

How is the Reading Kingdom different from other reading systems?



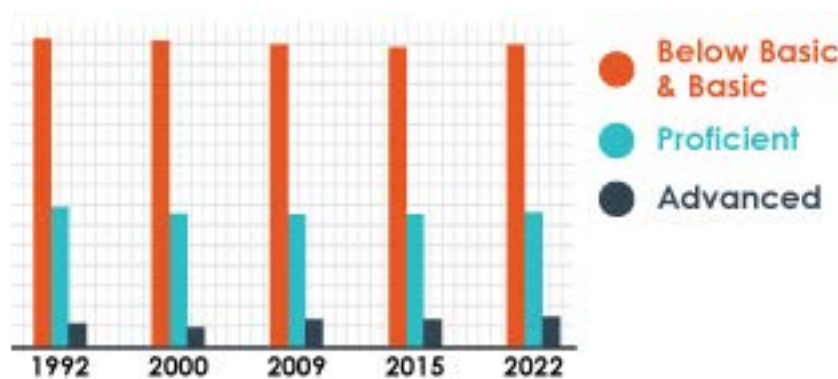
Thank you for taking the time to find out about Reading Kingdom. Reading Kingdom is a groundbreaking online reading and writing program that teaches children to read and write with comprehension to a 3rd grade level (Lexile 750). It is fundamentally different from other reading systems available today in both the skills it teaches and in the methods for teaching those skills.

Do we really need a new reading program?

In a word, yes. According to the US Dept. of Education:

2 out of 3 children are failing to achieve proficiency in reading.

That's not a typo. 2 out of 3! And students who cannot read proficiently by the end of 4th grade are four times more likely to drop out compared to proficient readers. Even more disturbingly, 2 out of 3 will end up in jail or on welfare.



Source: US Department of Education

As you can see in the chart above, over the course of decades, the National Assessment of Educational Progress has shown 2 out of 3 students at “below basic” or “basic” and only one third at proficient (with only 8% at advanced). This is 4th grade reading – the core skill students need to succeed in school and in life.

How can this be?

The reason is that English is, for lack of a better word, a crazy language that has combined many other languages with the end result being that there are no rules that can explain how the spelling works. You might say that English is **tough** because it was not **thoroughly thought through**.

So how do we teach this crazy language? Until now, educators relied almost exclusively on a system of reading instruction known as phonics to teach reading. Phonics teaches the sounding out of words. But there is a major problem with phonics – the vast majority of words in English cannot be sounded out.

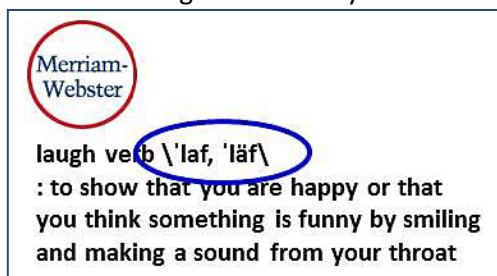
Consider the following sentence:

I knew in my head and heart that the theater bureau's harsh reaction to the great and beautiful ocean/earth pageant, was mean spirited – despite the caveat that their review was changeable.

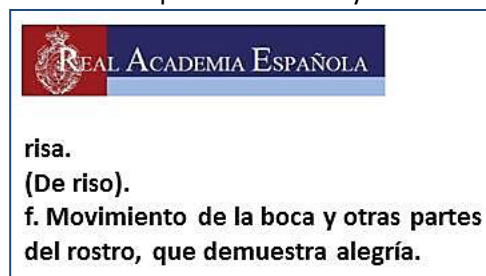
The “ea” letter combination in this sentence can be pronounced 13 different ways!

Dr. Godfrey Dewey, from Harvard University, who devoted his career to studying English spelling, found that of the 10,000 most common printed words in English, only 1 in 5 is spelled phonetically. 1 in 5! There are also 1,768 ways of spelling forty phonemes (a basic sound unit in the language) – which is why English is one of the only languages that requires a pronunciation guide. (In almost all other languages, pronunciation guides are not needed because the spelling adequately represents the pronunciation.) This naturally leads one to ask: **How can you teach a child to “sound out” a language that requires a pronunciation guide?**

English dictionary



Spanish dictionary



In order to overcome the problems inherent in sounding out, phonics asks children to memorize almost 600 spelling and pronunciation rules, such as the silent e rule, the double vowel rule, the consonant combination rule and on and on. Remembering nearly 600 rules is impossible for a child - or even an adult for that matter. What's worse is that the rules themselves are riddled with exceptions. Dr. Robert Hillerich, the former Chariman of the Dept. of Reading & Language Arts at the National College of Education concluded: “Generalizations [i.e. rules] about vowels can be grouped into two categories: generalizations which hold true most of the time but which include too few words to be worth teaching, and those which apply to many words but which are so unreliable that they are not worth teaching.”

For better or worse, in English, irregularity is the rule. Put simply, if phonics worked as advertised it would be spelled "foniks."

Reading Kingdom, on the other hand, is the only program available that uses a "phonics plus" approach to reading instruction that incorporates the best parts of phonics while teaching additional skills required for reading and writing success without requiring kids to learn any complicated rules. When children are taught all 6 skills they learn how to read easily – and they do so with the added benefit of achieving fluency and strong comprehension skills.

	Sequencing	Writing	Sounds	Meaning	Grammar	Comprehension
Reading Kingdom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other programs			✓			

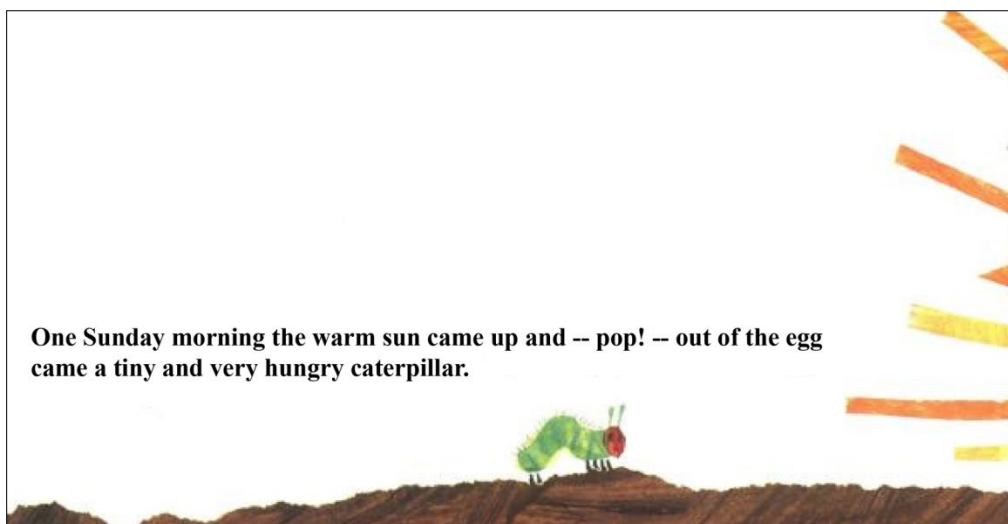
The reliance on Phonics has led to instruction that is stilted and leaves children unprepared for the text they find in the real world. Consider the following image taken from a competitor’s website:

Our competition:



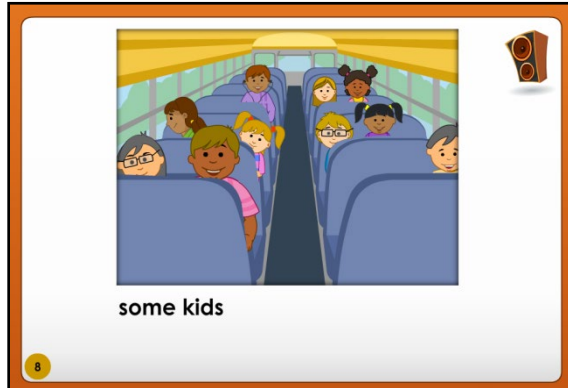
**The peel is old.
 “I can fling the old peel.”
 Can Scout free his wing?
 Fling holds the peel.
 Scout is free!**

Why would a reading company advertise that they teach children sentences that amount to gibberish? Because that is considered normal when the words being taught are structured based on sounds – which is typical of all phonics-based decoding instruction. It is also worth noting that this text has many other strange characteristics such as centered spacing (as opposed to the left justified spacing found in virtually all books), quotations appearing without any attribution, bizarre proper names (“Fling”), etc. As soon as children pick up a real book, they find something completely different. Consider “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” which has been on the Amazon children’s best seller list for many years.



In real books, words are always structured based on meaning, which is exactly how Reading Kingdom is organized. Here are typical pages from Reading Kingdom books:

Book 1



Book 29



In Reading Kingdom, children are taught words that are used to build meaningful sentences which then combine with other sentences to make meaningful messages – just like the books children find in real life.

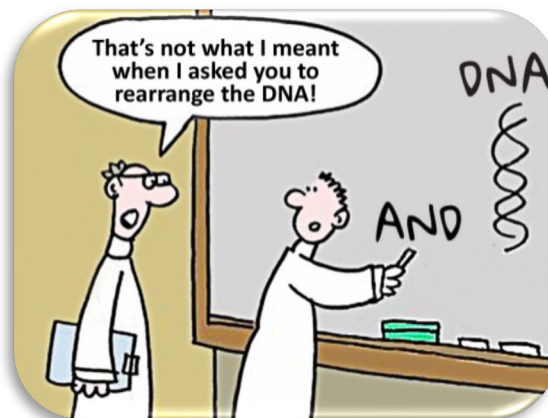
Why would you teach children to read using text that is unlike anything they will encounter in the real world? To be frank, we don't know. It doesn't make any sense. Just think about any other skill we learn – such as musical instruments, sports, or foreign languages, etc. We start off learning the basics – but we learn the form correctly. We don't begin by learning a stilted, incorrect and inappropriate version of the skill we want to learn! Why should reading be any different?

Reading Kingdom is the only system using this innovative approach. And when children are taught all six skills in an integrated fashion, they easily master both reading and writing. To get a sense of their power, let's briefly consider what the six skills entail.

The Six Skill Integrated Method of Reading & Writing

The six skills of reading and writing are: sequencing, writing, sounds (phonology), meaning (semantics), grammar (syntax) and comprehension. Here is a little bit about how and why Reading Kingdom teaches those skills.

Sequencing (Letter Order)



When we are young children and see items that are grouped together, we learn that their sequence, or order, doesn't matter. For example:

here are some puppies



& here are the same puppies...



& here are the same puppies...



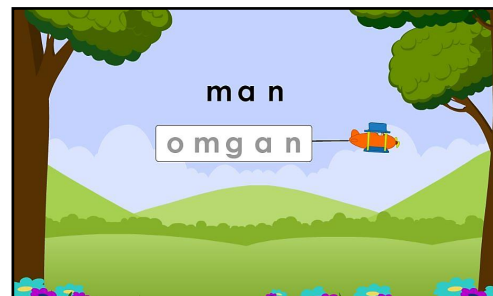
Our experience has taught us that these are all the "same" group of adorable puppies. The order they appear in doesn't make any difference. However, when we learn how to read, suddenly, the sequence of the objects becomes essential.

Sequencing is what allows us to read the same letter combinations as different words by changing their order – as you can see in these words:

now / won / own	pale / leap / plea	eat / tea / ate
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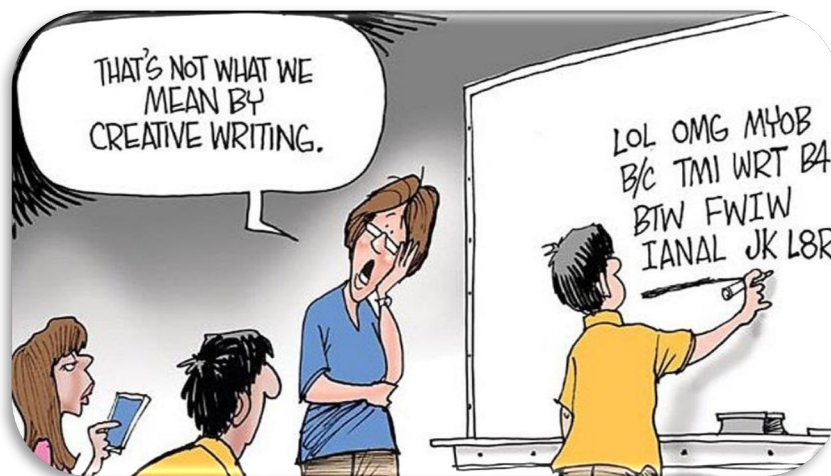
These differences in sequencing are obvious to us, but not to a young child who has not yet learned to read. Amazingly, children are not taught this essential aspect of reading.

However, in Reading Kingdom's Seeing Sequences segment, children easily and rapidly acquire the sequencing skills they need. Because Reading Kingdom is adaptive, only those students who will benefit from this format, receive it.



Seeing Sequences

Writing



Writing is reading's sister skill and is an essential part of reading education. Research shows that teaching writing and reading together is far more effective than teaching reading alone. For example, it has been found that **teaching a child to write a word accurately is 5 times as effective in facilitating**

word recognition as reading the same word once. In other words, reading fluency is attained much faster via writing. That’s why Reading Kingdom incorporates a lot of writing.

To write successfully, students need to have mastered the physical skills involved in creating written words. With paper and pencil material, this means handwriting; with computers, this means keyboarding. Fortunately, for young children, keyboarding does not entail their having to use all ten fingers. A single finger is enough. But the movements of that finger must be guided by teaching which leads the children to have a solid sense of the keyboard layout. With that mental map in place, hunting and pecking vanishes to be replaced by smooth, accurate movements on any keys they need.

The solution is provided in Reading Kingdom’s Letter Land format which offers an integrated system for teaching children the skills for recognizing and selecting the letters they need to produce for effective spelling and writing. This segment teaches upper and lower case letters, as well as the beginnings of punctuation.



Letter Land

(Reading Kingdom also offers an easy-to-use handwriting program that teaches children the fine motor skills and the production of shapes that handwriting requires.)

Sounds / Phonology



Phonology is the skill that allows you to take a set of letters (such as "c", "a", and "t") and translate them into sounds that form real words (e.g. "cat"). Unfortunately, the current methods for teaching “sounding out” do not work for many children. As previously discussed, English is highly irregular and there are 1,768 to spell 40 phonemes. For example, the sound “u” as in “nut” can be spelled 60 different ways (e.g. **a**bout, **o**cean, **g**orge**ou**s, **n**ati**o**n, **d**oes, **p**ati**e**nce, **w**om**e**n, etc.).

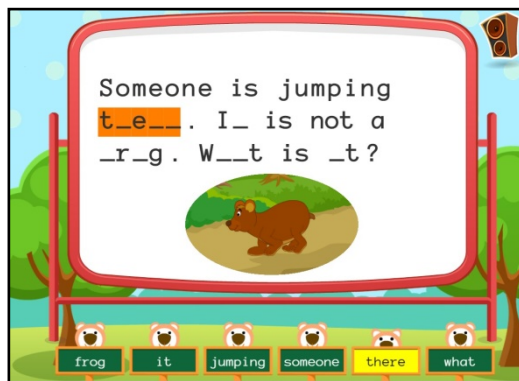
The "solution" that traditional phonics approaches offer to get around this obstacle is to have children learn "rules" about the way letters work. In fact, Phonics has developed almost 600 rules! But the problem with the "rules" is that they are riddled with exceptions.

Fortunately, there are easier and more effective methods for converting letters into sounds without requiring children to learn complicated and error-prone rules. That’s why Reading Kingdom uses two unique methods that lead to rapid sound and word identification and do not require children to memorize any rules. These are:

Bit blends: this technique eases the demands of blending – which is very challenging for children – by providing part of the sound blend and requiring students to complete the other part. It’s like putting training wheels on the process of blending. After a period of time, children learn how to blend on their own.



Orthographic phonemics: teaches the sounds of letters in words via writing so students learn to see sound patterns in numerous situations that can be very challenging for students, such as words where the same letters have different sounds (ie, play**ed**, paint**ed** and work**ed**) and words that sound the same but are spelled differently (ie, **their**, **there** and **they’re**), etc.















Semantics (Meaning)



One of these things is not like the others

In early reading children are typically presented with pages of words that have nothing to do with one another except for sharing sets of letters. For instance, here is a typical phonics worksheet:

map  lap nap	pot  got hot	mop  top pop	kid  lid did
hum  gum yum	van  can ran	bug  hug dug	ox  fox box
get  pet jet	ten  pen hen	map  tap rap	rug  tug mug

There are very significant problems with this approach. For one thing, using this method children get accustomed to worksheets showing endless sets of disconnected words. In real reading material, of course, words never cluster this way. Even in the earliest readers, **words are always linked together on the basis of meaning – not sounds**. A story about a hungry animal, for example, might read as follows:

“The bear was hungry. She was looking for some food. She spotted a tree with berries...”

None of these words shares common letter patterns. To read this material, a child must be able to shift rapidly from one different word to the next. The sound-sharing words of worksheets do not prepare children to do this, leaving them at a loss when they have to do actual reading.

A second key problem is that in English there are many words that are spelled the same but have different meanings and pronunciations (sounds), or sound the same, but have different spellings and meanings. **The correct word and meaning can only be gleaned from context**. In fact, Charles C. Fries, author of “Linguistics and Reading,” found that the 500 most-used words in the Oxford English Dictionary have 14,070 separate and different meanings, an average of 28 each.

For example, consider the following words with multiple meanings:

- **bay**: a color, a tree, a part of a building, a body of water, a prolonged bark
- **fair**: good weather, impartial, an exposition, a light color

And these sentences:

Since there is no time like the **present**, he thought it was time to **present** the **present**.
They decided to **desert** their friends in the **desert** restaurant before eating **dessert**.

Context makes these distinctions clear. Without context, how is a student to know?

For children to become effective readers, from the start, they must learn to read words organized to convey meaningful messages. The reading and writing materials in Reading Kingdom all pay close attention to meaning so that a child is always working with words and sentences that actually mean something – just like the words and sentences they encounter in real life.

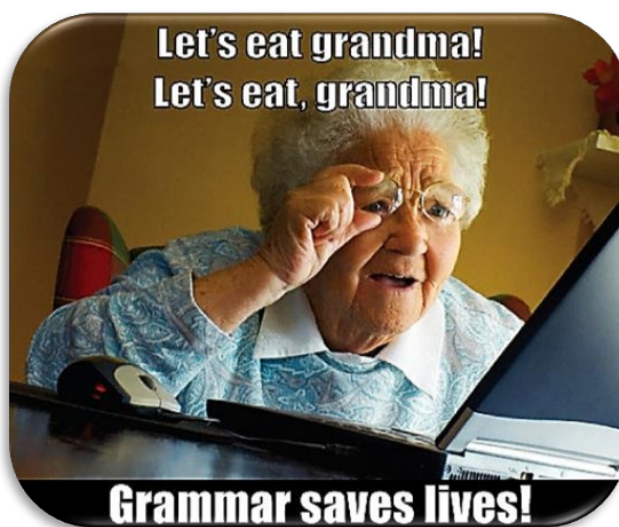
In Reading Kingdom, words are always taught in context.



Ray and other fish like her have to ___ in the ___ and stay ___ much of the time. They swim just on top of the sand.

dig smile sand there

Syntax (Grammar)



Intensive High frequency Syntax System: Reading Kingdom uses the Intensive High frequency Syntax System which takes advantage of the fact that while English contains more than one million words, out of that vast number, there is a very small, unique group made up of only 100 commonly used words. They are words such as "the," "is," "was," "they," "how," "what," "to" and "does" and are often referred to as "non-content" words because they seem to lack any clear meaning.

Because these words cannot be sounded out, they are labeled as "exceptions" and they are given very minimal teaching time.

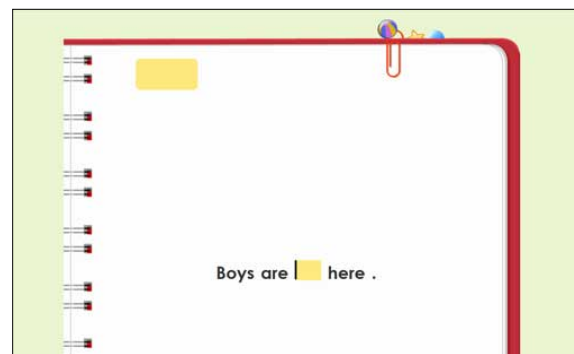
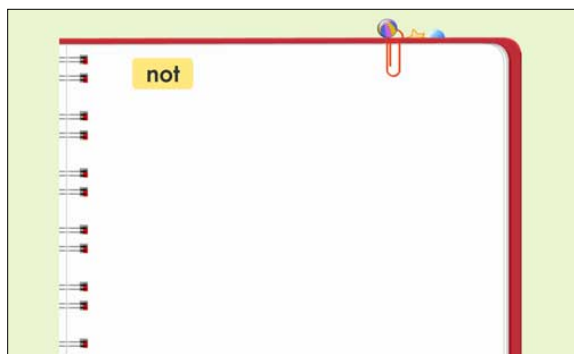
Although they are often overlooked, 100 **or so of the** non-content words form **the** majority **of any** page **of** text **you will ever** read **in the** English language — **regardless of whether the** book **is for a** child **or an** adult.

(In the sentence above, the **bolded** non-content words comprise 63% of the total.)

Moreover, these powerful words are essential to our system of grammar because they:

• identify nouns	<i>the boy, some toys, etc.</i>
• identify verbs	<i>is running, are playing, etc.</i>
• identify singular	<i>a girl, his home, etc.</i>
• identify plural	<i>they ran, these boxes, etc.</i>
• establish tense	<i>is here, was here, will be here, etc.</i>
• form questions	<i>What is? Did she? Are they? etc.</i>
• negate	<i>but, not, etc.</i>
• indicate space	<i>in the corner, on the box, etc.</i>

But Reading Kingdom doesn't just teach children to memorize these words as some "high frequency" word list – the program actually teaches these words' meaning. Reading Kingdom does this by carefully pairing words and graphics. For example, in learning the word "not" the child first sees a sentence where the word has to be inserted.



The sentence is followed by a graphic that illustrates its meaning. Then guided by audio instructions, the child has to type some or all of the words in the sentence—including its punctuation.



So if you teach children these 100 words, they can read 60% of every page they will ever read and even more importantly they will understand the relationships among all the other words on that page. The importance of this to reading instruction cannot be overstated.

Reading Kingdom is the only system that has been designed to leverage the power of this group of words by thoroughly teaching their meaning and usage in context. As a result, children are provided with a potent tool that makes reading easier, smoother, and easier to understand.

Comprehension (Text)



Books represent the heart and soul of reading. Unless they have been beset by failure, young children have no deeper yearning than being able to read books on their own.

Unfortunately, motivation is not everything. Good books tell stories. To do that, they need to use a fair number of complex words, ideas, and sentences. These books are often too long and complex for many children, with the result that children find themselves adrift in a sea of unrecognized words. When this happens, the experience for novice readers is not pleasure, but rather pain as they experience repeated errors. And nothing is more devastating to learning than high rates of error.

Any teacher whose student struggles with the printed page will tell you the real story. With repeated failure, motivation is transformed into tension and misery. Children will love reading only if they can read the messages on the printed page easily and effortlessly and if they see the way ideas are put together to create meaningful stories. Without comprehending the **main idea** conveyed by the books, children aren't really reading.

Other programs typically use the method of providing passages and then asking questions about them. For example:

The United States

The United States is a large country. It is the third largest in the whole world! It is located in a continent called North America. Parts of the United States touch three different oceans. The United States has tall mountains, wide plains, deserts, hills, rivers, lakes, volcanoes, and even rainforests! People from all over the world have come to live in the United States.

1.) The United States is the _____ country in the world.

A.) smallest C.) second largest
B.) third largest D.) largest

2.) Parts of the United States touch _____ different oceans.

A.) three C.) four
B.) two D.) five

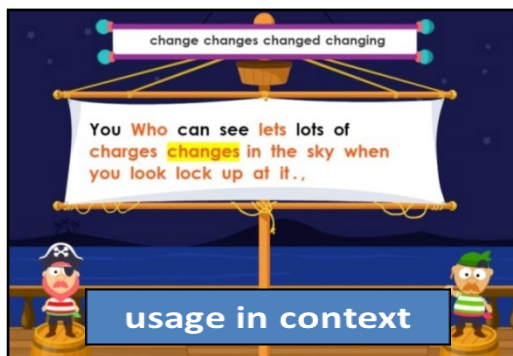
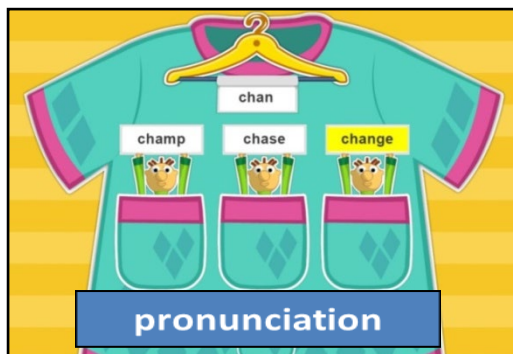
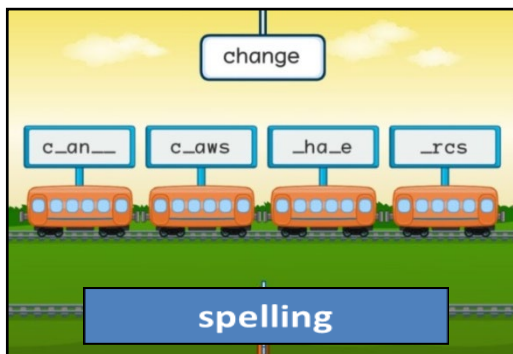
3.) The United States does not have _____.

A.) 50 states C.) volcanoes
B.) mountains D.) continents

The problem with this approach is that it only teaches students to recall details. And a student can remember many details about a book and still have no idea what the main idea was.

Reading Kingdom offers two innovative methods for ensuring comprehension:

Intensive Word Teaching Method: Before reading a book, students learn all the words using 4 formats that teach a word’s 1) spelling, 2) pronunciation, 3) meaning and 4) usage in context. This way, students can be assured that they can successfully read and comprehend the program’s 30 custom books.



Comprehension Modeling Method: After reading a book, students are taught how to form “main idea” summaries of the stories they have read via the highly effective pedagogical method of modeling. It’s like putting training wheels on the process. After a period of time, children learn how to grasp and recapitulate the main idea on their own.

A screenshot of a comprehension modeling activity. It features a small illustration of a park scene in the top left and a speaker icon in the top right. The main text is a paragraph with several blank spaces for students to fill in. Below the paragraph is a box containing the words "dirty", "happy", "like", and "swing".

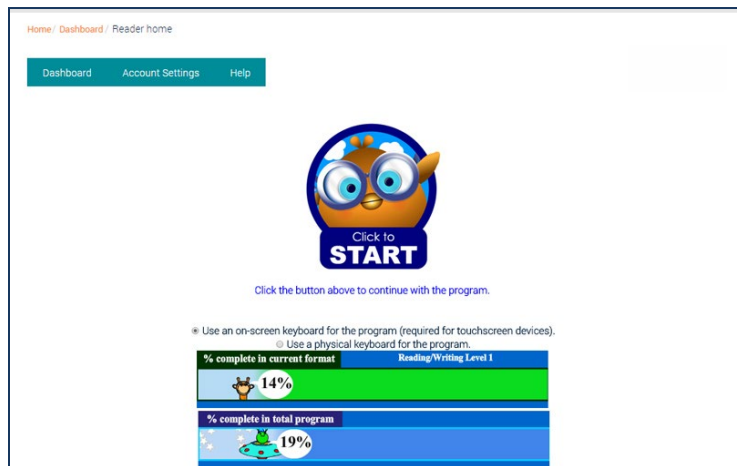
There was a park that was very _____. Some kids wanted to get out of the _____. But some other kids wanted to _____. They wanted to fix all the _____. All the kids did stay and they did clean the _____. They put all the dirty things into _____. Then the park was a nice place for _____.

dirty happy like swing

Other highlights:

Very easy to use

Reading Kingdom is designed for children to use on their own. All they need to do is click the big start button and the program takes care of the rest.

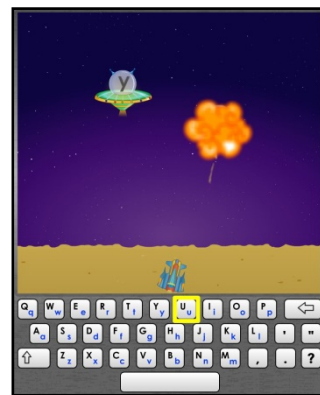
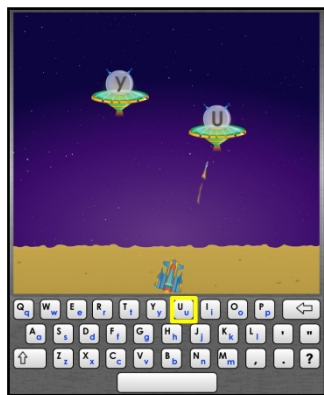


Adaptive learning

Reading Kingdom has been designed to take advantage of a child’s strengths and to help him or her overcome any weaknesses. As a child moves through the program, the path is adapted to his or her particular needs. Because of this, each child’s experience in Reading Kingdom is unique. This prevents children from wasting time learning something they already know (which leads to boredom) or being faced with tasks that are too difficult (which leads to frustration). The program begins with a placement test and then continuously and seamlessly determines whether a student should skip portions of the program or receive review when needed.

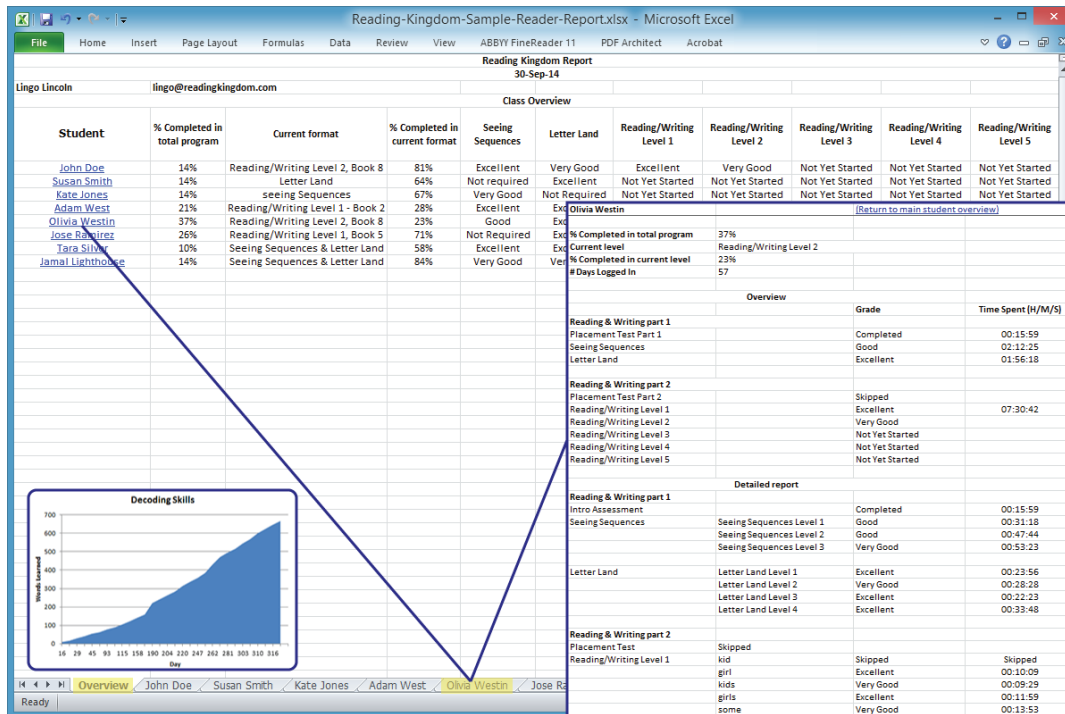
Engagement

Kids like their computer based learning to be fun. That’s why the program uses principles of gaming such as points, levels, challenges and rewards to stimulate engagement.



Reporting

The program provides extensive reports that are available online and as downloadable spreadsheets. These show all student performance on all elements of the program.



Works Everywhere

Reading Kingdom works on any device with an Internet connection including Windows, Mac, iPad, Android and Chromebooks. The program can be used anywhere a student may be. All progress is stored online and students can always pick up right where they left off.



Research Based & Incredibly Effective

Reading Kingdom children to read and write with comprehension at a 3rd grade reading level in only 12-18 months.



Here's what people are saying about Reading Kingdom:



"Reading Kingdom is **a monumental work** that makes available to educators, therapists and families a simple, straightforward time-tested approach."
-- Dr. Jeffrey Lieberman, Columbia University



"There are **so many great things about Reading Kingdom** ... It's easy to use, builds on success, and your child really enjoys it."
--Cindy Crawford, whose kids used Reading Kingdom



"The program addresses deficiencies in phonics and whole language ... **I highly recommend it.** The financial investment will garner huge returns for you."
-- Anitra Elmore, teacher



"Reading Kingdom is the only program I recommend. It is fun for kids, easy to use, well grounded in research and it works! **There is no better program.**"
-- Karen Quinn, Testing For Kindergarten



"All three of my children report that they **love Reading Kingdom** because it is a lot of fun.' It's an exceptional program that expands on traditional phonics."
-- Maureen Ruble, parent



"Reading Kingdom provides the most complete method for teaching reading & writing that I have seen. **Thank you for this outstanding program.**"
-- Catherine Smith, teacher



"My son loved Reading Kingdom from the start. **In his words, 'Mommy, I can read!'**"
-- Jennifer McQuillan, parent



"**I love how the program is customized** to teach the students exactly what they need & keeps me up to date on their progress. Thank you Reading Kingdom A++!"
-- Melissa Holyfield, teacher

For more reviews please visit: <http://www.readingkingdom.com/testimonials/>