



Reading Program

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Learn & Play reading program is a tool created for children aged 4 – 10, whose mother tongue is not English. It may be used in any classroom for group or individual work. Parents may benefit from it as well, as the program is user friendly and an excellent addition to the school work. The platform has versions in English, Spanish and Turkish as well, which may be used as instruments for learning a second language.

1. Methodology

Learning and Reading Methodology

The program is designed following the principles of the existing methodologies of learning through play and is inspired by the accelerative learning instruments.

Even though online learning and gamification of the learning content are relatively new concepts, the ideas behind them have been under development for more than a century. The works of Dewey, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, to name a few, have focused attention on the needs of the child and the importance of play for their proper development.

Our team has developed a unique mixture of approaches inspired by the above methodologies and it is based on the following principles:

- **Experiment, explore, discover!** The platform provides playful discovery of the letters, the sounds and the rules for reading. New knowledge is suggested mildly so that the children can internalize it quickly and thus imprint it in their long-term memory.
- **See the whole picture! Look for details!** The platform uses a systemic approach for teaching reading skills. The big picture is disintegrated into details and the details are synthesized back into the big picture again.
- **Use your senses!** The program is designed in a way that children use different senses – hearing, vision and touch (the last sense is integrated through worksheets and classroom activities). The design of the activities has considered different types of intelligence, different learning styles.
- **Start from what you know!** New concepts are interwoven and built on familiar ones. New knowledge is re-elicited from the children.



- **Be brave!** Reading is a key competency, which leads to confidence in all the other areas of life. Creates psychological safety and life-long learning motivation.

The reading process is broken down into broad areas of competence (17 in number), followed by more detailed learning objectives, which are translated into activities with specific learning goals. The activities serve as content for the platform games. The learning goals will be obtained through a learning path, which spirals the content on the platform as follows:

1. Pre-reading skills
2. Letters and sounds – beginner
3. Words and sentences - intermediate
4. Sentences and texts – advanced

The success of each step of the process is measured and the students are not allowed to move to another level without reaching at least 85% success with the current level of activities.

The reading skills are in line with the requirements of the Bulgarian educational system as well as with the other partners' educational standards (State educational standards for Bulgarian language and relevant documents in other countries). Each partner has researched and analysed the reading competencies for pre-school and first grade of their educational system. It has been concluded that all of them have adopted **phonetical reading** as the main methodology for teaching emergent readers. The reading program has adopted the same methodology.

2. Program Description

The program starts with a comprehensive diagnostic test to define the vocabulary and literacy levels and to suggest a suitable level for the learner.

Each step of the learning path will be introduced with various activities and tested. ***The system will not allow moving forward without accomplishing at least 85% success of the previous skill or set of skills.***

The program consists ***of 4 levels***, which cover ***17 basic reading skills***:

1. *Pre-reading skills (Spiral 1)*

The basic skills, included in this part of the program are:

1. Basic vocabulary themes
2. Listening/ auditory skills
3. Visual/ special skills
4. Kinaesthetic and group activities, developed as worksheets

The focus of this spiral is to improve listening skills and aims to increase active vocabulary. The games are of the flash card type, “yes or no” game, image selection game and memory game. The spiral includes 13 lessons, each of them usually contains between 3 and 5 games. Summary lessons contain more games - up to 15. The learners can practice a range of different listening skills with all these games. The lessons from this spiral aim to encourage children to try some of the fun online listening activities about:

- Colours- lesson 1
- Parts of the body- lesson 2
- Fruits and vegetables- lesson 3
- Animals- lesson 4
- Things in the classroom- lessons 5&6
- Family members- lesson 7
- All the topics- lesson 8
- Seasons and weather, food and drinks- lesson 9
- Active verbs- lesson 10
- Clothes- lesson 11
- Sports- lesson 12
- All the topics/summary/- lesson 13

2. *Spiral 2 – Letters and sounds*

The basic skills, included in this part of the program are:

1. Learning the Sounds and the Letters
2. Learning the Alphabet
3. Learning the vowels
4. Learning the consonants

5. Learning to blend with short and long vowels
6. Learning the long vowels

These are some of the skills and concepts, which a first-grade student will typically learn. The games aim to facilitate the literacy process and every child should become an independent reader, improve its phonics, phonemic awareness, and comprehension. They will increase their vocabulary as they blend consonant sounds and vowels, know the names and sounds of all consonants and vowels, understand phonics concepts such as consonant combination, and develop an understanding of the composition. There are 17 lessons in this spiral in total. They usually include between 2 and 5 games. Lessons include games of the kind: flash cards, image selection game, memory game and others.

3. Spiral 3- Words and sentences

The basic skills, included in this part of the program are:

1. Blending words – CVC, CVCC, CCV words long-vowel words
2. Learning the special sounds – diphthongs and triptongs – blends and words
3. Learning sight words
4. Learning to read simple sentences

The aim of the games in this spiral is that students begin to develop their own spelling skills. They understand letters, sounds and spelling things as they hear them when they sound them out. These goals are achieved within 9 lessons and each one contains 4 games. Sound model games and typing games predominate here.

4. Spiral 4- Reading comprehension

The basic skills, included in this part of the program are:

1. Learning to read sentences and short stories
2. Reading comprehension

Learning the difference between different texts/ genres

The lessons in Spiral 4 will help the children accomplish the following goals and objectives. The learners will increase their vocabulary as they blend consonant



sounds and vowels. They will read simple stories fluently and independently and answer questions about the text. These goals are achieved through 23 games divided into 9 lessons. In the games the children will have to put in the correct order the events of a story using the text and the pictures or using audio and the pictures.