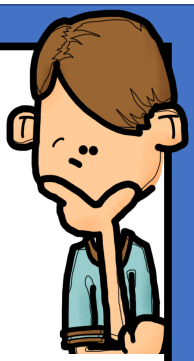
Where to start?



Does your learner know their consonant sounds? If so, they are ready to use this website!

When working with beginning readers on phonics and sight words, it is best to start at the beginning. This isn't a race and children feel more comfortable and confident when they have reached mastery before moving on.

If your child is already reading, you can use the quick test below to estimate where your learner should start. It has about ten to fifteen words and a sentence or two using each phonic pattern. If your child easily and rapidly reads the words and sentences, then move to the next level. If your child reads the words, but is not automatic, has to sound out some words or is making more than one or two errors, this might be the best level to start. Keep in mind that even though students often know words from higher levels, it does not mean they should skip to that level. Learners need a solid base at all levels.

Sight words (the 11 Dolch lists) should be tested for the correct starting place also. Learning the first Dolch list of 20 words and then moving into phonics makes reading easier and more fun. You can find the Dolch Sight Word check lists in the sight word section.

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1 cvc short vowel, -ck, -all, short vowel doubling –zz –ff –ss -ll

can	fox	red	vim	job	hub	web
big	sun	kid	jam	rot	yum	pal
*pick	hall	puff	boss	will	buzz	tell

The big dog ran to the vet for a hug.

It is fun in the hot sun.

*Quick run up the hill to see the big bull.

2 ccvcc short vowels with blends and the 4-brothers digraphs

track	frisk	prod	spun	whip
glad	splat	skin	bled	smell
when	chip	shot	that	thin

We had a plan to trap and stop the chick.

Do not slip and spill that trash.

Just then I got a whiff of the fresh fish shop.

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3 cv open syllables

be go hi so she fly

She and he can fly in the sky.

He will be so sad not to go.

We can be by the bus.

4 vce Magic e

make	kite	hope	cube	huge
hide	cape	tune	bike	while
plate	drive	slope	flute	Steve

Jake will race me twice.

Kate will ride the whale.

Mike will fly the kite.

I hope we have a fun time on the slide.

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5 vv regular double vowels

bean	play	fried	peel	toe
faint	field	float	bowl	bread

We can meet in the street, then eat a bowl of peach ice cream. Did you float your boat after the rain? I believe the monkey stole my cookie! He's a thief!

6 vr Bossy R / r- controlled vowels

star	dirt	cord	burn	herd
chart	burst	fern	horn	stir

The girl will first twirl and then turn. The barn on the farm is red. We had to sort the corn and put it in order.

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#7 Adding endings and schwa

For level 7 only, your learner needs to be accurate but not automatic to move on to level 8.
(The goal is to be aware of the schwa sound, not to memorize schwa words.)

wisdom	hundred	softest	skipping	runner
clapped	graded	mother	from	tricked
soda	above	alone	away	asleep

I got a hundred on my graded test.

The runner fell asleep above the darkest hill.

We tricked mother with our sneaky wisdom.

#8 -cle

maple	bugle	paddle	circle	stumble
wiggle	purple	noodle	little	prickle

Tell the people not to handle the hot candle in the middle of the table.

The pickle is stuck in the bottle, it will not wiggle free.

The baby is in a purple bundle in the cradle.

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9 vv irregular double vowels digraphs

coin fruit stood blue joy

fault cloud crawl moon plow

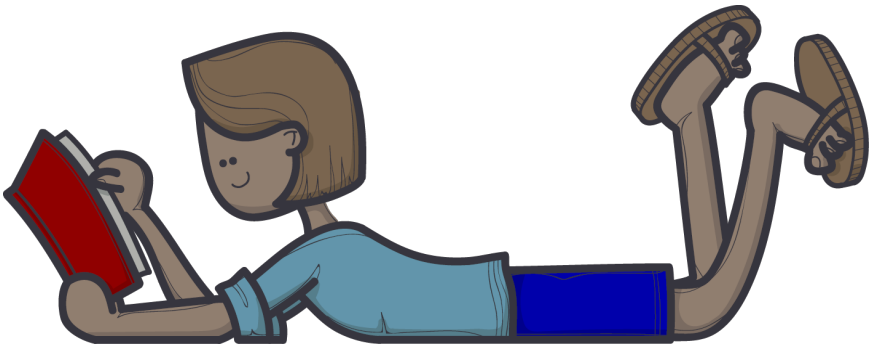
I knew the boys would enjoy the new blue toy.

We need to plow the ground to plant the flower.

Don't spill the stew on your new blue suit or you will ruin it!

10 Huge words

sunset	teacup	keyhole	contest
publish	nutmeg	tennis	submit
administrator	abnormal	attitude	accomplish
infectious	marvelous	continuous	devotion
solution	supervisor	explosion	conclusion



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