



Phonics based reading program

*Why a phonics based program vs. whole word/sight word instruction?

In a phonics program, children are taught the sounds of letters and then proceed on how to put those sounds together to “sound out” words. In whole word, or sight word, instruction, the belief is that having seen repeatedly a word next to a picture enough times, then a child will remember what that words says.

However, since our language is filled with thousands upon thousands of words, it is impossible to pair up all those words with pictures.

With phonics, and knowing what sounds the letters make, children will then be able to decode words on their own simply by looking for letter patterns and putting them together.

The Abeka phonics reading program begins with the 5 short vowel sounds and then moves on to consonants; by the 3rd consonant, the children are already combining all those letters to make words and begin that early reading step. Once all 26 letters are covered, we move on to long vowel sounds, then special letter combinations such as ‘ay’ and ‘sh’ just to name a few. The kindergarten year and the 1st grade year are a package deal; by the end of the 1st grade phonics year, children are prepared to decode any word they come across. Shortly after learning the basic 26 letter sounds, reading groups begin during which the students begin reading sentences, then stories. It is amazing the stories even the Kindergarteners are able to read by the end of the year.

"If a child memorizes ten words,
the child can read only ten words.
But if a child learns the sounds of ten letters,
the child will be able to read 350 three
sound words, 4,320 four sound words and
21,650 five sound words."

Dr. Martin Kozloff, 2002

