

Reading is Magic



**Teach Your Child to
Read at Home**



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About the Author

Marilyn Martyn trained as a teacher and librarian specializing in children's literature and developed a career around her love of books and reading.

She also spent some time as an education consultant for two publishers, visiting many schools.

She has taught children from prep grade to year nine in secondary schools.

Modern reading research supports the importance of early, systematic and explicit teaching of how to hear the sounds in words and how to sound out words. This teaching needs to occur, in the early stages of learning to read, as part of a comprehensive reading program.

Introduction

This book outlines how you can help your child learn to read.

Phonics, a proven method of teaching reading based on phonetics (the science dealing with speech sounds) is explained.

The method I outline for you in this book is based on my experience over many years.

It can help you to re-enforce the lessons your child gets at school.

Reading and spelling go hand in hand.

You can contribute to your child's literacy development by reading to him or her on a daily basis.

Providing a print rich environment really matters. The reading of stories together should be as free and interrupted as possible.

Let your child enjoy a story with you. This is not teaching time!



There are **four important parts** to improving your child's reading and spelling skills:

They are:

1. **Phonics:** The relationships between letters and sounds.
2. **Fluency:** The ability to read quickly and naturally, recognizing words automatically, and grouping words quickly.
3. **Vocabulary knowledge:** Remembering new words and what they mean.
4. **Text comprehension:** Processing what is being read and developing higher-order thinking skills.

I have outlined the following for you:

- § The sounds of English and the combinations of letters that represent them.
- § How to blend sounds into words and how to spell them.
- § How to recognize words.
- § Spelling patterns for English words.



You will know how to teach your child:

- The main letter sound relationships.
- § To read simple sentences.

Steady mastering of the basic reading skills outlined in this book will lead to
READING FLUENCY.

Understanding Phonics

When we speak, we join sounds together to make words.

We form these words into sentences.

The sounds of the English language are sorted into 2 groups.

1) Vowel sounds

2) Consonant sounds

English has

18 vowel sounds

25 consonant sounds

These sounds are used to make hundreds of thousands of words.

Words are a collection of vowel and consonant sounds blended together.

Every word must have at least one vowel sound.

A **syllable** is a word or part of a word with only one vowel sound. Most English words have 2 or more syllables.

We use the 26 letters in the English alphabet to represent the 18 vowel sounds and 25 consonant sounds.

The English Alphabet has 26 letters to spell around 44 sounds.

This means that English is more complicated than if there was one letter for every sound.

Also, English vowel sounds may be spelled in different ways.

This is why English spelling can be confusing at times.

Phonemic (Sound) Awareness

When a child has phonemic awareness they are aware that words are made up of sounds. They will then be able to hear individual sounds in words and change them around.

Phonemic awareness is not phonics. Phonemic awareness is sound awareness.

Phonics deals with the relationships between sounds and the letters that spell them.

Phonemic awareness activities should be oral. Do them often in short bursts and make them fun.

What should your child be able to do?

- **Hear rhymes and alliteration (rhyming words)**

Activity: Read nursery rhymes and short poems and stories that contain rhyming words. Ask your child to tell you the words that rhyme.

- **Notice how words begin with different sounds.**

Activity: Show some pictures (example she, sun, man) which picture begins with a different sound? (man)

- **Blend the sounds in words and split them up.**

Activity: Say the first sound in a word and then the rest of the word.

(f -at) Ask your child to tell you the word. Say a word and get your child to clap the syllables. (hap/py –2 claps). Break words up into their individual sounds.

- **Hear the individual sounds in words.**

Activity:

Say a word your child knows slowly. Ask them to tell you the sounds in the word. (Example: m/a/t)

- Replace sounds in one word to make a different word

Activity:

Say the word dog. Replace the first sound /d/ with /l/. What is the new word?

If your child finds these activities difficult don't panic but speak to a child specialist about it. It can be a warning sign that your child may experience difficulty in learning to read and write.

This is what one reading expert has said:

"The two best predictors of early reading success are alphabet recognition and phonemic awareness. " *Marilyn Jager Adams*

The Alphabet – Lower Case Letters

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	English Alphabet Lower Case Letters	

The Alphabet – Upper Case Letters

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	English Alphabet Upper Case Letters	

Sounds

English, like other languages, has two types of sounds:

1) Vowel Sounds: Vowel sounds are voiced causing the vocal chords to vibrate. The sound passes freely through the mouth. Vowels add volume to speech.

2) Consonant Sounds: Consonant sounds are made by touching mouth parts together. Some consonants are also voiced using the vocal chords and some are not. Consonants are hard to separate from vowels.

We blend **vowel sounds** and **consonant sounds** together to form words.

Every word has to contain at least one vowel sound.

Syllables

Syllables are parts of words that contain a vowel sound. If a word has one vowel sound, it has one syllable. If a word has more than one vowel sound it may have two, three or more syllables.

Most English words have 2 or more syllables.

rab/bit 2 syllables	Sat/ur/day 3 syllables	be/cause 2 syllables	be/gan 2 syllables
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43 Sounds of the English Language

18 Vowel Sounds		25 Consonant Sounds	
Sound	Key Word	Sound	Key Word
/a/	apple	/b/	boy
/e/	egg	/d/	dog
/i/	ink	/f/	frog
/o/	orange	/g/	girl
/u/	umbrella	/h/	hat
/a-e/	cake	/j/	jet
/ee/	feet	/k/	kite
/ie/	pie	/l/	lion
/oe/	coat	/m/	monkey
/ue/	flute	/n/	net
/air/	stair	/p/	pig
/ar/	bar pa	/r/	rabbit
/er/	fern bird hurt	/s/	sun
/oi/	boil boy	/t/	turtle
/oo/ short	book	/v/	van
/oo/ long	soon	/w/	watch
/or/	for law	/y/	yam
/ow/	cow house	/x/	fox
<p>English also has the schwa sound. The schwa sound is made when a vowel sound is spoken softly and it sounds like /uh/ or /er/</p> <p>Examples</p> <p>away (uhway)</p> <p>over (ovuh)</p> <p>doctor (docter)</p> <p>dinosaur (dinersaur)</p>		/z/	zip
		/ch/	chip
		/ng/	sing
		/qu/	quit
		/sh/	ship
		/th/ unvoiced	thin
		/th/ voiced	them
		/zh/	vision

Activities:

1. Drawing objects and writing names
2. Writing word families (log, dog, fog, frog) and drawing pictures
3. Writing action words (verbs) and drawing or doing the action
4. Copying a nursery rhyme from a book.
5. Filling missing letters in words. Use whiteboards. Kids love doing this.
6. Looking at a picture writing the names of things in it.
7. Writing short sentences. Writing them on card. Cutting out each word. Putting the sentences together again.
8. Drawing pictures for a word in a sentence. Sit in the (PICTURE OF A CHAIR) Jack.

How Sounds are Spelled in Words

About 87% of English words follow the accepted spelling rules. Up to 13% may contain at least one irregularly spelled vowel sound. Understanding the spelling of vowel sounds will help with your spelling.

5 short vowel sounds:

ant egg ink not but

5 long vowel sounds:

cake feet pie boat rude

The long vowel sounds in English have more than one spelling. This can be confusing.

Diphthongs are sounds spoken so quickly that it seems like only one sound is made.

round/how oil/boy haul/jaw

These examples show how the sounds can be spelled in different ways.

Vowel Digraphs -two letters used to spell one sound.

Digraph OO is a vowel digraph (two letters used to spell one sound) which can be used to represent a short sound or a long sound:

Long sound: **soon** Short sound: **look**

Vowel Digraphs - r controlled vowel sounds:

turn fern bird park fork

Consonant Sounds (One letter spells one sound)

get hot jug lap man net pig rat sun tap van win yell zip

Consonant digraphs (two letters spell one sound)

chop ship thin this whip sing

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