



# Introduction

Teaching children to read is important work, perhaps the most important work a teacher does. *Get Ready, Read!* provides a wealth of tools to help children get a strong start in discovering how to decode words. As beginning readers visually discriminate letter patterns and recognize word families (phonograms), they acquire knowledge about relationships between sounds and spelling. This skill is applied when reading meaningful text as children accurately recognize more words, thus increasing their reading fluency.

The logical place to begin teaching children to read is with what they already know—sounds. While still in the womb, babies hear sounds. By kindergarten, young children can say these sounds and put them into many words. Learning to read is simply an association of these sounds with symbols. But, where do you begin to cultivate these challenging connections? *Get Ready, Read!* provides a variety of activities that help students develop cognition in auditory and visual discrimination, learn to listen intently, and process written words. To make the teaching easier, each chapter includes the following:

- Word-family lists
- Clip art and reproducible word cards for a bulletin-board display
- Phonemic awareness and word-decoding activities
- Songs, games, and learning aids
- Follow-up activities, such as word sorts, word-building exercises, and easy-to-play bingo games and/or a path game for additional decoding practice

And, as a bonus, leaving up the bulletin-board displays transforms your classroom into a world of words!

## How to Use This Book

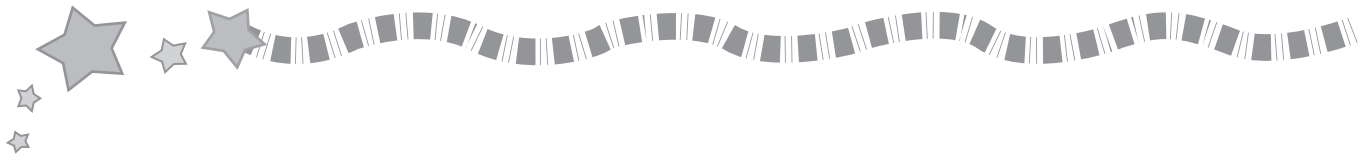


Listed below and on the following page are a variety of fun-filled ideas and helpful suggestions for ways to use some of the materials in this book.

### Word-Card Quick Tips

- Copy on colorful card stock, cut out, and store a set of word cards for each chapter in a large manila envelope to use on the bulletin-board word wall. Also, copy the word list for the chapter (pages 7, 42, 43, 82, 118, 119, 158, 159, 190, and 191) and staple it to the outside of the envelope to have as a convenient reference when working with students.
- Have aids or older students copy on card stock, cut out, stack, and fasten a rubber band around a set of word cards that you have selected for each student. Store each set of cards in a small manila envelope that has been personalized by the student.
- Decorate a cardboard box where the students' envelopes may be filed when not in use.
- Encourage students to take their envelopes home overnight for extra practice or have them search for those particular words in selected stories.





## **A Dozen Songs Sung New!**

Singing the letter sounds provides repetition that ordinarily would be tiresome and dull, but when silly lyrics are connected to a lively, familiar tune, a child will sing them again and again. Twelve simple, catchy songs are provided in *Get Ready, Read!* for you to use with children. Here are a few additional tips for teaching reading skills with songs:

- Turn the song into a guessing game. Students take turns singing a line as others identify the initial consonant or vowel sound they hear.
- Copy the words and send the songs home so that parents may sing along with their children.
- Assign song lines to individuals, pairs, or small groups of children. Practice and perform several songs for a kindergarten class or group of parents.
- After students learn each song, make a recording of their performance. At the end of the units, combine the recordings and burn a CD for each student. What a treasure they will have to cherish!

## **Over 60 Circle Time Lessons and Games**

When students are familiar with the rules of a game, play it again and again. Vary the games like this:

- Pair the students or form small groups and have children play as an independent guided-reading activity.
- Invite an older student to lead a small group of students in the game.
- Allow craft time for coloring and decorating picture game cards. Have each student place a set of game cards in a resealable plastic bag. Encourage them to take home their bags of cards to play with their families. For example: “Noisy Zoo Matchups” might be sent home with the rules for playing the five different games (see page 27).
- Have aids or older students decorate several extra sets of game cards to be placed in the literacy work station.

## **Six Fabulous Bulletin-Board Word Walls**

Once a bulletin-board word wall has been prepared by you and students have completed it, the board becomes much more than a visual, word-family motivator—it becomes the backdrop for a literacy work station and game hub. On a table under or near the board, you might arrange the following items:

- Cardboard box holding each child’s manila envelope of word cards
- Paper and pencils for writing short sentences (and later, stories) using the words found on the bulletin board
- Individual notebooks or stacks of paper stapled to form booklets, one for each student to create an illustrated dictionary (see pages 22 and 125 for reproducible booklet covers)
- Sets of game cards for the appropriate games, bingo boards and related materials, and assembled path games
- Extra copies of word picture cards to decorate along with crayons, paints, and/or markers
- Word-sorting and word-building activities for independent guided reading
- Picture books with limited text that children can use when hunting for other words that belong in certain word families; found words written on index cards and displayed
- Books and stories created by the students who use the word wall as a spelling resource