

Kindergarten Literacy

First Books Handbook

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First Books

Introduction

This set of 40 decodable readers has been developed for use with students in Kindergarten, Year 1, Year 2 and older students who struggle to learn to read.

The readers are an extension of the Ants in the Apple Reading and Spelling Program. Regular and irregular words are first introduced and practised in isolation; these same words are then practised in sentences and finally presented in reading passages (First Books). This gives students the opportunity to practise and utilise newly learned words in connected text. First Books are constructed so that the progression from one reader to another, and from one level to the next, is both smooth and simple.

The Structure of First Books

The First Books are designed to be used in conjunction with the Ants in the Apple spelling, phonemic awareness, phonics and handwriting programs, which are based on the **Carnine order** for the teaching of the alphabet (Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, Slocum, & Travers, 2016, p.62).

Please Note:

A simple black and white illustration matches the text on each page of the readers. The illustrations are NOT designed to be used to predict words or sentences but are provided for the purpose of supporting comprehension once the text has been decoded.

Using the Carnine order (referenced above), the readers are divided into five sets of eight titles: a, m, s, t, i, f (blue set), d, r, o, g, h, l (red set), u, c, n, k, v, b (green set), e, p, j, w, (yellow set), and y, x, qu, z (pink set). The books are best read in numerical order because there is a strong emphasis on the development of a cumulative vocabulary. For example, new words introduced in Book 1.4 will be practised in Book 1.5, 1.6 and so on. This practice is especially important for the learning of irregular words as these words present the most difficulties for beginning readers.

The books are developed on a number of continuums:

- i) the total number of words is increased from 130+ in a Set 1 book to over 600 words in a Set 5 book;
- ii) sentences increase in length and complexity;
- iii) the amount of word building (morphology) increases with each set;
- iv) vocabulary becomes more complex;
- v) the print size is gradually reduced; and
- vi) punctuation becomes more complex.

Students learn to read and spell three sets of words before tackling each reader:

- i) a set of regular words
- ii) a limited set of irregular words (words with a tricky sound). Some phonically regular words appear in the irregular word list if they do not belong to Level 1 of the Ants in the Apple **Spelling** program, that is they are not three letter c-v-c words. For example, at this level 'trick' is NOT a regular, sounding-out word.
- iii) a small set of extended words (word building): plurals, compound words, and words with an '-ed' or '-ing' ending, etc.

Diagnostic Assessment

The purpose of diagnostic assessment is to identify what a student does and does not know or has mis-learned. It is important, therefore, to ensure that the testing situation is arranged so that the student is able to perform tasks to the best of his or her ability.

Many factors may interfere with a testing situation including the testing **environment** itself. If a student is struggling to attend to the task, you may like to consider (among other things) lighting, surrounding noise, seating arrangement, print size, and interruptions. Also consider the state of the student, such as tiredness, anxiousness, the time of day (e.g. early morning/late afternoon) or missing out on something special in the classroom.

The Assessment Process

(See pages 11-152)

1. Choose the Student Reading Sheet considered to be nearest to the student's reading level.
2. Give the student the Student Reading Sheet containing the passage.
3. Use the corresponding Teacher Recording Sheet to record responses.
4. Record all errors made by the student. Write exactly what the student has said on the record sheet.
5. Start to time one minute when the student begins reading. When the minute has elapsed, mark the last word read but allow the student to complete reading the passage.
6. If the student pauses on a word for more than four seconds, supply the word and record the assistance given.
7. When the student has finished reading the passage, **collect the Student Reading Sheet** and then ask the comprehension questions on the Teacher Recording Sheet. Record the **exact answers** given by the student on the record sheet.
8. Finally, ask the **comprehension subskill questions**, again recording the **exact answers** given by the student on the record sheet.

Teacher Recording Sheet: Book 2.8 Let the Bugs Go!

| Line count | | Word count |
|------------|--|------------|
| 1 | This is Kim. She likes to catch bugs. Kim is good at catching bugs. | 14 |
| 2 | She likes to look at them in a jar. Kim digs big holes in the sand to catch bugs. | 33 |
| 3 | She catches big bugs in the holes. If the bugs get out, | 45 |
| 4 | Kim puts them into a bigger hole. Kim looks under the cat's mat for bugs. | 60 |
| 5 | You get odd, little bugs under mats! Where are the little bugs? | 72 |
| 6 | Kim puts all the bugs into jars with lids. The bugs are not happy, | 86 |
| 7 | but she likes to play with them. Kim takes the jar to school in her bag. | 102 |
| 8 | The boys and girls are happy to look at her bugs. | 113 |
| 9 | Kim puts sand and moss into the jar. She wants her bugs to be happy. | 128 |
| 10 | The bugs get under the moss. She puts her lunch into the jar too! She wants the bugs | 146 |
| 11 | to eat it. The bugs do not eat her lunch! Kim's mum is not happy with her. | 163 |

Comprehension Questions (Record *exact* student responses)

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | What does Kim like to catch? (Literal) | |
| 2 | Where does Kim find bugs? (Literal) | |
| 3 | Where does Kim keep her bugs? (Literal) | |
| 4 | How do the bugs feel? (Literal) | |
| 5 | How does Kim look after her bugs? (Literal) | |
| 6 | Where does Kim take her bugs? (Literal) | |
| 7 | Why do you think Kim's mum is not happy with her? (Inference) | |

Teacher Recording Sheet: Book 2.8 Let the Bugs Go!

Scores

| | Student Results |
|--|-----------------|
| Fluency (rate): Total words read in one minute | (F) _____ |
| Accuracy: _____ x $\frac{100}{1}$ % | (A) _____ |
| 163 | |
| Comprehension Questions (correct answers out of 7) | (C) _____ / 7 |

Comprehension Subskills (Record exact student responses)

A. VOCABULARY (synonyms)

1. Give me a word that has a similar meaning to 'happy'. _____
2. Give me a word that has a similar meaning to 'bug'. _____

B PUNCTUATION

3. Assessor: Using the student's reading sheet, point to the question mark at the end of line 5 and ask, "What is this?" _____

C ANAPHORA KNOWLEDGE

4. Assessor: Read the first two sentences in line 1 to the student as follows:
 "Listen to me read:
This is Kim. She likes to catch bugs?"
 (Ask) Who is 'she' in this sentence: She likes to catch bugs?

D PRIOR/GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

5. Assessor: "Tell me what you know about insects." _____

E MORPHOLOGY (verbal cloze exercise - plural)

6. Assessor: "Listen to my sentence: I have one bug, but my dad has two **bugs**. Now I will tell you another sentence, but there will be a word missing. *Kim has one jar, but I have two _____.* Tell me the missing word." _____

General Observations (e.g. attention deficit, fidgety, asks for help, asks for comprehension questions to be repeated, etc.)
