



# Help For Reading Difficulties

By Carolyn Goldammer, Certified Dyslexia Specialist/Teacher

As a part of the CoRaC National Education Team, I will attempt to put together a way to help your child when you have tried to teach them to read and spell and they just don't seem to be catching on. Sometimes it is because they have a language-based learning disability, such as dyslexia. All of the methods I use when teaching students with learning disabilities are the same as I would use for children who seem to catch on more quickly. The difference is the amount of repetition needed in order to build foundational reading skills. According to one study "A Principal's Primer for Raising Reading Achievement", p. 66, the number of times you repeat/practice a skill can range from 1-4 repetitions for a "gifted reader" to 200 or more repetitions (with correct responses) for a child with a language-based learning issue, in order to solidify the neural pathways to make reading automatic.

There are numerous materials that can be utilized to practice reading and spelling skills, remembering that they need to be systematic and multi-sensory, especially when a child struggles or is young. Our lessons should build in this repetition to link proper speech sounds to their letter representation while teaching correct letter formation, decoding skills (reading) and encoding skills (spelling). Some of the ways to accomplish this are using:

- Letter tiles\* (I like to put magnets on the back)
- Phonogram cards\*
- Reading words, phrases, and sentences using the new skill then transitioning to very decodable stories\* based on your scope and sequence.
- Clay that can be shaped into letters & sounds
- Sand trays (I have found an 11x13" metal baking dish with a bumpy bottom and filled with a thin layer of sand)
- Shaving cream

The list is as big as your creativity.

\* I love using the program All About Reading (AAR) and All About Spelling, which were written with homeschoolers in mind. One of the mistakes I see for new homeschoolers is understanding that "Lesson One" does not mean teach in one day. This needs to be practiced many times to build in automaticity. My students love to read from AAR "real books" with beautifully illustrated pictures. This program provides teachers' manuals, magnetic tiles and some activities to use with your children. See the "Sample-reading-lesson.pdf" for an example of a typical daily lesson.

## Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*

In order to provide more repetition, I have also purchased many, many word lists and stories from Orton-Gillingham Specialists on Teachers Pay Teachers. Some of my favorites are The Literacy Nest (Emily Gibbons) and The Dyslexia Classroom (Casey Harrison). I have these word lists, stories, and games printed out and put in sheet protectors so I can use and reuse them with multiple children.

If I can answer questions, please feel free to email me through [education@coracusa.com](mailto:education@coracusa.com).



# Help For Reading Difficulties (continued)

All About Reading, Level 1, Lesson 25: Sample pages

### Lesson 24 - Words with Final Blends

This lesson will teach words containing consonant blends at the end, as well as the Leap Word *wag*.

You will need:  Blast Off to Reading! pages 139-152  
 Word Cards 103-112

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**Before You Begin**

A consonant blend is different from a consonant team. In a consonant blend, each letter retains its own sound. In consonant teams, such as *th*, *sh*, and *ch*, two letters combine to make a completely new sound.

**Preview Consonant Blends**

In this lesson, your student will learn to read words with consonant blends.

A consonant blend consists of two sounds that are said together quickly. For example, the word *lamp* has a consonant blend at the end. The /m/ and /p/ sounds are said in rapid succession, but each consonant keeps its own sound.

A blend at the end of a word is called a **final blend**. Final blends are easier to read than blends at the beginning of the word, so we will introduce final blends first. Read the following examples and listen for the blends.

**dust help risk felt bump**

Words with consonant blends will be decoded using the same blending procedure that your student is already using. Touch each letter and say its sound, slowly at first, and then fast like you would in everyday speech.

Some phonics programs teach blends as a unit. For example, the blends *sp* and *nd* would be taught as their own sounds on letter tiles or flashcards. But that method requires much more memory work on the part of the student because the student would have to memorize dozens of blends. It is much simpler to have the student learn the basic phonograms and blend them to sound out words.

**Automatic Word Recognition**

*Automatic word recognition* means that words are recognized at a glance. If you have automatic word recognition, you don't have to decode the word; you just know what the word is with a single look. Another name for this skill is *automaticity*.

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**Before You Begin** (continued)

Automaticity enables your student to read more fluently. When he doesn't have to laboriously decode each and every word, he can read smoothly and with more comprehension.

These fluency exercises give your student the practice he needs to develop automaticity. After encountering the same words multiple times, your student will move from sounding out the words to automatic word recognition.

**Review**

Phonogram Cards

Review the Phonogram Cards that are behind the Review divider in your student's Reading Review Box. Show the card to your student and have him say the sound. If necessary, remind your student of the sound.

Word Cards

Review the Word Cards that are behind the Review divider in your student's Reading Review Box. If your student has difficulty reading the word, build the word with letter tiles and have your student sound it out using the procedure shown in Appendix C: Full Blending Procedure.

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**New Teaching**     **Blend Sounds with Letter Tiles**

Build the word *land* with letter tiles. l a n d

"Sometimes there are two consonants at the end of a word, as in the word *land*. Listen and watch as I blend the letters in this word: l-a-n-d."

Touch the l and say /l/. l a n d

Touch the a and say /a/. l a n d

Touch the n and say /n/. l a n d

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**New Teaching** (continued)

Touch the d and say /d/. l a n d

Now go back to the beginning of the word. Slide your finger under the letters l-a-n-d and say *land* slowly.

l a n d

Finally, read the word *land* at a normal pace, as we do when we speak.

Using the same procedure for blending, have your student sound out the word *test*.

t e s t

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**Decode Words Containing Two-Letter Phonograms**

Build the word *lunch* with letter tiles. l u n ch

"Sometimes one of the sounds at the end of a word is a consonant team, as in the word *lunch*. Listen and watch as I blend the letters in this word: l-u-n-ch."

Touch the l and say /l/. l u n ch

Touch the u and say /u/. l u n ch

Touch the n and say /n/. l u n ch

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Teachers' Book:



## Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*

All About Reading, Level 1, Lesson 25: Sample pages

Student Activity Book:

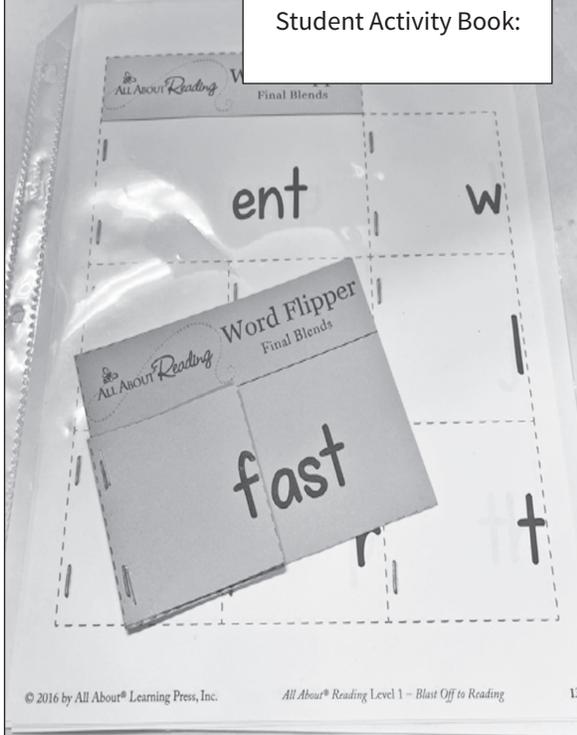
Lesson 24 - Practice Sheet

**New Words**

|                                   |                      |                       |                       |                       |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>-mp</b> chimp<br>jump<br>camp  | limp<br>lamp<br>lump | dump<br>pump<br>champ | damp<br>tamp<br>thump | bump<br>hump<br>chomp | ramp<br>Gump<br>romp |
| <b>-ct</b> fact                   | duct                 | act                   |                       |                       |                      |
| <b>-ld</b> weld                   | held                 | meld                  |                       |                       |                      |
| <b>-ft</b> theft<br>soft<br>shaft | gift<br>tuft<br>sift | loft<br>shift<br>left | raft<br>lift          |                       |                      |
| <b>-lk</b> elk                    | milk                 | silk                  | bulk                  |                       |                      |
| <b>-lp</b> help                   | gulp                 | yelp                  |                       |                       |                      |
| <b>-lt</b> quilt<br>wilt          | belt                 | silt                  | melt                  | tilt                  | felt                 |
| <b>-nd</b> fond<br>bend<br>band   | sand<br>and<br>fend  | wind<br>lend<br>mend  | hand<br>fund<br>tend  | pond<br>end<br>bond   | send<br>land         |



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Lesson 24 - Practice Sheet

**More New Words**

|      |      |      |      |     |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-----|------|-------|
| was  | elf  | next | wept | elm | kept | shelf |
| film | text |      |      |     |      |       |

**Phrases**

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| soft quilt    | munch on lunch |
| lend a hand   | fix the lamp   |
| mend the hem  | send help      |
| the last ant  | the bent tent  |
| gulp the milk | on the nest    |
| felt sad      | run fast       |
| at his desk   | jump in        |
| just a test   | a big hint     |

**Sentences**

The pond  
The pond had six fish.

Deb felt  
Deb felt the dust  
Deb felt the dust in the wind.

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Lesson 24 - Practice Sheet

**Sentences**

Bev and Beth  
Bev and Beth lost the quilt.

The red fox  
The red fox ran  
The red fox ran at dusk.

Ed had milk  
Ed had milk at lunch.

A gust of wind  
A gust of wind went past.

The gift shop  
The gift shop had a tan lamp.

The lost pup  
The lost pup was at risk.

That elk  
That elk was fast.

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## Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*

Reading two stories: "Tin Raft" and "Lost in the Bog" with Warm-Up sheets first. Stories are in beautiful hard bound books.

**New Teaching**

**Story 1: "Tin Raft"**

**Read the Warm-Up Sheet for "Tin Raft"**

Remove page 153 from the *Blast Off* activity book.

Have your student practice reading words and phrases that will be encountered in "Tin Raft."

Point out the name *Tish* in the Names section. "Tish is a nickname for Patricia."



**Teach Vocabulary and Activate Prior Knowledge**

Point out the illustration of a raft on the Warm-Up Sheet. "A *raft* is a flat structure that floats and is used as a boat. Rafts are often made of wood lashed together with cord."

Point out the illustration of a workbench on the Warm-Up Sheet. "This is a *workbench*. A workbench is a table where you can keep your tools and do small carpentry or electrical work, or repair small items."

"Have you ever had a favorite toy that was damaged or broken? What did you do to fix it?"

"The boy in this story has a damaged toy raft. Let's see if someone can fix it."

**Read "Tin Raft"**

"Turn to page 9 in your reader and read 'Tin Raft' aloud." Discuss your student's ideas for the questions below as you come to them.

**After page 14:** "Look at the raft in the illustration. Do you think it will be able to float now? Why or why not?"

**After reading:** "Why does Kent think this is the best gift?"

Lesson 25: Read "Tin Raft" and "Lost in the Bog"

Lesson 25 - Warm-Up Sheet for *Tin Raft*

**Words Taught in Previous Lessons**

|      |      |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| was  | raft | bent | held | rust | dent | bench |
| best | sand | bend | mend | task | test | tilt  |
| gift |      |      |      |      |      |       |

**Phrases**

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| tin raft     | big task      |
| had a dent   | test the raft |
| mend it      | did not tilt  |
| on the bench | best gift     |

**Names**

Kent  
Tish



raft



bench

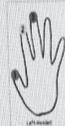
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**Using Finger-Tapping and Blending Strips**

While using Orton-Gillingham's multi-sensory approach to spelling, students learn to divide words by syllables. Each syllable contains 3 sounds (or blends). These tools can be used to aid students in recognizing those sounds and furthering their spelling development.

 This template is to be used with right-handed students. If a student writes with their right hand, they will finger tap with their left. It is important to blend words from left-to-right, so right-handed students will begin with their pinky while finger spelling.

 This template is to be used with left-handed students. If a student writes with their left hand, they will finger tap with their right. It is important to blend words from left-to-right, so left-handed students will begin with their thumb while finger spelling.

 For students who struggle with fine-motor skills or have trouble finger tapping, it may be easier to use the blending strip. This strip can be used with individual fingers (like finger-tapping) or with whole-hand taps.

**SPELLING**

Using "Finger-Tapping" with fists for syllables and "Finger Spelling" with sounds in the each syllable is very useful in teaching children how to spell the words you are practicing.

