



# The footy game

Written by Jacqui Edwards. Illustrated by Trent Lambert.

SPELD SA  
Phonic Book Series

# Learning to read

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SPELD SA Phonic Books support the teaching of reading by using a structured synthetic phonics approach. They are designed to build on the pre-reading skills of oral language and phonological awareness needed for reading success. The books support the learning of letter-sounds and blending in a sequential phonic order, helping students to develop their independent decoding skills. The books also contain limited high frequency words that need to be taught before reading the book. The questions and activities focus on increasing a student's vocabulary and fluency and encourage the student to make deeper connections with the author's message.

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## The footy game (135 words)

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Before reading the book, use the practice page to:

### 1. Revise the alternative spellings for sounds

### 2. Teach the blending of letter-sounds in regular words

The student points to each letter or combination of letters, saying the sound they represent. Swipe left to right under the letters, saying the sounds quickly and smoothly together to read the word. e.g. *p-i-le* is 'pile'; *j-o-ke* is 'joke'; *f-oo-t-y* is 'footy'.

During single word practice, check that the student understands the meaning of the word.

If the student is having difficulty hearing the word when blending:

- repeat the sounds more than once in succession to help the student 'hear' the word
- model stretching the sounds together without pauses, e.g. *nnnniiiiip*, is 'nip'
- use letter tiles and push them together while saying the sounds.

### 3. Teach the high frequency words

Tell the student the words and determine any 'tricky' parts by breaking up the word into its sounds. Many high frequency words will be able to be sounded out later as the student learns more sounds and how they are written.

## Reading tips

A combination of letters can represent a sound, such as in boat (b-oa-t), song (s-o-ng), fern (f-er-n), shout (sh-ou-t), or night (n-igh-t).

A sound can be written as different letters or letter combinations, such as the sound /ai/ in 'rain', 'play', 'make', the sound /ee/ in 'sleep', 'heat', 'happy' and the sound /ou/ in 'shout' and 'brown'.

A letter or letter combination can also represent different sounds, such as <ow> in 'how' and 'grow' or <y> in 'yellow', 'try' and 'mystery'.

Words can contain split vowel digraphs, such as in 'make', 'eve', 'bite', 'note' and 'tune'.

The suffix <ed> can represent the sound /d/ as in 'rubbed', /t/ as in 'packed' and /id/ as in 'landed'.

Words can contain schwa vowel sounds. The schwa is pronounced as an /uh/ sound, such as in, 'Nana', 'butter', 'across', 'the'. Explore with the student which part of the word has the schwa sound by breaking the word into its sounds. Take note of how the schwa sound is spelt.

## Practice page

Set 8 includes words with alternate spellings for the sounds /ai/, /ee/, /ie/, /oa/ and /ue/.

Practise blending sounds in words

y /ee/	footy	happy	Sammy
a-e /ai/	shakes	game	Dave
i-e /ie/	pile	arrive	drive
o-e /oa/	joke	home	
e /ee/	we		
i /ie/	siren		
o /oa/	oval	o'clock	

Practise high frequency words

onto	the	to	before
your	all	give	others
one	more	are	everyone
ball	talk		

# Vocabulary

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The words on this page can be used to help the student's comprehension before, during or after reading the book. Link the meanings of words with what the student already knows, show examples or have students act out the words.

- specky** – a big jump, a spectacular mark in Australian Rules football
- mates** – friends
- pile onto the bus** – get on the bus, quickly
- take the mark** – catch the ball in Australian Rules football
- to be a good sport** – to play fairly and be a good teammate
- hand-ball** – pass the football in Australian Rules football, by using a closed fist and punching it to another player
- just on the siren** – something happens on the field just as the siren blows to end the game

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## Help with syllables

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um/pire

winn/ing

morn/ing

happ/y

foot/y

si/ren

a/rrive



In the morning, we pile onto the bus and drive the long road to the footy game.



We arrive at nine o'clock, start jogging around the oval and kicking the ball before the big game.



We all line up and the umpire starts the game. Brrrrrr!



The coach shouts out, “Kenny, kick the ball! Gav, take the mark!”



“Dave is free! Quick! Give it to him!  
Look at Sammy take a specky!  
Hand-ball the footy to your mates,  
not the others!”



“One more point to win!”  
Kenny kicks the winning goal just  
on the siren. Everyone shakes hands  
because we are good sports.



We pile on the bus and start the long trip home. Everyone is very happy and jokes around on the bus.



We talk about that game until the next one, next week.

# From blending to fluency

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To develop fluency, the student needs to re-read the same book multiple times. Students might initially sound out every word and re-read every sentence but, with practice, blending will become more automatic. The fluency chart can be used to develop automaticity of blending by providing single word blending practice.

While reading the book, the student:

- blends the sounds of each unknown word in the sentence
- identifies and reads high frequency words
- re-reads the sentence from the beginning
- discusses the meaning of the sentence

When finished, the student needs to re-read the whole book and practise reading the same book until they can read at a steady pace with minimal sounding out.

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## Making connections - questions and discussion

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After the student has read the book, or the relevant page, ask them one or more of the following questions and discuss:

1. Why was everyone happy and joking around on the bus on the trip home?
2. Have you been to a footy game? Talk about what the umpires and coach do.
3. Why is it important to shake hands with the opposition after the game?
4. Do you know the rules for Australian Rules football?  
How many points are in a goal? (6)  
What might the score board look like at the end of the game?
5. The word 'footy' is short for football and the word 'specky' is short for spectacular. Are there any words that you shorten to make them easier to say? Do you have a nickname or shortened name?

## Fluency chart

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up

win

long

free

road

week

kick

coach

home

nine

mark

game

pile

point

footy

next

drive

siren

shakes

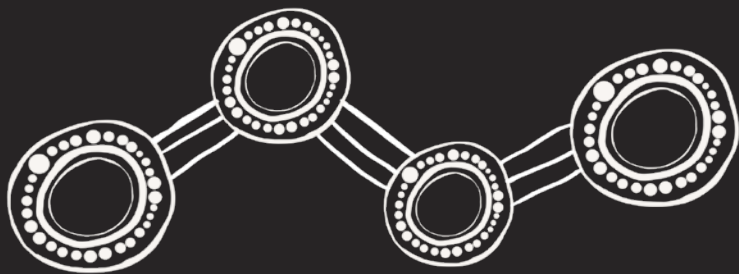
shouts

arrive

winning

morning

umpire



## Cover artwork by Elizabeth Close

Elizabeth Close is an Anangu woman from the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara language groups in the APY Lands in outback South Australia. She was born in Adelaide and spent much of her upbringing in remote communities, learning her language and receiving cultural education.

*'This artwork represents the literacy and numeracy learning journey, and the path towards independent learning. The circles represent the collaborative learning and supports around children with specific learning difficulties, including children, schools, families, SPELD SA and others.'* **Elizabeth Close**, Artist.

## About this series

The SPELD SA Phonic Book Series complements the teaching of reading and writing using a structured synthetic phonics approach. SPELD SA aims to help Aboriginal students engage with phonic books by having characters, content and settings that reflect Aboriginal communities. In developing this series, SPELD SA has consulted with people who live and work in the Anangu, Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. We understand that the content, settings and characters may not reflect all Aboriginal people and their experiences but hope that Aboriginal students learning to read can find some familiarity in and connection with these books in their literacy journey.

Each set of books introduces a group of sounds for students to blend to read words. The books with a single star icon on the front cover contain a lower word count and less high frequency words. The books with two stars contain a higher word count, a greater number of high frequency words and/or more complex word structure. Please consider your student's ability when choosing a book for them to read. For a comprehensive explanation of the structure of the series, please refer to the SPELD SA website.

## Acknowledgments

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**Government of  
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SPELD SA is grateful for the contributions of volunteers for: consultation and project development; writing texts, comprehension questions, charts and games; illustrating, photography and graphic design; character development and cultural advice; speech and language advice. This is a wide community project, with talents, expertise and knowledge being shared for a common purpose – to improve literacy. Thank you all.

Book design by Tricia Smith Design, compilation and additional design by Janet Stone.

SPELD SA Phonic Books follow the sequence of letter-sounds used in the Jolly Phonics synthetic phonics program. The books can be used with other phonics programs.

Set 1	<b>s, a, t, p, i, n</b>
Set 2	<b>c, k, ck, e, h, r, m, d</b>
Set 3	<b>g, o, u, l, f, b</b>
Set 4	<b>ai, j, oa, ie, ee, or</b>
Set 5	<b>z, w, ng, v, oo (book), oo (room)</b>
Set 6	<b>y, x, sh, ch, th (think), th (that)</b>
Set 7	<b>qu, ou, oi, ue, er, ar</b>
Set 8	<b>y (sunny), a (apron), a-e (cake), e (female), e-e (eve), i (silent), i-e (kite), o (open), o-e (home), u (student), u-e (tune)</b>
Set 9	<b>ay (play), ey (they), oy (toy), y (mystery), ea (dream), ie (chief), y (dry), igh (night)</b>
Set 10	<b>oe (toe), ow (rainbow), ow (now), ir (bird), ur (turn), ew (few), au (launch), aw (paw), al (talk)</b>



**Specific Learning  
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