

**Standards & reading research base  
of the**

***HELP ME 2 LEARN GOLD STAR  
PHONICS 3b PROGRAM***

**Advanced Level II  
Grades 3-5**

**September 2006**



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## INTRODUCTION

The educational content of the Help Me 2 Learn *Super Star Series* of interactive electronic *Phonics* programs is based on the recommendations of the following:

**National Reading Panel** (under the auspices of the National Institute for Literacy and the National Institute of Child Health and Development)

- *Report of the National Reading Panel*

**National Research Council**

- *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*

**California Department of Education**

- *Teaching Reading: A Balanced, Comprehensive Approach to Teaching Reading in Pre-kindergarten Through Grade Three*

**Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement**

- *Teaching Every Child to Read: Frequently Asked Questions*

**National Institute of Child Health and Development**

- *A Synthesis of Research on Reading*

**National Institute for Literacy**

- *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*

## INTRODUCTION (cont'd)

All these recommendations are in turn based on comprehensive surveys of over 30 years of large-scale scientific reading research. This research has amassed overwhelming evidence showing that, as stated by the National Reading Panel:

*Teaching children to manipulate the sounds in language (phonemes) helps them learn to read. This remains true under a variety of teaching conditions and with a variety of learners across a range of grade and age levels. The National Reading Panel concluded that teaching phonemic awareness to children significantly improves their reading when compared to instruction without any attention to phonemic awareness. Specifically, the results of experimental studies led the Panel to conclude that phonemic awareness training led to improvement in students' phonemic awareness, reading, and spelling.*

The National Reading Panel goes on to explain that:

*Phonemic awareness is the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. Before children learn to read print, they need to become aware of how the sounds in words work. They must understand that words are made up of speech sounds, or phonemes.”*

This is why the Help Me 2 Learn series of phonics programs is driven throughout by the principles of **phonemic awareness**.

There follows a table of the activities in the Phonics 3b program correlated with the reading research upon which they are based.

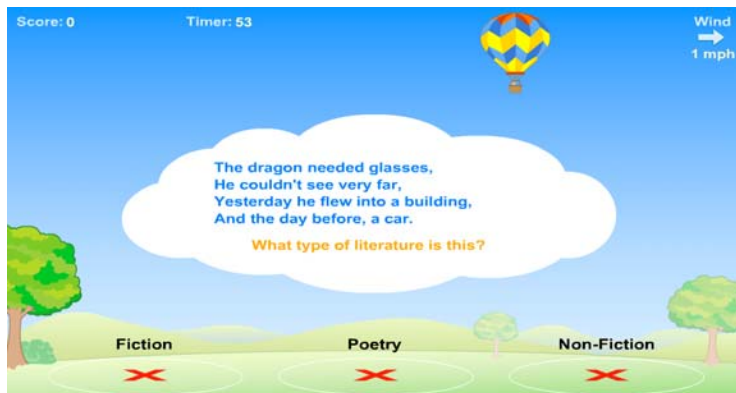
# Types of Literature

## Coach Time - Learn the Words - Blowing Balloons Game



What do you think usually makes poems a unique form of literature?

- A) Poems are almost always very short
- B) Poems are always about nature
- C) Poems typically have lines that rhyme in certain ways
- D) Poems for the most part have certain words in another language



## STANDARDS

California Department of Education:

Grade 3, Strand: Reading

Substrand: 3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

3.1 Distinguish common forms of literature (e.g., poetry, drama, fiction, nonfiction).

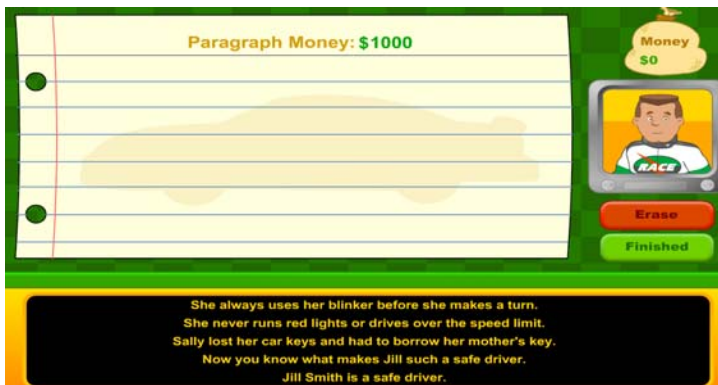
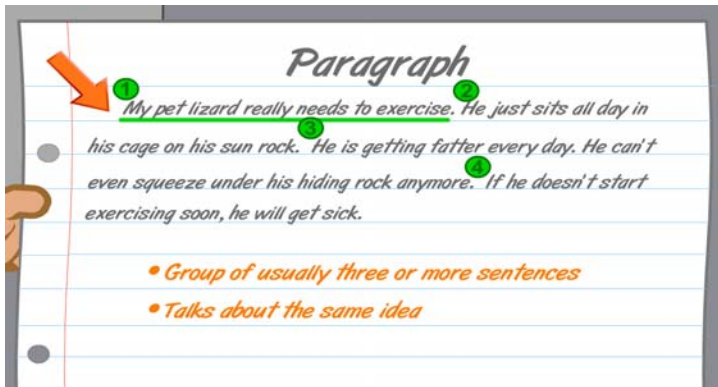
## READING RESEARCH BASE

National Reading Panel

The panel... found that reading comprehension of text is best facilitated by teaching students a variety of techniques and systematic strategies to assist in recall of information, question generation, and summarizing of information.

# Writing a Paragraph

## Coach Time - Learn the Words Writing Racers Game



# STANDARDS

California Department of Education:

Grade 3, Strand: Reading

Substrand: 2.0 Reading Comprehension

2.4 Recall major points in the text and make and modify predictions about forthcoming information

Grade 3, Strand: Writing

Substrand: 1.0 Writing Strategies

1.1a Create a single paragraph; Develop a topic sentence.

1.1b Create a single paragraph; Include simple supporting facts and details.

Grade 5, Strand; Reading

Substrand: 2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)

2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.

# READING RESEARCH BASE

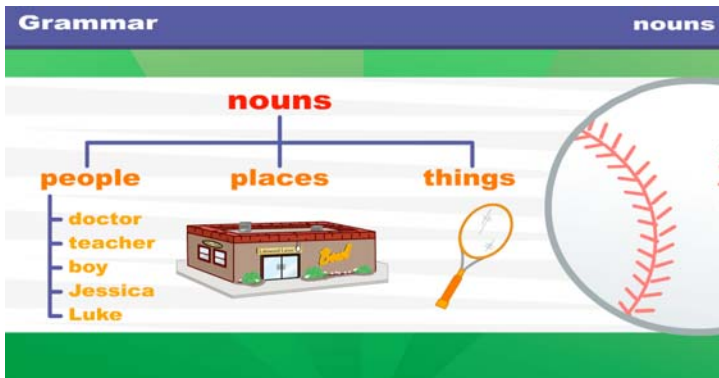
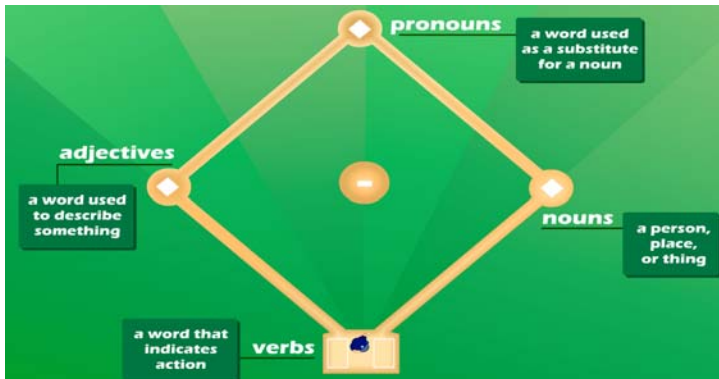
National Reading Panel

... the panel identified 16 categories of text comprehension instruction of which 7 appear to have a solid scientific basis:

- Comprehension monitoring...
- Cooperative learning...
- Use of graphic and semantic organizers (including story maps)...
- Question answering...
- Question generation...
- Story structure, where students are taught to use the structure of the story as a means of helping them recall story content
- Summarization...

# Grammar I

## Coach Time - Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, and Adjectives Learn the Words - Home Run Derby Game



# STANDARDS

California Department of Education:

Grade 3, Strand: Written and Oral English Language Conventions

Substrand: 1.0 Writing Strategies

1.2 Identify subjects and verbs that are in agreement and identify and use pronouns, adjectives, compound words, and articles correctly in writing and speaking

## READING RESEARCH BASE

Hillocks, G., Jr., & Smith, M. W. (1991). *Grammar and usage. Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts, 1991*

Systematic practice in combining and expanding sentences can increase students' repertoire of syntactic structures and can also improve the quality of their sentences,

## Grammar II

### Coach Time - Subject-Verb Agreement and Verb Tenses Learn the Words - Pole Vaulting Game

**Grammar** subjects & verbs

**subject**

- what the sentence is about
- can be a noun or a pronoun

**verb**

**Grammar** subject verb agreement

rule	subject	verb
If the subject is singular, add an s to the end of the verb	singular =	add s
	<b>She</b>	<b>plays.</b>
If the subject is plural, do not add an s to the end of the verb	plural =	do not add s
	<b>They</b>	<b>play.</b>
Never add an s to the end of a verb if the subject is "you" or "I"	"you" or "I" =	do not add s
	<b>I</b>	<b>play.</b>

singular = one person, place or thing  
boat Jill school

plural = more than one  
boats kids schools

Time: 39 ■■■ Height: 6' Speed: ■■■■

Cats [present tense] milk.

drank will drink drink

## STANDARDS

*California Department of Education:*

**Grade 3, Strand: Written and Oral English Language Conventions**

**Substrand: 1.0 Writing Strategies**

**1.2** Identify subjects and verbs that are in agreement and identify and use pronouns, adjectives, compound words, and articles correctly in writing and speaking.

**1.3** Identify and use past, present, and future verb tenses properly in writing and speaking.

**1.4** Identify and use subjects and verbs correctly in speaking and writing simple sentences

**Grade 5, Strand: Written and Oral English Language Conventions**

**Substrand: 3.0 Literary Response and Analysis**

**1.2** Identify and correctly use verbs that are often misused (e.g., lie/lay, sit/set, rise/raise), modifiers, and pronouns

## READING RESEARCH BASE

*University of North Carolina: K-12 Teaching and Learning*

Upper elementary students should start editing their writing using simple editing rules such as subject-verb agreement, verb tense

consistency, and pronoun usage.



# Punctuation and Capitalization

## Coach Time - Learn the Words - Punctuation Palace Game



### Punctuation

I like to read, and my favorite author is Ernest Hemingway. His books are fantastic! I read three of them last summer. Who is your favorite author?



Click on the correct punctuation mark

Who is going to the restaurant



# STANDARDS

*California Department of Education:*

*Grade 3, Strand: Written and Oral English Language Conventions*

*Substrand: 1.0 Writing Strategies*

1.5 Punctuate dates, city and state, and titles of books correctly.

1.6 Use commas in dates, locations, and addresses and for items in a series.

1.7 Capitalize geographical names, holidays, historical periods, and special events correctly.

*Grade 5, Strand: Written and Oral English Language Conventions*

*Substrand: 2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)*

1.4 Use correct capitalization.

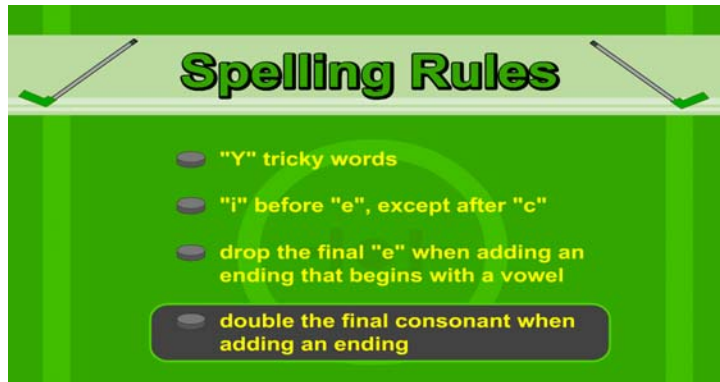
## READING RESEARCH BASE

*National Institute for Literacy*

Practicing fluent oral reading at a mastered level of decoding and word meaning will aid an understanding of the close relationship between speech and print. Readers grow to understand that there are markers in text that help bridge some of the differences between written and spoken language.

# Spelling Strategies

## Coach Time - Learn the Words Spelling Breakout Game



**Spelling Rules**

- "Y" tricky words
- "i" before "e", except after "c"
- drop the final "e" when adding an ending that begins with a vowel
- double the final consonant when adding an ending



**fry** → **fries**  
**candy** → **candies**  
**bunny** → **bunnies**



**sunny + est**

When you add -est to sunny, it becomes . . .

- sunniest
- sunniest
- suniest

## STANDARDS

*California Department of Education:*

*Grade 3, Strand: Written and Oral English Language Conventions*

*Substrand: 1.0 Writing Strategies*

1.8 Spell correctly one-syllable words that have blends, contractions, compounds, orthographic patterns (e.g., qu, consonant doubling, changing the ending of a word from -y to -ies when forming the plural), and common homophones (e.g., hair-hare)

## READING RESEARCH BASE

*National Institute for Literacy*

It makes the most sense to teach learners to spell word parts and words as they are learning to read them and to teach them to read words of adult interest that illustrate basic spelling rules. Learners, then, will have exposure to three reading components: decoding, encoding, and word meaning - all of which support reading comprehension.

# Reading Comprehension Strategies

## Coach Time - Learn the Words Bowling for Bugs Game

### Reading Comprehension Strategies



- ▶ **prior knowledge**
- ▶ **making predictions**
- ▶ **making connections**
- ▶ **summarizing**
- ▶ **main idea and details**

## STANDARDS

*California Department of Education:*

*Grade 3, Strand: Reading*

*Substrand: 1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development*

2.2 Ask questions and support answers by connecting prior knowledge with literal information found in, and inferred from, the text.

2.3 Demonstrate comprehension by identifying answers in the text.

2.4 Recall major points in the text and make and modify predictions about forthcoming information.

2.5 Distinguish the main idea and supporting details in expository text

*Grade 4, Strand: Reading*

*Substrand: 2.0 Reading Comprehension*

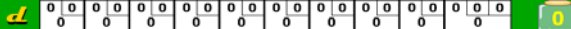
2.3 Make and confirm predictions about text by using prior knowledge and ideas presented in the text itself, including illustrations, titles, topic sentences, important words, and foreshadowing clues

*Grade 5, Strand: Reading*

*Substrand: 2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)*

2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.

2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge



Sarah and Rachel went to the beach with their mother last weekend. Their mother told them they could go into the water up to their waist, but no deeper. The girls agreed since they knew their mother was a strong swimmer, and they were not great swimmers yet. They ate some cookies on their beach towels, and then decided they wanted to play Frisbee before wading in. Sarah made a great behind-the-back catch! And Rachel made an amazing catch too, diving over a sandcastle! The Frisbee game was so fun, but then the wind took Sarah's

What is the main point of the story?

- Going to the beach was a lot of fun.
- Always go swimming with a partner.
- It is dangerous to play Frisbee alone.
- Listen to what your mother tells you.



## Use in the Classroom

The CD-ROMs in the Help Me 2 Learn *Phonics Gold Star Reading System*, along with their accompanying user guides and lesson plans, are designed to be used as a supplement to the existing classroom reading program.

The CD-ROMs can be used as follows:

1) By the teacher as a presentation to the entire class displayed on a single computer. Guided by the lesson plans, the teacher can control the CD in leading the class through discussion of the lesson concepts, relating this to any existing class materials.

- When leading the class through an activity, the teacher can either let the class as a whole vote on the correct answer or have an individual student respond to the question.

- The teacher can also copy the black-line masters or print out pages either as extra work or as a test of the students' comprehension of the lesson.

2) By the students working at their own computers, either in a computer lab or in the classroom. The CD-ROMs are designed for self-paced study, notably in the "Learn the Words" segments. The *Super Star Tracking System* (see below) allows the teacher to see which activities each student has completed and mastered, thereby enabling the teacher to help individual students with any specific activities that may be causing them a problem.

For most effective use of the material, we recommend that the teacher follow the lesson plans in presenting individual lessons to the class, and then let the students work on the CD-ROMs on their own, with the teacher assisting them as and when necessary.

When it is not feasible to let the students work through the CD-ROMs in the lab or classroom, we suggest that the teacher recommend the CD-ROMs to the parents or for use in after-school programs.

## Effectiveness

The Phonics Gold Star Reading System can certainly be used very effectively as supplemental material in the classroom. However, its use by individual students can be equally effective, since the students' progress and detailed results are readily tracked within the program.

We call this built-in student tracking our "*Super Star System*". It has two components:

1) *Super Star Buttons*. These are located in the center at the bottom of the program interface. They consist of a correct answer box, a wrong answer box and the Super Star. The Super Star button displays a purple "no star" state, a Silver Star or a Gold Star. Clicking on the Super Star button takes you to the Super Star Page.

## Effectiveness (cont'd)

2) *Progress Report*. This displays all 25 Super Stars and indicates which stars the student has earned in each of the songs or activities.

The “Super Star System is at once deceptively simple and highly effective. As the student plays an instructional song, he or she will earn a Silver Star at about 75% of the way through the song. By listening to the song all the way through, the student earns a Gold Star.

These songs contain much of the instructional material of the program. As the California Department of Education report on reading states, for very young children *“language arts skills and understandings are developed primarily through a variety of interactive activities, such as painting, drawing, building with blocks, singing, dancing, and dramatic play.”*

The CD-ROMs contain many other instructional components besides the songs. Students can also earn Gold Stars by watching these presentations or by clicking on all of the letters.

Children may earn further Silver and Gold Stars on the CD-ROMs through a comprehensive array of interactions and games, which are designed to reinforce and test their comprehension and mastery of the letters, sounds, words and concepts that were taught in the songs.

As stated earlier, the effectiveness of this “multi-mode” approach to teaching early readers has been extensively documented by the National Research Council: *“play with songs and poems that emphasize rhyming, jokes, and games that depend on switching sounds within words... can facilitate learning to read”*

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Il of the various activities and games in the CD-ROMs are based on the rigorously field-tested principles of instructional design, which are underpinned by over 40 years’ research in behavioral and cognitive psychology, human factors engineering and programmed learning.

The instructional design core of the CD-ROMs consists of continual motivational feedback and positive reinforcement – both intrinsic and extrinsic – every step of the student’s journey through the material.

### The Super Star System

The “Super Star System” illustrates this reinforcer-based “performance management” approach with particular clarity. When a student completes an activity or game error-free, he or she immediately earns a Gold Star. However, even if the students does make a mistake, the act of completing the activity or game automatically earns him or her a Silver Star.

Once a student completes an activity, he or she can repeat the activity as many times as desired. If the student earned a Gold Star on his or her first run through the activity, the student cannot lose this Gold Star by repeating the activity, even if he or she makes a mistake in these subsequent iterations of the activity. That is to say, there is no penalty – or “punishment” to use operant conditioning terminology – for repeating an activity. Instead, the child experiences nothing but positive reinforcement throughout the learning exercise.

This schedule of positive reinforcers is highly motivating, with a gratifyingly cumulative effect. Once students have garnered their first few Silver or Gold Stars, they will want to earn more and more stars, and will not be satisfied until they have earned a Gold Star for every single one of the songs, presentations, activities or games on the CD-ROMs. In other words, they will not rest until they have worked through all the material without making a single error.

### **ccountability and Student Tracking**

Once a student has completed the entire CD with a Gold Star on every “Super Star” page, he or she can print out a personalized Certificate of Completion, providing proof of that student’s mastery of all the letters, sounds, words and concepts taught in the CD.

performing to the “Silver Star” level, they constitute a systematic feedback and tracking system for the teacher or parent who can see immediately where the child is having difficulty.

In this way, both accountability and student tracking are built into the CD-ROMs themselves.

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