

Tip Sheet

Examples of High Quality, Evidence-Based Phonics Programs and Resources

Reading and spelling are reversible processes and need to be explicitly taught together through the use of a structured and systematic phonics program. There are a number of programs available for use by teachers, tutors and parents that cater for the literacy needs of individuals from pre-school through to adulthood.

Some examples of structured and systematic evidence-based programs for use by trained teachers, tutors, or parents who have undergone training courses appear below:

(DSF provides training in many of these programs)

- **Sounds-Write** – an evidence-based linguistic phonics program utilising a highly successful approach to the teaching of reading, spelling, and writing. It is aimed primarily at children in Foundation to Year 3, as a whole-school approach to teaching literacy and as a one-to-one remediation program. It can also be used as an intervention program for middle to upper primary students, secondary students, and adults.
- **Phonics Books UK** (including the Dandelion, Dragon Eggs, Moon Dogs, Magic Belt, That Dog!, Alba, Totem, Rescue, Island Adventure, Talisman and Titan's Gauntlet series) – decodable readers which are accompanied by a range of carefully developed student workbooks. Highly recommended for use with any structured synthetic phonics program (available at the DSF Library and in the DSF Bookstore). The Dandelion Readers follow the Sounds-Write sequence.
- **MultiLit Reading Tutor Program, MacqLit, Word Attack Skills Extension Program, MiniLit Early Intervention Program, PreLit Early Literacy Preparation and InitialLit-Foundation** – very structured and explicit remedial programs developed by Macquarie University, which aim to address the needs of children with reading difficulties. The programs range in use from pre-school children prior to school entry (InitialLit and PreLit), Foundation to struggling Year 2 students (MiniLit) and from Year 2 students to adults (MultiLit RTP, MacqLit and Word Attack).
- **Letters and Sounds** – designed as a whole-school approach to teaching literacy for students from Foundation to Year 3, but can be used effectively with any age group as a program for small group or one-to-one remediation. This program is supported by a range of free online resources and commercially available games.
- **PLD Literacy and Learning** - designed as a whole school approach from Kindergarten or Foundation to Year 3, but can be implemented within individual classrooms and for small group intervention.
- **No Nonsense Phonics Skills** – this program provides a logical step-by-step approach to teaching reading, spelling, handwriting and language comprehension. It guides the student and the teacher through a series of carefully designed systematic phonics routines to assist students with the development of strong literacy skills.
- **Little Learners Love Literacy** – a systematic early literacy program which focuses on explicitly teaching phonemic awareness and phoneme-grapheme relationships. A range of supporting resources is available, based around the character of Milo, including decodable readers, games, activities and iPad apps.
- **Jolly Phonics and Jolly Grammar** – a multi-sensory synthetic phonics program, which includes activities and games for reading and spelling in addition to the main teaching content. It is aimed at children from Kindergarten to Year 3, and covers 42 letter sounds, common and alternative spelling patterns and grammatical concepts.
- **Alpha to Omega** – a structured phonics-based course, with detailed lesson plans and printable worksheets and resources for each stage. Alpha to Omega is the basis of the WordShark computer program, and both can be used as part of a comprehensive remedial approach.

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- **Reading Freedom** – a systematic phonics-based approach to the teaching of reading and spelling, which aims to equip students with effective literacy skills. It is especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and is intended for use in the middle primary through to lower secondary years.
- **READ-3** - an evidence-based intervention program which integrates phonological awareness, systematic synthetic phonics and fluency strategies. It is suitable for use by parents or professionals with primary-aged students.
- **Read, Write Inc.** - a synthetic phonics 'catch-up' program aimed at students in Years 5, 6 and 7. As well as modules specifically targeting phonics knowledge, the program includes applied reading activities, comprehension questions, grammar and writing activities
- **Reading Mastery** – a complete basal reading program that uses the Direct Instruction method to help children (or older students) master essential decoding and comprehension skills. Each 30-45 minute lesson includes seven to nine short activities focusing on a range of skills including phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.
- **Spelling Mastery** – is a six-level Direct Instruction program that teaches students dependable spelling skills utilising phonemic awareness, word recognition and morphemic awareness.
- **Corrective Reading** – a Direct Instruction remedial reading series that provides explicit, step-by-step lessons focused on teaching decoding and comprehension skills.
- **The Writing Road to Reading** – a comprehensive language program which covers phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, high-frequency vocabulary, word meanings and usage, word parts, grammar, composition, literacy appreciation, text structure, fluency, listening and reading comprehension.

Resources to support the teaching of phonics

- **WordShark** – an online phonics-based program which focuses on the development of both reading and spelling skills using games. It includes a course suitable for secondary school students, a sequence that follows Letters and Sounds, high frequency words, an alphabet and dictionary skills course, and a range of everyday vocabulary lists (useful for EAL). WordShark is suitable for home and school use.
- **Reading Doctor** - Apps for teaching kids to read and spell – this series of interactive and effective Android, Mac and Windows-based apps teach children the essential skills of blending and segmenting, single letter sounds, letter-sound patterns and sight word recognition.
- **Phonics Handbook (Tom Nicholson)** – this book takes a phonological approach and is set out in the form of lesson plans designed to be used instantly, requiring no preparation. The lesson plans include every phonics skill from basic alphabet sounds to blends, digraphs, and syllable division, as well as diagnostic assessments of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, invented spelling, and writing.
- **The Complete Phonic Handbook (Diana Hope)** – this book contains colour-coded phonic word lists organised according to level of complexity and also includes activity suggestions. It is a useful guide for tutors to work through systematically with students.
- **Sound Check 1 and Sound Check 2** – these resource books contain activities to practise the blending of sounds to form words. There are phonemic awareness warm-ups and worksheets which encourage the application of letter-sound knowledge.
- **Nessy Learning Program** – this multi-sensory computer program begins with the earliest alphabet sounds and goes to an advanced level (16+). Each lesson follows a structured, phonic approach supported by hundreds of printable card games, activity sheets, mnemonics, reading and spelling assessments, storybooks and animated computer games to reinforce the rules and strategies for each teaching point.

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- **Spelfabet materials (Alison Clarke)** – the Spelfabet website (www.spelfabet.com.au) contains a range of downloadable spelling resources which are consistent with explicit, systematic synthetic phonics teaching.
- **Phonics Activity Pack (DSF)** – this is an ideal resource for phonics-based intervention at any level. It includes a small magnetic whiteboard with a full set of 78 magnetic alphabet letters, digraphs, trigraphs, and vowel teams. Use the letter tiles to assist with a phonemic approach to spelling and to encourage the blending of sounds and segmenting of words. It also encourages reluctant writers to have a go at spelling.
- **TRUGS (Teach Reading Using Games)** – these phonic reading card games provide enjoyable opportunities to practise reading accurately and fluently.
- **SPELD SA Phonic Books** – these decodable readers are free to download from the SPELD SA website (www.speldsa.org.au/speld-phonics-books and www.speldsa.org.au/SPELD-SA-Phonic-Readers-New-Series). The books are grouped in order of complexity and are based on the sequence of sounds introduced in the Jolly Phonics program. There are currently 300 books and 160 worksheets to accompany these books.

Parent-friendly programs that do not require specialist training

- **Beat Dyslexia** – a step-by-step multi-sensory literacy program for children with dyslexia, beginning with single letter-sound links and continuing through to blends, digraphs, short and long vowels, and complex spelling patterns. Each Beat Dyslexia book contains photocopiable activities, reading and spelling cards, teacher's notes and an audio CD.
- **Toe by Toe: A Highly Structured Reading Manual for Teachers & Parents** – a highly scripted, easy to follow program that teaches students phoneme-grapheme relationships in a sequential structured manner. The program teaches students to read polysyllabic words, uses repetition and nonsense words decoding throughout the program through syllable division.
- **Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons** – in 20 minutes a day, this step-by-step program introduces children to the reading process. This program allows parents to work on a one-on-one basis with children in need of structured assistance.
- **DSF Phonics Pack** – designed to assist with developing an understanding of the role of letters and sounds, this full set of 78 phonic tiles includes digraphs, trigraphs and vowel teams. Current DSF members can download a printable version of the phonics activity pack.

*Please note that this list is **not exhaustive**. There are likely to be other examples of evidence-informed, structured literacy programs that have not been listed here. Page 33 of the Understanding Learning Difficulties booklet provides criteria for evaluating whether a program is likely to be successful and this information can be used to assist in choosing a high quality, evidence-based phonics program.*