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# Introduction

## **About the Stories**

The stories and activities found in *High Interest/Low Readability: The Heroic Herald* have been specifically designed for students who are reading below grade level; for students who have reading disabilities; and for students who are reluctant or discouraged readers.

The engaging stories are written between early-first grade and mid-third grade reading levels. Each story's specific reading level and word count can be found above the story title on the Table of Contents (page 4). This information should help guide the teacher in choosing stories that are appropriate for the individual needs of the students. (*Reading grade levels are not printed on any of the stories or on any of the reproducible activity pages.*)

The stories were created with large print. Struggling readers are often intimidated and easily overwhelmed by small print. The easy-to-read large font, picture clues, and sentence structure should help children feel more confident as they read the stories included in *The Heroic Herald* news articles.

All the stories use high-frequency words and essential vocabulary. A list of the story's high-frequency words, as well as the special words that are necessary for each story, are found on pages 60 and 61. Prior to reading a story, review the word lists and introduce and practice any unfamiliar words. Make flash cards of the new words and outline each letter with glitter glue to provide a tactile experience for the students. Draw a picture of the word on each card to help students visualize any new vocabulary.

## **About the Audio CD: "The Heroic Herald Evening News"**

Each story comes with its own evening news broadcast and begins with a few seconds of introductory music. Following the music, the news anchor welcomes the listeners and says, "Tonight's headline story is. . . ." That is the student's clue to listen. The news anchor reads the headline title and the content of the story exactly as it is printed on the student's copy of the news article.

For many struggling readers, being able to listen to the story first can be extremely beneficial. Knowing the story's content ahead of time provides students with the opportunity of using context clues to help decode words and for interpreting the meaning of the story. For other students, being able to track the text as they listen to the words allows for a beneficial multi-sensory experience. Students can hear the words; see the words; and can touch each word as they follow along listening to the evening news broadcast.

## **About the Activity Pages**

Paper and pencil tasks are often "not fun" for struggling readers. The majority of the reproducible activity pages are divided into two different activities per page. The teacher may choose to assign both halves at once. The diversity of the two different activities should encourage the children to finish the page and not become bored or frustrated. The teacher may also choose to cut the page in two and assign each half at different times.

Coloring, drawing, solving puzzles, and cutting and pasting activities have been included. These types of activities reinforce a wide range of reading skills and are often viewed as "more fun" by the students.

In short, *High Interest/Low Readability: The Heroic Herald* will provide your students with a complete reading experience.