

## I. INTRODUCTION

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FAMILY LITERACY CENTER

This guide has been prepared to help parents understand how to use the video/CD information in the *Parent Literacy Training Program* binder. These materials represent one of four programs available in the Family Literacy Training Series: this one for **parents**, one for **center directors**, one for **tutors** and another for **students**.

Together they form an approach to teaching reading that draws on the strengths of one-to-one tutoring and parent supervised practice at home.

These materials are also intended to work with other literacy and tutor training programs used in schools, private tutoring centers, and in many government programs. They were originally developed to supplement one-to-one tutoring efforts by volunteer tutors in *Family Literacy Centers Inc.*, a non-profit public service organization that was created in 1994 for the purpose of teaching children and families how to read. The first video in this binder is designed to introduce you to these centers. You may even want to begin such a center if one does not exist in your community by contacting *Family Literacy Centers, Inc.* or their website.



## II. VIDEO SUMMARIES

**Video 1 is 74 minutes.**

### INTRODUCTION TO THE FAMILY LITERACY CENTER

(36 minutes)

#### 1. PARENT INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW (5:48)

Statistics are presented showing the effects of parental involvement in helping children learn to read and the importance of successful school achievement. The video describes *Family Literacy Centers Inc.*, a recent study showing reading gains that can be expected, and gives an introduction to the entire video set.

#### 2. PARENT ORIENTATION TO FAMILY LITERACY CENTERS, INC. (8:45)

This video describes *Family Literacy Centers, Inc.*, which approaches reading as both a family and an individual responsibility. It then provides a brief orientation to the centers-what they are attempting to accomplish, what happens there, and how to enroll. It describes the importance of volunteer tutors and conscientious parents who receive guidance from Center staff. It concludes with an explanation of how and what children are taught and a few testimonials from past participants in the program.

### **3. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES (8:40)**

**P**arent responsibilities are described that include being present when the child is screened and assessed, meeting the tutor assigned to a child, working closely with tutors, ensuring that a child attends every tutoring session and arrives on time, sitting in on one or more tutoring sessions, and seeing that the child reads to a parent or someone else in the family every day and follows through with the concepts learned in the tutoring sessions.

### **4. HOW BEGINNING STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT (7:47)**

**T**his presentation shows examples of lessons for beginning readers, children, and adults. A student who is just beginning to read is shown experiencing a structured program that progresses step by step through the necessary skills introduced in a series of story books. All lessons are adapted to the reading level, interests and personality of the child or adult. A description of a typical lesson is then given.

### **5. HOW INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT (4:50)**

**T**his presentation shows various child/tutor pairs during a typical lesson for an intermediate reader. The tutor is shown adapting the lesson to the particular needs and interests of the child. The lessons demonstrate a writing activity, vocabulary practice, sight words, spelling or punctuation, and “shared” or “paired” reading.

## **USING COMMUNITY RESOURCES (38 minutes)**

### **1. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (7:21)**

**T**his video describes the many community educational resources that can be used to help a child become a better reader. These include having materials to read at home, using a local library, and using local programs such as “Born to Read,” Family Literacy Centers, many types of museums, public school sponsored community education programs, and colleges and universities.

### **2. CULTURAL/RECREATION RESOURCES (9:37)**

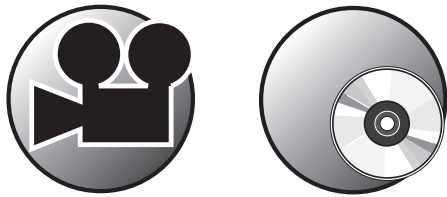
**T**his presentation shows cultural and recreational literacy resources in a community that include educational television, zoos, outdoor resources like state and national parks, local theater and concerts, art galleries, and spectator sports. Suggestions for follow-up at home to reinforce reading skills are demonstrated.

### **3. USING COMPUTERS AS A READING RESOURCE (8:56)**

**T**his video describes commercially available computer programs and guidelines are given for their selection. Computer games that actively promote literacy are highlighted. A description of the Internet, the World Wide Web and how it can be used to reinforce reading skills is the final topic of the presentation.

### **4. INTRODUCTION TO BOOKS (5:12)**

This animated presentation narrated by Rita Book who gives an explanation of how books are organized and how to make sense out of them. She explains how pages are made up of paragraphs, sentences, words, and letters, and how meaning is derived by reading them together. She shows how to interact with a book and how learning to read opens the world to understanding and the enjoyment of life's experiences.



**Video 2 is 37 minutes.**

**1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW:  
HELPING THE NEWBORN TO AGE 5**  
(9:07)

This presentation introduces parents to ways they can enhance learning in children ranging from birth to five years of age. A description is given of the other presentations covering the beginning reader (ages 5-7) and the intermediate reader (ages 8-9). The importance of the role of the parent in this process is emphasized by showing how parents can help with love and emotional support and how they can provide a stimulating environment.

**2. HELPING THE NEWBORN —  
3 YEAR OLD** (9:22)

This presentation explains early brain research showing that most brain development takes place in the first three years of life. The importance of preschool experi-

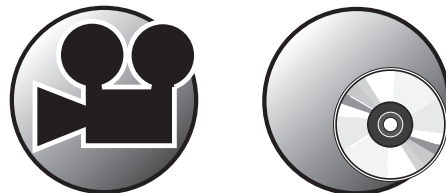
ences with reading are explained and tips for helping this age level are modeled.

**3. HELPING 4 AND 5 YEAR OLDS** (10:21)

This presentation demonstrates activities for four and five year olds to prepare them for reading and writing. The importance of verbal skills to help 3 and 4 year olds read and comprehend better is explained with an emphasis on doing things with a child and talking about these activities.

**4. TEACHING PRE-READERS VALUES  
THROUGH READING** (7:56)

This presentation discusses ways that activities with books can help parents teach values such as being kind, fair, honest and responsible to very young children. Specific books mentioned are "The Three Bears," "Cinderella," "The Little Red Hen," and "The Little Engine That Could."



**Video 3 is 48 minutes.**

**HELPING AGES 6-7**  
(48 minutes)

**1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW:  
HELPING AGES 5-7 READERS** (8:44)

These presentations in this video apply to beginning readers, most of whom are chil-

dren in kindergarten, first, or second grade - about ages 5-7. Suggestions are given for reading aloud to a child, showing that a parent values reading, setting a good example by reading regularly, talking with children about what they have read, and by taking advantage of the many resources for literacy found in the typical community. An overview of the other videos included on the tape or disk is also given.

## **2. THE FIRST STEPS TO READING WITH AGES 5-7 (15:18)**

The purpose of this presentation is to give parents a few tips that will help them teach basic phonics skills to beginning readers (kindergarten through second grade). Examples with specific steps are given to help young readers in pronouncing letter sounds, blending letter sounds together, reading sight words, reading sentences, and finally reading stories. Suggestions for tracking progress are given as well as ways to make repetition fun. The presentation then introduces some other beginning reading skills and shows parents ways to help with practice at home.

## **3. READING AND WRITING ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 5-7 (6:08)**

Ways to create meaningful reading and writing activities are given in this presentation along with activities that tie in with a child's interests. This presentation also suggests a few reading and writing activities that can hook children on reading.

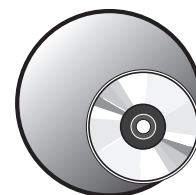
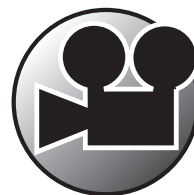
## **4. READING WITH AGES 5-7 (9:37)**

This presentation describes two activities

that parents can do with children to help them advance from beginning skills to a more advanced level: (1) reading aloud to a child, and (2) listening as a child reads to a parent. Suggestions for reading aloud to children of this age are given with an explanation of the "shared reading" concept. Reference is also made to books that guide parents in making reading selections.

## **5. TEACHING VALUES TO AGES 5-7 THROUGH READING (7:42)**

The purpose of this presentation is to show how reading and writing activities can be helpful in teaching values to ages 5-7. Fairy tales that teach moral values are reviewed including "The Ugly Duckling," Bennett's "Book of Virtues," "Brave Brush-Tail Possum," "The Bike Lesson," "Best Friends for Frances," and "Henry's Happy Birthday."



***Video 4 is 32 minutes.***

## **HELPING AGES 8-9 (32 minutes)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW: HELPING AGES 8-9 READERS (7:12)**

This video introduces parents to ways they can help strengthen their children at about ages 8 and 9 in the areas of reading and writing, as well as in personal values. Its focus is on children of intermediate reading levels -typically children of average reading

ability in third and fourth grades. A reminder that reading must be a part of a family's daily routine is given along with suggestions for limiting TV viewing, making reading material available at home, and giving positive feedback. It then provides an overview of the remaining videos on the tape (or CD-Rom).

## **2. IMPROVING READING SKILLS FOR AGES 8-9 (9:07)**

This presentation is designed to help parents help their children gain the skills and love of reading that will enable them to be independent readers. Suggestions are given to help children want to read and recommendations are made for providing frequent opportunities to read, providing practice, and having older children read to the younger ones. Other suggestions are also made for increasing reading speed, relating reading to real life, encouraging fluency, and improving comprehension.

## **3. IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS WITH 8-9 YEAR OLDS (6:00)**

This presentation discusses ways that parents can help children become better writers. When reading and writing are taught together, the benefits are greater than when they are taught separately. Explanations and examples are given to help children at this age use computers, engage in journal writing, create photo essays, make home-made greeting cards, write music lyrics, create scripts, and be involved in other creative writing activities.

## **4. TEACHING VALUES TO AGES 8-9 THROUGH READING (9:08)**

This presentation has a few suggestions for using reading and writing activities to help guide children to proper choices. Many of the books that interest youngsters of this age treat themes dealing with values - obedience to rules, being honest, kind, loyal, truthful, and helpful. Some of the books highlighted include: "Where the Red Fern Grows," "Sarah Plain and Tall," "Crow Chief," "The Long Winter," "Fish Fry Tonight," and "Rag Coat." Encouragement is given to children to keep a journal of what they learn from stories they have read.

# **III. TEACHING CHILDREN**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This part of the Guide will give information in several categories: (1) a look at children's attitudes and motivation you can expect, (2) the importance of improving interpersonal relationships with children, and (3) a description of good instructional techniques. Learning to incorporate what is explained in the rest of this guide requires more than a simple reading or even a so-called "training session." It requires constant practice, refinement, and sharing with other parents and tutors. Learning to improve as a parent is a life-long process - where perfection is never possible, yet is always desirable. Just because we are "aware" of these principles does not guarantee that we will be able to incorporate them into our behavior unless we try them out, personalize our efforts, continue to expand upon what we have previously learned, and incorporate them into our habits. Constant and continual practice will allow us to act appropriately in spontaneous ways. All learning is self-learning and occurs through practice, experimentation, and refinement - not just from a one-time

“training session.”

## 2. KNOWING OUR CHILDREN

Children possess a wide range in learning ability. It's likely that those who need literacy help have not yet developed their learning skills or their reading skills. There are two reasons for being aware of individual differences. First, the one-on-one approach gives an opportunity to adapt to an individual. It will be necessary to sense which children need many repetitions, which ones are confident, and which ones need attention or have physical handicaps to be considered. Being aware of these differences allows a parent to be more effective as a teacher. Secondly, while recognizing differences and adapting our teaching to a variety of learning styles, it is necessary to treat all children with equal respect. Some parents need to avoid showing obvious or subtle behaviors that might infer to other children that they prefer one child over another.

### A. Learning Problems

When working with students individually, it is easier to identify learning problems and respond to them than in a conventional classroom. Following are some common behaviors that might signal problems and ways a parent can help overcome them:

**Requires much repetition.**

*Have a large repertoire of ways to explain concepts. Be patient, and willing to repeat.*

**Needs individual attention.**

*The student materials have a built-in method for providing this attention.*

**Has short concentration span.**

*Help the student stay on task.*

*Occasionally plan for a break for a student with extreme difficulties.*

**Has difficulty staying on task.**

*In a friendly way, continue to direct the student back to his work. Help develop concentration.*

**Tends to hurry, lacks patience.**

*Slow the student down and carefully work through the problem with him.*

**Has gaps in understanding of concepts.**

*Through careful questioning locate where the gaps are and help the student fill them.*

**Has low frustration level.**

*Encourage the student. Help the student understand where they are having difficulty immediately, before frustration becomes too high.*

**Is discouraged, accustomed to failure.**

*Give constant positive feedback and encouragement.*

**Is overconfident - thinks he can do things when he is really not ready.**

*Don't point out failure. Take a positive approach and have the student walk you through the problem. Help him think through the problem and check answers.*

**Has low self image.**

*Constant positive feedback and encouragement. Point out strengths in areas.*

**Is dependent on the teacher and has an “I can't do it unless you help me” attitude.**

*Don't give into this. Encourage the student and indicate your confidence in his or her ability. Place the major responsibility*

on the student.

Student: "Is that the right answer?"

Teacher: "Let's look at it again."

***Doesn't want to admit difficulties.***

*If student can't admit a problem, get around the situation by looking at the work.*

Teacher: "Are you having trouble?"

Student: "No."

Teacher: "Okay, let's see what you're doing here."

**B. A NOTE CONCERNING STRUGGLING STUDENTS**

It is common for educators to label some children as "resource" children - children with more pronounced learning disabilities. These children simply do not learn some tasks as quickly as most adults or other children do. Often emotional factors are involved in learning disabilities, though it is not clear whether they are a cause or a consequence.

Some misunderstandings are common about these learners. For instance, some think they cannot learn. The fact is that most can learn just as thoroughly as others can; they just can't learn as quickly. The individualized, self-paced approach is tailor-made to these children because it can meet their learning needs - if they receive enough individual help. That places a greater burden on the tutor and parents. As far as learning problems are concerned, a parent can expect to see many of the behaviors described in the previous list, except that with resource students, such behaviors will be more intense. An occasional special student might be highly

distractible and hyperactive.

Some parents tend to ignore children with learning problems. It is important to show attention and respect to these children as we do to other children in a family.

**3. RELATING TO CHILDREN**

In working one on one with children, there are two aspects to consider: (1) the relationship with the child, that is, the rapport; and (2) the actual teaching of the concepts or principles. In reality, both of these aspects are interwoven - neither works very well without the other. But in order to teach them more clearly, this training program will separate them. First, the importance of a good relationship with our children.

In any tutoring situation, the relationship between the tutor and the person tutored is crucial. Learning does not take place well for anyone when the atmosphere is strained. This is true even for unusually bright children who experience academic success daily, though fast learners usually possess the ego strength to survive negative feedback. But children who experience daily failures may not have such personality resources. For these children an accepting attitude on the part of the parent is essential to learning.

**4. YOUR ATTITUDE**

A good parent or tutor in any situation needs empathy - the ability (*as far as is possible*) to place oneself in a child's shoes, to have a sense of what he or she is feeling and thinking. The way to relate to children is with friendliness, firmness and respect. These behaviors, however, grow out of your attitude, and you can't fake that. So you must respect the children and genuinely enjoy working with them.

## 5. A GENERAL PICTURE OF THE PARENT'S BEHAVIOR

Attitude is particularly important in one-on-one relationships because it's so easily detectable by children. One cannot dictate exactly how a good parent relates to children in a tutoring situation, because all parents have differing styles and personalities. Nevertheless, some patterns and behaviors emerge in all good parent/tutoring situations. The effective parent is firm, friendly, respectful, and understanding.

## 6. KEY ACTIONS TO CONSIDER IN OUR BEHAVIOR

There are ways to establish a good relationship that can be translated into specific behaviors. These behaviors can be practiced, observed and improved.

### A. Communicate friendliness and warmth.

Obviously, in order to communicate friendliness and warmth, you have to feel friendly. But this emotion is not communicated in a vacuum - it is transferred to another person by means of observable behaviors. Each time you tutor another person, show your friendliness by doing the following:

- *Establish eye contact when you speak to him or her.*
- *Let your facial expression show warmth. Smile. A tense look, tight mouth, looking away from the child, show that you are not comfortable around him or her.*

- *Verbally communicate friendship and interest when appropriate. "Hey, you're okay." "That's a nice dress." "How was the game last night?"*

### B. Encourage the Child

Giving encouragement is easy. The rule is: for every correct answer, give brief, positive verbal feedback. For every wrong answer say nothing about the performance, but help the child find the right answer. Encouragement doesn't mean being insincere, or overdoing the compliments. All that is needed is a matter-of-fact comment. Avoid negative comments, and sarcastic remarks.

Do say things like this:

"Good." "Right." "Excellent." "Okay."  
"That's right." "You can do this." "You almost got it that time." "Be patient with yourself." "You have caught on very quickly."

Avoid comments like these:

"Boy, that's a dumb answer." "You're wrong." "That problem is so easy." "Can't you understand that?" "You mean you don't even know that?" "You could get it if you'd just try."

### C. Show Patience

Many children will often have a mental block concerning a problem and need many repetitions. Often, parents have been so impatient with them that they become tense and flustered when they don't catch on immediately. Let them feel that you have time for them. This can be communicated by:

- *A calm voice.*
- *Waiting for an answer without becoming tense or rushing in with the correct answer.*
- *Verbal statements: "It's okay," "Take your time," "Sometimes it takes a*



*while to figure things out,” “You can get it.”*

Impatience is shown nonverbally by tapping your finger or foot, looking at your watch, looking nervously at another child, hurrying in with an answer or explanation.

### **When to Extend Help:**

When tutoring a student, be prepared to extend help in the following four situations:

#### **1. When the child asks for help.**

*Much of the time you will simply respond to a request for assistance. No problem there - just ask where the difficulty lies.*

#### **2. When a child misses the point.**

*At these times, most students will request help, but others won't because they are tired or discouraged.*

#### **3. When the child isn't completing work or practicing.**

*Before giving a student permission to practice, look over the work to make sure that he really understands. If there is any question, go over the missed sections until you are confident of success. Make spot checks of students' worksheets to see how they are doing.*

#### **4. When the behavior of a child shows that he is having trouble.**

As has been mentioned, many children don't ask for help with a problem. So be alert to these signs that indicate difficulty:

- *Day-dreaming, looking off into space.*
- *Drawing or doodling.*
- *Clowning.*
- *Talking.*
- *Any other avoidance behavior such*

*as cleaning fingernails, reading a book not dealing with the subject, etc.*

Some children are geniuses at looking busy when they are doing nothing productive. Naturally, in some cases the child will not be stumped by a problem; he may simply need to be put back on task. But, just as often, he is not working because he is discouraged and doesn't know how to proceed.

## **4. TEACHING PRINCIPLES**

### **A. Introduction**

As described in the previous section, in working one on one with children, there are two aspects to consider: (1) the relationship with the child, that is, the rapport; and (2) the actual teaching of the concepts or principles. This section will address the latter consideration. In teaching individual children, you will find some slight differences in the way you approach the teaching of concepts. In tutoring a child, you can assume that he or she is not understanding a concept. You may be required to compensate for inadequate, fragmented or illogical instruction in the past. As a result, plan to take more care in helping children learn. Many times a child will need only a brief explanation or a bit of help. At other times you can expect to work through a problem from beginning to end.

As you teach concepts, keep these principles and suggestions in mind:

### **General Principles**

1. Help children think through important processes by themselves. Don't supply answers or tell children immediately if they are correct. Help them think through their own answers.

2. Help children see the logic of a solution. Try not to teach just routine.

3. Where appropriate, have children check the reasonableness of their answers by estimating. It's sometimes a good idea to have them do this before they start a problem.

4. The child may have many gaps in his knowledge. If he does not understand underlying terms, and concepts, fill them in. You can find out if basic concepts are understood by asking questions.

5. Be willing to explain a process over and over. Some children understand one day and forget the next. They need repetition until they can retain the knowledge.

6. Relate new concepts to a child's environment and everyday life. Turn the numbers into money or cars or the price of theater tickets or dance floor space.

7. If a child doesn't understand one approach, have a repertoire of other ways to explain a problem. You can pick these up from teachers, other parents, textbooks, the Internet, or worksheets.

8. Speak clearly and slowly.

9. Make sure you include every step in a process for working out a problem. It's very likely your mind jumps from one calculation to another without knowing exactly what the mental process is. Many children must be told every step. You cannot assume they know anything. For example, some children will begin subtraction from left to right (because that's the way you read).

10. If necessary, use objects, drawings, or illustrations to teach.

11. At times explain how a concept is useful in everyday life. Children learn better if there is a reason for knowing something.

Sometimes it seems that nothing you can do will succeed with a child. Then what? Sometimes it's possible that you will never succeed with some children, whereas another person might. Sometimes children will learn at another time and stopping and trying again later might be the best solution.

## PUTTING RELATIONSHIPS AND TEACHING SKILLS TOGETHER

It is helpful for parents to observe one another while tutoring children or to do a self-assessment. Check each of the following behaviors observed and/or add others to the lists.

### Relating to Students

- \_\_\_\_\_ Used student's name.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has eye contact.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shows warm facial expression.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrates verbal friendliness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gives positive reinforcement for correct answer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gives no negative comments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses encouraging statements.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses calm voice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is willing to wait for answers and be patient.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has confident, calm attitude.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Commands student respect.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keeps a professional distance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Practices self control.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shows good sense of humor.

### Teaching Concepts /Principles

- \_\_\_\_\_ Helped student do thinking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Checked reasonableness of answer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Filled gaps in understanding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Related problem to environment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Repeated when necessary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spoke clearly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tried different approaches.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Included every step.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Used objects, drawings, illustrations, when appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applied concept to real
- \_\_\_\_\_ Followed steps (as appropriate)
  1. Pinpointed student difficulty.
  2. Checked understanding of basics
  3. Had student analyze problem
  4. Worked through problem.
  5. Had student try another problem.

### FOR FURTHER STUDY

For a description of more specific and complete steps and procedures for teaching reading skills, consult the guide available from *Family Literacy Centers, Inc.* titled "The Volunteer Tutor's Guide to Family Literacy Reading Materials." This contains a written description of most of the principles and procedures shown on the videos accompanying this training series.

The following pages contain an example of the training given to volunteer tutors in the Family Literacy Centers which also might be useful to some parents.

#### **IV. Teaching Children Reading Skills with the Family Literacy Reading Materials**

In the tutor training videos found in most family literacy centers one is called “*Teaching Phonics Skills and Sight Words*” (14:11). If it is available you should watch it before reading this section. This video explains and demonstrates two areas which students must master in order to read well: (1) phonics, the relationship between letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make, and (2) sight words - those words that must be committed to memory because they often do not conform to phonetic principles. This presentation outlines simple phonetic procedures and the sequence tutors can use as they use the Family Readers. This section outlines the basic design and structure of the Family Literacy reading program materials.

#### **Phonetic Principles to Teach Beginning Readers**

Anyone who knows how to read understands phonetic principles on some level. Following is a very elementary summary, which it might be well to review.

#### **Teach The Alphabet**

The basis of all printed matter is the alphabet. All readers need to know both the names of the letters of the alphabet (the names you say when you recite the alphabet) and the sounds made by the letters. (Of the two types of knowledge, the sound is most important to reading skill.)

Letters of the alphabet are divided

into two groups—vowels and consonants. Each letter (and sometimes groups of letters like: ing, wh, qu, etc.) makes a characteristic sound, or sounds, which should be learned. These sounds are best learned by vocalizing aloud the sound while writing the letter. The storybooks in the Family Literacy Program provide a sequential series of easy lessons for learning to read, write, and spell by blending these sounds in a left to right pattern to form words.

#### **Vowels**

The vowels are the letters a - e - i - o - u and sometimes y. (When not found at the beginning of a word or syllable, y may take the long e sound (baby), or long i sound (fly), or short i sound (gym).) The vowels have short and long sounds.

#### **Examples :**

Short:

a - *apple, pal*  
e - *Eskimo, beg*  
i - *igloo, big*  
o - *octopus, hot*  
u - *umbrella, run*

Long

a - *acorn, bake*  
e - *eel, cede*  
i - *ice, island*  
o - *open, rope*  
u - *unicorn, plume*

There are other vowel sounds as well, such as R-controlled (“alarm,” “clerk,” “fur,” where the “r” in the word changes the vowel sound, and combinations of vowels (“raid,” “weak” ). These are explained and taught gradually. If you are unsure of some phonetic principles and how to teach them, a coordinator in the center can help you.

## **Consonants**

The following are examples of consonant sounds found at beginnings and endings of words: *(Practice these orally until the sounds are clear and accurate.)*

- b - Ben or cab
- c - cat or Mac
- d - dad or had
- f - fun or puff g - (hard sound)  
girl or leg
- h - Hal (usually found at beginning  
of word)
- j - jet (usually found at beginning  
of word)
- k - Kim or milk
- l - little or mill
- m - me or Sam
- n - Nan or ran
- p - pen or hop
- q - queen (followed by u and  
found at beginning of word)
- r - Razz or car
- s - sun or gas
- t - tan or hot
- v - Val (words ending in v  
have a silent e ex: have)
- w - wagon (usually found at  
beginning of word)
- x - x-ray or Max
- y - yellow (usually found at  
beginning of word)
- z - zebra or buzz

While saying the consonant letter sounds b - c - d - g, etc., do not exaggerate by adding "uh" sounds, such as buh - cuh - duh - guh - etc. Consonants have a soft and short sound, not drawn out. Consonants also appear in clusters in many words: ask, whim, plum.

## **HOW TO TEACH WORD ATTACK SKILLS TO BEGINNING READERS**

The teaching of vowel and consonant sounds, as well as other skills related to phonics, linguistic patterns, structural analysis, and the like, is often referred to as "word attack skills." Word attack skills refer to those which allow us to understand how to unlock or to make it possible to say or pronounce words from their configuration or patterns.

The 72 Family Readers comprise the main source of instruction in our program. It is a carefully sequenced series that introduces phonetic principles in a logical, gradual order. For this reason it is important not to skip any of the storybooks.

On the inside of the front cover of each Family Literacy Storybook is a Word Preview chart including sounds and words to be learned before reading the storybook. (See the introductory video at the beginning of this manual for a demonstration of how it is used).

The order for teaching basic phonetic skills is: (1) short vowel sounds, (2) consonant sounds, (3) blending - consonant-vowel blends and consonant-vowel-consonant blends. The next steps are often to teach long vowels and sight words. Phonetic principles are introduced gradually, with much tutor modeling, and student practice and review.

### **1. Teaching Short Vowels**

The first step is to teach the sound/symbol for the short vowels. It is usually more effective to teach one short vowel at a time, usually beginning with A-a. After the student has learned the short vowel, it can be combined with a consonant to form a simple consonant-

usually more effective to teach one short vowel at a time, usually beginning with A-a. After the student has learned the short vowel, it can be combined with a consonant to form a simple consonant-vowel blend.

**IMPORTANT:** *Use the following four steps in teaching vowels, consonants and blends. It's useful to place an alphabet card "a" in front of the student for a visual/tactile reference.*

**Example:**

1. Model:

Say the sound of the letter "a" (as in apple) for the student as you write the letter "a" on white/chalk board, or on paper, or in the corresponding page in the Family Literacy Writing Activity Book.

2. Guided Practice:

Say the sound "a" with the student; help the student write the letter A-a. (upper and lower case)

3. Application:

The student repeats the sound "a" as he/she writes the letter.

4. Practice and review:

Student and teacher work together until the student is fluent and accurate.

*Use steps 1, 2, 3, and, 4 with each letter you are teaching.*

## 2. Teaching Consonant Sounds

The first consonants usually taught are c,f,h,m,p,t,x,s, and l. Teach each letter and its sound individually. Follow the same 4-step sequence suggested above for teaching short vowels. Model the sound

and written form; provide guided practice; let the student apply the skill by himself; and provide practice and review. To reinforce skills learned use alphabet cards, along with chalkboard writing, sound/matching letter games, and dictation (teacher saying letters, student writing them).

## 3. Teaching Blending: Consonant-Vowel Blending (c-v)

After a student has mastered a short vowel sound and a few consonant sounds, help the child slide them together into a single syllable. This is called "blending." The sound should be continuous. A pencil may be used to show the blending process.

**Example:**

m-a	mmmmaaaa	- ma
f-a	ffiffiffaaaa	- fa
c-a	cccccaaaa	- ca
s-a	ssssssaaa	- sa

The example below shows how to teach this following the four-step teaching sequence.

1. Model:

You write the letters of the simple blend "m - a," and slide them together to make the sound "mmmaaa"; the blend is "ma".

2. Guided Practice:

The student repeats with you the "mmmaaa" blend.

3. Application:

The student repeats the blend "mmmaaa" as he/she writes "ma".

#### 4. Practice and review:

Teacher and student work together until the student is fluent and accurate with sliding “mhmaaa” to “ma.”

*Use steps 1 through 4 with each new concept or skill.*

*For extra practice slide the consonant vowel cards apart, then together to form blends: the consonant begins on left side, the vowel on right side, following steps 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.*

### **Consonant-Vowel-Consonant Blends (c-v-c)**

After the student has mastered blending a consonant and vowel, add a final consonant to make a word.

#### **Example:**

ma-t mat  
fa-t fat  
ca-t cat  
sa-t sat

*Practice with cards, on boards, paper, or writing books until blending is automatic and natural. Blending is very important and is usually mastered quickly.*

### **HOW TO TEACH LONG VOWELS**

The long vowels are easier to learn than the short vowels and are usually learned quite quickly. Explain that long vowels sound the same as their letter sounds. Mastering long vowels will enable the student to read many common words.

#### *Procedure:*

1. Start with the letter “a” and ask if the student can hear the difference between the words "at" and "ate."
2. Ask the student to write the words and show how they are alike. Explain that the "e" at the end of the word is silent and changes the short a sound to a long "a" sound." Both words have only two sounds, but the word "ate" has three letters, one of which is silent. Cover up the "e" in "ate", and the word becomes "at."
3. Read with your student storybooks using words containing long vowels. Model and practice as you did when teaching the short vowels. Continue the same pattern for the long i, o, u and e. A good storybook to read with your student is "The Magic E."

### **HOW TO TEACH SIGHT WORDS**

Sight words are words that should be recognized instantly, or at sight rather than sounding them out.

Sight words are words that we see and use most often everyday and need to remember right away. Some may be phonetic, others are not and will need to be memorized. Sight words include the learner's name, names of family members, names of friends, streets, or words used often at home or school.

Other sight words, such as: "the," "of," "and," "a," "to," "in," "is," "you," "that," "it," "the," "and," and "was" are used more often than any other words in our language. In fact, the above twelve sight words are said to make up as much as twenty five per cent of all the words we read, regardless of our reading level.

### ***Sample Teaching Procedure***

1. Tutor selects sight words from the student's reading material.
2. Tutor or student writes the words on a flash card.
3. Tutor and student read the words in the storybook.
4. The tutor can give the words to the student to practice at home.
5. Tutor keeps a list of sight words to review regularly.

*A list of high frequency sight words and sight word phrases is available in the Tutor Tools section of Tutor manual.*

### **APPLICATION OF READING SKILLS**

1. Using the pre-reading pages from the Family Literacy Writing Activities Books, or other materials of your choice, help your student(s) practice and learn the sounds and words presented. Take as much time as needed, and vary the materials used from time to time
2. After the sounds and words are learned (or even almost learned), READ THE BOOK. As the student(s) feel the success of reading, the process becomes even easier.
3. After the book is read refer to the questions on the inside back cover for discussion and reinforcement.
4. Go to the next book and repeat the process.

### **TIPS FOR TUTORING SUCCESS**

- Become familiar with materials and learn how to use them.
- Emphasize prerequisite skills of: size, shape, order, and directionality.
- Be positive and patient when giving lessons. If students give an incorrect answer, do not call attention to the wrong answer; simply tell them the right answer, and have them repeat it after you. Positively recognize students when they are right.
- At the beginning of each lesson, review the last book before introducing the next one. The student needs to be fluent with each book before going on.
- Build comprehension by asking questions about storybook characters, content, and covers. Ask the student to predict what might happen in the story.
- Have at least two lessons each week at the FLC and have parents help with a follow up review for 10 to 20 minutes a day at home.