

Let's build a reading program around the building blocks to both reading and spelling. But let's also keep it interesting for students, with lots of cute pictures and easy to use for parents with short lessons and coloring pages!

The building blocks are not just the alphabet, but the sounds letters make when reading them. For instance, /b/ pretty much makes the "buh" sound (like in "b-at"), while /c/ makes the /k/ sound, like in "c-at". And, if you walk through the alphabet, you'll find - about half the letters equal the sound it makes: /d/, duh – d-og = yes; /a/ = "ah", as in cat and bat = not so much; /e/=eh = not so much; /f/ eff = yup; /g/ - guh = no; /h/ - huh = no, and so on. So, after about a third of the alphabet, you can see how just knowing the alphabet letter can help, but really isn't enough preparation or tools to *actually* read a word.

This is where phonics comes in. What is phonics? It is simply knowing that letters represent sounds within a word when reading a word (like you may have been taught in elementary school to "sound it out". Therefore, reading a word is: (1) knowing the sounds the letters make, and (2) putting those sounds together. Period!

So, what would be the easiest words to read or sound out? How about three-letter words, like the author's friend suggested? They would all be short-vowels, and would not be very long, nor complicated! The only letter of complication is the /q/. So, this is what we've done...put all of the short-vowels and consonants except /q/ in Section 1, Short-Vowel Book Skills. Then, we saved the long vowels (more complicated), blends and segmenting of big words for Section 2!