

Introduction to Using BRI

Begin by looking through BRI 1A, Story 1 together.

This story consists of five grapheme/phoneme correspondences:

‘I’ /I/

‘m’ /m/

‘S’ ‘s’ /s/

‘a’ /a/

‘ee’ /ee/

Download the **Letter/Sound Cards** and cut the five sounds into separate cards. Present each card and say: *‘The sound is ... What is this sound?’* Repeat until the child has practised each correspondence several times. It isn’t necessary for the child to remember every sound, as these correspondences will appear repeatedly in the story the child will be reading. You may also want to use a whiteboard on which to write each sound.

When you introduce a sound, try to keep the pronunciation as crisp as possible. For instance try to pronounce a pure sound for /m/ rather than a sound like ‘mu’.

As a child begins to read ‘I See Sam’ the instruction should be limited to *‘Say the sounds and read the word’*. Model if needed. For instance, point to *s* and *ee* and say: *‘The sounds s and ee make the word see’*. To sound out and read the word *see*, we say *sss* (one second pause) and *ee...see*. *‘Now you sound out and read the word’*. Again the objective is to familiarise the child with the how-to of blending, not to teach the child to ‘recognise the word’ as a whole.

BEGINNING STORY 1. The child **will** make mistakes in their initial reading. When a word is missed, resist saying ‘no’. Simply point to the word, and repeat: *‘Say the sounds and read the word.’* If s/he can’t do it, give the ‘missing’ sound and let the child try again. If, after a few tries, the child is frustrated, supply the word and go on with the story.

Never rush, and don’t make an issue of ‘mistakes’. Let the child and the books do the work! Mistakes with words containing new correspondences are to be expected throughout BRI instruction. In this first story all the words are new, with no new correspondences in the next story.

Take as much time as needed to get through Story 1 the first time. So long as a child is trying hard to use the protocol *‘Say the sounds and read the word’* and understands the text, that is all that is required. Praise the child lavishly for ‘reading the story’.

As with any complex skill, with practice there will be steady improvement. However, a child may be able to read a word, and then a couple of lines later be unable to decode/read that same word. This is common in learning any complex skill; the child isn’t ‘going backwards’. Patience and encouragement are the most important qualities you bring to the lesson, together with ensuring that the protocol is followed and that ‘over helping’ is avoided.

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Encourage the pupil to reread the story with different people. And after they are reading with ease (automaticity) and good expression, encourage them to read the story silently – like big people do.

A child should be reading ‘just like s/he talks’. BRI is a tool for teaching the child how to do this. In so doing, they will ‘comprehend’ written English in the same manner that they handle spoken English. If the child is bored with rereading a story before automaticity and good expression (‘fluency’) is acquired, go on to the next one, and return to the earlier story later to ensure that what was difficult ‘new code’ has now become ‘easy’.

As soon as the child is familiar with the protocol ‘*Say the sounds and read the word*’, it is preferable to work without letter/sound cards. New sounds can be introduced on a whiteboard or in the context of the story.

Use the **Optional Questions** for each story to ensure that the text is understood.

See *Getting Started with BRI* for more help or email: enquiries@piperbooks.co.uk