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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.





16.1 When a word ends in 'le', count back three from the end of the word to find the last syllable.

1. Say then combine the following syllables. Then look, say, listen, cover, write and check!

twin	kle	_____	brit	tle	_____
a	ble	_____	sad	dle	_____
bu	gle	_____	pad	dle	_____
tem	ple	_____	tur	tle	_____
buc	kle	_____	has	sle	_____
ta	ble	_____	stum	ble	_____

2. Use the words above to complete these sentences.

- a. The horse had a \_\_\_\_\_ on his back.
- b. During the parade you could hear the sound of the \_\_\_\_\_ being played. It sounds just like a trumpet.
- c. The \_\_\_\_\_ had been laid for ten people. I'm glad I wasn't cooking!
- d. I like to \_\_\_\_\_ in the sea.
- e. The \_\_\_\_\_ on my sandal had broken off.
- f. The plastic must have been \_\_\_\_\_ because it snapped very easily.
- g. We can see stars \_\_\_\_\_ in the night sky if there is no cloud to block our view.
- h. It's a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ having to get to school for 9 a.m.
- i. The lady will \_\_\_\_\_ if she doesn't look where she's going.



3. Choose one of these consonant 'le' syllables to complete each word: 'ble', 'dle', 'tle', 'fle' or 'kle'. Then look, say, listen, cover, write and check!

cat_____	_____	can_____	_____
ket_____	_____	mar_____	_____
hum_____	_____	twin_____	_____
an_____	_____	rid_____	_____
sti_____	_____	stum_____	_____
bun_____	_____	trem_____	_____

4. Read the words again.



16.2 In words that have 'stle' as their last syllable the 't' is silent.

5. Add 'stle' to make real words. Then look, say, listen, cover, write and check!

whi_____	_____	ne_____	_____
ca_____	_____	ru_____	_____
thi_____	_____	wre_____	_____

6. Use the words above to complete the sentences below.

- The train's \_\_\_\_\_ went off as it passed through the station.
- The baby birds \_\_\_\_\_ together in their nest to keep warm.
- I wonder if there is a ghost in that \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- I could hear the \_\_\_\_\_ of leaves behind me. Was it the wind or was I being followed?
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is a national symbol of Scotland.
- I would not like to \_\_\_\_\_ with a gorilla, would you?



16.4 There are no such spellings as 'nle', 'mle', 'vle', 'wle' and 'rle' in English, so words that sound like these are spelled with 'al' on the end.



Read the underlined syllables then practise reading and spelling these words. (Remember to work from left to right across the page.) How many words can you read in one minute?

idle	tickle	ruffle	rattle
stifle	Bible	stable	puddle
single	paddle	bundle	purple
cable	saddle	settle	fable
turtle	uncle	angle	bangle
dangle	wrangle	nibble	bubble
meddle	ramble	bramble	scramble
shamble	nozzle	cattle	freckle
kettle	middle	marble	battle
hurtle	pickle	trickle	prickle
strangle	spangles	jungle	sniffle
muffle	shuffle	squiggle	knuckle
whistle	wrestle	final	rival
naval	dismal	funeral	several
maternal	paternal	rural	cardinal