

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**
 ay oa u z k u

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**♦**mal** **con**♦**grat**♦**u**♦**late** **un**♦**der**♦**stand**
 u k u ch oo ay

Have your child look at these two pronunciations:

pro♦**duce** (As in: Fruit is in the produce section.)
 oa oos

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

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.

