technology and Instructional Design, where I specialized in both K-12 and adult learning experience design. I also have a Master of Science degree in Management and Leadership with a focus on global leadership education, and I'm currently pursuing a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership, specializing in English. I have served as the curriculum developer for Little House Kindergarten, Sherlock Homeschooling, and All-in-One Room Schoolhouse.

I created this reading guide to help empower parents as their child's first and best teacher.

Read Aloud Every Day

Before your child learns to read, they need to be read to. This is not optional. It is the most important step.

Reading aloud helps your child hear how words sound, understand what words mean, and build the knowledge they need to read on their own. We don't just want them sounding out letters—we want them to understand.

Read a mix of fiction and nonfiction. Read different kinds of books. Read every day. Aim for at least 20 minutes.

When you read, pause to check that your child understands. Explain new words. Talk about the story when you're done.

If you don't already read aloud daily, start now. Do this for at least one month before beginning this workbook.

Once you start the lessons, keep reading aloud every day. While you read, point to the words so your child connects the sounds with the letters. This is how this method works so fast.

Do not skip this step. Reading aloud is just as important as the lessons.

These books help build background knowledge and introduce a wide variety of vocabulary words. They are simple enough that your child will begin to recognize words as you point to them. Sooner than you think, they'll be reading along with you.

- Usborne Beginners series (Science, Nature, Our World, Animals) – Various Authors
- Henry and Mudge series – Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Suçie Stevenson
- Little Bear series – Else Holmelund Minarik, illustrated by Maurice Sendak
- Frog and Toad series – Arnold Lobel

Before You Begin These Lessons

Before starting these lessons, your child **needs to know the alphabet**. That means they should know their ABCs and be able to recognize both uppercase and lowercase letters, even when they are out of order. This is called the alphabetic principle—letter names stay the same, but their sounds can change depending on the word.

Your child should also be able to **recognize and read their own name**, even when it's mixed in with other words. This skill, called word recognition or word discrimination, helps children understand that words carry meaning and prepares them to track words as they read.

They should also know that in English, we **read left to right and top to bottom**. You can reinforce this by pointing it out frequently during your read-aloud time.

Once they've mastered these basics, they're ready to **try the first lesson** in this book. They will read their first words after the very first lesson! If they struggle with the lesson or it's just not clicking, that's completely normal. It simply means their brain isn't ready yet—their neural pathways need more time to develop.

If this happens, don't push too hard. Instead, give them another month of daily read-aloud time, making sure to point to the words as you read (at least for a few pages per book). Then try again next month. Reading readiness is a combination of skill, confidence, and physical development.

Don't compare your child's progress to others. Most children will learn to read fluently after completing a structured phonics program like this one, usually between the ages of 5 and 9 years old. Rarely does it fully click before then.

Most importantly, never stop reading aloud to them. It's crucial, no matter where they are in the process. **Keep reading to them even after they finish this program.**

Reading Readiness Checklist

Before beginning these lessons, your child should:

Know the Alphabet – My child can name all uppercase and lowercase letters, even out of order.

Recognize Their Name – My child can find and read their own name when mixed with other words.

Understand Letter Order – My child knows that letters in a word stay in the same order.

Know How Books Work – My child understands that we read words left to right and top to bottom.

Enjoy Listening to Books – My child has been read to regularly and listens with interest.

Follow Along with Words – My child can watch as I point to words while reading aloud.

Recognize That Words Have Meaning – My child knows that the words on the page represent spoken words.

If your child is struggling with any of these skills, continue reading aloud daily while pointing to words on the page. Revisit this checklist in a month and try again!

How to Use This Curriculum

This curriculum includes 120 phonics lessons. By the end, your child will be able to read anything. They'll still need daily practice reading books to build fluency and reading speed, but no word will be a mystery—they will know all the phonics rules.

As the teacher, you'll need to set aside about 30 minutes a day for 120 days to complete the lessons.

- The first 10 minutes are for the lesson. Each lesson includes one page for you and one for your learner. You'll read your page, and they'll read theirs. Before starting, read your teacher instructions carefully so you know what to expect. This should be done every day—phonics lessons require precise instructions.
- You'll be provided with a script to read to your child. What you read aloud is in bold. What you do is in parentheses. (For example, you may point to specific words.)
- Your child should look at their page while you give instructions. Encourage them to point at words and sounds as they read. Early lessons provide detailed step-by-step guidance, but as your child builds fluency, the instructions will become less structured.
- After the lesson, you must read aloud to your child. This should be from a book of your choice, but beginning readers with a mix of fiction and nonfiction work best. As you read, point to each word so your child can follow along. This step is crucial—do not skip it. Read aloud for 20 minutes daily.
- In addition to this structured reading, it's incredibly beneficial to read casually throughout the day. Picture books, bedtime stories, and chapter books help with background knowledge and vocabulary. During these casual read-alouds, you don't need to point to words—just focus on enjoyment. Choose books that you and your child will love to make reading a lasting habit.