Putting the Science of Reading to Work
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Introduction

At Curriculum Associates, we believe all students can become skilled readers, and the best way to get them there is a strong start with explicit, systematic, and evidence-based literacy instruction. Magnetic Reading Foundations thoughtfully merges the Science of Reading and the science of instruction. These beliefs are at the core of Magnetic Reading Foundations, our comprehensive foundational skills program for students in Grades K–2.

Reading Is a Complex Process

Thousands of international, interdisciplinary, scientific, and educational studies have pinpointed what—and, crucially, how—we must teach students who are learning to read. The resulting evidence forms the foundation of reading science. Humans are not hardwired to read in the same way we are to speak. We must all be explicitly taught to decipher the complex alphabetic code. In Magnetic Reading Foundations, students learn to read beginning with these word recognition skills:

- Phonological Awareness: the ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of spoken language
- Phonics: the ability to map sounds onto letters or combinations of letters (i.e., sound spellings)
- Recognition of High-Frequency Words: the ability to automatically identify and read words that occur most often in text

In addition to learning to read, Magnetic Reading Foundations supports students as they begin to build a foundation for reading to learn with instruction in two of the language comprehension skills:

- Literacy Knowledge (Concepts of Print): knowledge specific to understanding how print works, such as reading from left to right and top to bottom in English
- Background Knowledge: information stored in the brain based on prior experiences of topics and ideas

Word recognition and language comprehension skills weave together becoming increasingly strategic and automatic as students become skilled readers (Scarborough, 2001). There are instructional opportunities in each week of Magnetic Reading Foundations for systematic, evidence-based, explicit fluency instruction to support students as they move toward skilled reading:

- Fluency: the ability to read with accuracy, automaticity, intonation/inflection, and proper phrasing

The following pages explain and illustrate how the intentional design of Magnetic Reading Foundations is aligned to the areas of reading research listed above that are appropriate to the age and development of our Grades K–2 readers.
## Scope and Sequence

*Magnetic Reading Foundations*’ scope and sequence is organized to systematically build and reinforce foundational skills. Our scope and sequence is informed by and aligned to research collected from cutting-edge reading science, including that from Heidi Anne Mesmer and Linnea Ehri.

### Word Recognition

#### Phonological Awareness

Research shows that phonological awareness is one of the first and most essential reading skills that students must learn as it is the greatest predictor of future reading success (National Reading Panel, 2000; Wagner & Torgesen, 1987). The phonological awareness scope and sequence in *Magnetic Reading Foundations* follows a progression from large units of sound, such as syllables and onset-rime, and moves to individual phonemes.

Research has confirmed that the phoneme level is the most important skill for later reading success because it trains students to hear the word parts that correspond to sound spellings (Brady, 2020; Wagner & Torgesen, 1987; Petcher et al., 2020). In *Magnetic Reading Foundations*, students hear the week’s phonics sounds in the phonological awareness, or Listen Up!, part of the session first. This sequence helps students learn to sound out words (Muter et al., 1997; Yopp & Yopp, 2000).

In this Grade K session, students isolate the initial sound in words that start with */b*/ in the Listen Up! part of the session. This helps students understand the connection between the sound and the letter used to represent the sound that is introduced in the Learn Letters! part of the session.

### Contact Information

Contact your Curriculum Associates Educational Sales Consultant to access the full *Magnetic Reading Foundations* scope and sequence.
Phonics

Decoding

The Magnetic Reading Foundations phonics scope and sequence begins with letter recognition, during which students are steeped in letter learning and heavily scaffolded into decoding words with the simplest sound spellings, such as short vowels, progresses through consonant digraphs, and advances into more complex sound spellings, like blends and vowel teams (Guthrie & Seifert, 1977; Pirani-McGurr, 2009).

In the Build Words! part of the session, teachers model how to read words with the new sound spelling. After, students practice in the Apply/Practice part of the session.

Teachers use the Sound-Spelling and Articulation Cards to teach the week’s phonics skill. This allows students to connect the sound to the symbol.

Encoding

Students learn word analysis skills that complement phonics skills to build word knowledge.

Students practice word building to warm up for spelling. Teachers explicitly model words, and students practice building them using the Word Building Cards. Teachers guide students to change a letter to spell a new word.

Lessons include direct instruction and practice with encoding using the Spell It Routine. This gives students the opportunity to practice new sound spellings and review the previous week’s sound spellings.
High-Frequency Words

The ability to recognize high-frequency words is essential for fluent reading (Blevins, 2017). Magnetic Reading Foundations provides systematic and explicit high-frequency words instruction using a partial decoding approach, which involves reviewing known sound spellings when learning high-frequency words. We also group together high-frequency words by pattern, when possible, which facilitates orthographic mapping and helps students make analogies to other unknown words (Ehri et al., 2009). This approach helps students retain the words better than if they learned with memorization alone (Miles & Ehri, 2019).

The Super Words Routine provides a structure for introducing Super Words (i.e., high-frequency words). Students hear context sentences and practice words through writing and multimodal activities.

Super Words are grouped together by phonics pattern and often include the week’s phonics skills. In this Grade 1 session, the phonics pattern is beginning digraphs (i.e., sh, th, ch, wh), and the high-frequency words there and what map to those patterns.

Super Words Routine

Trace and write each Super Word.

1. look 2. make 3. there 4. what

Write the missing Super Words.

5. __________________________ is in the pan?
6. I will ______________________ eggs for us.

Students practice saying, spelling, and writing the Super Words as well as reading them in sentences and connected texts. This provides multiple opportunities to build fluency with the Super Words in various contexts.

There is one Super Word Card for each Super Word taught in the program to help students say, spell, and write each word. The cards include the word and context sentences to support meaning and usage.

Language Comprehension

Literacy Knowledge: Concepts of Print

Researchers agree that the understanding of concepts of print is important for reading acquisition (August & Shanahan, 2006). Magnetic Reading Foundations provides explicit instruction in concepts of print, such as book handling, text features, directionality, punctuation, and how to track text with fingers. Later, as students become more secure in the alphabetic principle, they learn concept of word, which prepares them for decoding (Ehri & Sweet, 1991).

Alphabet Tales, our program-specific Big Book, is used in Grade K to introduce each letter and teach concepts of print in a whole class format.

Alphabet Books are simple, mostly visual little books that help Grade K readers build concepts of print and alphabet knowledge in a whole class or small group format.

Teachers can use Magnetic Readers to reinforce concepts of print as needed in small groups.
Content-Rich Reading Experiences

Reading proficiency is connected to students’ prior knowledge, and a content-rich curriculum can improve student learning. Magnetic Reading Foundations helps students begin to build background knowledge through cohesive text sets that are rich, compelling, and accessible. As students begin to build background knowledge, they add to their stored background knowledge they can use anytime they encounter new texts. In each Magnetic Reading Foundations unit, students read conceptually connected literary and informational texts that begin to build knowledge in key content areas within and across grade levels.

Each unit is organized around a topic, and each week students explore that topic through a wonderfully rich variety of activities and texts.
Unit Words and Story Words

*Magnetic Reading Foundations* includes conceptually linked Unit Words that appear throughout the texts in each unit. Students have multiple exposures to the Unit Words across the lessons’ texts.

**Words with Magnetic Reading Foundations**

**Magnetic Reading Foundations** includes conceptually linked Unit Words that appear throughout the texts in each unit. Students have multiple exposures to the Unit Words across the lessons’ texts.

**Unit Words**

- **Magnetic Reading Foundations**

**Unit Words** include conceptually linked words that are introduced in the unit opener and appear throughout the texts in each unit. Students have multiple exposures to these words across the lessons’ texts.

**Super Words**

- **A**, **a**, **ay**

**Decodable Words**

- **Thad**, **gone**, **shin**, **shut**, **shell**

**Connected Texts**

- **Shop**, **shin**, **shut**, **shell**

**Fluency**

**In Magnetic Reading Foundations**, students practice isolated word reading fluency as well as fluency in connected texts. Research shows that when children practice with isolated words, they have better recall of orthographic patterns and spellings than when they read words in connected text (Ehri, 2020). Reading isolated words is one important type of practice, and reading connected text is another. Reading connected text applies phonics, high-frequency words, word analysis skills, and fluency to the meaning of words (Ehri & Roberts, 1979; Goldenberg, 2020). *Magnetic Reading Foundations* provides ample opportunities for students to practice word reading fluency and apply the skills they’ve learned in connected texts.

**Word Reading Fluency**

**The Student Worktext** gives students an opportunity to practice isolated word reading fluency before applying the skills they’ve learned in connected texts.

**Duet Passages**

**With scaffolded supports**, Grade K students learn to decode one word at a time and slowly build to short phrases and sentences.

**Making Clay Pots**

**Making Clay Pots** features a 200-word passage about a meaningful experience in which students learn to decode the phonics pattern **-sh**. Students use the passage to build automaticity and fluency with words that include the **-sh** pattern. After reading, students have the opportunity to apply their reading strategies to a connected text.

**Phonics Practice**

**Phonics Practice** is designed to give teachers maximum flexibility for practicing and assessing rate, accuracy, phrasing, expression, and intonation/inflexion.

**Fluency Practice and Formative Assessment**

**Fluency Practice and Formative Assessment** is designed to give teachers maximum flexibility for practicing and assessing rate, accuracy, phrasing, expression, and intonation/inflexion.
### Magnetic Readers

Magnetic Readers are decodable literary and informational little books fully aligned to the Magnetic Reading Foundations scope and sequence. This means they are 100 percent usable to ensure every student has the potential to read every word in every text. Additionally, Magnetic Readers offer a bridge toward reading comprehension with colorful, engaging texts on high-interest weekly topics and unit themes.

#### Grade K: long o (o, o–e)

- Texts on high-interest weekly topics and unit themes offer a bridge toward reading comprehension with colorful, engaging potential to read every word in every text.
- Additionally, Magnetic Readers are decodable literary and informational little books fully aligned to the Magnetic Reading Foundations scope and sequence.

#### Grade 1: long o (o, oa)

- Magnetic Readers are decodable literary and informational little books fully aligned to the Magnetic Reading Foundations scope and sequence.
- This means they are 100 percent usable to ensure every student has the potential to read every word in every text. Additionally, Magnetic Readers offer a bridge toward reading comprehension with colorful, engaging texts on high-interest weekly topics and unit themes.
- Magnetic Readers are 100 percent readable to ensure every student has the fully aligned to the Magnetic Reading Foundations scope and sequence.

#### Sessions 1–4

### Magnetic Reader

#### Build Independence

- **Concepts of Print:** Remind children that a sentence always ends with a punctuation mark. Point to the first sentence on p. 2. Identify the period and review that a period ends a sentence. Ask children to identify the sentences that end with a question mark and an exclamation mark. Discuss the different kinds of end punctuation and review what each mark means.

- **Before reading, students preview texts, learn story words, and set a purpose for reading.**

- **SESSION 1 Introduce**
  - Explain the meaning of the phrase blended in. Tell children that the word spring can be used both as a noun and as an action word. Point out that spring is used as an action word in the text.
  - Revise the Unit Topic and Weekly Focus with children. Then have children point to the title and read it aloud together.
  - Preview the book. Provide background: plants in the ocean provide food and shelter for many sea animals. Then, guide children to set a purpose for reading, such as to find out how animals can look like plants.
  - Read aloud the first page as children follow along. Model pointing to each word and have children do the same as they read aloud. Listen and correct errors.

- **SESSION 2 Practice and Apply**
  - Remind children that reading each word accurately will help them understand the text. Read aloud a portion of the text fluently as children follow along. Then, model sounding out words and using Confirm and Correct Word Recognition to self-correct. Point out that the word word you read doesn’t make sense. Read the word again by sounding it out and blending the sounds. Model using context to confirm that the word is correct.
  - Have children read through p. 5. Remind them to think about whether the words make sense as they read. Guide them to self-correct as needed.
  - After reading, check for understanding by asking:
    - What is the sea full of? Living things
    - Is sea grass a plant or an animal? A plant

- **SESSION 3 Make Connections**
  - Have children restate the book on their own or with a partner. Check that children can decode with automaticity and read with accuracy. Remind them to use what they know about letters and sounds as well as what is happening in the story to self-correct. Then, have children restate their favorite part of the story.

### Fluency Instruction Makes a Difference

- Fluency instruction begins with accuracy. Students learn to self-correct when a word doesn’t make sense by sounding it out and blending the sounds.

- Students have the opportunity to practice fluency skills and read for meaning by answering comprehension questions and making connections.
Conclusion

*Magnetic Reading Foundations* provides teachers with resources grounded in the Science of Reading, from the systematic scope and sequence and explicit instructional routines to helping students begin to build background knowledge. With *Magnetic Reading Foundations*, teachers combine their art of teaching with the Science of Reading to move every student from foundations all the way to fluency—and skilled reading.

References


Complete your *Magnetic Reading* suite with our reading comprehension program for Grades 3–5.

[MagneticReading.com/3–5](https://MagneticReading.com/3–5)

To see how other educators are maximizing their *Magnetic Reading Foundations* experience, follow us on social media!

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