

Examples of High Quality, Evidence-Based Phonics Programs

Reading and Spelling are reversible processes and need to be explicitly taught together through the use of a structured, systematic and multisensory phonics program. There are a number of programs available for use by tutors, teachers and parents that cater for the literacy needs of individuals from pre-school through to adulthood.

Structured and systematic evidence-based programs for use by trained tutors, teachers, or parents who have undergone training courses

(DSF provides training courses for many of these programs)

- **Sounds-Write** – an evidence-based linguistic phonics program utilising a highly successful approach to the teaching of reading, spelling, and writing. It is aimed primarily at children in Pre-primary to Year 3, as a whole-school approach to teaching literacy and as an intervention program for middle to upper primary students and secondary students. It is also an excellent phonics program for adults.
- **Phonics Books UK** (including the Dandelion, Totem and Talisman Readers) – decodable readers which follow the teaching sequence (introduction of sounds and letters) from the Sounds-Write program and are accompanied by a range of student workbooks. Highly recommended for use with any structured synthetic phonics program or as a stand-alone program.
- **MultiLit Reading Tutor Program, MiniLit Early Intervention Program and PreLit Early Literacy Preparation** – very structured and explicit remedial programs developed by Macquarie University, which aim to address the needs of children with reading difficulties. The programs range in use from pre-school children prior to school entry (PreLit), Foundation to struggling Year 2 students (MiniLit) and from Year 2 students to adults (MultiLit).
- **Letters and Sounds** – designed as a whole-school approach to teaching literacy for students from Foundation to Year 3, but can be used effectively as a program for small group or one-to-one remediation. This program is supported by a range of free online resources and commercially available games.
- **Little Learners Love Literacy** – a systematic early literacy program which focuses on explicitly teaching phonemic awareness. A range of supporting resources is available, based around the character of Milo, including decodable readers, games, activities and iPad apps.
- **Jolly Phonics and Jolly Grammar** – a multi-sensory synthetic phonics program, which includes activities and games for reading and spelling in addition to the main teaching content. It is aimed at children from Kindergarten to Year 3, and covers 42 letter sounds, common and alternative spelling patterns and grammatical concepts.
- **Alpha to Omega** – a structured phonics-based course, with detailed lesson plans and printable worksheets and resources for each stage. Alpha to Omega is the basis of the WordShark computer program, and both can be used as part of a comprehensive remedial approach.
- **Teaching Literacy to Learners with Dyslexia: A Multi-Sensory Approach** – a structured, cumulative, multi-sensory teaching program for learners with literacy difficulties. It is designed to support individuals between 5 to 18 years of age.
- **Reading Freedom** – a systematic phonics-based approach to the teaching of reading and spelling, which aims to equip students with effective literacy skills. It is especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and is intended for use in the middle primary through to lower secondary years.

- **Read, Write Inc. Fresh Start** – a synthetic phonics ‘catch-up’ program aimed at students in Years 5, 6 and 7. As well as modules specifically targeting phonics knowledge, the program includes applied reading activities, comprehension questions, grammar and writing activities.
- **Sound Waves** – a whole school, multi-sensory program utilising a phonemic awareness approach to spelling. It focuses on the basic units of sound in our language – listening for sounds and saying sounds. It explores the letters that represent these sounds and how they are used to represent the words in our language.
- **Words Their Way** – a word study program for phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction whereby students engage in a variety of sound, letter pattern and word meaning activities, sorting pictures and words. It caters for differentiated learning in the classroom and enables activities to be tailored to student’s level of spelling knowledge.
- **The Gillingham Manual** – this multisensory phonics approach to teaching reading and spelling to children with learning disabilities is based on the Orton-Gillingham technique. It can be used with individuals or small groups and is appropriate for young children, older students and adults.

Resources to support the teaching of phonics

- **Phonics Handbook (Tom Nicholson)** – this book takes a phonological approach and is set out in the form of lesson plans designed to be used instantly, requiring no preparation. The lesson plans include every phonics skill from basic alphabet sounds to blends, digraphs, and syllable division, as well as diagnostic assessments of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, invented spelling, and writing.
- **The Complete Phonic Handbook (Diana Hope)** – this book contains colour-coded phonic word lists organised according to level of complexity and also includes activity suggestions. It is a useful guide for tutors to work through systematically with students.
- **Sound Check 1 and Sound Check 2** – these resource books contain activities to practise the blending of sounds to form words. There are phonemic awareness warm-ups and worksheets which encourage the application of letter-sound knowledge.
- **Nessy Learning Program** – this multi-sensory computer program begins with the earliest alphabet sounds and goes to an advanced level (16+). Each lesson follows a structured, phonic approach supported by hundreds of printable card games, activity sheets, mnemonics, reading and spelling assessments, storybooks and animated computer games to reinforce the rules and strategies for each teaching point.

Parent-friendly programs that do not require specialist training

- **Beat Dyslexia** – a step-by-step multi-sensory literacy program for children with dyslexia, beginning with single letter-sound links and continuing through to blends, digraphs, short and long vowels, and complex spelling patterns. Each Beat Dyslexia book contains photocopiable activities, reading and spelling cards, teacher’s notes and an audio CD.
- **Toe by Toe: A Highly Structured Multi-sensory Reading Manual for Teachers & Parents** – a highly scripted, easy to follow program that combines a multisensory approach with a memory bonding technique.
- **Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons** – in 20 minutes a day, this step-by-step program introduces children to the reading process. Allows parents to work on a one-on-one basis with children in need of structured assistance.
- **ABC Reading Eggs** – this visually appealing computer program supports literacy development through phonics-based games. There are 120 lessons suitable for children aged 4 to 7.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive. Page 24 of the Understanding Learning Difficulties booklet provides criteria for evaluating whether a program is likely to be successful and this information can be used to assist in choosing a high quality, evidence-based phonics program.