

Level 4 Books**New Concepts:**

- **Vowel Sounds:** Vowels have two distinct pronunciations. An easy method for explaining this to a beginning reader is to use the term SOUND for the short vowels (a - e - i - o - u) and NAME for the long vowels (as in the letter name A-E-I-O or U). The mentor must pronounce each correctly, as these contribute to the understanding of many words in early texts. You may go to the following link and listen to or download the vowel songs (we will send a CD of these songs upon request). Often a learner's school will have a preferred method for remembering vowel sounds.

[booksinbags.com/short vowel sounds](http://booksinbags.com/short-vowel-sounds)

Potential Problem Areas and Related Activities:

- Because there may be words that end with s or ing, learners should say these sounds clearly and call them "word endings" when asked.
- Learners should start to recognize some letters as "special," usually beginning with th (because of the common sight-word the).
- These also include wh, ch, and sh. Another th (i.e. think) sound is formed by placing the tongue between the teeth and forcing air around it. Learners sometimes like to hold up a thumb and verbalize it to arrive at this th sound. *Although the sounds differ, this exercise may help the learner understand the concept of the two th-letter combinations.*
- The word are can be hard to remember, as it is abstract. After covering the first and last letter, revealing the r in the middle, the learner may say the letter r.
- The word you is confusing, as y may be difficult for early learners to remember. For the time being, mentor and learner may play a spelling game in which they spell the word together, then point a finger toward each other and say "u"!

Learner Behavior for Mentors to Encourage or Correct:

After the learner finishes the book, select and talk about no more than two of the following items:

- **RE-READING:** Those who re-read a word, phrase, or line of print are more likely to self-correct errors. Point out places where this was done and give praise.
- **CONFUSING SIMILAR WORDS:** The mentor may say, "Your words seemed to fit, but they do not match the author's words." Ask the learner to re-read and give praise for self-correcting. If the learner does not do this, indicate the error and encourage correct reading.
- **INVENTING WORDS:** Return to one page where this error was observed. Encourage the learner to think about the story. Repeat the incorrect word or words and ask, "Does that make sense for this story?" Ask the learner to re-read the page. Praise accurate reading or help the learner to read the correct words. This might include reading the page together.

NOTE TO MENTORS: If there are too many errors, return to an easier level. Learners should also be encouraged to read the same book two or three times with a reasonable amount of accuracy. Please note that most learners misread some words; mentors may choose to accept this without correcting.

PARTIAL REVIEW OF SUGGESTIONS FROM EARLIER LEVELS

- Read aloud the title and the author's name. Locate the introduction, found either inside the front cover or at the back, and read this aloud.
- Have the learner look at all the pictures in the book before attempting to read any words. The mentor and learner should briefly discuss the story that the illustrations seem to show. A "meaning walk" is essential before the first reading of the story.
- Be aware of unusual vocabulary words or events in the story. It is a good idea to explain unfamiliar circumstances. It may also be helpful to locate one or two difficult words in the story as the meaning walk takes place. Ask what letter is at the beginning of the word, and wait for the response. Then ask the learner to place his/her fingers on either side of it while saying the difficult word aloud.
- Have the learner touch each word's "reading (left) side" as needed. Word-by-word pointing is a helpful strategy but can inhibit fluent reading as books become longer.
- Model or encourage expressive reading, which sounds like a normal conversation.
- Encourage the learner to notice **bold** or *italicized* print in the text. Mentors should explain that these are ways for an author to indicate strong feelings.