

Series 1
Books 1 and 2
Coaching Guide

The goal: The goal of these books is to help your child feel successful as a beginning reader. This should be an experience your child enjoys sharing with you.

Remember these things:

- Students need to be exposed to new material several times before they master it. So, just because your child was successful at sounding out “go” today does not mean that s/he won’t need some help with the same thing tomorrow. That’s okay!
- Make sure you don’t express frustration or worry. Expect this to be a long process. Expect to back up and review. Rome was not built in a day!
- If your child resists, put this away for a little while and try again later.
- Keep doing other things to support your child’s literacy, like reading other books aloud to him or her every day.

Sounding-Out Words

In these books, there are only **two sounds** (two letters) in each sounding-out word. Before you read each book, start with the flashcards. Ask your child to sound out the words by saying each letter sound slowly and then blending the sounds together.

- As you move your finger along the word GO:
 - **You:** Guh...oh. Now you try.
 - **Child:** Guh...oh.
 - **You:** Say it faster. Guh.oh What word is it?
 - **Child:** Go!

As you read the book, you will probably find that your child struggles with the words you just went over. This is totally normal. It’s how people learn. We need to encounter new material a few different times and in a few different contexts before we really get it.

So, have patience. When your child is stumped, start by reminding him/her of the strategy: “Sound it out.” Wait patiently until s/he tries it. If necessary, help more: “What’s the first sound?” Wait again. Avoid jumping in with the answer unless you sense frustration. You know your child best.

Vowel Sounds

In books 1 and 2, **the vowel sounds are long:**

- Letter O sounds like the letter name “O,” as in “go.”
- Letter I sounds like the letter name “I,” as in “hi.”
- Letter E sounds like the letter name “E,” as in “we.”

Later on, your reader will learn that vowels sometimes have different sounds that don't sound anything like the letter names. But for now, the letters sound as the child would expect, the way they sound in the alphabet song. This helps make the sounding-out process easier.

You might say to your child that in these books, "the letters say their names."

Character Names

Character names are the only words in books 1 and 2 that are not "sounded out" as part of the phonetic theme. (NOTE: If you choose the "default" character for book 2, Lee, instead of inserting your own characters, that character name will fit with the phonetic theme.)

The character names you add will be learned like "sight words." (Sight words are common words, like "the," that readers memorize instead of sounding out.)

Encourage your child to remember what the names look like.

To help your child with the names:

- **POINT** to the name next to the picture of the character. Read it to the child, running your finger along the word from left to right as you read it.
- **TALK** about the name.
 - What letter does it start with? What letters are in it? What letter does it end with? What sounds do you hear in the middle of the name?
 - Is the name longer or shorter than your child's name? Count the letters.
- **REVIEW** the name.
 - The next time you see the name, encourage your child to read it himself. If he struggles, point to the picture. "Who does that look like? Who could that be?"
 - When your child is successful, bring your child's attention back to the written name: "That's right. That's Darren. See his name? It starts with D. Darren."
- **PLAY** with flashcards of the names and the pictures of the characters.
 - Place flashcards on a table and ask your child to match each name with the correct character picture.
 - Hold up just the names and ask your child to read them.

NOTE: If you find your child gets frustrated with names, choose the default setting, which provides names that fit with the phonetic theme of each book. Then you can sound out the names just like the other words.

Reading Fun

Make Predictions

These books are designed to encourage your child to **make predictions**.

- In Book 1, when you see part of the obstacle at the right edge of the screen, ask: What do you think that is?
- In Book 2, can you predict who will appear next on the big bike? What might the characters be going to see?

Talk About Other Words

Encourage your child to think of other words that sound like the words in the story.

- After you read Book 1, ask:
 - What other words do you know that sound like “Go” and “No”?
 - You and your child might come up with words like so, whoa, flow, snow, etc. (It’s okay if they’re spelled differently.)
- After you read Book 2, ask:
 - What other words do you know that sound like “We” and “See”?
 - You and your child might come up with words like me, bee, tree, tea, etc. Again, spellings might differ. The important thing is the long E sound.

Connect the Story to Real Life

Book 1 takes your child on an ocean adventure. Ask your child what it would be like to go there for real. How would it feel, and what would be the best parts? Has your child been to a beach before? Recall the experience with him or her.

Book 2 is all about a bike ride. Does your child ride a bike? Would he or she like to go on a long bike ride? Where? What would it be like to ride a 3-person bike?

Change the Story

- Read the books many times and make changes to keep them exciting:
 - Change the secondary character in each book.