

# Reading Rocks! Teacher's Guide

*Reading Rocks* is a supplemental reading program for students of all ages.

This instructional guide will help you organize your reading lessons. Each story has five parts:

1. **Phonics** – word patterns which are found in the story
2. **Story words** – vocabulary words found in the story
3. **Phrases** – chunks of words: high – frequency sight words, story words, and learned words
4. **Stories** - developmentally and sequentially designed using the words they have just learned
5. **'make a pic'**– an opportunity to draw small pictures (pics) to represent the story line(s) read

## 1. Phonics

*These are the word patterns found in the story on the facing page.*

The teacher can model by reading the words first. Students are then asked to read the words aloud. At first they read chorally, then individually. The teacher can verbally correct the child as he makes errors. It is suggested that the student read from one to four times. The student may underline the phonic elements if he needs to do so.

## 2. Story Words

*Story words, in the shaded box opposite the story, are presented for the development of vocabulary and reading skills.*

Each student should be given the opportunity to read these words aloud. This provides an introduction to the words that will be found in the story which follows. The teacher reads and translates each word. Students are to write the translation of the story words which are new to them. They are to write them in their native language, above the words in the shaded box.

After the teacher reads the Story Words, the students are to read the words aloud, chorally. They should read the words at least once. The teacher can then ask for volunteers to read the words individually.

### 3. Phrases

*The Phrases section contains words found in the story on the facing page, high-frequency sight words, and learned words. It is critical that students read and verbally translate the phrases aloud, as this will promote reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills.*

a. The teacher models by reading the phrases. Students are then asked to read the phrases aloud. At first they read chorally, and then the teacher can ask for individual volunteers to read. The teacher can correct the child as she makes errors. (Be sensitive to those children who may become embarrassed by reading in front of peers.) It is suggested that students read the phrases orally two to four times, in order to promote automatic recall of words.

b. The teacher leads the oral drill of reading and translating the phrases. Students can refer to the translation that they have written above the story words. (Students should *not* write the translation above the phrases, but *only* above the story words.) It is suggested that the students read chorally two to four times. Individual students are then asked to volunteer to read and translate the phrases aloud. The teacher can verbally correct the child as he makes errors. This exercise will lead to extraordinary comprehension of text.

### 4. Stories

*By the time the student is ready to read a story, he will be familiar enough with the words to read and understand most parts of it.*

The goal here is to teach students to read smoothly with understanding and expression. Teachers will notice that there is a familiar story pattern throughout **Reading Rocks**. It is the intent of the authors of **Reading Rocks** to gradually increase sentence length with each new idea in the story. This builds vocabulary as well as reading skills in a graduated step- by- step manner. [For example, the first sentence will be about a dog, the next sentence is about a big dog, and finally it is about a big, white dog.] For the weak reader, this technique makes it far easier for the student to understand and translate. The student reads words in repetition, as each sentence builds upon the previous one. Previously learned words are repeated often by using this story pattern, since students are required to learn only one or two new words as the sentences progress.

1. The teacher models the reading of the title and story. She then asks the students to read the story. They should read this chorally.

*The next step is to determine if they understand the story.*

1. Then they translate, as a class activity, with teacher guidance. If necessary, the students can refer to the facing page for the translations. (The book is open so that both pages are facing the reader. This is the reason the book has a spiral spine.)

Students can be asked to read aloud again, individually. The teacher can model reading

with expression and ask for volunteers to read the story, also using expression. Some stories lend themselves to being acted out, with the readers using some or all of the sentences from the stories.

## 5. 'make a pic'

*The 'make a pic' on the top right corner of every story page is an assignment that allows the teacher to assess the student's understanding of that which he has read.*

After the class has read and orally translated the story, ask the students to draw small pics (pictures) after every one to two lines in the story. The student drawings indicate just how much the student is able to understand, word by word, or phrase by phrase.

For those students who do not want to draw, they can write a short phrase or sentence in their native language. However, drawing is the preferred outcome, as it best demonstrates understanding of the text.

This can be an in-class or homework assignment.

### **Using the Story Section to Develop Reading Fluency for Individual Students**

This is an excellent tool for *Ofek Chadash*, and for tutoring struggling students.

#### **Monitoring Guided Repeated Oral Reading:**

- Note that each story has a word count.
- This technique takes 2-3 minutes per student. Use this with students who are struggling and seem to be unmotivated. It can change their outlook on learning!

a. Select the story which you are teaching in ***Reading Rocks***. You can read the story aloud to the student, to model reading. Tell him you will set a timer for 1 minute to see how many words he can read correctly in a minute. Ask him to read the story aloud. This is to be a 1-minute ***timed*** reading. Use a timer, placed on the desk. Ask the student to read the title and the story.

As the student reads, the teacher orally corrects any errors made. The teacher makes a small dot above the error. At the end of the minute, the timer will sound, and the reading stops. Let the student know that he did a good job: 'Good work,' 'Great job.' Review the errors with him and have him read those the words correctly.

b. Together, count the total number of words the student read in one minute, saying: "Okay, let's count how many words you read in one minute." Write the total number of words she read. Verbally reinforce the student for reading this number of words!

c. Count the number of errors that were made. Write down the number of errors.

d. Subtract the number of errors from the total words read. The result is the WCPM (words correct per minute) that the student reads.

e. Make a graph for each student, and chart reading progress on a regular basis. Put the date on every charted reading. Put the number of WCPM on the graph. This is an easy, quick way to maintain a record on student growth. They have a visual representation of their progress. It is truly motivating!

Ask the student to read the story again the next day, and each day until he is able to read it with 100% accuracy, within one minute. Always time the readings. It is best practice to conduct oral repeated readings on a daily basis with struggling students. Improvement in reading fluency will take place and students will *want* to read.

For this individualized instruction in fluency training, do not move on to the next story until this one is mastered with 100% accuracy. However, the student can go on to the next chapter with his class for group work.

Research indicates that after a student has analyzed and *correctly* read a word *several* times, he will form an exact 'neural model' of the word.<sup>1</sup> This means that he will store the word form in his brain. He will remember that word each time he sees it, and he will be able to read it automatically.

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<sup>1</sup> Shaywitz. *Overcoming Dyslexia*. (New York: Knopf, 2003), p. 79.