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Introduction

The *Step-by-Step Literacy Program* is a complete course for middle years students needing extra help in reading and spelling. It has been divided into five books for ease of use by tutors and students.

Book 1: Words

covers the building and splitting of simple cvc (consonant – vowel – consonant) combinations and consonant blends.

Book 2: Syllables

covers breaking words into syllables and long vowel sounds.

Book 3: Vowel Sounds

covers the long vowel combinations and splitting syllables with long vowel sounds.

Book 4: Beginnings and Endings

deals with common prefixes and suffixes.

Book 5: Complex Words

deals with more complex multi-syllabic words and further common prefixes and suffixes.

The books may be completed in order from Book 1 to Book 5, or areas of need for a particular student can be selected. Each book builds on the previous lessons.

- Many students enter the Secondary phase of school unable to take full control of their reading and more particularly their spelling, from a lack of knowledge of how letters work within words. If this is uncorrected, the sheer volume of reading and writing demanded during the Secondary years may leave them at a severe disadvantage.
- For some of these students, their potential for understanding information is marred by an inability to work quickly and automatically to decode and encode words. The *Step-by-Step Literacy Program* is designed to help them.
- Set out in unit lessons, it is a 'second chance' for students who need extra support in basic understanding of the word, phonics and syllable knowledge needed for reading and spelling.
- The units are designed to be delivered through extra daily sessions which may be monitored by a teacher, support teacher or support assistant.
- Each unit follows a similar pattern of delivery, enabling students to work with the minimum of tutor preparation and guidance.
- Optimum group size will be dependent on the rate and speed at which the students gain understanding, but the program has been successfully trialled with full classes working in sub-groups under the overall guidance of one member of staff.

Reading and writing performance have been closely linked to the phonemic knowledge of the student. The use of phonemic recoding is critical because it acts as a self-teaching mechanism. It enables the learner to independently identify new words and thereby acquire the orthographic representations necessary for rapid autonomous visual word recognition. Simple exposure to the alphabetic orthography is not sufficient for a child to induce alphabetic principles spontaneously.

There are basically three types of reader. There are those who read phonetically, those who read whole words, and those who use a combination of the two methods. A combination of phonics and 'whole word' reading is what a good reader uses.

Poor readers may try to read phonetically but do not have the knowledge of sound–symbol correspondence to allow them to be successful. Sound–symbol correspondence must be learned before any progress will be made.

'Whole word' readers do not recognise the individual letters or groups of letters that make up a word. They look at the outside shape of the word and match this from the shapes of whole words in their memory. Their competence with reading and spelling may then be dependent on the capacity of their memory. They may know some phonics but never use them to help with reading. 'Whole word' readers are thought to make up 60% of all poor readers. To improve their reading and spelling they must learn sound–symbol correspondence. Using known words and getting them to identify sounds within the words is the way to start.

The *Step-by-Step Literacy Program* can be used with all types of reader. It teaches the reading, spelling and contextual use of single- and multi-syllable words through a systematic progression of skills. Each unit focuses on a distinct group of skills: phonic, 'whole word' or syllable division methods. Teaching strategies are standardised throughout the program.

The structured and sequential program begins with the identification of vowel and consonant letters of the alphabet and quickly extends to include strategies for attempting to read and spell unknown words. It is cumulative, as each new unit draws on skills and abilities already developed and so allows for new knowledge to be incorporated into the old.

This series was originally written to teach strategies for reading and spelling to underachieving students of secondary school age. It is, however, suitable for all ages from nine to ninety.





1.1 Each letter of the alphabet has sounds as well as a name. Letters make up the alphabet and they are needed to make words.

There are two kinds of letters:

VOWELS and CONSONANTS.

The vowels are: a e i (y) o u

An easy way to remember them is: **I O U An Egg Yolk**

(‘y’ can be both a consonant and a vowel. It can take the same sounds as ‘i’.)

The consonants are the rest of the alphabet letters:

b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v w x y z

1. Write the letter ‘v’ above the vowels in these words.

had on van dog set peg

web win zap box big hop

up us cup fun gum wax

2. Write the letter ‘c’ above the consonants in these words.

fox dig hen pet lid jog

cup bun hum van top pit

rob cub jut him red mix

3. Now read the words in **1** and **2** to your partner. Listen as you read them. All these words are spelled as they sound.

To practise spelling these words you have to:

- **look/say** (read) the word
- **listen** carefully – what does it sound like?
- **cover** the word with your free hand
- **write** the word without looking at the word
- **check** you have spelled the word correctly, and if you have made a mistake change your spelling to the correct one

8. Add 'o' to these letters to make words, then write the words in full.

f _ g _____ h _ p _____ h _ t _____

b _ x _____ c _ d _____ t _ p _____

Use the words to complete these sentences.

a. There was f _____ on the t _____.

b. There was a c _____ in the b _____.

c. I h _____ and get h _____.

9. Add 'u' to these letters to make words, then write the words in full.

c _ p _____ b _ n _____ h _ m _____

f _ n _____ g _ m _____ b _ s _____

Use the words to complete these sentences.

a. I had f _____ on the b _____.

b. There was a b _____ by the c _____.

c. If you have some g _____ you cannot h _____.



1.2 The words 'hat', 'cat', 'fat' and 'sat' rhyme with each other and have the same spelling pattern. This is called a 'rhyme'. When you say the word it rhymes, when you see the word it is a 'rhyme'. Words usually rhyme when the endings of the words are spelled the same.

10. Add a consonant to the rhymes below to find words that rhyme. Cut off, then use, the consonant list to help you.

had vet rip hot run

_ ad _ et _ ip _ ot _ un

_ ad _ et _ ip _ ot _ un

----- cut here -----

p u v f o r _ k _ E C P O L S T > X > N



1.3 The word 'plural' means 'more than one'.

singular

plural

We have one dog.

We have ten dogs.

I have one box.

You have two boxes.

To show 'more than one' we add 's' to a word that ends in a consonant, like 'dog'. If a word ends in an 's' sound, like 'box' (which sounds like it ends in 'cs'), we add 'es'. (You will learn more about plurals later.)

11. Read the words then choose one of them (singular or plural) to complete the sentence.

- a. cup / cups The _____ were in the van.
- b. hen / hens The hut had ten _____ inside.
- c. box / boxes The _____ were full of jam.
- d. lid / lids The _____ was left off the tub.
- e. pig / pigs The _____ are in the hut.
- f. bus / buses Mum gets on the red _____.



1.4 To find the base word (singular) of 'cats', the 's' is taken off: 'cat' is the base word.

12. Find the 'base word' of the words below by taking off the 's' or 'es', then write the word in the sentence so it makes sense.

- | plural | singular |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| a. balls | A _____ hit the man. |
| b. dogs | The _____ sits in his bed. |
| c. vans | The _____ is red. |
| d. foxes | The _____ had six cubs. |
| e. legs | I have cut my left _____. |
| f. buns | Bob has one _____ left to eat. |

