

**Overview** Learning to read is a complex task involving the acquisition of a number of skills and the proficient application of those skills.

As a supplement to the visual discrimination activities in this program, the *Building Reading Skills* binder contains lesson plans covering a variety of reading skills. Each lesson is based on a recommended approach or technique from current educators or researchers in the fields of reading and brain research.

The order in which the lessons are presented provides a natural progression of learning. A teacher may individualize instruction by selecting lessons at the appropriate level for each student. The lessons provide extra practice and/or a different approach to promote reading success for every learner.

The lessons in the Level One *Building Reading Skills* binder are designed for emergent readers. Each lesson fosters an early skill that is considered an essential prerequisite to reading.

**Units** The five units in Level One include the following:

- Unit 1—Building Visual Skills
- Unit 2—Building Attention
- Unit 3—Building Memory
- Unit 4—Building Concepts of Print
- Unit 5—Building Phonemic Awareness

**Unit 1—Building Visual Skills**

The lessons in this unit provide initial experiences in visual discrimination. Ordered from concrete to abstract, the lessons provide practice in recognizing the similarities and differences among 3-D objects, pictures, and text. To give students practice applying newly acquired visual discrimination skills, reproducible student worksheets are provided. The activities and worksheets in this unit may be used to strengthen a student's visual discrimination skills prior to being introduced to the *Word Building Lessons*.

**Unit 2—Building Attention**

The lessons in this unit provide teaching strategies to gain and maintain student attention within the classroom. Some of the lessons address whole-class techniques, while others focus on small-group and one-on-one settings.

**Units****Unit 3–Building Memory**

The lessons in this unit introduce three approaches to memory building: rehearsal, visualization, and association. These techniques, based on brain research, may be used anytime and repeated as necessary throughout the school year.

**Unit 4–Building Concepts of Print**

The lessons in this unit build a foundation for basic book usage. The unit begins with lessons on book care, including handling and correct orientation. Next, the lessons focus on the pages of a book and review directionality, eye progression, and pagination. Finally, the lessons review print concepts dealing with text, such as uppercase and lowercase letters as well as differentiating between letters and words. The skills represented in the lessons are those which are typically learned before a child begins school; however, these skills are covered in order to bridge any gaps in learning and to provide a review for students who require frequent repetition.

**Unit 5–Building Phonemic Awareness**

The lessons in this unit represent only a small introduction to phonemic awareness, namely sound discrimination, rhyme, and initial sounds. In Level One, the focus is on sounds—hearing and replicating sounds as well as recognizing similarities and differences among sounds. These skills are necessary for emergent readers prior to and during Level One reading instruction.

**Using the Lessons**

The supplemental lessons in the *Building Reading Skills* binder offer a way to individualize instruction to meet the needs of each student. Many of the lessons begin with a quote from a current educator or researcher that relates to the concept or skill being taught. Reading the quote will help the teacher determine if the skill presented is appropriate for any of his or her students.

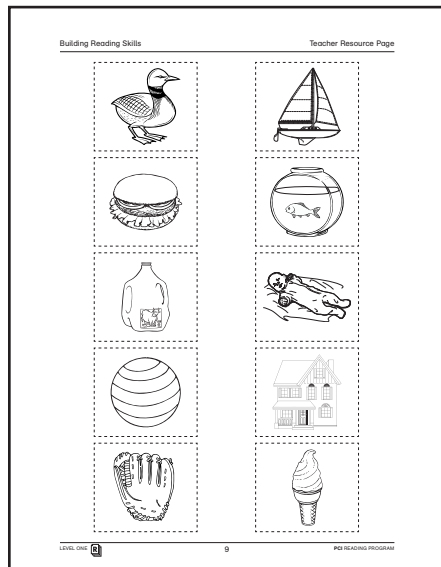
“The complexities of maintaining attention to identify and learn sounds don’t happen for most children without practice.”

Patricia Wolfe and Pamela Nevills  
*Building the Reading Brain, PreK–3*

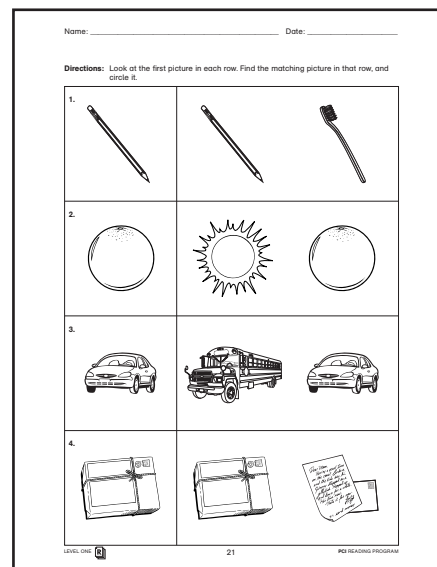
Lesson pages include the following components: an objective, a materials list, and a method for lesson delivery. All lessons also contain one or more variations to the activity. These variations are intended for use with students who need additional practice with the same reading skill.

Building Reading Skills	Building Attention With a Small Group
<b>Objective</b>	The students will wait for their turn to speak.
<b>Materials</b>	• a beanbag
<b>Method</b>	Hold the beanbag in your hands when you are teaching a small group. Ask a question, and then toss the beanbag to a student. After the student answers the question, have him or her gently toss the beanbag back to you. Repeat the activity until each student has had an opportunity to answer at least one question. Teach the students not to speak unless they are holding the beanbag.
<b>Variation</b>	Have the student who is holding the beanbag decide who will answer the next question, indicating his or her choice by gently tossing the beanbag to that student.

In addition to the lesson pages, teacher resource and student activity pages have been included in the binder. These pages have been marked with the reproducible symbol and should be photocopied in advance of the lesson. In general, the teacher resource pages provide manipulatives that will need to be cut out. You may wish to laminate these items for use with other students.



Teacher Resource Page



Student Activity Page

- Works Cited** Adams, M. et al (1998). *Phonemic Awareness in Young Children: A Classroom Curriculum*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
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