



# Scholastic Interactive Phonics Readers™ Product Overview

## **SCHOLASTIC OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

The *Scholastic Interactive Phonics Readers* program supports the reading and language development of children in grades K-2 by providing them with explicit, systematic phonics instruction integrated with independent reading practice. The product consists of:

- Engaging, interactive text and activities that help students develop phonemic awareness and decoding skills, recognize high-frequency words, and build fluency.
- A built-in software management system that helps teachers differentiate instruction, monitor student performance, and report progress.
- Research-based instructional strategies that focus on phonemic awareness, the sound-spelling connection, vocabulary, and decoding text.

The Phonics Reader (Book) component of *Interactive Phonics Readers* has been scientifically proven to significantly increase student word identification, phonics, phonemic awareness, and decoding skills. (*An Evaluation of the Decodable Text in Scholastic Phonics Readers*, Wiley Blevins, 1999-2000)

### **Instructional Content**

Explicit, systematic instruction and reading practice with controlled-sound text help students develop foundational skills that are necessary to become fluent, successful readers.

#### **Phonemic Awareness**

- Children practice phonological awareness skills on the computer by breaking apart picture names by sound and by putting sounds together to make picture names. Students can click on a panel to hear sounds individually and on pictures to hear the name read aloud.
- For students who need additional support, teachers present oral blending, oral segmentation, discrimination, and word play activities off the computer.

#### **Phonics**

- The six introductory lessons focus on concepts of print, a-b-c recognition, and common letter reversals.
- Lessons 1-36 focus on all consonants and short vowel sounds.
- Lessons 37-72 focus on digraphs, diphthongs, consonant clusters, and long vowel spellings.
- After reading a book on the computer, students listen to pre-recorded narrators who break down each decodable word into its component sound-spellings, blend the word, and say the word naturally as a whole.
- Each lesson provides a dictation/spelling segment that gives students encoding practice based on phonics learned.

#### **Fluency**

- Students build fluency by listening to a narrator read a story and reading along with the aid of word-by-word highlighted text.
- Students are encouraged to read aloud to build fluency. Students make a page-by-page audio recording that can be played back by them and by the teacher.

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### **Instructional Content**, continued

#### **Vocabulary**

- Each **Phonics Reader** introduces a set of high-frequency words and incorporates elements and words that have been previously taught.

#### **Comprehension**

- The **Phonics Readers** expose children to new genres and subject matter.

### **Instructional Design**

Because they systematically introduce and review sounds/letters, **Scholastic Interactive Phonics Readers** can be used as independent reading materials and instruction to supplement any comprehensive reading program or as a separate phonics course of instruction. The course is implemented in the following sequence:

1. Students read a book on the computer. They have the option of reading it by themselves or listening to a narrator read it as they follow along.
2. Students may record themselves reading the story page by page, play back their recording, or re-record.
3. Children complete a set of computerized practice activities that reinforce the skills that were introduced in the current **Reader**. There are three rounds of activities for phonemic awareness, three for phonics, and three for dictation/spelling.
4. Students take a computerized test that measures their acquisition of phonic skills and high-frequency words.
5. Students assemble the black-and-white paper versions of the **Readers** covered during the week and take them home for additional practice.

### **Assessments**

The **Interactive Phonics Readers** software provides a computerized assessment, the timed Word Challenge, that students take after a **Reader** and its practice activities are completed. The Word Challenge tests the student's understanding of phonics skills and high-frequency words presented in the current book and in previously read books.

### **Screening**

The software is designed for all students to begin the program by reading Book 1. Teachers may override the default and manually change the student's reading placement.

### **Diagnostic**

The software's management system measures and reports the child's performance on the Word Challenge tests. Separate scores are given for the percentage of total correct words, the number of correct decodable words, and the number of correct high-frequency words. Teachers use the scores to decide whether a student needs additional support. If the child passes the Word Challenge test by correctly answering 73% or more of the questions, the computer will allow him/her to proceed to the next book. If not, the student rereads the book and tries again to achieve mastery. Teachers can also listen to student audio recordings to assess reading and decoding skills.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Teachers can access a student's performance history on the Word Challenge tests or listen to student audio recordings at any time using the Teacher Management System in the software.

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### **Motivation and Engagement**

Students are captivated by the interactive format, playful stories, and age-appropriate themes. They enjoy searching for a hidden star in each **Reader** and clicking on it to activate a special animation. Children enjoy reading more because software features help them read successfully. For example, text is highlighted as the narrator reads it, and children can click on a word to confirm how it is pronounced when reading the book by themselves.

### **Intervention Strategies**

The Word Challenge tests report the percentage of words students can read accurately and whether students are having trouble with decoding or high frequency words. Non-mastery scores are highlighted in red so that teachers can spot them easily and use them to help target intervention instruction. The Teacher's Guide provides instructional methods that teachers can use to give students additional support in the areas of phonological awareness, the sound-spelling connection, vocabulary development, and decoding text.

The program accommodates children with different learning styles by providing practice through visual and auditory means on the computer and by making available audiocassettes and book sets. Software settings allow teachers to make adjustments for children with disabilities. Teachers may disable button and sound effects if they are distracting and enable the large text feature for visually impaired students. Children acquiring English benefit from strong visual clues provided in the illustrations and the slow, steady introduction of new vocabulary. All students benefit by receiving instructive feedback during Word Challenge tests, which give the correct answer after three failed attempts.

### **Home-School Connection**

Each **Phonics Reader** has an associated black-and-white paper version that students bring home to share with their families. Parents and caregivers receive a letter that explains the take-home books' purpose and suggestions for their use. For example, parents can read the books aloud while encouraging their child to identify key words in the story. Teachers can also share assessment results during conference times.

### **Professional Development**

The **Scholastic Interactive Phonics Readers** Teacher's Guide presents specific instructional strategies to help students develop their phonological awareness, connect sounds with spelling, review vocabulary and high-frequency words, and read decodable text. Dictation exercises, writing options, and assessment approaches are also offered.

The **Scholastic Interactive Phonics Readers** program is supported by the *Scholastic Red* facilitated online course, "Putting Reading First in Your Classroom." The course lessons cover strategies for teaching the five essential elements of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This professional development solution provides:

- Instant access to research and theory.
- Video modeling of research-based practices.
- Interactive simulations that allow for practice of skills and strategies.
- Structured feedback, collaboration and ongoing support.
- Materials that can be immediately used in the classroom.