

Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics

First Readers

With Flesch-Kincaid & Dale-Chall
Grade Level
Readability Statistics
and
Word Count

Study by Donald L. Potter

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Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics

First Readers

<u>Book</u>	<u>Lessons</u>	<u>Skills</u>
Book 1	Lessons 1 – 14	Short Ää, Mm, Nn, Ss, Tt, Xx, Dd, Ww, Ll, Bb, Cc, Gg, Ff, Jj, Ll, Nn, Pp, Rr, Tt, Vv, Yy, Zz, ck, qu.
Book 2	Lessons 15 – 28	Short vowels: ě, ĭ, ō, ŭ; Consonant Digraphs: ph, th
Book 3	Lessons 29 – 37	Consonant Digraphs: sh, ch, wh. Verbs: to be, to have, contractions
Book 4	Lessons 38 – 39	Two-syllable short vowel words
Book 5	Lessons 40 – 57	all, consonant blends: ng, ing, Final Consonant blends: nd, nt, (er), nk, nc, nch, ct, ft, pt, xt, sk, sp, st, lb, ld, lf, lk, lm, lt, mp, tch, dge, nce, nse. Two-syllable words with consonant blends.
Book 6	Lessons 58 – 71	Initial consonant blends: bl, br, cl, cr, dr, dw, fl, fr, gl, fr, gw, bl, br, sl, shr, sm, sn, sp, spr, st, str, sw, sc, sk, scr, tr, thr, tw.
Book 7	Lessons 72 – 86	Long ā vowel spellings: ā-e, ai, ay/ey, ei, eigh, au/aw, ār
Book 8	Lessons 87 – 100	Long ē vowel spellings: ee, ēa, [ěa, eā], e-e, ie, --y; Long ī vowel: I, -y, uy. igh
Book 9	Lessons 101 – 117	ough, augh, gh=f, Long ō vowel spellings: ō-e, ōe, ōw, ōld, ōst. –o, oo, oo, ould, ou/ow, ouch, oy/oi, Long ū vowel: ū-e, ūi, ūe, ew, eu.
Book 10	Lessons 118 – 128	er, ir, or, ur, ear, le, Silent t, ph=f, ti=sh, ssi, ci, ce = sh, ci, sci, xi = su, ssu = sh, si, su = zh, ti tu = ch, kn =n, mb = m, bt = t, Silent h, wr = r, st = s, ft = f, ch = k, ps – s, y = short ĭ
Book 11	Poetry	

First Reader: Book 1

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 14 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: Short Ää, Mm, Nn, Ss, Tt, Xx, Dd, Ww, Ll, Bb, Cc, Gg, Ff, Jj, Ll, Nn, Pp, Rr, Tt, Vv, Yy, Zz, ck, qu.

FKGL = Flesch Kincaid Grade Level.

The grade levels were determined by the Utility at the following website:
http://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level: 1.71 – 373 Words

Dad has a van. Dad's van has a fan. Dad's van has a tan cab. Dad's van has gas. A van can pass a cat. Can a cat pass a van? Sam can pat a cat. Can a cat pat Sam? A tan cat can zap a fat rat. Can a cat jab at sand? Al has land and sand. Cal has ham and jam. Pam has a tan fan. Jan has a tan hat. A lass and a lad ran. A cat and a yak ran. Dad has a bad back. Dad had a nap. Mad Max has a pad and a map. Jack can pack a bag. A bag can snag. Hal's back was tan. Max was mad at Jan. Was Jan mad at Max? Jack was sad. Hal and Val had ham and jam. Pam can nag Dan. Can Jan nag Pam? Max can pass a hat. Can Pat wax a van? Nat's hat was tan. A hat can sag. Can a bag sag? A lad can zap a bag. Can a cat pat a lad? A lad can pat a fat cat. Cal has a cap and a bat. Can Pam and Dan bat? Dan and Pam can bat. Dad has a cap and can bat. Zack has an ax. Jack has wax. Pam was mad at Max. Max was sad. Hal had a yam. A lass and a lad sat and had jam. Jack has a tan back. Mack has a rag-tag jazz band. Pam and Val can tap a hand. Jack and Zack can fan a band. Dan was a jazz fan. Nat has a sax. A band can lack a sax. Sal can tag Sam. Can Sam tag Sal? Can a cat nab a rat? A fat cat can nap. Jan had a pan and a vat. Dad has a fax. A lad and lass had ham and jam. A lad can cap a pan. Jan and Jack can gab and gab. Nat and Pam can yack and yack. Zack has a fax. Sal was a sad lad. Dad's fax has a rack. A man can jab at sand. A lad can lack a sax. A cat, a rat, and a yak ran. Can Jan tap a fat bag? An ax can hack a ham.

First Reader: Book 2

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 15 through 28 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: Short vowels: ě, ĭ, ō, ŭ; Consonant Digraphs: ph, th

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out.

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level: 1.16 – 513 Words

Pam has a pet pig. It is a fat pig. Pam's pig is in its pen. Deb has a read hen. Dad put Deb's hen in a big red net. Bob has a pup. Can Deb pet Bob's pup? Pat's pet fell in a pit. Jack has a pet duck. The duck fell in the pit. Jeff has a pet dog. The dog fell in the pit. The pit is big and full of pets. The pets got wet. The sun is hot. Dan can get a tan in the sun. Mom fed Bess an egg. The egg got hot in the sun. Meg put the egg on the pot. The pot got hot. Can Ted sell an egg? Ted and Jeff sat on a keg. Rex sat on the deck. Meg led Peg up the deck. Ned's cat fell off the deck. Jack got the cat back. The cat was wet. The deck was a mess. Ben can run and hop. A fox can run, hop, and dig. Jack hid his pet duck in his bed. His bed got wet. A wet bed is a mess. Can Jack mop up his bed? Can Jack mop up the mess? A fox can rob a pen. The fox can hop and run. Ted put the fox in a box. Bob put the pot in the pit. Jack can tuck the duck in bed. Meg sat in the sun and had an egg. The pup ran in the sun and had fun. Mom and Dad sat on the deck and got tan in the sun. Mom and Dad quit the deck at six and met Gus at the bus. Jim is a big kid and can bat well. Will Jim win at bat? Jim will tell him yes. Jim will hug Jill. Jack's dog fell in the tub and got wet. Phil's pet

duck got sick and Phil did fill his bill with a pill. Will Phil's duck get well with the pill? The duck got well and ran on top of Phil's head. The duck can quack, quack, quack. Meg will tell Bess the deck is a mess. Did Tex get wet? Tell Bess yes. Can a hen get wet in a pen? The pen is full of mud. Can a hen hop in the mud? The bug dug in the mud. The hog fell off the log. Jack and Jill ran up the hill. If Rick is sick, can Kim tell Tim? Kim did tell Tim, and Tim ran back. Tim sat with Rick, and Rick got well. Liz had a quiz and did well. Sid's pup sat on the quiz and got it wet. Bud let his cat sit on his quiz. Dad has a lap-top. Dan quit his job at six. Dad and Dan had a Big Mac. Ron kisses his Mom. Val hugs Dad and has fun with the pup. The pup ran with Dad and Val. Can Jack pull a big log up the hill? Rick and Dick hid the mop in the box.

First Reader: Book 3

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 37 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*. Consonant Digraphs: sh, ch, wh. Verbs: to be, to have, contractions

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out. When the word is irregular, such as were or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules.

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level: 1.16 - 628 Words

Mom and Val are on the big ship. When will the ship dock? The ship will dock at six. Dad is in a rush. Dad met the ship with the van at six. Mom and Val had fun on the ship. The ship had shops on deck. You can sit on deck and get a tan. A fish shop is on the dock. Dad had fish and chips. Val had a chop and chips. Mom had fish and eggs in a dish. The fish shop will shut at ten. Mom and Val were in the sun a lot. They had a lot of fun. On a big ship, you can have lots of fun. Jack has lots of cash and is rich. Bud is Jack's chum. They had fish and chips at the fish shop. Jack and Bud met Mom, Dad, and Val at the shop. The shop is on the dock. They sat and had fun. The sun had set. Rick has six cats and Peg has a dog. Peg's dog had six pups. She put the pups in a bath. Can he wash the pups? Yes, she can. Rick's cat dug in the sand. Will Rick wash the Cat? Yes, if he can. The thin man has a thin cat. The cat can lick his chin. Beth will run with her dog. Meg is Beth's chum. She ran with her pet duck. The duck ran in the shack. The duck met a chick in the shack and then ran in the shed. Meg can dash in the shed and get the duck. This is Peg's pet hen. The hen can rush and dig in the sand. The hen had ten chicks. The chicks ran with the hen. The hen and the chicks ran in the shed. Jack put a big dish of fish in the shed. The hen had eggs. Jack will sell them at the shop.

When did Jill check the shack? She did it at ten. Where the hens in the shack? Yes, they were. Were the chicks in the shack? The chicks were in the shed. When did Jill check the shed? She did it at six. Jill then shut the shed and the shack. Kim and Tim got rich when they won cash. What did they wish? They did not wish much. Did Tom win cash? No, he didn't. What did he win? He won a big red pot of fish. Tom's pet cat got a dish of fish. Fish can rot if not in a pot. Pam put the fish in a hot pot. Can Phil's ox pull Dad's van? No, it can't. Can Don put a hat on a cat? Yes, if he can pick up his cat. But the cat ran and ran. Don' didn't put the hat on the cat. Dad cut logs on his land. He put the logs in the shed. The shed is full of logs. Can dad shut the shed? Yes, he can and he did. Is Peg's dog in the shed? No, he isn't. Mack is a big chap and can ax a log. Bill got a chill and was ill. He got well with a pill. Bud has a rash on his hand. Mom will rub his hand with a gel. His hand will get well. The chess set is in a box. The box has a red top. The box is on top of the bed. Beth and Rex had a math quiz. They can add and did well on the quiz. At the end of the quiz, they ran and had fun in the sun. Jack and Jill are chums. They will run in the hills. They will run in the sun. Can they run in the thick fog? Yes, they can.

First Reader: Book 4

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 39 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*.: Two-syllable short vowel words

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out. When the word is irregular, such as were or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules.

Please note that where a two-syllable word is first introduced in this book, it is followed by the same word in parentheses and broken up into its syllables to help the reader sound it out more easily.

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level: 1.33 – 468 Words

Jack had a hotdog with relish Jill put a bag of chips in the picnic basket. Meg's tomcat sat on top of the basket. Mom and Dad are in the chapel. Val put linen on the bed. Bill got a traffic ticket. Bill put the ticket in his jacket pocket. The traffic signal was red. Philip had a pencil in his hand. Kevin is a rascal Ken has a mascot. Mom has a red satin bonnet. Val has a velvet hat with a red ribbon on it. Mom put the satin bonnet in a hatbox. Val put her velvet hat in a box with her sash. The vivid sunset was magic. A rocket. can go up and up and up. Phillip sat on a cactus He got up and ran. Was Philip upset? Yes, Philip was upset. But he had a lesson. You can't sit on a cactus. When can Calvin visit his chum Kevin? Kevin and Karen are in Japan. Calvin has a rabbit as a pet. Karen has a tennis lesson. Kevin put a pencil in his pocket. Karen has a tablet and a pencil. The camel sat on the picnic basket. Did that upset Mom? Yes, it did. Can a tomcat run with a rabbit? Can a rabbit mimic a tomcat? Patrick put his hat on the hatrack. Kevin put his jacket on the hatrack. Can Kevin put his combat helmet on the hatrack? No, he can't. A helmet is not a bonnet, and the hatrack is full of hats.

Philip had a dental exam. He had a checkup and his gums are well. Calvin sat on the deck until sunset. Meg's pet rabbit is in the attic. Can Meg's chum, Calvin, visit the attic? Kevin is bashful, but Karen is not. She can be a rascal. She can sit on a camel and get it to run at a gallop. Karen is full of fun. She can mimic a puppet. But she can't sit on a bobcat. Karen put Calvin's jacket in the wagon. Did the jacket vanish? No, it didn't vanish. Calvin put Karen's locket in his jacket pockets. Did the locket vanish? No, the locket was hidden (hid-den) in the pocket. Peg's husband, Ted, has a red van. Ted put the van in the shed and locked the shed with a padlock. A camel can gallop with a rabbit on its back. But a rabbit can't gallop with a chick on its back. Rabbits can hop and chicks can run, but they cannot gallop. Dad is a vet and was in combat. He won a medal. His combat helmet is in the attic. The medal is hidden in a box in the log cabin. Mom's dad had a cabin when she was a kid. The cabin had six cots for six kids.

First Reader: Book 5

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 57 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: all, consonant blends: ng, ing, Final Consonant blends: nd, nt, (er), nk, nc, nch, ct, ft, jpt, xt, sk, sp, st, lb, ld, lf, lk, lm, lt, mp, tch, dge, nce, nse, Two-syllable words with consonant blends.

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out. When the word is irregular, such as were or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules.

We have inserted some words with vowel sounds and consonant blends the reader has not yet been taught but which are easily decoded. These words are added to ease the flow of narrative.

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level: 1.78 – 794 Words

Cal's pal, Tim, is tall and can bat a ball. Hal put the ball in his jacket pocket. He hung his jacket in the hall. Then they all went to the mall. They sang songs at the mall and the public sang with them. The last song they sang was the best. They rang bells and had lots of fun. Mom and Dad went shopping at the mall. They had lunch with Beth and Kevin. Dad is shipping a rug to his mom as a gift. Bill sent a letter to his sister. Hank put cash in the bank. Dad put gas in the van's tank. Dad wants to get a ranch in Texas. Bob had punch with his lunch. Beth had a hotdog with relish for lunch. Seth sat on a bench and put a pat of butter on his chicken. Is chicken better with butter? Ask Seth. This summer Ken went camping with Chuck and Bill. This summer the tent was bigger and better than last summer.

Last winter Bob went west with his mom and dad. The winter was long and then it was summer. Summers tend to go faster than winters. We all miss the summer in winter.

Bill got a raft as a gift. He left the raft at the pond. Bill and Chuck went fishing at the pond. In winter Bill will put the raft in the shed. The shed is next to the pond.

Philip and Kevin are selling eggnog and hotdogs to the public. In summer they sell lots of lemon drink. In winter they sell lots of eggnog, hotdogs, and chicken wings. They have fun selling to the public.

Mom was mending Dad's socks. She then went shopping at the mall to get Dad a fishing rod as a gift. Did Dad want a fishing rod? Yes, he did.

Karen is calling her sister Ann. She wants Ann to go shopping with her at the mall.

Karen and Ann are fond of Jack and Seth. They all had a picnic last summer at the pond. They went fishing and had a lot of fun. At dusk they went back to the camp and had fish and chips. Mom and Dad were at the camp. It was the best picnic of the summer.

Dad and Kevin went to Japan and Hong Kong. Calvin and Philip went to Dallas. Dallas is in Texas. It was getting hot in Dallas, so they left and went to Kansas to visit Chuck and Rick. After the visit, they got in the van and went back to Dad's ranch in Texas. They got back at six and had dinner at the ranch.

A robin was singing in her nest. She fed her chicks and sang a song. Hank did a lot of running this summer. He can run fast. In winter he will not be running as much and will get a lot of rest.

Val has a gift list so that when she shops, she will have her list in her handbag. It is best to have a list when you go shopping.

Kevin and Bob have bunk beds. Kevin's bunk is on top. Bob's is on the bottom. Kevin's mattress is soft. Bob's mattress is not as soft. Next winter Dad will get them better beds.

Ken has a lot of junk in his shed. The shed is so full of junk that Ken can't get his raft in the shed. Can he put his raft in the attic? No, it will not fit.

Hank and Philip were washing Dad's van but did not finish the job. Dad was upset. "You must finish the job," he said. They did finish the job, and Dad was glad that they did.

Hank and Philip then had lunch at a lunch wagon. The man at the wagon sells hotdogs and eggs, fish and chips, mints and gum. He also sells chicken wings.

Seth wants to get a job so that he can get cash. He wants to go to London and visit his pal, Calvin. Calvin has a job in London. He is singing with a band.

London is better in summer when it is not as wet as in winter. There is a lot of fog in London in the fall and winter. When Seth gets to London he will get in a cab and visit Calvin.

Dad got stuck in traffic. He had to stop in back of a truck that had a flat. He had to skip lunch but got back to finish his job.

Greg got a chill and a stiff neck. He drank a hot lemon drink. It did the trick, and he felt much better. A hot lemon drink can help get rid of a chill.

First Reader: Book 6

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 71 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*. Initial consonant blends: bl, br, cl, cr, dr, dw, fl, fr, gl, fr, gw, bl, br, sl, shr, sm, sn, sp, spr, st, str, sw, sc, sk, scr, tr, thr, tw.

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out. When the word is irregular, such as were or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules.

We have inserted words with vowel sounds the reader has not yet been taught but which are easily decoded. These words are added to ease the flow of narrative.

Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level: 1.88 – 833 Words

Kenneth and Gwen sat on the grass at the edge of the cliff. The sun was sinking in the west. It was a vivid sunset, with red and pink and orange colors. It was a thrill watching the sun set from the edge of the cliff.

Kenneth and Gwen then had a snack. Kenneth had a plum, and Gwen had an orange. When it was dusk, they left.

The frog swam in the swamp under the bridge. A frog can hop, skip, and jump. A skunk can also hop, skip, and jump. It is fun watching frogs and skunks hopping, skipping, and jumping. But a skunk can be a pest when it smells bad.

Frank and Fred went swimming last summer in the pond. After the swim, they had hotdogs for lunch.

They watched as a swift swan got stuck in a swamp. A small frog skipped and jumped. A skunk got in the act and hopped at the

edge of the swamp. The skunk fell in and got wet. It jumped on a log and began to smell. A duck got in the act. It went quacking in the swamp.

When a frog and a skunk and a duck want to help a swan in a trap, it's fun to watch what happens.

A runner can trot in the dust or trudge in the mud. In the spring the running track can get wet. Twigs can fall on the track, and a runner can twist his leg. Runners must watch the track as they run so that they will not slip in mud or trip on a crack.

When a runner gets a stiff leg, he must stop and rest. It is better to rest than risk getting hurt.

Can a prince and a princess dance in France? Yes, but they must ask the King. He will let them dance and sing. The prince is tall and can sing and dance well. The princess can sing and dance as well as the prince. The prince and princess dance as if they were Swans.

The King thinks that the prince and princess are grand.

Frank sent a letter to his mom from summer camp. He put a self-sticking stamp on it. You don't have to lick a self-sticking stamp, and it will not fall off. Frank's mom got the letter and was glad that her son was well.

Frank had a lot of fun at camp. He swam and fished and sang songs with his pals.

The men put a flag on the crest of the hill. Then they sang, "God bless this land." The kids sang with them. It was spring, and small buds were getting bigger.

A fresh wind spun the flag up. As they watched the flag, they clapped hands. At twelve they sat on the hill and had a picnic. After the picnic, they went for a swim in the pond.

Don has a scab on his scalp. He fell off a wall and hit his head. He is getting well.

Hal was stung on his hand by an insect. His hand swelled, and he had to go to a doctor. The doctor asked, "Was the insect a bee or a wasp?" Hal did not see what bit him. But his hand is getting better. Do not let an insect sting you, if you can help it.

Patrick has a bucket of shrimp and clams. His mom and dad will have the shrimp and clams for dinner.

It is twelve o'clock, and lunch is next on the list of things to do. "Can Fred have lunch with us?" asked Patrick. "Yes, he can," said Mom. They set a blanket on the grass and had a picnic lunch. They had fudge for dessert.

Dad went to the dump with a barrel of trash in his red truck. Next, he went to Kenneth's farm to get a basket of plums for dinner. Then he went to a shop for a box of fudge. Greg was glad that his dad got the fudge. He had it after dinner with a glass of milk. His sister, Fran, had fudge and a plum after dinner.

With a flashing mirror, Greg sent a signal from his raft on the pond to Philip on land. You can flash a signal with the flick of the sun on a mirror. Philip also had a mirror and flashed a signal back to Greg. So Greg got the raft to land and picked up Philip.

Greg and Philip then went fishing on the raft and had lots of fun.

Last spring Kenneth and his twin sister, Val, went on a trip to Paris. Paris is best in the spring when it is warm and there is no fog or smog. Paris is in France and is very big. You can get lost in Paris. But Kenneth and Val did not get lost. They had a map and stuck to their travel plans.

Kenneth and Val said Paris was grand.

First Reader: Book 7

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 86 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: Long ā vowel spellings: ā-e, ai, ay/ey, ei, igh, au/aw, är.

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out.

When the word is irregular, such as were or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules. If the reader is having difficulty with a word of more than one syllable, have the reader break up the word into its separate syllables and then have him or her read it.

We have inserted some words with spelling forms the reader has not yet been taught but which are easily decoded. These words are added to ease the flow of narrative.

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level for *First Reader Seven*: 4.08.

Dale-Chall Grade Level Average for *First Reader Seven*: 4.57.

Rambo the Cat

FKGL: 3.44; DC: 5.99 – 110 Words

Kate has a cat named Rambo. She gave that name to him when she saw that he chased a barking dog away. Rambo is a brave cat.

Rambo plays a lot with Kate and her brother Dave. Rambo also naps a lot under a blanket on Kate's bed. Kate runs after Rambo on the lawn. Rambo will crawl under the porch to get away. But Kate will tempt Rambo with a can of cat dinner, which Rambo can smell. He can't resist a can of cat dinner.

Rambo can catch a rabbit in the dark. The rabbit has no chance to get away when Rambo is set to get him.

At the Lake

FKGL: 3.50; DC: 5.04 – 103 Words

We have a cabin at the edge of Lake Clare. A lake is much bigger than a pond and it has lots of fish in it.

Lake Clare is the largest lake in our state. Dad and I sail on Lake Clare in the summer months. We start sailing in May when there are warm winds to fill our sails. But there are windy days when big waves rock our craft and make the sails shake. We can swim in the lake when it is placid. Then it's as if the lake were a mirror and you can see your face in it.

Jake's Birthday Party

FKGL: 3.96; DC 4.88 – 93 Words

Kate and Jane are twin sisters. They like to bake cakes. Their small brother, Jake, will be eight in May and they are planning to bake a large birthday cake for him. They expect a lot of their friends to attend Jake's birthday party. They are planning to play games, sing songs, and dance.

They expect that Jake will get gifts from his friends, not big gifts, but small gifts. His mom and dad may get him a big gift, maybe a train set. It's fun to be eight, but you can be eight only once.

A Baseball Game

FKGL: 3.52; DC 5.59 – 102 Words

Jake and Dave will take the train on Sunday to visit their friend, Gabe, in Boston. They will all go to a baseball game at Fenway Park.

The Red Sox are playing a big game against the White Sox. After the game, they will have pizza at Pizza Hut.

Summer days are grand for baseball. The days are warm and the sun does not set until after eight. The fans can watch pitchers pitch, batters bat, and catchers catch. It's a great game. When a batter hits a home run, the fans jump up and cheer the player as he runs home.

A Visit to Grandma and Grandpa

FKGL: 3.07; DC 5.47 – 110 Words

Gail and Wade went to visit their grandma and grandpa on their farm in Kansas. They went with their mom and dad. The farm has a large lawn up front and a big back yard with a set of swings. Their grandma always bakes a big cake for the kids and a big dinner for all. She can also bake muffins. Their grandma and grandpa are their mom's parents. Their grandma's name is Maud, and their grandpa's name is Paul.

They came to visit by car from Memphis. It was raining when they got there, but they did not complain. The crops must have rain if they are to grow.

Uncle Mark

FKGL: 2.35; DC: 3.55 – 87 Words

Mom's brother, Mark, came to visit us. Uncle Mark is a mailman and he collects stamps. He gave Jane and Dave a set of airmail stamps. He also gave them stamps from France and Spain. Uncle Mark gave them stamp albums as gifts. With Uncle Mark's help they will fill their albums with lots of stamps from far off lands.

Uncle Mark came from Dayton in his red Mustang. He can go fast in that car, but he can get a ticket if he is not careful.

Taking a Trip

FKGL: 5.81; DC: 5.55 – 107 Words

If you want to take a trip, you can go on an airplane, or a train, or a bus. The airplane is the fastest way to get to where you want to go. The train can be a fun way to travel if you do not have to get there fast. You can relax and watch as the train travels past farms and dwellings and forests.

On the other hand, a bus travels with all the traffic and cannot go as fast as a train. But you can relax in a bus and take a nap so that when you wake up, the trip has almost ended.

Hunting in a Cave

FKGL: 3.55; DC: 5.35 – 118 Words

Jake and Dave went on a rock hunt in a cave. A cave is not the best place to hunt for rocks because it is dark and damp. But Jake and Dave think that the rocks in the cave are made of stuff that you can't obtain elsewhere.

Jake and Dave almost got lost in the cave. But their pal, Wade, gave them a string which he held in his hand and which Jake and Dave unrolled as they went into the cave. But they dropped the string along the way. Later, they came across the string and made their way back to their waiting friend.

"Thanks for the string," said Dave. "You saved us from getting lost."

When a Watchdog Barks

FKGL: 6.13; DC: 5.41 – 115 Words

When a dog barks in the dark, that's a signal to stay away. It is the job of a watchdog to cause a person to stop in his tracks. If you do not want to get bitten by a watchdog you had better back away, but not in such a manner as to bring the dog after you.

A smart, well-trained watchdog will take care of property and family. A watchdog is a brave dog, and it will not harm you if you are careful and do not panic.

It is said that a dog is a man's best friend. A pet dog will accept you as you are and will always stay with you.

Going into Space

FKGL: 4.51; DC: 4.89 – 112 Words

Jane wants to go into space in a spaceship. She thinks it will be lots of fun in space where you do not weigh a thing. But if you want to go into space, you must go into training. That may take up to seven months.

To travel in space a cadet must be brave and must obey all the commands he or she is given. You may think that space is fun, but there are things you must watch for. There is no air in space, so you must bring your air with you. Air can be taken into space in an air tank, which you must put on your back.

The Salesman

FKGL: 3.45; DC: 3.24 – 120 Words

Dad is a salesman. He sells cars. He is a star salesman and sells lots of cars because he is smart and can tell what a person wants. The cars travel on a freight train to get to where Dad sells them. From the train they are put on trucks, which are driven to Dad's place.

Dad will explain what makes the car run well to the person who wants it. He will help them obtain credit. You must get credit if you can't pay cash for a car. Credit is when you ask the bank to lend you cash. You can take the car with you, but you must make payments to the bank for a number of months.

A Soccer Match

FKGL: 5.15; DC: 5.28 – 107 Words

Dave and Gabe went to a soccer match in the park. In soccer you kick the ball. You can also hit the ball with your head.

Soccer is a fast game, with players running back and forth, kicking the ball as they go. The trick in soccer is to kick the ball so that the other players miss it. That part can be fun, but it's hard to do when the other players have the skill to get the ball away from you. You can win the game if you can get the ball into the other players' net more than they can get it into yours.

First Reader: Book 8

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 100 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: Long ē vowel spellings: ee, ēa, [ĕa, eā], e-e, ie, --y; Long ī vowel: I, -y, uy. igh

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out. When the word is irregular, such as were, ready, or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules. If the reader is having difficulty with a word of more than one syllable, have the reader break up the word into its separate syllables and then have him or her read it.

We have inserted words with spelling forms the reader has not yet been taught but which are easily decoded. These words are added to ease the flow of narrative.

Average Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level for *First Reader Eight*: 4.69.

Average Dale-Chall Grade Level for *First Reader Eight*: 6.04

A Visit from a King and Queen

FKGL: 4.79; DC: 4.62 - 115 Words

The King and Queen of Greece came to visit our city. The mayor was there to greet them, and he gave them the key to the city. The key to the city is not a real key. It is a means of saying to the King and Queen that the city is open to them and that the people are glad to see them.

The King and Queen spent a week seeing the sights. They had many lunches and dinners with the best people in the city and gave gifts to many children. When the King and Queen were ready to leave, the children sang a song of farewell. The King and Queen were pleased.

Going for a Ride

FKGL: 3.57; DC: 5.01 – 135 Words

Gary likes to drive his car. It is bright cherry red and has white seats. It also has a white stripe and white walled tires. He gets twenty miles with a gallon of gas. His wife, Betty, thinks that he paid a high price for the car but she likes the way it drives, and she can drive it as well as Gary. They like to go on rides on nice weekends. They visit friends in the city and the country.

They also like to go to the shopping mall for a treat. Last week they met Betty's niece Sally at the mall. They all had ice cream and candy and pie. But Sally had to hurry home to study. She thanked her aunt and uncle for the treat and said goodbye with a smile.

Penny Has Puppies

FKGL: 4.35; DC: 4.62 – 127 Words

Jean's dog had five puppies last week. The dog's name is Penny, and Jean watched Penny lick her little puppies clean. Jean wanted to keep the puppies but her mother said, "No. We don't have the space for five puppies, but you have friends who will be happy to have one or two of the puppies. You must give them away."

Her mother was right. You can't keep all of the puppies a dog may have. They must be fed and trained, and only a person who wants a puppy will do all of that. Jean wanted to do all of that, but she wanted to obey her mother. "It isn't always easy to do what I ask," said her mother, "but there is no other way."

The United States

FKGL: 6.14; DC: 4.49 – 116 Words

There are fifty states in the United States. It takes time to visit all fifty states. You can fly across the United States in less than a day, but you do not see much from the air. If it is a clear day you can see the land below. But if it is not clear, you can only see the sky from your airplane window.

It is much better to drive across the country if you wish to see all the sights from sea to sea. You can visit the Grand Canyon or Disneyland or one of the great parks along the way. All in all, the summer is the best time to drive across America.

A Forest Fire

FKGL: 6.60; DC: 4.99 – 114 Words

You cannot predict where a forest fire will take place. Most forest fires are caused by lightning striking a tree and causing it to burn. Some fires are caused by careless campers who drop a match on dry leaves or build a campfire that gets so big that the wind carries the sparks into the trees.

Be careful when you are in a forest. Do not make big campfires, and do not drop lit matches on dry leaves. Also, tell your friends to be careful and to always obey the forest ranger. He is in charge of the forest and his job is to see to it that people do not do careless things.

East and West

FKGL: 4.63; DC: 5.36 – 189 Words

The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. If you live in the east at the edge of the sea, it seems at dawn as if the sun were rising from the sea and going higher and higher in the sky.

If you live in the west at the edge of the sea, it seems as if the sun were sinking into the sea at the end of the day. But it isn't the sun that passes across the sky. It is this planet that is turning. It takes a full day and night for the planet to make a complete turn.

The sun is much bigger than our planet and it turns on its own axis. It is in the center, and it is this planet as well as other planets that are revolving around it. It takes us a year to go around the sun. In fact, we are turning and revolving at the same time.

We are a very small planet going around a very big sun. The sun gives us light and life. With no sun, all would be dark and lifeless.

Hiking

FKGL: 4.94; DC 5.59 – 112 Words

Mike and his dad like to hike in the forest. They can walk five miles a day with packs on their backs on trails that go from where the trees begin to camping sites many miles deep inside the forest. They must watch for snakes and insects. It can take an entire day of hiking to reach the campsite.

Hiking is a nice way to keep fit, to keep your weight where you want it to be. Riding a bike can also keep you fit. But riding up a steep hill can be very tiring. A bike rider will do it so that he can say that he is not a quitter.

Rambo

FKGL: 3.28; DC: 5.33 – 109 Words

Rambo the cat likes to chase mice in the barn. He is a smart cat that will watch to see where the mice are hiding and wait for them to speed across the barn to the other side. Then he lunges after the speeding critter swiftly as can be. He nabs the little scamp and carries it in his jaws. He drops it and plays with it. What a funny sight to see Rambo playing with a mouse.

Rambo also likes to lie in the sun. He likes to be rubbed and patted. He likes kids because kids like to play with him. Rambo is a very happy cat.

A Day at the Beach

FKGL: 4.56; DC: 5.49 – 118 Words

Lee and Steve live in East Beach, a village in Maine with a small sandy beach. In Maine most of the beaches are rocky, but East Beach has sand and is a nice place to swim. Lee and Steve go there often. When friends come to visit, they take them to the beach for a summer beach party. They bring a picnic basket, volleyball, and beach blankets, and they have a great time.

Summer is the best time of year in Maine. There are lots of places to visit; lots of shops, and plenty of clean fresh air. There are also lobster shacks where you can sit in the sun near the beach and eat a lobster dinner.

On Saving Pennies

FKGL: 5.27; DC: 4.30 – 131 Words

Tommy is saving his pennies in a jar so that he can get a box of candy for his mother on Mother's Day. He must save a lot of pennies so that he can go to the bank where he will get a five-dollar bill. He can get a nice box of candy for five dollars.

It takes a hundred pennies to make one dollar. To get five dollars, Tommy must save five hundred pennies. Tommy also saves dimes. A dime is made up of ten pennies. You only need ten dimes to make a dollar and fifty dimes to make five dollars.

But pennies pile up much faster than dimes, and Tommy has already saved lots and lots of pennies.

Mother's Day

FKGL: 3.38; DC: 4.60 – 107 Words

Mother's Day takes place in May when it is springtime. That's the best time of year. The days are getting longer and warmer.

Dad and the kids must think of getting gifts for Mother. They ask: "What will she want? What will she need?" Betty says she needs a sweater. Billy says she needs a bigger pan for frying eggs. Terry says she needs a blender. Dad says Mother wants a bathrobe.

When Mother's Day came, they all gave their presents to Mother. She liked the sweater and the pan and the blender and the bathrobe. They all kissed Mother and wished her a happy Mother's Day.

First Reader: Book 9

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 117 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: ough, augh, gh=f, Long ō vowel spellings: ō-e, ōe, ōw, ōld, ōst. –o, Long oo, Short oo, ould, ou/ow, ouch, oy/oi, Long ū vowel: ū-e, ūi, ūe, ew, eu.

Some of the words in this hook may have some spelling forms not yet learned. But there is enough in the words to suggest their correct pronunciation through simple decoding. If the reader needs a little help, give it. These words were added to enhance the flow of the story.

When the learner has trouble with a word, have him or her spell it aloud and then read it. Spelling the word forces the reader to look at the letters in their proper sequence and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. If the reader is still unable to read the word, have him or her sound it out. When the word is irregular, such as were, ready, or you, tell the learner what the word is and point out that it is irregular and does not follow the usual letter-sound rules.

If the reader is having difficulty with a word of more than one syllable, have the reader break up the word into its separate syllables and then have him or her read it. Words such as musical or instrument should be broken up into their syllables so that the reader can see the phonetic structure of the words.

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Average for *First Reader Nine*: 4.69.

Dale Chall Readability Average for *First Reader Nine*: 5.019

Father's Day

FKGL: 4.75; DC: 4.59 – 130 Words

The third Sunday in June is Father's Day. On that day we honor our fathers. Someone thought that we ought to pay tribute to all the good things that dads do when we are young. Most fathers who are baseball fans will teach their kids how to throw and catch a ball. They love to take their kids to ballgames.

When kids grow up, they like to think of the time when they were small and their dads told them stories about their own days as a child. Some dads like to tell jokes that make the kids laugh.

It's a good thought to phone your dad on Father's Day if you are no longer at home and live too far away to visit. It's the loving thing to do.

The Toy Store

FKGL: 4.88; DC: 5.47 – 121 Words

Mom took Joan and Joyce to a toy store at the mall. They went to buy a toy truck for their little brother Luke. His birthday was coming up soon. But when they got to the store and saw so many toys, they thought that it might be better to buy a game or a ping-pong set so that they can all play together.

They spent an hour at the store looking at games and jigsaw puzzles and paint sets. They also looked at dollhouses and all sorts of dolls. But in the end, they bought a toy truck because that was what Luke said he wanted. Mom also bought Joan and Joyce a doll house. That made the girls very happy.

On the Phone

FKGL: 2.07; DC: 4.58 – 149 Words

We have three phones in our home. One phone is in the hall. That phone is for all of us. Then there is a phone in the kitchen, which Mother uses. We can also use that phone, although Mother will frown if we use it too often. The last phone is on a desk in Dad's den.

We would like to use Dad's phone, but he would complain if we did. "I don't want you to tie up my phone," he said when I asked if we could use it. "You can use it," he said, "should there be a real need."

Should kids have phones of their own in their rooms? I think they should. Then everyone will be happy and no one will need to complain. But Dad does not see it that way. He says that we do not need more phones or more phone bills.

Acting in a Play

FKGL: 5.27; DC: 5.01 – 147 Words

Joan and Bruce got parts in a Christmas play. It is a well-known play called “A Christmas Carol,” written by Charles Dickens. It has many roles in it for children. The play is put on by the church that Joan and Bruce go to with their parents. There is music in the play and even some dancing.

It is not easy to act on stage and remember all your lines. If you are ever in a play and have to learn your lines, you must repeat them over and over again until you know them well.

Some kids can be taught to act and some kids can be taught to sing and dance. Even though acting, singing, and dancing on stage for three hours can be tough, it’s great fun. It is also quite a thrill to be on stage and hear the people laugh and applause.

The Horse Farm

FKGL: 3.91; 5.0 – 140 Words

A horse farm is where they raise and keep horses. You will find many kinds of horses on a horse farm. One type is a colt, which is a young male horse four years old or younger. Then there are mares. A mare is a fully-grown female horse five years old or older. A pony is a small horse not over fifty-eight inches high at the withers. The withers are the highest part of the back of the horse between the shoulder blades.

A mustang is a small, wild or half wild horse found in the Southwest plains of the U.S. There are horse farms near big cities where children can learn to ride a horse. Horses are no longer as useful as they used to be when there were no cars. But horseback riding is still a great sport.

A Ride to the Airport

FKGL: 2.92; DC 5.28 – 138 Words

Mom drove Dad to the airport when he had to fly to visit his brother, our Uncle Joe, in Tampa. Bruce and I went along for the ride. At the airport, Mom parked the car and we went with Dad to the check-in counter. Dad had one suitcase to check in. The flight was nonstop to Tampa.

Dad bought a book to read on the plane. There were a lot of books for sale at the newsstand. Dad also bought a paper to read on the flight. We sat with Dad at the gate until it was time for him to board the plane. Mom told Dad to phone her when he got to Uncle Joe's house. We would have liked to watch the plane take off, but the runway was too far away from where we were.

Bowling

FKGL: 4.97; DC: 4.69 – 150 Words

Bowling is a great sport that you can enjoy any time of the year. Bowling is a sport that is played inside a building. You can play on a team or you can bowl on your own any time you feel like it. To bowl well, you should wear shoes that do not skid on the shiny wooden floor. If you do a lot of bowling you might want to buy your own bowling ball.

The aim of the game is to knock down as many pins as you can with one roll of the bowling ball. It is a great thrill to watch the ball roll down the lane and knock down all the pins at once. We call that a strike.

If you have a bowling lane in your town and you have never bowled before, you ought to check it out. Bowling is a lot of fun.

Music Lessons

FKGL: 6.27; DC: 5.57 – 128 Words

Should you learn to play the piano? Many parents ask their children if they would like to learn to play the piano, or the violin, or the trumpet. Some parents think that children ought to learn to play some musical instrument. It is thought that music is such a vital part of life that it should be taught when a child is as young as four years old.

One thing we know about learning to play music is that you must practice a lot to become good at it. Practice, practice, practice is what the music teacher tells the music student.

Some kids like to play drums. If you play drums you must play in a band. But if you play piano, you can enjoy it by yourself.

The State Fair

FKGL: 5.66; DC 5.16 - 122 Words

Most states in the United States have a state fair once a year. The fair is held in summer so that lots of people will come and enjoy the many shows and contests. Kids enjoy state fairs because they can compete in the contests and win prizes and ribbons.

Many kids raise show pigs and chickens and bring them to the state fair to be looked at by the judges. They hope that their pig or chicken will be chosen as the best one there. Some parents will bring their best-canned foods. Canning is a good way to preserve and store food during the winter.

You don't win a gold medal at a state fair, but you can win a blue ribbon.

Drilling for Oil

FKGL: 3.24; DC: 4.89 – 139 Words

Some people say that oil makes the world go round. What that means is that oil is used to make the fuel that we use to drive cars and fly airplanes. Without it we would have to use horses and wagons.

Where is oil found? It is found deep in the ground and we must drill to get at it. Sometimes we must drill through rock to get at the oil. But when oil is found, it gushes up through the oil well and makes a great splash. Then the oil well must be capped so that the drillers will be able to control the flow of the oil.

Oil that has just come out of the ground is known as crude oil. Then we must refine the oil before it can be used in a car or plane.

First Reader: Book 10

For Parents and Tutors

The words in this reader comprise all of the letter sounds and spellings learned in Lessons 1 through 128 in *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics*: er, ir, or, ur, ear, le, Silent t, ph=h, ti=sh, ssi, ci, ce = sh, ci, sci, xi = su, ssu = sh, si, su = zh, ti tu = ch, kn =n, mb = m, bt = t, Silent h, wr = r, st = s, ft = f, ch = k, ps – s, y = short ĩ.

Virtually the entire range of our spelling forms will be found in this reader. However, you may want to go back to some of the earlier readers to give the learner additional practice by rereading the simpler texts and increasing the speed of word recognition.

Also, further reading of all sorts of texts is necessary if the learner is to expand his or her knowledge of our English alphabetic system.

Since there are many more multisyllabic words in this book, the reader may find it somewhat difficult. Always have the reader spell out the word he or she is having trouble with. This forces the reader to focus attention on the left to right sequencing of the letters, and is usually enough to evoke a correct reading. However, with multisyllabic words, it is sometimes necessary to break the word up into its syllables. At the end of this book, we have a special page where we have broken up most of the multisyllabic words used in this book. Refer to those pages if the reader is having difficulty.

Although Book 10 is the last of the *Alpha-Phonics First Readers*, we have added Book 11, which is an anthology of simple poems for the beginning reader along with the words of our best-known patriotic songs. Our aim is to help the reader learn to appreciate good poetry and instill in the individual that patriotic sentiment so essential in developing love of country.

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Averages for *First Reader Ten*: 6.12.

Dale-Chall Grade Level Averages for *First Book Ten*: 5.41.

Notice that several stories are much higher than the average.

A Nursing Career

FKGL: 5.04; DC: 4.89 – 139 Words

Many young girls think about becoming nurses. They want to serve others by taking care of them when they are ill. It is a very noble kind of work. But nurses learn very early that it is hard work and that they may not earn much money at first.

A nurse who becomes an expert at what she does can become a head nurse. She knows how to give tender loving care and is worth the money she earns. If you are thinking of becoming a nurse, read a book about the life of a nurse. It will inspire you.

By the way, there are also many male nurses. A male nurse is a man who has taken up nursing as a career. Men can also give tender loving care to the sick and enjoy helping people get well.

Andy Finds a Turtle

FKGL: 3.4; DC: 5.7 - 170 Words

Andy found a little turtle crossing the road. It was having quite a struggle getting to the other side. So Andy picked it up and carried it to the other side. He set it down on a rock, but the turtle tumbled off onto its back. Its legs were wriggling and its tail wiggled back and forth. So Andy picked it up and set it down right side up. The turtle then made its way into a grassy jungle.

Andy started to walk home. He stopped to toss a pebble into a nearby stream, and the pebble made a ripple in the water. Andy then saw an eagle fly overhead. It began to drizzle and the wind rustled the leaves on the trees. And thought that he had better hustle on home before he was caught in the rain.

When Andy got home, his mother asked him where he had been. He told her about the turtle. “Andy,” his mother said, “you have a kind heart. I’m proud of you.”

Learning Phonics

FKGL: 6.24; DC: 5.14– 161 Words

The best way to learn to read is with phonics. Our alphabet letters stand for speech sounds. If you learn the sounds that the letters stand for, you will be able to read anything you want.

To be good at phonics, you must do a lot of practice reading, sounding out all of the new words you find. The more you read, the easier it gets. That's because the more often you see the same word and the same spelling, you no longer have to sound it out. With practice, you will soon find that you will be able to say the word right away.

Phonics also helps you learn to spell. To become a good speller, you must learn all of our spelling forms. Many of our words do not follow regular spelling rules, so it's important to pay close attention to the different ways words are spelled. Writing the words will also help you to remember them more easily.

The Railway Station

FKGL: 5.25; DC: 5.24– 159 Words

In our town the railway station is located near the main highway. Where the railroad tracks cross the road, there are red lights to warn traffic when a train is coming. These trains come from across the nation. Some of them are long freight trains carrying all sorts of goods, such as cars, coal, lumber, fruits and vegetables, and cattle.

You must be patient if you are in a car stuck at the crossing waiting for a long freight train to go by. Some people like to count the freight cars as they pass. Time seems to go faster that way.

The station was built many years ago. But today people in town think of the station as a town treasure, as part of its history. There are even picture postcards of the station sold at the newsstand. I don't think they will ever tear down the station because it is a very special place in this town.

The Gymnast

FKGL: 4.42; DC: 5.91– 170 Words

Lynn's brother Ralph wants to become a gymnast. He will have to do a lot of practice at the gym if he wants to succeed. At first he wanted to become a wrestler. But then he decided that wrestling was not for him.

Ralph practices all the time. He also works with other kids at the gym. He enjoys teaching and wants to be a teacher of gymnastics some day.

Ralph is also a good scholar at school. He would like to get a scholarship so that he can go on to college and become a school teacher. His parents told him to write a letter to the college he wanted to attend. So he wrote the letter but did not get an answer right away. His mother told him to be patient. She was sure he would hear from the college soon. He did hear from the college and the letter they sent assured him that he would get a special scholarship because he was such a good student.

Our Home School

FKGL: 4:29; DC: 4.84- 173 Words

A few years ago, our family moved to a small town in Kentucky. The school was so far from our home that our mother and father decided to teach us at home. My sister, Phyllis, was in the third grade and I was in the fifth grade when we moved. We did not want to leave our old school because we had many friends there.

We are now very happy we moved and that our parents decided to home-school us. We are learning new things all the time and we can plan our own days.

Mom does most of the teaching but Dad helps out at night. We read a lot of good books. I like to read about nature and explorers. Phyllis likes to read about history. Mom makes us do a lot of writing. She says that being a good writer will help us get good jobs when we are ready to go to work.

As for friends, we made a lot of new friends among other home-schoolers in our neighborhood.

A New School Year

FKGL: 8:22; DC: 5.15 – 121 Words

Jane and Kevin went to live with their grandma and grandpa at the beginning of the new school year. Jane was starting first grade, and Kevin was starting second grade. Their grandma and grandpa wanted to know how they would be taught to read at the new school.

They had learned phonics when they were children and were very good readers. They loved to read stories from long ago to their grandchildren. Their grandma's favorite story was *Little Women* and their grandpa's favorite story was *Swiss Family Robinson*.

When their grandma and grandpa visited the school, they were very happy to learn that their grandchildren would be taught to read with phonics just as they had been taught many years before.

Knowledge

FKGL: 7.91; DC: 5.95 – 173 Words

The more you know the better you will be able to make your way through life. You can gain much of your knowledge from books. You can also gain it by talking with successful people who know how to obtain knowledge that will help you succeed in life.

Studying hard and doing lots of reading will help you expand your vocabulary and become a good speller. The more words you know the more knowledge you will have, for each word adds knowledge to your mind.

If you want to have a good future, you must also know how to handle money, how to save part of what you earn, and how to make your money grow. All of that also requires knowledge.

Knowledge is power because it helps you to choose the right path in life. It helps you plan the future. Reading books written by the wise men and women of the past will open the door to all of the knowledge the human race has gained from the beginning of time.

Choosing Good Books to Read

FKGL: 7.55; DC: 5.68– 177 Words

Now that you are a reader, you have the entire world of the written word at your fingertips. The library has thousands of books on every subject you can imagine. It is always fun to browse in a library and look at the books you may want to read.

There are books about history, which tell us about the past, how people lived before there were airplanes, TV, and computers. There are books about the lives of famous people. They are called biographies. We can learn much from reading about the lives of great men and women. They can teach us about what it takes to succeed in life and they can also teach us about the mistakes people make so that we need not make the same mistakes.

So you can see that the library is a storehouse of great knowledge and stories. There are books on sports, travel, cooking, inventions, space, and many other subjects. You will find that using the library will be a great benefit to you for the rest of your life.

Con-grat-u-la-tions

FKGL: 6.18; DC: 5.91 – 144 Words

Congratulations! You have reached the end of the *Alpha-Phonics* reading program. By now you should be able to decode and sound out any word in English you come across. But this is also a beginning. Now you will be learning how to use our wonderful and beautiful English language. How you use this language will not only tell people how smart you are, but it will also tell them how well educated you are.

Do as much reading as you can. Reading will increase your knowledge and expand your vocabulary. It will also entertain you. You will have access to all of the knowledge and wisdom of the past. This is your heritage. It will expand your mind and give you a deeper sense of life. We wish you great success in all that you do and that your fondest dreams will come true.

First Reader: Book 11

For Parents and Tutors

We've prepared this little volume of poetry in order to introduce the new reader to the beauties of poetic thought and language.

Man is a spiritual being, and it is through poetry that his spiritual nature is best expressed. It is important to elevate the mind of the child, so that he or she aspires to reach upward to what is uplifting and sentimentally pure.

Children should be encouraged to read good literature so that they become aware of the wisdom to be found in the written word. Good, simple poetry is an excellent place to start.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

Note from Donald Potter

I did not do a readability study of the poems since poems are not easily amenable to that kind of study.

Erasers

Erasers are the nicest things!
Of that there is no doubt.
We write wrong words. A few quick swipes –
And big mistakes fade out.
And you will find erasers,
Of a very different kind.
Extremely helpful, if you will try
To bear these facts in mind:
When you bump someone in a crowd,
And almost knock her down,
A soft “I’m sorry!” may bring smiles
And rub out that old frown.
Apologies, invariably,
Obliterate mistakes;
And three small words, “I love you!”
Can erase the worst of mistakes.

Author Unknown

Trees

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer

Feline Anyway

“Life’s a cat with nine sharp tails,”
Loud laments the man who fails.
“Life’s a cat with nine good lives,”
Answers him the man who thrives.
Good or ill their fate may be,
Life’s a cat, they both agree.
Let what fortune haunt the house,
Life’s a cat and man’s a mouse.

Eden Phillpotts

Not in Vain

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain:
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

Emily Dickinson

Bunnies

The Bunnies are a feeble folk
Whose weakness is their strength,
To shun a gun a Bun will run
To almost any length.

Oliver Herford

A Dirge for A Righteous Kitten

Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong.
Here lies a kitten good, who kept
A kitten's proper place.
He stole no pantry eatables,
Nor scratched the baby's face.
He let the alley-cats alone.
He had no yowling vice.
His shirt was always laundered well,
He freed the house of mice.
Until his death he had not caused
His little mistress tears,
He wore his ribbon prettily,
He washed behind his ears.
Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong.

Vachel Lindsay

The Cow

The friendly cow all red and white,
I love with all my heart;
She gives me cream with all her might,
To eat with apple-tart.
She wanders lowing here and there,
And yet she cannot stray;
All in the pleasant open air,
The pleasant light of day.
And blown by all the winds that pass
And wet with all the flowers,
She walks among the meadow grass
And eats the meadow flowers.

Robert Louis Stevenson

My Country 'Tis of Thee

My country 'tis of thee
Sweet land of liberty
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died
Land of the Pilgrims' pride
From every mountainside
Let freedom, ring.

America the Beautiful

Oh, beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain's majesty
Above the fruited plain.
America, America,
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good
With brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

The Star-Spangled Banner

Oh, say can you see
by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed
at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched
were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare,
the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
that our flag was still there.
Oh, say, does that star-spangled
banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free
and the home of the brave?

Francis Scott Key

Four Ducks on a Pond

Four ducks on a pond,
A grass bank beyond,
A blue sky of spring,
White clouds on the wing—
What a little thing
To remember for years. . . .
To remember with tears!

William Allingham

The Little Salamander

When I go free,
I think 'twill be
A night of stars and snow,
And the wild fires of frost shall light
My footsteps as I go;
Nobody—nobody will be there
With groping touch, or sight,
To see me in my bush of hair
Dance burning through the night.

Walter de la Mare

The Vulture

The vulture eats between his meals,
 And that's the reason why
He very, very rarely feels
 As well as you or I.
His eye is dull, his head is bald,
 His neck is growing thinner.
Oh, what a lesson for us all
 To only eat at dinner.

Hilaire Belloc

Who Has Seen the Wind?

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you:
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I:
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

The Frog

Be kind and tender to the Frog,
And do not call him names,
As "Slimy-skin," or "polly-wog,"
Or likewise "Uncle James,"
Or "Gape-a-grin," or "Toad-gone-wrong,"
Or "Billy-Bandy Knees;"
The frog is justly sensitive
To epithets like these.
No animal will more repay
A treatment kind and fair;
At least so lonely people say
Who keep a frog (and by the way,
They are extremely rare).

Hilaire Belloc

Minutes of Gold

Two or three minutes—two or three hours,
What do they mean in this life of ours?
Not very much if but counted as time,
But minutes of gold and hours sublime,
If only well use them once in a while
To make someone happy—make someone smile.
A minute may dry a little lad's tears,
An hour sweeps aside trouble of years,
Minutes of my time may bring to an end
Hopelessness somewhere, and bring me a friend.

Author Unknown

The Housekeeper

The frugal snail, with forecast of repose
Carries his house with him where'er he goes;
Peeps out—and if there comes a shower of rain,
Retreats to his small domicile again.
Touch but a tip of him, a horn—'tis well—
He curls up in his sanctuary Shell,
He's his own landlord, his own tenant; stay
Long as he will, he dreads no Quarter Day.
Himself he boards and lodges; both invites
And feasts himself; sleeps with himself o' nights.
He spares the upholsterer trouble to procure
Chattels; himself is his own furniture,
And his sole riches. Wheresoe'er he roam—
Knock when you will—he's sure to be at home.

Charles Lamb

Summary of the *First Readers* Flesch-Kincaid Grade Levels

Book	Average Grade Level	Individual Stories Grade Level
1	1.7	practice sentences only
2	1.2	practice sentences only
3	1.2	practice sentences only
4	1.3	practice sentences only
5	1.8	practice sentences only
6	1.9	practice sentences & paragraphs
7	4.1	3.4; 3.5; 4.0; 3.6; 3.1; 2.4; 5.8; 3.6; 6.1; 4.5; 3.5; 5.2; 4.8; 3.6; 4.4; 6.1; 4.; 4.9; 3.3; 4.6; 5.3; 3.4.
8	4.8	4.8; 3.6; 4.4; 6.1; 6.6; 4.6; 4.9; 3.3; 4.6; 3.4.
9	4.7	4.8; 4.9; 2.1; 5.3; 3.9; 2.9; 4.9; 6.3; 5.7; 3.2.
10	6.1	5.0; 6.2; 5.3; 4.4; 4.3; 8.2; 7.9; 7.6; 6.8.

Interpretation and Comments

1. The *Blumenfeld-Alpha-Phonics System* is developmental in the sense that it starts with lower grade level reading and gradually advances to higher grade levels. It is developmentally appropriate from start to finish.
2. The stories are unassisted by pictures or context supported guessing strategies. This direct approach leads to automatic decoding, which frees up attention for high level comprehension.
3. Unlike the whole-language and most phonics basal reading program, Mr. Blumenfeld's did not labor under any artificial grade-level restraints in constructing text for students to read.
4. The unusually high levels of First Readers 7 to 10 is to be explained by Mr. Blumenfeld's goal to develop the phonics reflex. rather than a sight-word vocabulary. Phonics trumps sight-words every time.
5. The natural outcome of Mr. Blumenfeld's phonetic approach is kindergarten and first-graders who are capable of reading on higher grade levels than the average child of the same age in the typical reading program. Notice that some of the stories are as high as 7th and 8th grade.

Note by Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter

September 18, 2010

The stories were originally published as neat little individual readers to be read after the students had finished the corresponding *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics* lessons. Sam sent me a set several years ago to use with my *Alpha-Phonics*' tutoring. I did not fully understand their value until I started using them with tutoring students at the Odessa Christian School last year. I taught *Alpha-Phonics* with cursive handwriting. The students wrote all the words and sentences in *Alpha-Phonics* during my 30-minute daily tutoring time. I first used the *First Readers* with a second grader with a history of reading difficulties. The *Readers* proved to be the extra help he needed to become a proficient phonetic reader. I now use them with all my tutoring students.

I say that these decodable texts are “monumental” because they represent the kind of meaningful texts that will **support** intensive phonics **without interfering** with students' progress in decoding and developing orthographic mapping. Most so-called decodable texts are a mix between decodable and whole-word. Far too many sight-words are sprinkled into the text, supposedly to make the stories more natural and interesting. They also have pictures on every page, which I believe distract from the primary focus on decoding and adds an unfortunate element of guessing. Sam was able to produce a set of decodable readers, which avoid all these problems. The absence of pictures is not because he couldn't find or afford an artist to illustrate his stories. Sam considers pictures in beginning readers as positively harmful because of the distraction and confusion they create, and I concur. You can read his article, “Why Pictures are Harmful,” on my website, www.donpotter.net

The purpose of this study is to compare the *First Readers* with other material typically used to teach beginning reading and **to make some inferences** from the facts ascertained. Typical first-grade materials are rigorously restricted to materials that are determined to be on the instructional level of the students, but not above. Independent reading is restricted to reading materials on the student's independent reading level as determined by popular reading scales such as the Fries' Readability Formula (Graph) or the Flesch Kincaid Scale. The *Accelerated Reader* program for many years used the Flesch Kincaid Scale. Most public and private schools participate in the *Accelerated Reader* program. The Fries' Scale was use in the mid 1980s. Now the ATOS Scales is used.

Mr. Edward Miller found that some students who did not have artificially induced whole-word dyslexia in first grade curiously showed signs of it in later grades. At the time I first heard this, I thought there must be some mistake. I figured those students who were free of whole-word dyslexia in first grade would be inoculated against ever getting. Still, Mr. Miller has test results that showed otherwise. Then it began to dawn on me that if students were **restricted** to reading the same basic vocabulary over and over (sight-word readers) they might suffer from **atrophy of their decoding skills** and regress in their phonetic decoding. These so-called predictable texts (Leveled Readers) are so constructed that the students can generally guess the next word by pictures, context, and memorized sight-words.

It is most enlightening to examine the grade levels of the texts in Samuel L. Blumenfeld's *First Readers*. This study uncovered the fact that these beginning phonics readers are written on a **much higher-grade level** than typical text used in basal readers for beginning readers (both phonics and whole-language). The readers are developmental in the fact that they begin at a lower grade level and gradually increase grade level as the phonics facts are progressively introduced. These readers are not restricted to any artificial vocabulary of high frequency or basic sight-words. Students who read these texts will have ample opportunity to exercise their new phonics skills without experiencing any atrophy of their phonics skills.

Students who can successfully read the First Readers for *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics* will be on a grade level comparable to the grade level of the texts regardless of their age.

Schools that adopt *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics System* can expect their students to read considerably above grade level and to be free of artificially induced whole-word dyslexia. Student will develop "total linguistic function" in speaking, reading, writing, and spelling.

This study is a companion to my paper, "A Study Concerning the Wisdom of Teaching the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary." I used The *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Literacy System* in both studies as a "standard of comparison" to show that a good intensive phonics program was superior to any sight-word program or mixed-phonics and sight-word program. These twin studies also establish that the sight-vocabulary method of teaching reading is **unnecessary** since all the words and grade level skills are taught without any need for sight-word memorization. The idea that the Dolch List words are so irregular they cannot be taught with intensive phonics is patently false.

Dale-Chall (second edition, with 3,000 common words) levels were added for further support. I did not use the Lexile Scale because the "Agreement" for using their formula specifically states that the measurements cannot be published. I also did not use the ATOS system, developed by *Renaissance Learning* for the *Accelerated Reader Program*, because its parameters are not published. Many schools have not upgraded their grade-level numbers from Flesch-Kincaid to the new ATOS system.

The differences in the levels can be explained by the fact that Flesch's scale is based on word and sentence length. The Dale-Chall scale adds the factor of "vocabulary burden" that is determined by calculating the percentage of uncommon words in a text based on a list of 3,000 common words.

Below is the program for determining Dale-Chall levels. I did not use Dale-Chall for texts below 4th grade.

<http://www.lefthandlogic.com/htmdocs/tools/okapi/okapi.php>

This study was first published on www.donpotter.net on June 6, 2012. Last edited 1/31/2013, 9/25/2014, 2/25/21, 9/20/21. The *First Readers* are now available as a printed anthology in two editions: print and cursive.

Donald Potter, Odessa, TX

Further Notes from Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter Concerning *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Reading System*

October 23, 2010, Revised Jan. 2, 2013, Sept. 20, 2021

The greatest flaw of most modern reading methods is that they teach English as if it were a hieroglyphic writing system instead of an alphabetic writing system. Teaching English as a hieroglyphic language where the shapes of the words represent meaning while skipping the sounds of the letters leads to cognitive confusions because it violates the alphabetic nature of written English - and is the major source of low reading achievement.

In *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics* all external clues such as pictures are eliminated so the students can totally focus on mastering our alphabetic system of reading. This eliminates confusion and assures steady progress toward high levels of reading achievement.

Reading skills are taught sequentially and reviewed in a spiraling fashion for total mastery and an absolute minimum of frustration. By the end of the program, students will achieve full automaticity, reading orally and silently as rapidly and with equal comprehension as when listening to a story being read or instructions being given.

The Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics System consists in the following components.

1. ***Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Workbook***. This is the heart of the program containing both the Teacher's Manual and the Reading/Spelling lessons.
2. **Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Practice Card Decks**. These Cards correspond with the sequential skills being taught from the *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Workbook*.
3. **Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics First Readers**. The First Readers is a set of decodable texts, designed to be used with the *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Workbook* and *Practice Cards*. The students practice their phonics skills with real stories. This is a major step to independent and fluent. There are no pictures in the readers since we consider pictures to be a distraction from the core skill of automatic word recognition. You can purchase the *First Readers Anthology* from Amazon.
4. **Handwriting Paper**. This can be purchased at any office supply. Since *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics* is taught with cursive handwriting from a chalk or whiteboard, the students will need lots of paper to write all the words and sentences in the Workbook. It is important to make sure the students can spell the words orally and in writing as well as they can read them so they can attain to "total linguistic function," the true goal of any legitimate reading program. I use inexpensive wide-lined spiral notebooks.
5. **Blumenfeld's Audio Instruction**. For parents and teachers who have not had instruction in the sounds the letter represent and how to teach them, this audio CD will be of tremendous help. Students without a teacher can work through the lessons by following the instruction on the CD. See my website for accessing the audio from the Internet. http://donpotter.net/reading_clinic.html
6. *Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics Self-Tutor*: <http://donpotter.net/don-potter-tutoring.html>

Practice Chart for the Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics First Readers

Student: _____ Teacher: _____

<u>Reader</u>	<u>Lesson Completed</u>	<u>Skills Practiced</u>	<u>Dates Read</u>
Book 1	Lesson 1 - 14	Short ä Single Letter Consonants, ck, qu	_____
Book 2	Lessons 15 – 28	Short vowels: ä, ĩ, ö ũ, ph th.	_____
Book 3	Lesson 29 – 37	Consonant digraphs: sh, ch, wh; to be, to have; contractions.	_____
Book 4	Lesson 38 – 39	Two-Syllable, short vowel words.	_____
Book 5	Lessons 40 – 57	al, all; Consonant Blends: ng, ing, Final Consonant Blends, 2-syllable Words with Final Blends	_____
Book 6	Lessons 58 – 71	Initial Consonant Blends	_____
Book 7	Lessons 72 – 86	Long ā spellings, au/aw, ar.	_____
Book 8	Lessons 87 – 100	Long Vowels ē & ī Spellings	_____
Book 9	Lesson 101 – 117	ough, augh, gh=f, Long Vowel ō spellings, Long ōō, Short öö; ow, ou; oy, oi; Long Vowel ū Spellings.	_____
Book 10	Lessons 118 – 128	The rest of the <i>Blumenfeld's</i> <i>Alpha-Phonics</i> Spelling Patterns, /er/, Silent Letters, etc.	_____
Book 11	Poetry		_____

Chart prepared on May 18, 2009 by Donald L. Potter. www.donpotter.net