

HAPPY CHEETAH READING

WHERE TO START?

Because you'll always be connecting new information to old, start with what your student knows. This helps your student feel safe, and believe that they can succeed.

If you are not sure where to place your student between two grades, *start with the lower grade.*

It is far better for your child to experience immediate success and a boost in self-confidence than for your student to start off feeling behind.

Assessment

1 STEP 1

Can your student do these tasks:

1. Write all capital and lowercase letters?
2. Identify which sounds go with which letters?
3. Accurately write short words, such as "lag," "mug," and "fed"?

Can your student do these tasks:

- In less than five minutes, read and write, using all lowercase letters, these high frequency words: mom, dad, dog, cat, stop, jump, red, help, fun, sit, run?
- Write his or her full name properly, beginning with capital letters?
- Identify vowels and vowel chunks (two vowels together, as in *raccoon*)?
- Begun to learn basic grammar, such as when to capitalize, what to use at the end of sentences, and quotation marks around speech?
- Read the following passage quickly and easily, with no hesitation, no sounding words out, and missing no more than two words? I have small pink ears. I have a long, thin tail. I say, "Squeak! Squeak!" I am gray. I am a mouse. "Eeek!"

Yes?

If you are confident in your student's ability to do all of this, move to the next set of questions.

Even if you are pretty sure that your student is more advanced, Dr. Karen encourages families to start here.

No?

Start with Happy Cheetah K. In this grade, your student will:

- Learn to write all capital and lowercase letters quickly and easily.
- Copy short sentences, like: "My fish is orange."
- Identify which sounds go with which letters.
- Accurately write short words, such as "lag," "mug," and "fed."
- Read thirty simple stories that accompany the Level 1 Workbook.
- Learn to write his or her name properly, starting with a capital and using lowercase letters.
- Learn to read dozens of non-phonetic words, such as *water, towel, polka-dot, look, boat, yellow, shells, and find.*
- Practice identifying vowels and vowel chunks (two vowels together, as in *raccoon*), the start of spelling instruction.
- Start working with basic grammar and punctuation.
- Practice the intuitive reading methods that all successful readers use.
- Sound out and write high frequency words easily and quickly, using lowercase letters.

2 STEP 2

Can your student read this passage quickly and easily, missing only 2-3 words? If your student misses "Komodo" the first time, because it is unfamiliar, your student should be able to read it correctly the next two times.



Do not simply count the number of wrong words. Besides the number of words missed, is your student able to read this fluently, so that it sounds like a story?

If your student is trying to sound out words, or hesitating for ten seconds or more before saying a word, this is the right grade level for your child.

Komodo dragons are big lizards. They can grow to be ten feet long. They are the world's largest lizard. They can run up to 13 miles per hour. Komodo dragons can weigh nearly 200 pounds. They can have up to 60 teeth that look like shark teeth. Komodo dragons lay 15 to 30 eggs in the ground. Their eggs are rubbery and get bigger as the babies grow.

Yes?

If you are confident in your student's ability to do this, move to the next part of the assessment.

No?

Start with Happy Cheetah Reading Grade 1.

With Grade 1, students build on what they already know, and rapidly expand on what they already know. It is an excellent level to continue to grow reading confidence and fluency.

In this level, your student will:

- Gain additional new vocabulary.
- Learn to read a wide range of challenging words, starting with words like *pizza*, *elephant*, *bubbles*, *sweet*, and *books*, and ending with words like *camouflage*, *museums*, *weigh*, *lantern*, *social*, and *tongue*
- Continue to work on identifying vowels and vowel chunks, developing the visual memory necessary for proper spelling.
- Continue working with basic grammar and punctuation.
- Continue to practice the intuitive reading methods that all successful readers use.
- Sound out and write additional high frequency words easily and quickly, using lowercase letters.

3 STEP 3

Can your student read this passage quickly and easily, missing only 2-3 words? If your student misses a name the first time, because it is unfamiliar, your student should be able to read it correctly the next two times.

Do not simply count the number of wrong words. More important than total missed vocabulary words is

whether your student is able to read this passage fluently, so that it sounds like a story.

If your student is trying to sound out words, or hesitating for ten seconds or more before saying a word, one of the earlier levels would be a better option.

Henry and Greta each put icing on an empty milk carton. They stuck graham crackers on the icing. Then it was time to decorate.

Henry stuck gumdrops on his roof. Greta made a door out of peppermints. Then she put a peppermint in her mouth.

The lady winked at Greta. "You are nibbling like a mouse!" she said.

"This is fun," said Henry. "Let's come again next week!"

Yes?

If you are confident in your student's ability to do this, *congratulations!* Your student is too advanced for the Happy Cheetah Reading System.

If you still suspect your student could use remedial help, Dr. Karen addresses the most common difficulties she sees in *Dr. Karen's Cure for Reading and Writing Challenges*. Read that book for recommendations on how to help your student move forward.

No?

Start with Happy Cheetah Reading Grade 2.

With Grade 2, your student's rate of improvement skyrockets. As your student reads ever longer passages—with several short paragraphs per page—they continue to grow reading confidence and fluency.

In this level, your student will:

- Gain a lot of additional new vocabulary.
- Read both nonfiction and fiction.
- Focus on vowel chunks, Bossy-R words, and suffixes, in order to develop the visual memory necessary for proper spelling.
- Continue working with basic grammar and punctuation.
- Continue to practice the intuitive reading methods that all successful readers use.
- Sound out and write additional high frequency words easily and quickly, using lowercase letters.

