## Reading Non-Phonetic Words Section 3

The goals of this section are to 1) Introduce Rocket Phonics® "helpers," which is a prompting system that gives students the sounds that non-phonetic words make; 2) Provide students practice reading phonetic and non-phonetic words; 3) Develop more advanced reading comprehension (thinking) skills for better academic performance and lifelong problem solving skills; and 4) Assess reading progress.

Note: If a student begins to read any of the activities in a section so easily that he becomes bored, the student can skip the remaining activities and move on to the next section. Another option is to move ahead to the next section and return to the previous section later.

## 3.1 Rocket Phonics® Helpers (Prompting)

Your student has learned to read perfectly phonetic words (words written the way they sound). However, as you know, not all words are spelled phonetically!

Our next step in Rocket Phonics® is to help students read non-phonetic words. To show students how to read non-phonetic words, we use "helpers." Our helpers are prompts in non-phonetic words. Helpers prompt students in four different ways:

1. Two-letter blends are underlined (e.g., /ay/, /ch/, and /ie/). A two-letter combination underlined makes one sound consistently. For example, in the word "may" we will simply underline the /ay/ rather than gray out both and retype them underneath with the underline.

Examples: may church pie boot now

2. Prompted words are printed in blue and gray. Letters that make no sound are gray. The child should never sound grayed-out letters.

Examples: when gnat which

3. Letters that make completely different sounds are gray with the phonetic sound underneath in black. In this case, the child should sound out the symbol underneath the grayed-out letter. For example: in the word "made" the a is gray. An /ay/ is shown underneath, so the sound of a is like the a in "ape" rather than the a in "apple." The e is gray with nothing written underneath because this letter makes no sound in this word.

Examples: made open from his camel

4. Syllables: When possible, we prefer to leave multi-syllabic words whole, not divided into syllables. We find that this speeds development of sight words. However, experience has shown us that some words are learned more easily if we divide them. Thus, you will find some words divided and some not. If a word is divided into syllables, the accented syllable will be bolded.

Examples: an+i+mal con+grat+u+late un+der+stand

Have your child look at these two pronunciations:

pro duce (As in: Fruit is in the produce section.)

**pro** duce (As in: A factory can produce thousands of toys each day.)

Ask your child if he hears the accent on the first syllable in the first word and on the second syllable in the second word.

## **Teaching Helpers (Prompting)**

You might introduce your child to helpers like this:

Say, "Rocket Phonics® shows some words with helpers. Helpers use the same sounds you've already learned in the games we played. Use the helpers to read words that don't sound like they're spelled."

Show the child examples: "When a word is blue and gray, that means it doesn't sound the way it looks. A word that is all blue might have a two-letter sound like this: day. As you've learned, two-letter sounds are underlined. If a letter or letters appear gray, that means you don't try to sound them the way they're spelled. If there aren't any small, black letters underneath them, you don't sound them at all, like in the word: when. It just says /wen/. The h is silent. Underneath some gray letters you'll see a small, black letter or letters. Those helpers give you the sound of the grayed out letter above it. An example is: from. The gray letter o

tells you to look for a helper. If there wasn't a helper, the letter would ,be silent. Since there *is* a helper, use it to sound out the word. The sound of **u** is /uh/ as in "duck," so you sound the word like: /frum/."

Ask your child to use the helpers to read the words below.

At this point, you should also teach your student the following blending rule: Two of the same letter next to each other makes the same sound as just one letter. For example, "jazz" sounds the same as "jaz." The only exception to this rule is the two-letter combination <u>oo</u>, which will always be underlined and makes the sound /oo/ as in "room." Ask your student to practice this blending rule by reading the words below.

## **Capital Letters**

Tell your child that both letters sound the same, and have him practice recognizing both forms.