

Emphasis on mastery of phonics reading skills in Texas Grade 1 ESL programs

approved for 2011 local Texas adoption

	<i>TEXAS TREASURE CHEST</i> Macmillan, 2012	<i>NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC REACH</i> Hampton-Brown, 2011	<i>LONGMAN TEXAS CORNERSTONE</i> Pearson, no copyright date	<i>ON OUR WAY TO ENGLISH</i> Rigby, 2012	
decodability¹ of phonics component	90% <i>Decodable Readers</i>	86% <i>REACH into Phonics</i>	87% <i>Phonetic Storybooks</i>	85% <i>Fiction Phonics Readers</i>	
decodability¹ of rest of program (except for phonics component)	75% <i>Leveled Readers</i> (Beginning level)	61%	82%	32% <i>Nonfiction Vocabulary Readers</i>	
% of student reading selections that are at least 80% decodable	75%	65%	78%	44%	
% of student reading selections that are at least 90% decodable	43%	41%	40%	2%	
# of phonetically- IRREGULAR words properly taught as sight words	82	77	39	17	
# of phonetically- REGULAR words improperly taught as sight words before they are fully decodable	77	255	82	142	
comprehensiveness² of phonics instruction ("LSCs" = letter-sound correspondences)	70 of 70 LSCs + 27 more	70 of 70 LSCs + 36 more	58 of 70 LSCs + 13 more	36 of 70 LSCs	
intensiveness³	391 practice opportunities	728 practice opportunities	560 practice opportunities	355 practice opportunities	
alignment	Does this program's ORAL VOCABULARY COMPONENT consistently avoid "reading" and/or writing undecodable words?	YES	NO	No separate, identifiable Oral Vocabulary component	NO
	Does this program's LANGUAGE ARTS COMPONENT consistently avoid "reading" and/or writing undecodable words?	NO	NO	NO	NO
total overall ranking ➡	BEST	FAIR	FAIR	WORST	

Publishers tout *teaching aids*. We stress *phonics content*. Publishers hype their *strengths*. We include their *weaknesses*. No textbook publisher funds us in any way. Unlike publisher sales reps, we have no monetary interest in any adoption. We have no financial stake in the textbook industry. Our support comes from individuals and a few small foundations, which to our knowledge have no ties to any textbook company.

¹ **DECODABILITY:** For each Grade 1 reading selection, we added the phonetically-regular words, all of whose sounds have been taught, plus the phonetically-irregular words that have been taught, and divided by the total number of words. The figure shown here averages all those quotients.

² **COMPREHENSIVENESS:** We identified 70 letter-sound correspondences (LSCs) often taught in Grade 1, and found how many of these each program covers. We also list all additional LSCs each program teaches in Grade 1.

³ **INTENSIVENESS:** We counted how often 1st graders practice (i.e., see, hear, say, and write) three representative LSCs (m, short o, long a spelled "a-e") in their respective introductory lessons. The figure shown here is the total for those three lessons.

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Additional Comparisons of Texas Grade 1 ESL programs

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coordination & integration of phonics component with rest of program	coordinated, integrated Single TE combines phonics component + rest of program. <i>Phonics Readers</i> appear only in <i>Workbook</i> . Each <i>Leveled Reader</i> is a separate binding. TE refers to both but shows neither.	coordinated, unintegrated 2 large TEs cover phonics component. 2 separate, additional, large TEs cover main program. All 4 coordinate well in a single instructional sequence.	uncoordinated, unintegrated 5 bindings + <i>Phonetic Storybooks</i> = entire program. 2-page correlation tries to reconcile CONFLICTING SEQUENCES OF PHONICS COVERAGE in main program vs. its phonics component.	coordinated, integrated 2 medium-sized TEs unify phonics component & rest of program in a single instructional sequence.
story content	No objectionable content; Positive themes include family harmony, patriotism, ingenuity, friendship between native-born and immigrants.	One negative portrayal of a father, otherwise unobjectionable content; National Geographic Science and Social Studies topics predominate.	No objectionable content; 3 selections stress patriotism or express cordiality to immigrants.	5 stories involve anger or misconduct. Other content unobjectionable
— SUMMARY —				
best feature(s) ("LSCs" = letter-sound correspondences)	90% average decodability of <i>Decodable Reader</i> stories; Oral Vocabulary component shuns anti-phonics pedagogy; the only program that properly teaches more phonetically-irregular words as sight words than it improperly teaches phonetically-regular words as sight words	<i>REACH into Phonics</i> most thoroughly teaches LSCs and uniquely reviews them in "high-frequency words" ...	Excellent phonics practice in <i>Phonetic Storybooks</i> ; patriotic emphasis in main program reading selections	Unifies phonics component with rest of program
worst feature(s) ("LSCs" = letter-sound correspondences)	Below-average number of student practice opportunities when learning LSCs, compared to other programs here	... but many of those "high-frequency words" are still undecodable because 1 st graders have not yet learned all their LSCs. Also, an exorbitant number of "vocabulary words" are initially undecodable because some or all of their LSCs are as yet untaught.	Both its main program vs. its Phonics Kit, and its <i>Phonics & Word Analysis</i> book vs. its <i>Phonetic Storybooks</i> (which together compose its Phonics Kit), are respectively OUT OF SYNC WITH EACH OTHER ON SEQUENCE OF PHONICS INSTRUCTION . Publisher's 2-page correlation helps with the first problem but not with the second.	Covers only 36 of 70 common 1 st grade LSCs; exceptionally low decodability of <i>Nonfiction Vocabulary Readers</i> ; abysmally low number of 90% decodable total reading selections; most negative story content
total overall ranking ⇨	BEST	FAIR	FAIR	WORST

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