

CVA Custom Language Arts: First Grade

Language Arts and Math are going to take up the majority of your formal schooling time with your child during First grade. Spending time on the skills specific to Language Arts is going to help your child be successful in all subject areas.

Students need to listen to stories, talk about them, interact with the ideas and skills in different ways, including manipulatives, using local libraries, and they may need to use our optional online phonics supplemental programs.

There are many different types of materials for this course because students need to work on letter and sound recognition, phonics, comprehension, listening skills, retelling skills, handwriting, all of which will lead to successful independent reading. Students are introduced to formal spelling, vocabulary, writing and grammar skills.

CVA has designed this short overview to help you get your child off to the best start possible. Below are some specific instructions for beginning this reading program along with more detailed descriptions of each component of the program.

1. Administer the Explode the Code placement test for your child. The books that came as a part of this set are designed for beginning first grade students, but your student may score above or below grade level. If this is the case, contact your teacher so that the correct level can be ordered. Once you have determined the correct starting point, refer to the enclosed schedule for lesson pacing.
2. Read the Teacher's Manual for Explode the Code in order to successfully implement phonics instruction. There are detailed instructions to help you build fluency, comprehension, phonics, vocabulary, writing, as well as reinforcement activities for each lesson.
3. In Soaring with Spelling and Vocabulary, students will complete 1 Lesson a week that consists of 5 days of work. Day 1 of each lesson is a pretest. If your student passes the pretest with 100%, they have the option to skip to the next lesson.
4. Ready Reading will consist of two different types of lessons, Read Aloud Lessons and Focus Lessons. Refer to pages A14-A15 of the Teacher Resource Book for more detailed information.
5. Daily story time is important, so read to your student every day. Story time is on the calendar because it IS that important.
6. Your student is going to dictate the pace at which you follow this program, but we encourage you to follow the calendar as best you can. An ongoing conversation with your CVA teacher to gauge progress is the best way to determine an appropriate pace for your child.

These are the materials your student will be working with:

Explode the Code: Give your student the Explode the Code Placement Test to find out where your student should start in this program. If your student placed in a different book than what this grade level starts with, talk to your CVA Teacher and the needed book can be ordered. An average student will take 2 days to work through each lesson. Some lessons may go faster or slower than others. Be sure to read

through the Teacher Guide book and incorporate as many suggestions noted throughout each lesson as you see appropriate to enhance your student's learning. The Wall Chart mentioned within Explode the Code is not a part of the set; however you can easily create a wall chart on your own, and this will help your child to see these words daily and aid in improving their reading skills. In addition to the words introduced within the Explode the Code books you should add words from the other academic areas as well. The "half" books are review and not a requirement, but it is suggested you start the school year off with 2.5 just to review the concepts for your student in case they have forgotten skills over the summer. If you find your student is bored to tears and has proven he/she know the skills, feel free to move on to the next book. If you find you need to order additional books as you notice your child working through them at a faster pace than what is included in the set, talk to your CVA Teacher about ordering. This needs to be done around the end of first semester, which is at the end of January.

Ready Reading includes a student instruction book, teacher resource book and high-quality literature and informational texts from a variety of genres. Lessons have a consistent layout throughout the curriculum; teaching, modeling and practicing for emerging readers. Pacing and instructions are easy to follow.

Soaring with Spelling and Vocabulary – Level 1: There are 36 lessons within this curriculum. Each lesson is to be completed over a five day period. Use whatever schedule works best for your student. The calendar lists all weekly lessons to be completed for the week on Monday. If your student passes the pretest with 100% we suggest having them work through the daily lessons, but we feel that it is optional to have them take the post test at the end of the lesson.

Bob Books: consist of 4 boxed sets within this curriculum. Once your student has been introduced to a book, continue to read and re-read the book, in addition to the new ones introduced. This repetition is at the heart of learning to read. Add words to your word wall that you find are giving your student trouble. Adding any leveled reader to your collection of books that your child can read will greatly help improve their skill.

Story Time: Use this time to read to your child. Point out characters, illustrations, vocabulary words they might not be familiar with, and anything that might interest them. Question them throughout the story, ensuring they are comprehending what you are reading. Ask their opinions of what is being read and have them predict what might happen next. Have them select stories, but also share ones that you select, ensuring some of them focus on the letters/sounds they are learning. There is benefit in having children just listen to a story at times and at other times, having them read along with you as you point to the words. Students should be able to sit and listen during story time for up to 20 minutes. If they will enjoy longer, smile and keep reading. This is also a time you can use to read aloud a more challenging book, such as a chapter book. Ask your CVA Teacher for some title recommendations, or just search your local library for great ideas. This will help in their comprehension skills.

Additional online reading supplemental programs: Ask your CVA Teacher about additional online reading programs that are available to your student. Finding leveled readers for that beginning reader is very important. Adding exposure to the phonics skills will also help enhance your students reading ability. These programs are a part of the Learning A to Z on-line program.