

## **Submission to the Senate**

To:

The Senate Committee - Teaching and Learning (maximizing our investment in Australian schools)

From:

Glyn Parfitt

This submission relates chiefly to the following terms of reference:

(a) the effectiveness of current classroom practices in assisting children to realize their potential in Australian schools; and:

(d) the adequacy of tools available for teachers to create and maintain an optimal learning environment;

<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b>Page</b>
Self introduction	2
Importance of Good Education	2
Primacy of Reading	3
Primacy of Phonics	3
Advantages of Phonics	4
Disadvantages of Phonics	5
A Complete Well Graded System of Phonics.	5
How this Phonic System came to be developed	6
Other Experiences with this Phonic System	7
Implementation of this System	8
Details of this Phonic System	9
Instructions from Book 1	10
Pre-Reading Exercises from Book 1	17
Sample Pages from Book 1	25
Instructions from Book 2	27
Sample Pages from Book 2	30
Closing Remarks	32

### **Self Introduction**

I am a graduate of Sydney University holding the following degrees:

B. Sc. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Hons., Specializing in Physical Chemistry (Reaction Kinetics).

M. Sc., Specializing in Radiocarbon Dating.

Dip. Ed., Specializing in Maths and Science Teaching.

I spent 7 years teaching and doing post graduate research at university, and 2 years teaching High School Maths and Science, particularly the senior years.

I studied theology for 4 years and was a minister of religion for 4 years. I recently authored and published an 850-page book on the Trinity, and a number of theological papers.

The last 10 years of my working life I worked as a commercial computer programmer.

Since retiring, I have developed and trialed the Phonic reading System described below.

### **Importance of Good Education.**

It hardly needs saying that the happiness, well-being and prosperity of individuals, families, society and the nation, is largely dependent upon the quality of the education which is given to children as they grow.

While curricula and academic achievement are a vital consideration, I believe that instilling a good attitude is the most important thing that teachers can do for their students. One of the reasons for this is that a lack of knowledge, skill or understanding can be largely rectified, but wrong attitudes, once established are very difficult to eradicate, tend to get worse with advancing years, and may be perpetuated from generation to generation.

To achieve a good outcome in attitude, I believe that the years at school should be the happiest years of a person's life rather than something to be endured, and teachers should make every effort to make their pupil's experience at school a happy one. If this is to be achieved, the number one qualification for teachers should be that they love children, in particular, the children who are under their care.

The learning experience should also be an interesting and even exciting time. Subject matter should, as far as possible be chosen in a way that the children can see its relevance. It should be adjusted to their level of maturity, not too hard and not too easy or boredom will ensue. A love of learning should be instilled and curiosity aroused, not stifled as is so often the case.

I remember a first year Maths teacher at university who had us all on the edge of our seats with excitement in many of his lectures. If all of our schoolroom classes could approach this, what a happy time our children would have.

### **Primacy of Reading**

I think it should be self evident that the ability to read well, is basic to all other forms of learning. This was dramatically demonstrated to me by a student in one of my reading classes.

He was in grade 5 and 6 at the time. He was a gifted child in many ways and had an encyclopedic knowledge of some things that he was interested in. I think he must have learned these things by listening to his parents, for his reading ability was very rudimentary. This had held him back in many areas, particularly Maths. He could not read the exercises in his Maths book, or the questions in his tests.

He had tried to learn to read by the usual methods, but had some disability. He was provided with specially tinted glasses partway through his time with me, but their help was marginal, although easing somewhat his level of discomfort.

I had to start him right at the beginning with phonics. He progressed reasonably at first, but found the use of silent *e* very difficult. But he eventually got it, and was progressing slowly through the various long vowel combinations when he was moved to another school. He was very happy with the way that, what I was teaching him, helped him with his general reading. He took a keen interest in the structure of the reading program, and of his progress through it. Thankfully I was able to catch him up in his Maths during his “reading” lessons.

### **Primacy of Phonics**

It is my experience that some children will learn to read well, no matter how they are taught. For instance my oldest daughter was taught the letters of the alphabet when she was 4, and she taught herself to read without any further help. She was a fluent reader of all kinds of material, at 7 years of age.

However, the fact that a few gifted children can do this, does not excuse us from seeking the best way to teach reading.

The statistics show that the current methods of teaching reading, (namely whole word recognition in context, supplemented with some phonic instruction), fails to achieve satisfactory results for a number of students. The statistics would be even worse if there were not a remedial reading program in place.

It is my experience that a fully phonic approach is best for the remedial teaching of reading. Other submissions indicate the same. This leads me to believe that a totally phonic system of teaching reading would be the best method of initiating reading for all students.

I have found that whole word recognition and phonic reading cannot successfully be taught concurrently. The reason for this is that the more whole words that are recognized as whole words, the less phonic practice is possible.

It is therefore imperative, if phonics is to be taught successfully, to only teach the whole word recognition of words that have already provided the necessary practice that they can give to phonics. For many students who are initially taught phonics, it will not be necessary to teach any whole word recognition, it will just develop naturally from their

phonic reading. Why waste the time and effort of teacher and pupil doing something that will prove unnecessary for most students?

All this was dramatically demonstrated to me by a 10 or 11 year old boy who came, with his mother, to stay with us at the time I was developing the phonic reading program. He was a fluent reader of anything that was put in front of him. He had learned to read by sitting beside his mother and following along in the book she was reading aloud to him. It was clearly whole word recognition. Nothing seemed amiss until I followed along in another copy of what he was reading.

It did not take long to realize that although he was reading fluently, he was guessing some words, and getting them hopelessly wrong, sometimes changing the whole meaning of the text.

I tried teaching him using my phonic system, but it was hopeless. He knew every word I put in front of him. Eventually I found a simple three letter word with a short vowel which he had not seen before. He could not sound it out, no matter how hard he tried, even though he well knew the sounds of the individual letters. At last I had one word I could work with, but that night, despite my pleading, his mother told him what it was.

Here we have the example of a bright boy, placed at considerable disadvantage, probably irreparably, by not having been taught phonics reading before whole word recognition. There are no doubt a host of others whose similar problems go unrecognized.

### **Advantages of Phonics**

The great advantage of learning to read phonically is that pupils learn to read accurately. In contrast to this the current emphasis on fluency has led to a loss of accuracy in reading.

Students learning to read by whole word recognition are actively or inadvertently encouraged to guess what a word is, depending on the context. This tends to lead to inaccuracy and uncertainty in the pupil's mind. This can lead to a more general uncertainty, and discouragement with the whole learning process.

I often ask, Would you like your doctor or lawyer to guess what words they are reading?

In contrast to this guessing game, pupils who have learned to read phonically know that they have the skills to accurately decipher and read any reasonable English word that they may come across. They are not bound by a limited reading vocabulary as are students who have learned by whole word recognition, (unless they have somehow learned the skills of phonics as well).

As well as that, a large amount of effort and memory is required in order to learn by whole word recognition. I have observed many children labouring over lists of memory words, but all of this is largely unnecessary for those who learn phonically. For most of them, the transition from phonic reading to whole word recognition happens effortlessly and almost unnoticed.

### **Disadvantages of Phonics**

The system of whole word recognition has prospered partly because of the lack of a well-graded and complete phonic system and partly because of the perceived complexity of the English language.

It has been assumed by many, including myself, that once the sounds of the letters have been learned, a pupil should automatically be able to put these sounds together to form simple words, i.e. to begin reading. While this may be so for many, I have found that for others it is not so. Putting sounds together to form words is a mental skill that must be discovered by each pupil. Students can repeat after a teacher “c a t cat,” and so on, but that does not do it for them. It merely adds to the list of whole words that they can recognize. Thus any attempt to teach phonic reading as a class or in a group, (except for teaching the sounds of the letters and the sound of the various vowel combinations), is merely a disguised form of teaching whole word recognition.

The only practical way of teaching the actual process of phonic reading is in a one-on-one situation where the teacher merely acts as a facilitator. This is described in detail below.

Is it worth the extra time and effort to do this one-on-one teaching in order to achieve the superior results of phonic reading? I believe it is. It only requires around 10 to 20 minutes for each pupil, 2-3 times a week for 1 to 2 years, to complete books 1 and 2, depending on their rate of progress. The work can be done by properly instructed teacher’s aides, parents, or even children from the higher grades who have themselves been taught using this system. This can be a very enriching experience for them.

Two of my primary school years were spent at a one teacher school in the country. The teacher allowed me, when I had finished my own Maths exercises, to go around the pupils in the lower grades to assist them with their Maths. I think it gave me a love for teaching and helped to develop my skills in that area.

### **A Complete Well Graded System of Phonics.**

I owe much to a lecturer at Sydney Teacher’s College who taught us the art of teaching Maths. He taught us three rules of teaching: follow a logical system; teach one skill at a time; and keep reviewing what has just been taught previously.

I have used these same principles in developing the Phonic System described below. It follows a logical sequence in that it starts with the most simple things and progresses to the more complicated, with everything building on what has gone before. The list of vocabulary words in each lesson give practice in only one new skill, or occasionally two if they are similar. The story lines that are part of each lesson not only practice some of the vocabulary words of that lesson, but are designed to review things taught in the most recent lessons.

To this I have added the very important principle of grading the lessons. (I must have been taught this also). The lessons are graded in a number of ways. (1) The amount of material in each lesson gradually increases as the lessons progress, beginning with very little. (2) The story lines gradually become more complex and more mature in their themes. (3) The font size starts quite big and gradually becomes smaller as the lessons progress and the pupil’s eyes become more used to the reading process.

(4) Most importantly, no story line uses any word which has not already been presented to the pupil as a vocabulary word. This rule has been rigorously followed until near the end of Book 2. While such a restriction is not necessary when teaching whole word recognition, it is vital for teaching phonics.

This is because we are trying to instill confidence, by making the task of learning to read as easy as possible, and it is always easier for a pupil to decipher a word phonically when it is part of a family of rhyming words. Having once deciphered the word in a vocabulary list, the pupil is in a better position to decipher it again in a story line. In other words, we do not want to violate the principle of teaching only one new skill at a time. Most importantly, we do not want to tempt the pupil to guess at a word by reading the context.

The result of this stringent grading is that the earliest lessons have no story lines at all, and when they do begin, the story lines are rather quaint and stilted. But they serve their purpose and encourage the pupil to read.

### **How this Phonic System came to be developed.**

I tell this story because it illustrates important principles.

Some years ago I was asked to teach two young children how to read. Mentally, they were late starters, and the mother wanted them taught phonically. I found a phonic reader and began to teach the older child. I found he was unable to begin to read until around age 7, but once started, he learned quickly and soon came to the end of the book. Whereto then? The book only taught the five short vowel sounds.

At that stage, having obtained a computer, I decided to write a set of reading books myself. Thus the first draft of the two books on this series was produced, covering not only the short vowel sounds, but also all the long vowel sounds and the many ways of writing them with various vowel combinations, together with all the consonant blends.

This pupil quickly began to recognize whole words, and was reading quite fluently by the end of the second book. However, by starting sight reading too quickly, the rules of phonics did not get sufficient practice and were not fixed in his memory. By the end of the second book, he was able to move on to general reading.

The younger pupil was unable to begin phonic reading until age 10. Although she knew the letter sounds well, she could not reliably put the sounds together. For instance when presented with **pin**, she would read **pan** and **pen** as well as **pin**. However, eventually her brain matured and she was able to begin reading. The change was quite dramatic. I was testing her every day. One day she was still responding with incorrect vowel sounds, and the very next day she was able to respond correctly and reliably, and continued to do so from that day on.

It was for this pupil that I developed the Pre-Reading Exercises detailed below. She was able to progress through them without doing all of the examples. By the time she began to read, she had, for some weeks, been able to reliably spell any three letter short vowel word I asked for. In other words, she had developed the skill of taking words apart, but not of putting them together.

The exercises were designed not only to occupy her time profitably until she was able to begin reading, but hopefully to prime or jump start her ability to read. I think it may have been successful in this.

This pupil was able to work her way slowly through both reading books and then progress to general reading. However, she had not learned to recognize, by sight, more than a few words. She was sounding everything rapidly in her head. As a result she was not reading fluently, and I had to set about teaching her sight reading. This she found quite difficult, and I have now added to the lessons in Book 2, a list of sight or spelling words for those pupils who may need them. They are chosen from lessons at least 20 lessons previous, so as not to interfere with the task of learning Phonic reading.

However, the delay in learning whole word recognition by this student resulted in her thoroughly mastering the skills and rules of Phonics. This was in marked contrast with the older pupil who had automatically transferred to sight reading fairly quickly.

### **Other Experiences with this Phonic System**

Not long after its initial development, the two reading books were used by members of my family.

It was reported to me that one grandchild in his preschool year began his reading experience through the use of my first book. He progressed well and at the start of grade one could easily sound out any basic three letter word and was enjoying the reading experience. However this soon changed when at school he was repeatedly instructed not to sound out words but rather to guess from the context. The result was that he lost his enthusiasm for reading and was a poor reader for the rest of his school life.

My second oldest child was told at school that he had dyslexia. He read very poorly, and then only when absolutely necessary. However, he was very gifted at mechanics. After doing his apprenticeship and becoming an A-grade mechanic he took a job where he was in charge of maintaining all the vehicles and machinery associated with drilling for minerals in the middle of Australia. The only problem was that he could not read the manuals for the machines or vehicles. He heard of my reading system and sent an S.O.S. for them. I sent him a copy, and in a very short time he had taught himself to read, and then taught one of his friends to read also.

Some time later, I was asked by the principle of a local independent school to assist with their reading and Maths program. As I could only attend one or two days a week, several teacher's aides, as well as the teachers themselves, were instructed in the use of the system. With the help of the teacher's aides, we were able to progress the students much faster than I could have done on my own.

We found that it was essential to keep accurate records of the progress of each pupil so that we could co-ordinate our lessons, and to prevent students trying to skip lessons. We recorded for each lesson period the date, the lesson or part thereof completed, the difficulty experienced, and any particular problems encountered.

These records made assessment a breeze. No special test was needed. All that was needed was to note that over the period a particular student had progressed from Book 1, Lesson 20 to Book 2, Lesson 15, say. However, these statistics are only meaningful to someone familiar with the system.

Our work was largely remedial, at least initially. Teachers chose which students from the higher primary grades should receive help from us, and at what time they should come for that help. The first thing was to decide the entry point for each student into the system. Some started somewhere in book 1, but for most it was somewhere in Book 2. They were then progressed through the book(s) from that point, with occasional digressions into earlier pages to pick up parts that had been missed.

The main task was to correct bad habits. The most prominent of these was guessing, which was not allowed while with us. The next was incorrect pronunciation, especially of the **th** sound. A number had learned some of the short vowel sounds incorrectly by being taught the names of the letters too soon. This proved to be a very persistent problem and very difficult to correct. Most had not learned more than a few of the many vowel combinations, and our work mainly centered around using Book 2, to drill them on these sounds.

Not all of our pupils were from the upper grades. Some children from the Prep class, who were deemed to be at risk, were also put in our care. It was a joy to initiate their reading using the pre-reading exercises, and then begin progressing them through the reading lessons. Their teacher, who had been instructed in this Phonic System, cooperated with us by not teaching in class, the names of the letters until the pupils under our care had progressed some way in their reading.

Sadly, however, some of our pupils were seen being drilled on a list of sight words, many of them of more than one syllable. On questioning the teacher, who was aware of my request that this not be done, she explained that she had to prepare her students for the Naplan Test.

It is a shame that our teachers are held hostage by this test, and must adapt their teaching so as to maximize their classroom score in the Naplan Test. If we must have a Naplan Test, surely the lower grades should be exempt from this pressure.

As a result of my experiences at this school, and following the suggestions of the teacher's aides who were working with me on the days I was not there, a number of improvements have been introduced into the two reading books.

I am currently teaching a 50 year old friend to read. He was told by his teacher at school that he would "never learn to read." On top of this, his eyesight has been damaged by his having the back of his skull blown off by a mortar bomb in the Viet Nam War.

When I first met him, he was reading very hesitantly, and had to be told every second word or thereabout. Now, his general reading has become more fluent, he needs less help, and he is learning not to guess!

### **Implementation of this System**

I look forward to the day when Australia will lead the English speaking countries in the literacy of its citizens as the result of implementing a Phonic system such as this, and other measures.

The first thing that needs to be done is to instill in young children the desire to learn to read. I think this is most naturally done by reading to children interesting, even exciting stories appropriate to their age. This should be done at an early age by parents. In this



age of television and working mothers, this is not done as much as it should be. The gap needs to be filled by Day Care, Kindergarten, Prep and Grade 1 teachers and their aides. They need to realize that their task is not just to fill in time, to entertain, or even to teach curriculum material. They should realize that their prime task is to instill a love of books and what is in them, and hence an insatiable desire to learn to read like their parents, teachers and teacher's aides.

Wherever possible, educators in the academic world should be led to embrace the Phonic model as the prime and initial way of teaching reading. This may not be easy initially, because many have embraced a different model, and may need the proof that should come with trialing this system.

The help of the media should be enlisted to showcase the Phonic system.

The help of Principals of Primary Schools should be sought, with a view to introducing this system in their schools.

In-Service-Training should be provided for teachers especially in the lower grades, together with their aides. This should include Kindergartens, and Day Care providers.

I do not believe that it is best to coerce Teachers and Principals to adopt this system. I believe it is best to conduct trials of this system throughout Australia. Others seeing the results will then want the system in their schools. Trials should be conducted only where Principals and Teachers are convinced of the superiority of this system, and are enthusiastic about implementing it. Such schools should either be freed from the Naplan test, or that test should be modified for these schools. This modified test should eventually become the norm.

In order for schools to be able to take part in these trials, they must have the two (eventually three) books in their hands. To make this possible, a publisher will need to be found who is convinced of the value of this system, and is enthusiastic in promoting and marketing it.

### **Details of This Phonic System.**

I have called this System *Graded Phonics* because it is extremely well graded. (This name can be changed, for promotional purposes if that is thought desirable). It is also much more complete than other Phonic Systems that I am aware of. It consists of 3 books.

The first book has only single syllable words with short vowels; the second book covers the long vowels and the various ways of writing them. The third book, which is only in the planning stage, will deal with multi-syllable words, and other matters not yet dealt with. Although it would be nice to have the third book, it has been found that pupils can move to general reading after completing Book 2.

So that the Senate Committee can appreciate the nature of this Phonic System, I have included the full set of instructions for teachers, from Book 1 and Book 2 which fully describe the system. (Some features of this material have already been presented above). I have also included two sample reading pages from each book.

## Instructions from Book 1

### Before You Begin

The teacher should read the whole of this introductory material before commencing the reading lessons. This should include the section of pre-reading exercises that follows the reading lessons proper.

### Important Considerations

#### Teaching the Alphabet

This book does not include methods for teaching pupils the individual letters of the alphabet and their sounds. A variety of methods have successfully been used by teachers to assist pupils in this task. However, to avoid confusing our little pupils, it is highly desirable that **initially, only the sounds of the letters are taught**. Only those methods which do not teach or even reveal the names of the letters should be used.

Failure to follow this rule leads many pupils to confuse the long and short vowel sounds or to think that the letter U has the sound of the letter Y, the letter Y has the sound of the letter W and the letter G has the sound of the letter J (which is true sometimes and is taught later). Once these wrong associations are made, many young pupils find it hard to unlearn them. They do not need this unnecessary handicap.

Another source of confusion to the young learner are the varying shapes of the letters that may be presented to them. It is therefore highly desirable that there be uniformity in teaching the shapes of the various letters. To assist with this task, it is planned to publish laminated letter-cards with this book. There are also small letter-cards at the back of this book which may be photocopied for this purpose.

#### Teaching Reading

As will be explained later, this book is designed to give pupils a thorough grounding in the skill of phonic reading. For this to be achieved successfully, there needs to be a re-organization of classroom methods of teaching literacy skills.

Most pupils learn to recognize words they have seen a number of times. To the extent that this happens too quickly, the relevant phonic skills are used less frequently, and hence learned less thoroughly. For this reason it is beneficial for most pupils for there to be a **delay in such whole word recognition for as long as possible**. There are a number of ways that this can be achieved.

- Do not teach the reading lessons to the whole class, or even a small group of pupils. Instead, go through the reading lessons one by one with each individual pupil. While this may be considered a disadvantage of this phonic system, it is a method that is frequently used beneficially with other reading methods. Such individual tuition has the added advantage that pupils can progress at their own pace, according to their level of maturation. This one-on-one teaching of reading is a task that teacher's aids, parents, or even older pupils can be trained to do.

- Do not go through a particular lesson more than once with each pupil unless really necessary. If a learner is struggling with a particular lesson, leave the lesson partly completed, and return to it next time, or go back to a previous lesson if it clearly needs to be reviewed. The lessons have been designed to give as much practice as is necessary for most pupils in each phonic skill. With rare exceptions we are not teaching them to recognize whole words at this stage.
- **Do not at any time give the pupil the sound of the word they are trying to discover.** Not only does this deprive the pupil of the use of phonics skills, but it encourages them to rely on whole word recognition. The only exceptions to this rule are the very few highly irregular words such as “the” and “a,” which they are clearly told they must recognize as whole words.

The pupil may well need assistance in deciphering a word. This can include:

- Reminding them or asking them for the sound of any particular letter.
- Assisting them to divide the word into parts by covering up some parts or physical separation of letter-cards.
- Reminding them of the sounds of portions of the word they have already deciphered.

However, the final result of deciphering the whole word must be the pupil’s own discovery. If this cannot be achieved, try skipping to another word. If that is no better, either end the lesson or return to a previous lesson or pre-reading exercise. The pupil may be having a bad day, or their brain may need time to mature or catch up.

On occasion, it may require some discretion on the part of the teacher to decide whether the word has been correctly deciphered or not. A question to the pupil about the meaning of the word may be helpful.

If a word seems to have been deciphered correctly, but pronounced wrongly, it is then important for the teacher to give the correct pronunciation and attempt to have the pupil repeat the correctly pronounced word. This is the time to begin correcting this speech defect. The defect should be noted, and future lessons should include practice with the sound of this or similar words until the defect is corrected.

### **Understanding What They Read**

It is essential that pupils learn to understand what they read. Initially, students are so involved in the mechanics of sounding each word that they have little spare capacity to remember each word and put the whole sentence together into a meaningful concept.

Phonics teachers should therefore initially assist the pupil with this process by reading the sentence aloud for the pupil after they have successfully read each individual word. There is no harm in this, for the student has already gained the benefits of achieving their phonics task.

As the phonics skills are mastered, students are able to devote more of their attention to sentence comprehension, but until it is evident that pupils are comprehending sentences from their own initial reading of it, teachers should continue re-reading each sentence for the pupil.

### **Eventual Whole-Word Recognition**

Most pupils tend to remember words that have been presented to them for sounding, after several such encounters. This is good, provided that it does not occur too quickly, and deprive the student of essential practice of their phonics skills.

There are some students, however, for which this does not happen, or at least not very readily. Teachers should be alert for such students, and begin teaching them a few sight words each lesson. Beginning in Book 2 of this series, sight words are included with the lessons. These words are taken from the most frequently used words taught at least 20 lessons earlier.

The same rule should be applied more generally for **spelling words**.

### **The Student's Vocabulary**

It will soon become apparent that the vocabulary of real words presented to the pupil includes words that may be unfamiliar to them. This arrangement has two advantages. It maximizes sounding practice, and it provides an opportunity for pupils to increase their personal vocabulary.

The teacher should be aware that students may reproduce the correct sound of the word without knowing its meaning. Most students will ask, if they do not know, but others do not. For these, the teacher should ask for the meaning of uncommon words, and for all, the meaning should be given in a way that they can understand.

### **Advantages of a Good Phonic Reading Program**

Far too many young people leave school today without the ability to read, and many more cannot read well. What is worse is that many of these are firmly convinced that they lack the ability to do anything about it.

The fact that a few gifted children can learn to read readily at a very early age has led educators to believe that, given the right methods, most children should be able to begin reading at age 5 or 6.

While this may be true for many, there are some children who find themselves in a situation where peer or adult pressure dictates that they must attempt to read before their mental or physical abilities have developed sufficiently for the task. Attempting to learn to read before they are ready, frequently engenders such poor self confidence in this area that they eventually give up really trying.

The search of a method of teaching reading that will give quick results at an early age, together with the apparent complexity and irregularity of the phonic system, has led to the virtual abandonment of the method of sounding each letter (phonics) in favour of whole word recognition (sight reading). This method succeeds because it depends on memory rather than skill. However, there are problems as we shall now see.

Students who have learned to read by whole word recognition become very fluent at reading words they have learned, but generally lack the tools to read new words. They are thus locked into a very limited reading vocabulary, unless, somewhere along the line they have absorbed the principles of phonics. Since their reading vocabulary cannot easily be expanded, their speaking and thinking vocabulary is not likely to expand either, since reading is the usual source of new words.

While most people learn to cope with their limitations, it should be the aim of parents and teachers to see that the children under their care have the widest possibilities open to them.

The method of whole word recognition has been used by the Chinese since they invented their method of writing. It depends on memory alone, the same kind of memory which develops early in childhood enabling them to learn to associate a sound with an object, and hence to understand speech, and later to talk.

The Chinese system succeeds because it is pictorially based. Our words are not pictorially based. They are designed to be sounded out, and therefore lack those visual clues which would help to make whole word recognition easy.

There is nothing wrong with whole word recognition or sight reading as such. In fact almost all of us eventually learn to do it. However, those who have learned phonically learn at their own pace to sight read, and, for the most part, they do not even realize that they are doing it.

For the pupil, the rewards of sight reading, in increased ease and speed of reading, are so great that the phonics teacher needs to be continually on guard against encouraging its too early adoption by the pupil.

There are two main problems associated with learning to read by whole word recognition. For this method to succeed, pupils are encouraged to guess what a word is, if necessary reading ahead to get the context. This guessing is the beginning of an uncertainty that can pervade the whole of the learning process in all areas, and may eventually lead to discouragement with the educational process. Moreover, few would want their doctor or lawyer to guess when they read.

Even if some phonics is taught along with whole word recognition, the immediate rewards of sight reading are so great that there is little incentive for the pupil to master the skills and rules of phonics. It becomes little more than an aid in the guessing game and eventually fails to release the student from a limited reading vocabulary.

The successful teacher of phonics must be patient, accepting that initial progress will be slower than for teaching whole word recognition. The teaching of reading may also need to be delayed until the pupil is older and the necessary phonics reading skills have matured. The eventual rewards however are worth waiting for. The student does not guess. They know that they can read. They know the rules of phonics, and they know that they can tackle words they have not seen before, with confidence.

### **The Rationale of this Phonics System**

It is a basic principle of teaching to begin with simple things and progress to the more difficult. The English language is notorious for its apparent irregularity in spelling and for the complexity of its vowel sounds. Careful planning is therefore necessary if one wishes to develop a well graded reading system.

It is essential that a phonics teaching system begins with a few simple and perfectly regular sounds, which make single syllable words. For this reason phonics reading books usually begin with the short vowels. There are only six of these, and most of them are perfectly regular in their sound.

Moreover, there is such a wealth of single syllable words with short vowels that one can manage to communicate many things with these alone. It is therefore possible to construct story lines which will not only provide interest and motivation for the pupil to read, but will provide valuable practice in sounding words, leading eventually to whole word recognition.

Book 1 of this series is devoted entirely to these single syllable short vowel words. Book 2 covers consonant blends and most of the long vowel sounds with single syllable words. Book 3 completes the long vowel sounds and covers the range of multi-syllable words.

### **Word Families**

The principle of word families or grouping words together that rhyme has been adopted in this book. This has a number of advantages.

It is vitally important that the pupil's enthusiasm and confidence be maintained, especially in the early stages. It will immediately be apparent that the student finds it much easier to read a column of words where it is only the first letter that is changing.

It may be thought that this is cheating on the sounding process. This is not so. The pupil is still adding sounds together, but there are only two sounds to add instead of three. This is why it is easier. If there were more two letter words in our language, this would not be so important. As it is we must pass from two letter words to three letter words before the skill of adding two sounds is mastered. The best solution is to present the three letters, as two sounds to be added.

When presented with a family of words arranged in a column, there will of course be a tendency for the pupil to look only at the first letter and remember the second sound from the previous word(s). The story sentences are most important in correcting this tendency. It is the combined effect of the word families and the story sentences which produces the desired result.

The aim of the teacher will be towards syllable recognition as this is the basis of reading complex words. By teaching using word families including unreal words, the foundation of syllable recognition is laid.

By grouping words in families, some regularity may be perceived by the student in the complex maze of spelling. If this can be achieved, the later task of learning spelling may be considerably lightened.

An alternative method embraces the idea that the student should learn to write a word before reading it. Not only does this make the task of learning to read much slower and more daunting for the pupil, but there is a much greater tendency for the pupil to begin sight reading too soon, with consequent loss of phonics skills.

### **Simple to More Complex.**

It is a basic principle of this book that one sound only is mastered for each letter before presenting an additional sound for that letter. This is most important in helping to increase student's confidence.

The vowels in **a** and **the** do not have their normal sound. The use of these words has therefore been delayed. The sounding of **s** as if it were **z**, at the ends of words, is also delayed as long as possible. The result is that most of the early sentences, while grammatically correct, seem rather quaint to our ears. Their meaning however is readily perceived by the pupil, whose joy at being able to read, more than compensates for this quaintness.

### **Starting with Short i.**

Most phonics books begin with short **a**. The alphabet begins here, and there are more single syllable words with short **a** than any other vowel. These include a number of verbs needed for forming sentences.

However short **a** is not regular. For example, **was** is needed for story sentences, but it is pronounced using the short **o** sound, not short **a**.

Because of this irregularity, and to give the less frequently used short vowels adequate practice, short **a** has been presented after the other short vowels.

On the other hand, short **i** is perfectly regular in its pronunciation, and has almost as many single syllable words as short **a**, including the important word **is**. Also, **his** can be used in story sentences in place of the articles **a** and **the** which are irregular, and whose use has therefore been delayed.

It is well known that **e** is the most frequently used letter. It is perhaps less well known that short **i** is the most frequently used short vowel sound. We recently observed the following frequencies of short vowel sounds, averaged over four different types of text: **i** 30%, **a** 26%, **e** 22%, **o** 13%, **u** 9%.

For these reasons this book has followed the unusual course of commencing with short **i**. It is believed that both teacher and student will find this arrangement helpful.

Short **i** and short **e** are the closest in sound of any of the short vowels and students often tend to confuse them. It is therefore not a good idea to present them one after the other. Short **o** has been used in this book to separate them.

### **Printing Style.**

Beginning readers find that it is much easier for them if the letters are large and simple. It is also important that upper case **I** be distinguished from lower case **i**. Malgun Gothic has been chosen for this reason, and because the dot over the letters **i** and **j** are circular rather than square.

Alphabet cards are a big help in teaching the student the sounds of the letters. We are therefore planning to produce plastic covered alphabet cards to use in preparation for reading, using the same typeface as the book. For those without the cards, the book includes several pages of alphabet letters which may be photocopied to produce alphabet cards. This is the only portion of the book which may be copied.

While the students find it easier to begin with large letters, they eventually must learn to read using regular sized print. To assist them with this, the size of the print in this book is reduced in small steps as the student progresses.

One simple style of printing is used for the student's reading, while a different style and smaller print is used for all instructional material. This, together with the ruled margins, should help prevent any confusion.

### **Page Layout.**

Initially, all reading for the student is presented on the right hand side of the page. This eliminates one possible source of initial confusion.

The margins of the page are used for instructions and documentation. The **top right corner** has an essential summary of instructions. The **outer margin** contains a list of the new work presented in the lesson. The teacher may find this helpful when approaching a new lesson and when locating a particular lesson for revision. The **bottom margin** displays a summary of all the sounds the pupil should know by the end of that lesson. Any additional work that is thought necessary for the pupil should include only these sounds.

### **Progressive Vocabularies.**

At the end of each group of lessons dealing with a particular short vowel sound, a progressive vocabulary of words encountered up to that point is included. Should the student have difficulty with a particular word it will be a simple matter to go back to the page where it was first presented. If thought necessary, additional story lines can be constructed using these vocabularies.

### **Sounding Practice.**

At the end of each section dealing with a particular short vowel, a number of pages of sounding practice exercises are presented. They can be read both vertically and horizontally. Vertically is easier. As the student gains confidence, they can be read horizontally. They should not be over used, and parts of them may be all that is needed to practice little used consonants. Many of these words are not real words. This gives the students practice and confidence in sounding, as they are not concentrating on trying to recognize a known word. Every effort has been made to omit words which might cause offence.

### **Vowel Practice.**

A lesson of vowel practice is on page 110. Although this is at the end of the lessons, it may be helpful to give an initial presentation of this lesson earlier. This will help the pupil distinguish between vowel sounds. It also contains practice in distinguishing the letters **b** and **d**.



### **Pre-Reading Exercises from Book 1**

The full set of Pre-Reading Exercises are reproduced here, (with the exception that some of the lists have been considerably shortened). These exercises are a vital part of this whole phonics program. They should enable one to understand the graded approach presented here in this system.

## **Pre-Reading Exercises**

### **Teaching the Letter Sounds**

Before the student begins reading at Lesson 1, they should already know the sounds of most of the letters. Each letter sound should be learned well, before it is needed for reading.

As explained earlier, the **names of the letters should not be taught** until about Lesson 44, (in preparation for Book 2). Initially only one sound should be taught for each letter. This sound has been indicated on the letter-cards for each letter printed at the end of this book, by giving two words containing the sound.

The instructor should refer to each letter by its sound, not by its name. Point to the letter and say, “**What sound does this letter make?**” Keep reviewing the sounds of all the letters while teaching the reading lessons. The sounds for **th**, **ch**, and **sh** should not be taught until the student has mastered the sounds of all the individual letters.

Any method of teaching the letter sounds that does not reveal their names may be used. They may be taught as a class, in groups or individually. However the following has been found helpful in teaching individually.

The letters are most easily learned from cards. A set of letter-cards go with this book, but for those who cannot obtain them, the letters are presented at the end of this book, in a form that may be cut out or photocopied to produce cards. Other portions of the book must not be copied.

When working with the letter-cards, it is helpful to arrange the letters in a consistent orderly way in front of the pupil. The following arrangement has been found helpful.

**a b c d**

**e f g h**

**i j k l m n**

**o p q r s t**

**u v w x y z**

When arranged in this way, the vowels are at the beginning of each line.

The letters should be taught in groups of five or six at a time. Begin by teaching capital and small (lower case) letters together, using the cards that have them

combined. The capital letters are usually more easily distinguished and recognized by the pupil. When they can confidently identify the letters (giving their sound) using these cards, teach the small letters on their own. The capital letters on their own need not be learned before the reading lessons begin.

Many pupils experience difficulty distinguishing **b, d, p, q**. The following may be helpful.

Have the pupil arrange these four letters in a square pattern, depending on the position of the stem of the letter. If the stem points up, the letter is on top. If the stem is on the left, the letter is on the left, etc.

The pupil may need a little help by asking suitable questions, such as: "Does this stem point up?" When the small letters have been correctly placed by the pupil, have them place the combined capital and small letter cards beside the appropriate letter, in this way identifying, for the pupil, the small letters. The resulting pattern is:

**Bb b d Dd**

**Pp p q Qq**

Practice this frequently until the clues from the capital letters are no longer needed in order to recognize the small letters. Continue to practice this exercise until the pupil can recognize all four of these letters without placing them in a square.

If there is a lack of readiness for reading at this stage, it is probably due to an inability to consistently add (or blend) sounds together to form words. This skill is usually the last of the many skills required for reading, to mature. In the meantime, the following lessons should be found helpful in attaining reading readiness.

If the pupil has learned the sounds of the individual letters, but is unable to manage the first reading lessons, the following set of Lessons A-L should help to develop the necessary skills. Only use as many of them as are necessary for a particular student to develop these skills.

When pupils cannot manage the first or second of these lessons, the teacher is often tempted to reveal what the words are, but this quickly leads to sight reading (whole word recognition), and the skills of phonics are not learned.

These lessons are presented to the pupil using the letter-cards already used for teaching the letter sounds.

## **Lesson A**

Use six different letter-cards to write two three-letter words, one below the other. For example:

**cat**

**pig**

Point to each letter and have the pupil give the sound of each of them.

Then say:

“One of these words is **pig** and the other is **cat**. Tell me which they are.”

Initially, the pupil may have trouble remembering the two words. Repeat them as often as necessary, but say them together. This helps train the short term memory which is essential for reading.

If necessary. Have the pupil repeat the sounds of the letters in the two words.

If necessary, questions may be asked, such as:

“Is there a **t** sound in **pig**?” [Say the sound not the name of the letter.]

Or:

“Is there a **c** sound in **cat**?”

If the pupil still cannot tell which word is **cat** and which is **pig** after several such questions, try again another day with a different pair of words.

The following list of word pairs may be used for this lesson. If possible, do not use a particular pair more than once. **Only use as much of each lesson as is necessary.** We do not want to encourage sight reading at this stage. Move on to the next lesson as soon as a correct response is given consistently and without too much hesitation. When this happens, it means that the pupil has worked out a system. They may even volunteer what their system is. (“I only look at the first letter,” is their usual response to this lesson).

The words in these lessons have been chosen so that they use only the sounds already learned.

When telling pupils the two words, it is essential to vary the order of presentation by saying sometimes the top word first, and sometimes the bottom one. Otherwise the pupil may soon realize that you are always saying the top word first.

To assist the teacher to vary the order of saying the words, an **asterisk** has been placed beside the word to say first. After saying the two words, remember to say, “**Tell me which they are.**”

Word pairs for Lesson A:

cat leg wax\* pet\* rob hug dog\* lap sun\* jig\*  
 pig\* dot\* fun man sip\* pat\* pin cut\* beg run

etc.

This and the following lists have been made longer than are needed for most pupils.

## **Lesson B**

Lessons B, C, & D are similar to Lesson A, but each word pair has only one letter different. Lesson B has the first letter different, Lesson C the second letter, etc. Start the pupil on the lesson that corresponds to the system they have developed for Lesson A (if this is known), then do the other two lessons. If a lesson is too difficult, go back to the previous lesson.

Word pairs for Lesson B:

bad dip fox\* get hut\* jam kit led\* mop nap\*  
 had\* sip\* box wet\* nut ram\* pit\* red top\* sap

etc.

## **Lesson C**

Word pairs (second letter different). Only use (an, in) or (it, at) if necessary to start the following word pairs.

an\* pan bat\* leg man sun\* hat din fun get\* lad pet\*  
 in pin\* bit log\* men\* sin hot\* den\* fan\* got lid\* pot

etc.

## **Lesson D**

Word pairs (third letter different).

rat big\* dot cap\* fig\* ham mug\* jog lip pen\*  
 ran\* bit dog\* can fin had\* mud jot\* lit\* peg

etc.

## **Lesson E**

Lesson E revises Lessons B, C & D by mixing the word pair examples.

mix job\* net kid\* fog\* lax rat\* gum hip mad\*  
 fix\* jog nut\* kit fig lad\* hat gun\* hop\* mat

etc.

If more revision is required, examples can be taken from Lessons B, C & D, preferably the unused portions.

## **Lesson F**

By now the pupil should be able to distinguish the different sounds within words. They should understand how these sounds go together to form words, and be able to distinguish their order. With these skills they should be able to begin forming their own words.

Provide the pupil with a selection of letter cards (no more than 7 initially) with which they can spell the following words.

Ask the pupil to make up the following words after you say them.

Repeat the word as often as necessary until the word is spelled correctly.

When the pupil has correctly spelled the word, repeat the word, and have the pupil say (after you initially) the individual letter sounds and then the whole word, as if they were sounding it in reading. For example: **c a t cat**.

If the pupil is initially unsuccessful, do not be tempted to reveal the sounds in the word, but a little guidance can be given. Questions may be asked, such as:

“What is the first sound in **cat**?”

When the correct answer is given, if necessary, ask:

“Which letter is **c**?” [Say the sound, not the name of the letter.]

“Where will we put it?”

Similar questions can be asked for the second and third letters, but only if necessary.

Sometimes the pupil will choose the right letters, but may put them in the wrong order. Assure them that they have the right letters, and then, if necessary, questions like the above should help to get the order right.

In the following examples, a pool of letters has been suggested and printed above words that can be made from them. As the pupil gains confidence, the pool of letters can be increased to 10 or 12 if desired.

Only continue with this lesson as long as is required for the pupil to gain confidence and consistency. If more examples are required, words can be taken from Lessons A to E.

If the pupil cannot manage this lesson, return to the previous lessons.

Lesson F examples:

**b m i a n t k**

**d u s n e t g**

**e o l p g t m**

**bin, mat, bit, ban, kit**

**sun, get, nut, den**

**lot, peg, top, met etc.**

## **Lesson G**

This lesson introduces the pupil to the concept of word families, that is, words whose endings sound the same and are spelled the same way. Do not say anything to the pupil to indicate that there is any difference from the previous lesson. Let them find it out for themselves.

When the pupil realizes that only the first letter needs to be changed to make the next word, the lesson has been learned. Fix it in the mind by mixing some examples from the previous lesson with examples from this lesson.

When the pupil can recognize a word family when it is presented, proceed to the next lesson, continuing to use the examples from this lesson, but in a different way.

Sometimes the pupil may indicate readiness for the next lesson by volunteering family words before they are asked for. They may pick up a pool letter, replacing the first letter of the word with it, and then correctly say the new word they have made. Encourage this, and proceed to the next lesson after several such instances.

Sometimes pupils have difficulty transferring from one family of words to another. As long as this difficulty persists, only do one family each day. This will allow the memory of the family just done to fade, before presenting another family.

Lesson G examples:

**c t b a m i h f**

**bat, cat, fat, hat, mat**

**m t o h e d p n**

**hen, pen, ten, den, men**

**p l t i h a s n**

**sip, tip, lip, nip, hip**

**u l c g h t d o**

**cot, dot, hot, got, lot**

etc.

## **Lesson H**

This lesson uses the same examples as Lesson G, above, but the procedure is a little different. Continue from where the pupil is up to in the examples.

Set out the pool of letters and ask the pupil to make up the first word as in the previous lesson.

Repeat the sound of the word made by the pupil while pointing to the word. Quickly replace the first letter with another consonant from the pool of letters, saying:

“What is this word?”

If the pupil answers correctly, quickly replace the first letter with another consonant from the pool. If the pupil again answers correctly, repeat this until all the words in that family have been recognized. The pupil is on the verge of reading.

If the pupil recognizes one or two words correctly, but then becomes confused, it may help to return to the word in that family made by the pupil initially. If the pupil can recognize that word, return to the word that gave trouble, or another word not yet attempted.

If the pupil is quite unsuccessful, simply return to the procedure of the previous lesson.

It may be helpful to initially restrict the pupil to one word family per day, if presenting more causes confusion.

When the pupil can confidently respond, the procedure of the next lesson can be added.

## **Lesson I**

This lesson is the same as the previous one, except that additional consonants not in the pool are also used. This will usually produce unreal words which the pupil should be able to pronounce if the previous lessons have been mastered. In this way, the skills and confidence of the pupil are considerably increased.

After replacing the first letter with a consonant which makes an unreal word, say:

“This is not a real word. If it were a real word, what would it say?”

Care should be taken, lest an occasional undesirable word be introduced. The main reading Lessons, 12, 20, 28, 37, 50 may be used as a guide if necessary.

Do not use the consonants **c**, **g**, **q**, or **x**, as these can cause problems

If the pupil is unable to pronounce the unreal words, return to the procedure of the previous lesson for a while.

## **Lesson J**

This lesson introduces the sound of a two letter word or part of a word.

Begin as in the previous three lessons, by having the pupil use letter-cards from a pool of cards to make a three letter word. Remove the first letter and ask for the sound of the remaining two. Say: “What does this say?”

Begin with words ending with **-it**, **-in**, **-an**, **-at**, **up**.

For example: **fit**, **pin**, **van**, **mat** & **cup** may be used.

Follow this up with words from the other families in Lesson G. The last two letters of these words usually make sounds that are in themselves not real words, and hence are a little more difficult.

If the pupil is unable to give the sound of the last two letters of words, review Lessons G to I, then try this lesson again.

When the pupil can respond confidently, proceed to the next lesson.

## **Lesson K**

This lesson is similar to the previous lesson, but does not start with a complete word.

Using the letter-cards, present just two letters, a vowel (**a, e, i, o, u,**) followed by a consonant. However do not use **c, h, k, j, q, r, v, w,** or **y,** as these can cause problems.

The following examples may be used to begin with:

**in, it, if, ig, ib, at, ad, ap, ab, an, ed, eg, et, on, ot, og, op, up, ud, ut, ub, ug**

Ask: "What sound does this make?"

If the pupil is unable to respond correctly to the first pair of letters presented, a few other combinations can be tried. Persistent failure indicates a return to the previous lesson.

Correct confident responses show that the pupil is ready for the next and final stage of actually reading three-letter words.

## **Lesson L**

Using the letter-cards, present any three letter word from one of the above lessons. Preferably, use a word that has not been presented to the pupil before.

Remove the first letter a short distance away from the other two letters. Have the pupil give the sound of the two last letters together. Put back the first letter and the pupil should be able to give the sound of the whole word.

If the pupil fails to respond correctly, another word or two could be tried. Persistent failure indicates that Lessons H to K need revision.

As part of this lesson, the main Reading Lessons 1 to 4 can be presented using the letter cards. Having done them using the cards, it is a simple matter to transfer to using the printed page for the lessons that follow.



Sample Pages from Book 1

	<div>Lesson 19</div> <div>The first really new sound, <b>th</b>. Some people have difficulty with this sound. It is pronounced with the tongue slightly between the teeth. Now is the time to start correcting any such speech problems.</div>						
	<table><tr><td><b>th</b></td><td><b>with</b></td><td><b>thin</b></td></tr><tr><td><b>pith</b></td><td><b>moth</b></td><td><b>thick</b></td></tr></table>	<b>th</b>	<b>with</b>	<b>thin</b>	<b>pith</b>	<b>moth</b>	<b>thick</b>
<b>th</b>	<b>with</b>	<b>thin</b>					
<b>pith</b>	<b>moth</b>	<b>thick</b>					
	<div>His fig is with his tin.</div> <div>His tin with his fig on top is thin.</div>	<div>New Sounds</div> <div>th</div>					
	<div>Tim will dig in his pit with his pick.</div>						
	<div>Rick will mix his dip till it is thick.</div>						
	<div>His dog is thin. It is sick.</div>						
	<div>Sounds Learned So Far</div> <div>Short i, o; Consonants except v, y; s=z; th</div> <div>Double Letters; -ck</div>						
	45						

## Lesson 25

The second irregular consonant. Occasionally **f** can sound like **v**. Here **of** sounds as if it were **ov**. Note that when the **f** is doubled, it has its normal sound as in **off**.

**fist**                      **cost**                      **of**  
**list**                      **lost**  
**mist**

*New  
Sounds*

f=v

**Beth is not lost in the mist.**  
**Beth is on top of the hill.**  
**The mist is not on the top  
of the hill.**

**Jim did not hit Rex with his  
fist.**

**This dog is on his list.**

*Sounds Learned So Far*

Short e, i, o; All Consonants; f=v, s=z; th

Double Letters; -ck, -st

**59**

## Instructions from Book 2

### Before You Begin

The teacher should read the whole of the introductory material in Book 1 before commencing the reading lessons in this book.

### General Principles

The same principles that guided the preparation of Book 1 have been used in developing Book 2, and the same principles of teaching practice apply. In particular, it is essential that pupils continue to decipher words by their own sounding. Except for a few irregular words, students should not be told the sound of any particular word. Hence the following guidelines continue to apply.

- Do not teach the reading lessons to the whole class, or even a small group of pupils. Instead, go through the reading lessons one by one with each individual pupil. While this may be considered a disadvantage of this phonic system, it is a method that is frequently used beneficially with other reading methods. Such individual tuition has the added advantage that pupils can progress at their own pace, according to their level of maturation. This one-on-one teaching of reading is a task that teacher's aids, parents, or even older pupils can be trained to do.
- Do not go through a particular lesson more than once with each pupil unless really necessary. If a learner is struggling with a particular lesson, leave the lesson partly completed, and return to it next time, or go back to a previous lesson if it clearly needs to be reviewed. The lessons have been designed to give as much practice as is necessary for most pupils in each phonic skill.
- **Do not at any time give the pupil the sound of the word they are trying to discover.** Not only does this deprive the pupil of the practice of phonics skills, but it encourages them to rely on whole word recognition. The only exceptions to this rule are the few irregular words which they are clearly told they must memorize and recognize as whole words.

The pupil may well need assistance in deciphering a word.. This can include:

- Reminding them or asking them for the sound of any particular letter or combination of letters.
- Assisting them to divide the word into parts by covering up some parts.
- Reminding them of the sounds of portions of the word they have already deciphered.

However, the final result of deciphering the whole word must be the pupils own discovery. If this cannot be achieved, try skipping to another word. If that is no better, either end the lesson or return to a previous lesson. The pupil may be having a bad day.

On occasion, it may require some discretion on the part of the teacher to decide whether the word has been correctly deciphered or not. A question to the pupil about the meaning of the word may be helpful.

If a word seems to have been deciphered correctly, but pronounced wrongly, it is then important for the teacher to give the correct pronunciation and attempt to have the pupil repeat the correctly pronounced word. This is the time to begin correcting this speech defect. The defect should be noted, and future lessons should include practice with the sound of this or similar words until the defect is corrected.

### **Understanding What They Read**

It is essential that pupils understand what they read. By now this should not be a problem for most students. However, on occasion it may still be necessary for the teacher to assist the pupil by reading the sentence aloud after the student has successfully read each individual word.

### **Whole-Word Recognition**

Most pupils tend to remember words that have been presented to them for sounding, after several such encounters. There are some students, however, for which this does not happen very readily.

In this book, **sight words are included with most lessons**. These words are taken from the most frequently used words taught at least 20 lessons earlier. Only use these sight words for drill, if the pupil is not automatically moving to whole word recognition. It will help if these sight words are also used for **spelling words**.

Spelling words should not be chosen from some other list of more difficult words. There will be time enough for that later on.

### **Page Layout.**

The margins are used for instructions and documentation. The **top right corner** has an essential summary of instructions. The **bottom margin** displays a summary of all the sounds the pupil should know at the end of that lesson. Any additional work that is thought necessary for the pupil should include only these sounds.

### **Revision and Practice.**

In addition to the list of words for sounding and the story lines, the main text of each page includes material for Revision. This includes suggested **sight words** for those pupils who need them, and the various letter combinations making **long vowel sounds** learned to that point. These need continual revision and practice. It may be found helpful to use the final pages of this book to make cards to assist in this process.

This method of revision replaces the system of long lists of real and unreal words used in Book 1, as this would become too problematic for the long vowels.

## **Outline of Book 2**

Book 1 of this series was devoted entirely to single syllable words with short vowels, and a few ending consonant blends. Book 2 covers both beginning and ending consonant blends and most of the long vowel sounds with single syllable words. Book 3 completes the long vowel sounds and covers the range of multi-syllable words.

Various **tables of contents** have been included at the end of this book. Not only is this of assistance to the teacher when looking for a lesson to revise a particular matter, but some students like to see the big picture, and know where they are in the whole process.

Because of the size of the **vocabulary list**, only one such list is included at the end of the book, instead of the growing vocabulary lists found in Book 1.

The lessons begin by teaching the effect of silent **e** at the ends of words in making the previous vowel say its name. Therefore the names of the letters, especially the names of the vowels should have been well learned before beginning to teach the lessons in this book.

Some pupils have difficulty mastering the use of silent **e** in their sounding. This seems to be due to the fact that it involves breaking the strict sequence of moving along the word from left to right to produce the sequence of sounds.

However, the single syllable words ending in silent **e** are so regular in their behaviour, making use of the letter names, and they are so numerous, that it worthwhile beginning to introduce the long vowels using the silent **e**. To enable the short vowel sounds to become well established before introducing the long vowel alternative, the same order **i, o, e, u, a**, is followed as was used for the short vowels.

To enable the long vowel sounds to be well practiced before introducing a different one, the lessons on vowels are interspersed with lessons introducing consonant blends.

Likewise, the various ways of writing the same long vowel sound are presented one at a time, with sufficient space between each of them to enable the way already presented to be well learned before presenting a new one.

Sample Pages from Book 2

<b>Lesson 2</b> <div>This lesson continues to introduce words with the long i sound, indicated by the silent e on the end of each word.</div>				
bike	bile	fife	dive	pipe
dike	file	life	five	ripe
hike	mile	rife	hive	wipe
like	Nile	wife	jive	
Mike	pile		live	size
pike	rile	jibe		
<p>Quick Mike, hide in this pipe.  It is quite wide.  Did Mike hide in the pipe?  Yes, Mike did hide in it.  Mike is quite thin.</p>				
<p>Dan and his wife will hike with Mike.  Jim will lend Mike his back pack.  Mike will like that. The pack is his size.</p>				
<u>Suggested Sight / Spelling Words</u>				
is	will	did	his	it

*Sounds Learned So Far***11**

Short vowels except oo; f=v, s=z; ch, sh, th

Long i; Double Letters; -ck; -mp; -nd; -st

## Lesson 24

Three ending consonant pairs are here introduced: -lp, -lm, -lt

gulp	self	cult	jolt	quilt
help	elm	dolt	kilt	silt
kelp	film	felt	lilt	tilt
pulp	belt	hilt	melt	welt
yelp	bolt	jilt	pelt	wilt
elf	colt			

Do not gulp the food like that.

Can we help to make the kite?

Yes. It will be fun. Help me make it.

Mike rode in the bus.

He felt a jolt as the bus hit a bump.

This bolt on the van is loose.

We must fix it soon.

The fat is in the pan.

The fire will make it melt.

### Suggested Sight / Spelling Words

Dad          up          got          has          him

*Sounds Learned So Far*

33

Long & short vowels except OO. Long vowel combinations OO

-ck; -ft; -lf; -lp; -lt; -mp; -nd; -ng; -nt; -pt; -s; -st

**Closing Remarks**

Here we have a carefully planned and comprehensive Phonic System, designed as the result of close one-on-one interaction with pupils in the act of learning to read. The results of using this System have proved very beneficial, and I believe its time has now come. I commend it to the Senate.

Yours sincerely,

Glyn Parfitt