

Pioneer Valley Books has a strong commitment to provide research-based literacy solutions to our school partners. Our products combine the science of literacy with the latest research on the principles of learning and how that translates into effective literacy resources that ensure students' success.

For more than 25 years, Pioneer Valley Books has partnered with educators, conducted research, collected data, and built literacy programs and tools that support students' literacy growth and teachers' professional learning. Each new product or program is driven by educational leaders and literacy experts to ensure the development of evidence-based learning solutions. We strive to deliver better literacy results and better reading experiences in the classroom.

The Pioneer Valley Books Product Research and Development Cycle:



Stage 1: Needs Assessment and Background Research

With the help of educators and literacy leaders, we identify challenges. After conducting background research, we then propose a resource or curriculum to address the needs of teachers and learners.

Stage 2: Development and Design

As we develop the solution, we conduct trials and testing with students and teachers in

classrooms and schools. We use that data and feedback to guide improvements throughout the production process.

Stage 3: Impact

We partner with researchers and educators to measure the effectiveness of our programs in classrooms across different settings with diverse student populations.

Phonics Launch has been developed based on the most current research on literacy acquisition. Phonics Launch meets ESSA Tier 4 standards. This curriculum is built around a well-defined logic model, is informed by research, and is currently under evaluation.

Curriculum Overview

Phonics Launch is a research-based, foundational skills curriculum that provides a structured literacy approach to phonics instruction. Lessons can be used by K–2 classroom teachers; intervention, ELL, and special education teachers; and support staff who are teaching children to read and write. Each kit contains lesson plans for systematic, explicit phonics instruction paired with beautifully illustrated decodable storybooks. Multimodal letter learning and phonics tools foster vibrant student learning experiences. The lessons provide differentiated instruction in phonemic awareness, alphabetics, phonics, decoding, and encoding—all critical elements in a science-based reading program.



Lessons are designed around:

- a systematic instructional scope and sequence, with phonics skills threaded throughout every part of the lesson
- engaging multimodal activities that build phonemic awareness connected to the phonics skill
- high-impact phonics routines, such as sound boxes, making words, analogy charts, and breaking words
- daily application of phonics skills to authentic reading and writing experiences
- beautifully illustrated decodable readers that keep previously taught and newly acquired phonic elements at the forefront
- carefully crafted dictated sentences and guided writing designed to reinforce and extend students' phonemic awareness, phonics, and bank of sight words, and build and deepen comprehension

The Phonics Launch Kits align with the phonics continuum:

- Ready, Set, Go provides the most novice reader with opportunities to develop concepts of print, such as one-to-one matching and return sweep, as well as practice in decoding using consonant sounds and short vowels.
- On Our Way provides the beginning reader with opportunities to practice decoding CVC words, words with initial and final digraphs, and simple words with initial blends.
- Building Up provides the early reader with opportunities to practice decoding words with final blends, digraph blends, long vowels, and vowel teams.
- Moving On provides the early/transitional reader with opportunities to practice decoding words with more variable and challenging sounds, such as vowel-*r* combinations, diphthongs, and digraph and three-letter blends, as well as compound and multisyllable words.
- Lifting Off provides the transitional reader opportunities to practice decoding multisyllabic words with common prefixes and suffixes, as well as words with challenging sounds such as vowel-*r* combinations, vowel teams, trigraphs, diphthongs, and digraph and three-consonant blends.

See Appendix A for a more detailed scope and sequence for each kit.

Weekly Lesson Framework

	DAYS 1 AND 3	DAYS 2 AND 4
STEP 1	Learning Letters/Phonemic Awareness	Sight Word Review
STEP 2	Phonics	Phonics
STEP 3	Applying Phonics (Reading)	Applying Phonics (Writing)

How *Phonics Launch* Aligns with Current Research

To develop literacy, students need instruction in foundational skills. Each instructional component of Phonics Launch is built around standards and current research that has established that students need to develop strong spelling-sound correspondences and solidify a store of high-frequency words to read fluently. The primary features of Phonics Launch are alphabet knowledge instruction, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, high-frequency words, and immediate transfer of phonics skills to print (reading and writing). Each component is backed by scientific research that verifies phonics instruction's positive effects on student learning and reading proficiency.

Alphabet Knowledge Instruction. Alphabet knowledge is an important learning goal for young children. A growing body of research demonstrates reciprocal relationships between letter name and sound knowledge and suggests that instruction in letter names may facilitate letter-sound learning for those letters whose names also include their sounds (Piasta & Wagner, 2010; Rayner et al., 2001). Phonics Launch lessons teach the components of letter-sound knowledge and phonemic awareness using developmentally appropriate strategies and activities. Each lesson has students using tactile and multimodal tools that provide opportunities to develop knowledge and encourage curiosity about letters through explicit and systematic instruction.

Phonemic Awareness. Students with strong phonemic awareness hear and manipulate sounds in words. The combination of letter work and phonemic awareness fosters sophisticated skills needed for decoding words, such as

phoneme segmenting, blending, and substitution (Adams, 1990; Blevins, 2019). Phonics Launch lessons include engaging activities that teach students to identify, blend, segment, and manipulate phonemes. The explicit instruction includes teacher explanation and modeling before students do the procedure independently and draws on the reciprocal relationship between phonics and phonemic awareness.

Phonics. Systematic phonics instruction is essential to becoming a proficient reader (Rayner et al., 2001; National Reading Panel, 2000). It is important to develop a continuum of easier to more complex skills (Blevins, 2019). During the phonics portion of the Phonics Launch lesson, teachers are given a variety of effective, engaging, and research-based procedures that explicitly teach phonics using analogic, analytic, and synthetic approaches designed to support students in learning letters, sounds, sight words, high-frequency words, phoneme-grapheme mapping, spelling patterns, inflectional endings, and morphemic units. Phonics is also explicitly taught during the reading of the book. To facilitate rapid word solving, children are taught to break words in useful and flexible ways (Kaye, 2006; Ehri et al., 2001). (See Appendix A for the Phonics Launch scope and sequence for teaching phonics, according to kit.)

High-Frequency Words. Skilled readers are able to read individual words accurately and quickly in isolation. When a reader is able to quickly read words, they can focus their attention on constructing meaning (Ehri, 2005). Research informs us that it is important to teach regular and irregular high-frequency words so students can recognize them efficiently (Foorman et al., 2016). Explicit instruction in high-frequency words likely increases students' sight word banks. Phoneme-grapheme mapping can support learning new words by sight and spelling words from memory. The letters that students see and the sounds they hear get processed together as a sight word, which is then stored in the brain (Ehri, 2014). The collection of decodable Phonics Storybooks used in Phonics Launch has a carefully sequenced set of high-frequency words that provides students with multiple opportunities to read and reread the new sight words in context. Then, to support the acquisition of new words, Phonics Launch lessons include a phoneme-grapheme mapping routine. Once students are introduced to the new high-frequency word and map it, they then have many opportunities to practice the new words in isolation and in

the context of reading and writing. Using this multilayered approach ensures students quickly develop a large bank of sight words.

Immediate Transfer of Phonics Skills to Print (Reading and Writing).

In Phonics Launch, connected phonemic awareness and phonics activities are immediately transferred to print (decoding/encoding). Research shows that students need daily opportunities to apply their phonics skills to real reading and writing experiences (Kilpatrick, 2015; Blevins, 2016).

Applying New Skills to Reading. The goal of phonics instruction is for students to be able to read text independently (Blevins, 2019). There is clear evidence that students benefit from opportunities to practice new phonics skills by reading text that includes the skills they have just learned (Blevins, 2016; Duke & Mesmer, 2019). Decodable readers are intended to be used for explicit instruction in how to decode or apply phonics skills to reading words. Researchers have defined decodability by two features: 1) the proportion of words with phonetically regular relationships between letters and sounds and 2) the degree of match between the letter-sound relationship and what the reader has been taught (Mesmer, 2000). Pioneer Valley Books has created a collection of decodable Phonics Storybooks around which the Phonics Launch lessons have been written. Each book aligns explicitly and intentionally with the lesson's targeted phonics skill and a new high-frequency word as well as a review of previously taught phonics skills and high-frequency words. The books are beautifully illustrated, with natural language structures and interesting story plots that support young readers in making meaning.

Applying New Skills to Writing. Writing can be a valuable tool for supporting phonics instruction and helping students develop their reading skills. As children learn to write, they become more familiar with the relationship between letters and their sounds. This helps them to identify and recognize letter-sound correspondences when they encounter them in reading (Graham & Hebert, 2011). Writing requires children to think about how words are spelled. This helps them to develop phonemic awareness, which is the ability to identify and manipulate the individual sounds in

words. Writing can also help children to recognize words more quickly and accurately (Ehri, 1987). As they write words repeatedly, they become more familiar with their spelling and are better able to recognize them when they encounter them in reading. Moreover, when children write, they often use their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences to encode unfamiliar words.

Emphasis on Reading and Writing as a Reciprocal Process. The Phonics Launch curriculum is rooted in the principle that reading and writing are reciprocal processes. In the lessons, students read (decode) one day and then write (encode) the next, directly applying the phonics skills they have learned in the first part of the lesson. Extensive research has revealed positive effects for integrating reading and writing (Shanahan, 1990). The complexities of reading merge during guided writing as children use phonics, orthography, language structures, and newly learned vocabulary to write about the text.

Closing Thoughts

Phonics Launch is anchored in evidence-based literacy research and effective classroom practice. Developed in concert with educators in the field and literacy experts, Phonics Launch provides flexible, data-driven instruction designed to support teachers as they help their students become better readers. Phonics Launch is an effective and engaging curriculum that sets students up to be strong, successful readers.

The goal of Phonics Launch is simple: to help all students become powerful and joyful readers who just can't wait to read another book!!

APPENDIX A: Phonics Launch Scope and Sequence by Kit

PHONICS STORYBOOKS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE READY, SET, GO SET 1

BOOK	TITLE	SIGHT WORD	PHONICS FOCUS
1	<i>Nan the Bear Cub</i>	can	Initial consonants: c and n
2	<i>What Can Pam See?</i>	see	Initial consonants: p and s
3	<i>Who Is in My Van?</i>	my	Initial consonants: m and v
4	<i>What Is Red?</i>	is	Initial consonants: b and r
5	<i>The Fox</i>	the	Initial consonants: f and h
6	<i>A Tiny Dog</i>	at	Initial consonants: d and t
7	<i>We Can Go!</i>	we	Short vowel: a
8	<i>Wag in the Zoo</i>	in	Initial consonants: w and z
9	<i>Be Quiet, Wag!</i>	am	Initial consonant: q Short vowel: a
10	<i>Kitten, Go Home</i>	go	Initial consonants: g and k
11	<i>I Like the Store</i>	like	Initial consonants: l and j
12	<i>Who Can Sit?</i>	to	Initial consonant: y Short vowel: i
13	<i>Tim and the Pig</i>	and	Short vowel: i
14	<i>The Sock</i>	got	Short vowel: o
15	<i>Who Can Hop?</i>	no	Final consonant: x Short vowel: o
16	<i>Fun in the Mud</i>	it	Short vowel: u
17	<i>The Bug</i>	me	Short vowel: u
18	<i>Where Is the Hen?</i>	yes	Short vowel: e
19	<i>A Little Hen</i>	on	Short vowels: e and a
20	<i>Sid the Big Pup</i>	can	Short vowels: i and u
21	<i>The Hat</i>	look	Short vowels: a and o
22	<i>Where Is Ben?</i>	see	Short vowels: e and o
23	<i>The Race</i>	am	Short vowels: a and i
24	<i>At the Top</i>	here	Short vowels: o and u

PHONICS STORYBOOKS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE
ON OUR WAY SET 1

BOOK	TITLE	SIGHT WORD	PHONICS FOCUS
1	<i>Wag Is a Yappy Dog</i>	look	Short vowel: a
2	<i>Tip and Fin</i>	here	Short vowel: i
3	<i>Big and Little Cats</i>	you	Short vowels: a and i
4	<i>Rox the Fox</i>	for	Short vowel: o
5	<i>Bud and Mutt</i>	come	Short vowel: u
6	<i>Dot the Pug</i>	like	Short vowels: o and u
7	<i>Jen's Pet Hen</i>	and	Short vowel: e
8	<i>Hens</i>	out	Short vowels: a and e
9	<i>Rusty Wins</i>	said	Short vowels: i and o
10	<i>I Am a Bat</i>	are	Short vowels: a and u
11	<i>Tig the Pig</i>	looked	Short vowels: e and i
12	<i>Jen's Hen and the Fox</i>	going	Short vowels: a, e, i, o, and u
13	<i>Shoo, Cat, Shoo!</i>	went	Short vowels Initial digraph: sh
14	<i>Jen's Hen and the Chick</i>	where	Short vowels Initial digraph: ch
15	<i>Thump in the Night</i>	your	Short vowels Initial digraph: th
16	<i>Chip Likes to Chew</i>	will	Short vowels Initial digraphs: ch and sh
17	<i>The Moth in the Woods</i>	this	Final digraph: th
18	<i>The Choo Choo Train</i>	they	Short vowels Initial and final digraphs: ch and th
19	<i>Such a Big Fish</i>	help	Short vowels Initial and final digraphs: ch, sh, and th
20	<i>Fun in the Rain</i>	play	Initial blend: dr
21	<i>Don't Cry</i>	make	Initial blend: br
22	<i>The Pond</i>	I'm	Initial blend: fl
23	<i>The Sloth</i>	down	Initial blend: sl
24	<i>Quack and the Fox</i>	then	Initial blend: sp

PHONICS STORYBOOKS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE
BUILDING UP SET 1

BOOK	TITLE	SIGHT WORD	PHONICS FOCUS
1	<i>A Trunk in the Road</i>	one	Final blend: <i>nk</i>
2	<i>A Yummy Plant</i>	want	Final blend: <i>nt</i>
3	<i>The Pest</i>	some	Final blend: <i>st</i>
4	<i>Camping with Gramps</i>	now	Final blend: <i>mp</i>
5	<i>A Rafting Trip</i>	was	Final blend: <i>ft</i>
6	<i>A Grand Plan</i>	find	Final blend: <i>nd</i>
7	<i>A Birthday Cake</i>	after	Long vowel pattern: <i>a_e</i>
8	<i>A Fine Place to Hide</i>	another	Long vowel pattern: <i>i_e</i>
9	<i>Some Fun</i>	great	Long vowel pattern: <i>u_e</i>
10	<i>Smoke!</i>	began	Long vowel pattern: <i>o_e</i>
11	<i>A Bike for Little Knight</i>	thank	V <i>Ce</i> long vowel patterns with: <i>a, i, o, and u</i>
12	<i>Izzy the Inchworm</i>	what	Digraph blend: <i>nch</i>
13	<i>The Green Jeep</i>	next	Long e vowel team: <i>ee</i>
14	<i>Peach Has an Adventure</i>	please	Long e vowel team: <i>ea</i>
15	<i>Sunny the Seal</i>	keep	Long e vowel teams: <i>ea</i> and <i>ee</i>
16	<i>A Lion's Tail</i>	very	Long a vowel team: <i>ai</i>
17	<i>The Boat Ride</i>	think	Long a vowel team: <i>ay</i>
18	<i>Brave and Brainy Daisy</i>	rain	Long vowel pattern: <i>a_e</i> Long a vowel teams: <i>ai</i> and <i>ay</i>
19	<i>Clarence Goes to School</i>	because	Vowel team: <i>oo</i> (as in <i>cool</i>)
20	<i>The Redwood Forest</i>	there	Vowel team: <i>oo</i> (as in <i>look</i>)
21	<i>Mylo Moose's Loose Tooth</i>	again	Vowel teams: <i>oo</i> and <i>oo</i>
22	<i>The Toad</i>	little	Long o vowel team: <i>oa</i>
23	<i>Lessons from a Crow</i>	know	Long o vowel team: <i>ow</i> (as in <i>tow</i>)
24	<i>Frogs and Toads</i>	who	Vowel teams: <i>oa, oe, and ow</i>

PHONICS STORYBOOKS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE
MOVING ON SET 1

BOOK	TITLE	SIGHT WORD	PHONICS FOCUS
1	<i>The List</i>	there	Vowel-r combinations: ar
2	<i>The Bluebird</i>	many	Vowel-r combinations: ir
3	<i>Corny Jokes</i>	why	Vowel-r combinations: or
4	<i>Bunny and the Lion</i>	already	Vowel-r combinations: ur
5	<i>Homer Goes to Summer Camp</i>	would	Vowel-r combinations: er
6	<i>Joey and the Fox</i>	walked	Y as in i (<i>cry</i>) and e (<i>baby</i>)
7	<i>All about Sharks</i>	first	Vowel-r combinations: ar, er, ir, or, and ur
8	<i>The Pig Rescue</i>	finally	Three-letter blends: str and squ
9	<i>All about Shrimp</i>	water	Three-letter blend: scr Digraph blend: shr
10	<i>The Barred Owl</i>	large	Diphthong vowel team: ow
11	<i>Who Is Super Sam?</i>	friend	Diphthong vowel team: ou
12	<i>My Nephew Drew</i>	knew	Diphthong vowel team: ew
13	<i>The Mermaid Statue</i>	laughed	Long u vowel team: ue
14	<i>The Fawn and the Hawk</i>	wrong	Diphthong vowel team: aw
15	<i>Uncle Saul</i>	couldn't	Diphthong vowel team: au
16	<i>The Plowboy</i>	thought	Diphthong vowel team: oy
17	<i>Poison Ivy</i>	special	Diphthong vowel team: oi
18	<i>Ozoy and the Asteroid</i>	only	Diphthongs (all)

PHONICS STORYBOOKS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE
LIFTING OFF SET 1

BOOK	TITLE	PHONICS FOCUS
1	<i>The Hare and the Carrots</i>	Vowel-r combinations: <i>are</i>
2	<i>The Chocolate Eclairs</i>	Vowel-r combinations: <i>air</i>
3	<i>A New School Year</i>	Vowel-r combinations: <i>ear</i> and <i>our</i>
4	<i>Petey Pelican Soars</i>	Vowel-r combinations: <i>oar</i> and <i>ore</i>
5	<i>All about Pelicans</i>	Three-letter blend: <i>spl</i> Digraph blend: <i>thr</i>
6	<i>The White Whale</i>	Digraph: <i>wh</i>
7	<i>A Night Adventure</i>	Long <i>i</i> vowel team: <i>igh</i>
8	<i>The Sleigh Ride Rescue</i>	Long <i>a</i> vowel team: <i>eigh</i>
9	<i>Chief</i>	Long <i>i</i> vowel team: <i>ie</i>
10	<i>Bear's Sweater</i>	Vowel team: <i>ea</i> (as in bread)
11	<i>The City Yard Sale</i>	Soft <i>c</i> and <i>g</i>
12	<i>Badger's Bridge</i>	Trigraph: <i>dge</i>
13	<i>The Smartest Mouse</i>	Suffix: <i>-est</i>
14	<i>The Harriet Tubman Report</i>	Suffix: <i>-ly</i>
15	<i>A Visit from Pops</i>	Suffix: <i>-ful</i>
16	<i>Pearl the Polar Bear</i>	Prefix: <i>un-</i>
17	<i>Danny and the Saxophone</i>	Suffix: <i>-ment</i>
18	<i>Miracle the Baby Bat</i>	Prefix: <i>dis-</i>

APPENDIX B: Phonics Activities Used in Phonics Launch

ACTIVITY	PURPOSE FOR PHONICS ACTIVITIES
New Sight Word	Link phonemes to graphemes for regular and irregular high-frequency words to support the orthographic processing system
Sound Boxes	Hear and record sounds in sequence to encode new words; left to right visual scanning
Picture Sorting	Hear initial phonemes or medial vowels and link those sounds to letters
Making Words	Monitor sounds and letters (synchrony) to encode words; manipulate letter(s) to decode new words
Emergent Breaking Words	Hearing and recognizing rime in words to foster decoding; building phoneme-grapheme correspondences
Breaking Words	Break words into smaller parts to promote efficient decoding skills (onset and rime) and to recognize common rimes in words
Make a Big Word	Make and break multisyllabic words into syllables to decode and encode new words (syllabication)
Analogy Charts	Hear differences in minimal contrast words; generalize a pattern in known words to decode and encode unknown words (analogy)
Breaking Big Words	Break words into smaller parts (onset, rime, and inflectional ending) to promote efficient decoding
Writing Words	Use phoneme-grapheme mapping to encode new words (auditory and visual synchrony)
Reading and Writing Words	Monitor sounds and letters (synchrony) to encode words; manipulate letter(s) to decode new words.
Advanced Breaking Big Words	Break words at the syllables and blend the parts to promote decoding of multisyllabic words
Write a Big Word	Use knowledge of affixes to decode and encode multisyllabic words (morphology)

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