

iPad Apps for Reading, Spelling and Writing Instruction

Compiled by Elaine Cheesman, Ph.D.

Purposeful, effective literacy instruction explicitly and systematically links instruction with essential content that is appropriate for the learner’s needs. I have organized this list of apps by their intended use: **Utility / Presentation** and specific areas with the two domains of **Literacy Content**—word recognition skills or language comprehension strategies.

Multi-Use Utility, Presentation & Reference Apps		
	<p>Dropbox by Dropbox</p> <p>Lets you access any file saved to your Dropbox account from any and all computers, iPhone, iPad. You can share a link to one file or set up shared files with other Dropbox account holders. 2 GB are free.</p>	Free
	<p>Doodle Buddy for iPad by Pinger, Inc.</p> <p>Paint with fingers or drawing tools, add sounds and stamps. You can import documents and photos from your Dropbox account.</p>	Free
	<p>Flashcards [+] by NKO Ventures, LLC</p> <p>This versatile and powerful app allows the user to create custom flashcards with pictures or download sets made by “experts and novices” on Quizlet or Flashcards Exchange. The user can organize flashcards into categories. Text-to-speech in different languages is available for a fee.</p>	Free
	<p>Explain Everything by MorrisCooke</p> <p>Explain Everything is an easy-to-use design, screencasting, and interactive whiteboard tool that lets you annotate, animate, narrate, import, and export almost anything to and from almost anywhere. Create slides, draw in any color, add shapes, add text, and use a laser pointer. Rotate, move, scale, copy, paste, clone, and lock any object added to the stage. Add new or existing photos and videos. Import PDF, PPT, DOC, XLS, Keynote, Pages, Numbers, and RTF files from many apps. Export MP4 movies, PDF documents, PNG images, or XPL project files directly from your iPad.</p>	\$2.99
	<p>VisTimer by Mindfultools</p> <p>Utilizes an animated shrinking pie chart to depict elapsed time. It provides a visual reminder of time remaining. It has an optional early warning setting. The user can select the sounds and colors.</p>	Free
	<p>Socrative Teacher Clicker & Student Clicker by Socrative</p> <p>iPad / iPhone version of a Classroom Response technology (clickers). Requires all users to be on the same wireless internet connection.</p>	Free

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WORD RECOGNITION: Phonological / Phonemic Awareness		
	<p>SoundLiteracy by 3D Literacy</p> <p>Eliminates the need for blank tokens, letter tiles, and morpheme tiles. It is an instructional tool that must be guided by an instructor. It contains consonant and vowel phoneme charts, blank tiles for counting, ordering, and manipulating. The tiles are arranged by category. Elkonin boxes can be added.</p>	\$25.00
	<p>SmallTalk Phonemes by Lingraphica</p> <p>Interactive “flash cards” show the phoneme written on one side. Touch it, and a video of a real person’s mouth demonstrates how to pronounce the phoneme. This uses symbols of Speech and Language Therapists (e.g., /ch/ is shown as /tsh/), so classroom teachers may need to modify some “cards.” Disappointingly, /ng/ is pronounced /ing/.</p>	Free
	<p>HaruMirror! the Best of Mirror Application by Lounge LLC.</p> <p>Easy to use mirror to help students articulate phonemes. This is a good companion to SmallTalk Phonemes.</p>	Free
	<p>Beginning Sounds Interactive Game by Lakeshore Learning Materials</p> <p>Match words that share the same beginning sound. User selects three sounds to play. Drag and drop format.</p>	\$0.99
	<p>ABC MAGIC 3 Line Match by Preschool University</p> <p>Draw lines to match initial sounds. Two formats: pictures to pictures or letters to pictures.</p>	Free
	<p>Sound Beginnings by Preschool University</p> <p>Spelling starts with phonemic awareness (sequencing speech sounds in oral words). This app matches pictures at the beginning, middle and ends of consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words and by matching letters to sounds. By touching the letter, the user can hear the associated sound (spoken by a child’s voice); touching pictures allows the player to hear the name of the picture. Like all the apps by Preschool University, the images, voice and audio reinforcements are of the highest professional caliber.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 1 by Preschool University</p> <p>Blend and segment three-phoneme, closed syllable words.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 2 by Preschool University</p> <p>Blend and segment four- and five-phoneme, closed syllable words with initial and final consonant blends.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 3 by Preschool University</p> <p>Blend and segment six-phoneme words with two syllables. Contains a few errors. The app developer was responsive to my suggestions, though, and this should be corrected by the Fall, 2013.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 4 by Preschool University</p> <p>Blend and segment three-phoneme words with long vowel sounds.</p>	Free - \$0.99

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WORD RECOGNITION: Alphabet & Spelling-Sound Correspondences		
	<p>Handwriting Without Tears: Wet Dry Try + Live Insights by No Tears Learning</p> <p>The app allows each student in a classroom to sign in and practice their letters, while the app records their progress and errors. Via the Live Insights website, the instructor can access reports, view graphs, and analyze the data for each student individually or collectively as a class.</p>	\$4.99
	<p>Cursive Writing by Horizon Business, Inc.</p> <p>Provides option to display directional arrows. Provides tracing practice for upper- and lower-case letters.</p>	Free
	<p>Letter Quiz by Tantrum</p> <p>Four learning modes to identify and write the letters of the alphabet, match upper- and lower-case, and learn the associated sound (not all are the most common sound, though).</p>	\$1.99
	<p>LetterSchool by Boreaal</p> <p>Provides three modes of progressively more difficult letter forming practice (with mostly correct associated sounds and key words). The scaffolding and instant feedback are brilliant!</p>	\$2.99
	<p>Letter Find by Matthew Thomas</p> <p>Letter matching activity. The “negative” feedback buzzer sound proved to be too tempting for children over 8.</p>	\$1.99
	<p>Write On Handwriting: Powerful Printing Letters & Numbers by Write-On Handwriting LLC</p> <p>Guided printing practice.</p>	\$2.99

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WORD RECOGNITION: Reading (Decoding) with Spelling-Sound Correspondences		
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 1 by Preschool University</p> <p>Read three-phoneme, closed syllable words. Touch the blank picture box to reveal the professional photo of the word to check your answer.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 2 by Preschool University</p> <p>Read four- and five-phoneme, closed syllable words with initial and final consonant blends. Touch the blank picture box to reveal the professional photo of the word to check your answer.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 3 by Preschool University</p> <p>Read six-phoneme words with two syllables. Contains a few errors. Touch the blank picture box to reveal the professional photo of the word to check your answer. The app developer was responsive to my suggestions, though, and this should be corrected by the Fall, 2013.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC Reading Magic 4 by Preschool University</p> <p>Read three-phoneme words with long vowel sounds. When the user touches the vowel, the final silent e visually joins with the vowel as the long sound is spoken. Touch the blank picture box to reveal the professional photo of the word to check your answer.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>Sentence Reading Magic by Preschool University</p> <p>This app bridges the gap between reading CVC words and reading decodable text in either print or cursive! This app has three modes. The first mode is sentence building where children can move the words into their correct sentence position. The second mode is the reading mode where children can read the words of the phrase or sentence and then check their work by touching the hidden picture. The third mode challenges the user to match spoken and written high frequency words. The picture is hidden so that the child will read the words first and then only look at the picture to check their work.</p>	Free
	<p>Bob Books - Reading Magic 1 and 2 by Learning Touch</p> <p>Decodable book that is identical to the popular beginning reading book series. These interactive books put decodable words into a story to read (or be read to). The user also spells target words by dragging and dropping letters to form a spoken word from the story. Each level contains four levels of difficulty.</p>	\$1.99 to \$3.99 per level
	<p>Starfall Learn to Read by Starfall Education</p> <p>This app is identical to the popular beginning reader web site.</p>	Free

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WORD RECOGNITION: Spelling (Encoding) with Spelling-Sound Correspondences		
	<p>SoundLiteracy by 3D Literacy Eliminates the need for blank tokens, letter tiles, and morpheme tiles. It is an instructional tool that must be guided by an instructor. The tiles are arranged by category. Instructional videos guide the user.</p>	\$25.00
	<p>Sound Beginnings by Preschool University This app matches pictures and letters at the beginning, middle and ends of consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words.</p>	Free
	<p>ABC SPELLING MAGIC by Preschool University CVC words. The Word Building game includes only the three letters needed; the Moveable Alphabet includes all letters. Touch the letters and pictures for audio. Drag and drop format. Positive feed-back is a short snippet of classical music!</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC SPELLING MAGIC 2 by Preschool University Following the same format as ABC Spelling Magic, this app focuses on beginning and ending consonant blends and double letter spellings (e.g., ff, ll, ss). Both letters appeared simultaneously in words with final doubled letters.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC SPELLING MAGIC 3 by Preschool University Two syllable words with closed and open syllables.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>ABC SPELLING MAGIC 4 by Preschool University Magic e syllables. In the Short/Long Vowel game, the CVC picture and word appear first (e.g., cap). When the player drags the final silent e into place, the picture changes (cape) and the corresponding word is spoken.</p>	Free - \$0.99
	<p>abc PocketPhonics: by Apps in My Pocket Ltd This app combines handwriting practice and spelling individual letters as well as letter combinations, or digraphs (e.g., th, ea). This app reinforces spellings by using the target spelling-sound correspondence to spell spoken words. This app could be improved with more inspiring feedback and rewards, but educationally, it is very sound.</p>	\$3.99
	<p>Spel It Rite Pro by Todor Dimitrov Note: This is listed under iPhone apps, but can be played on an iPad. This is for mature spellers. The objective is to select the correctly spelled word from two choices (e.g., epicurean, eppicurian). The word is presented orally (requires an internet connection). Instant feedback quickly corrects errors. One can review the spelling, pronunciation, definition and synonyms.</p>	\$0.99
	<p>A+ Spelling Test by Innovative Mobile Apps The parent, teacher, or older student must type and record spelling lists, which takes just a minute from prepared lists. Several activities plus a test tracks progress; reports can be emailed.</p>	Free
	<p>SpellingCity by SpellingCity Although the provided word lists are not particularly useful for increasing spelling achievement, one can easily create customized lists to suit any purpose. This is particularly useful for students learning to spell advanced words. On a PC, the adult creates an account at www.vocabularyspellingcity.com. Then one can easily create a new list with a specific focus. After the words are entered, one selects definitions and sentences or creates original text. Once done, users can play a game on the iPad or computer. Appealing bonuses are the alphabetizing the lists and handwriting features! One can create a PDF document of the word list in manuscript, D'Nealian, Cursive, or American Sign Language, with a choice of sizes.</p>	Free

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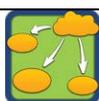
WORD RECOGNITION: High Frequency (Sight) Words		
	<p>Fry Words by Innovative Mobile Apps This “flashcard” app has two modes – learn and practice. In the “learn” mode, the user can choose to have the words pronounced or not. In the practice mode, the user has the option of selecting the pronounced word from a presented list of 2 to 5 words.</p>	Free
	<p>Ultimate Sight Words - Student & Teacher Edition by Money Matters Ltd. Includes the first 1000 Instant words by Dr. Edward Fry. Provides single and unlimited classroom list of students. Can create individual student accounts with name and optional picture. Track and email progress on bar graph. Shows missed words to practice. Can enter parent’s email address automatically so emailing is easy. Speed drill game that records the number of words read correctly in 60 seconds. However, the speed drill includes music, which can be distracting. It does have an English accent which affects R-controlled syllables.</p>	\$1.99 - \$4.00
	<p>English Words 1-300: Everyone Learns by Teacher Created Materials This app offers seven interactive games and four learning activities designed to read and spell 300 of the most common high frequency words. One can also purchase sets of 100 words for half the price.</p>	\$8.99
	<p>Sentence Reading Magic by Preschool University One option in this app challenges the user to match spoken and written high frequency words in either cursive or manuscript.</p>	Free

FLUENCY and PROSODY		
	<p>Fry Words by Innovative Mobile Apps In the practice mode, the user can set the display time from 0.7 seconds per words, spoken or not.</p>	Free
	<p>Spel It Rite Pro by Todor Dimitrov Note: This is an iPhone app. The objective is to select the correctly spelled word from an oral prompt (requires an internet connection). Missed words can be reviewed; tap to see the definition and synonym.</p>	\$0.99
	<p>Poems By Heart from Penguin Classics by Penguin Group USA This app provides a structured, drag-and-drop format to memorize classic poems from master wordsmiths including Shakespeare, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson, and more. The free trial version comes with 2 poems.</p>	Free trial version with 2 poems
	<p>Rainbow Sentences by Mobile Education Store The who, what, where, and why parts of sentences are color coded to help students recognize and understand how combinations of these parts create basic sentence structure. The user can read and record his / her voice to practice grouping words by logical phrases. The recording (and associated image) can be emailed to parents or teachers.</p>	\$7.99

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LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION: Vocabulary and Morphology		
	<p>SoundLiteracy by 3D Literacy</p> <p>It contains tiles of prefixes, suffixes, Latin Roots and Greek Combining forms. It is an instructional tool that must be guided by an instructor. The tiles are arranged by category. Instructional videos guide the user.</p>	\$25.00
	<p>Word Wit by Ballpoint Inc.</p> <p>For both iPhone and iPad, this app presents a word and its “evil twin,” (e.g., averse and adverse), the definitions, a quote, a “Master It” game for the user to select the correct word for the presented sentence, and a quiz. Excellent for advanced word learning skills.</p>	\$0.99
	<p>Vocab Rootology HD – Greek and Latin Roots and Etymology by PreplInteractive</p> <p>This app has a flash card format for instruction, plus interactive games. It offers “grades” for work done, and doesn’t limit itself to “positive” grades. If you do poorly, you might get a D-! With over 5,000 combined Flash Cards and Multiple Choice Questions designed by Harvard, INSEAD, and University of Chicago Graduates, Vocab Rootology is the most comprehensive Vocabulary Etymology App on the market.</p>	\$2.99
	<p>4 Pics 1 Word by LOTUM GmbH</p> <p>Guess the word that all four photos on your screen have in common. Hints and answers are (fortunately) at: http://4pics1word-answers.com</p>	Free
	<p>Find The Synonym by FreshLogo</p> <p>Combine the provided letters to find the synonym / antonym before time runs out.</p>	Free

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION: Language Structures & Verbal Reasoning		
	<p>Categories Learning Center by Smarty Ears</p> <p>Categories Learning Center can be used to help individuals sort items that belong to a certain category. There are several levels of play: Level 1 sorts dissimilar objects and Level 2 sorts similar objects. Where does it go - placing an object in the correct category (of 3), Category Naming - providing the correct category name for a group of objects without prompts, Category Selection - identifying which category name (of 4) a group of objects belongs. A Progress Monitoring feature showing treatment effectiveness with a report is presented at the end of each session which may be emailed, printed, or stored for later use.</p>	\$9.99
	<p>Rainbow Sentences by Mobile Education Store</p> <p>Rainbow Sentences is designed to help students improve their ability to construct grammatically correct sentences by using color coded visual cues. The who, what, where, and why parts of sentences are color coded to help students recognize and understand how combinations of these parts create basic sentence structure.</p>	\$7.99
	<p>Inspiration Maps by Inspiration Software</p> <p>Students build their knowledge by creating diagrams, maps and organizers that help them brainstorm, plan, organize and build thinking skills. Tap to transform visual work into outlines that export for writing. Diagrams transform to outlines with a tap</p>	\$9.99
	<p>Phrase Wit by Ballpoint Inc.</p> <p>Challenges the user to select the correct form of common figurative phrases (e.g., bated/baited breath). By providing explanations of the origins, one discovers how they are spelled, and why. Included are descriptions, origins, quotes from literature with the phrase used in the correct sense, and provides repetition through games</p>	\$0.99

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LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION: Literacy Knowledge (Early Childhood)		
	<p>The Monster at the End of This Book...starring Grover! by Sesame Street</p>	\$4.99
	<p>The Cat in the Hat - Dr. Seuss by Oceanhouse Media The Cat in the Hat Comes Back Free lite version. Picture / word associations. Words Zoom up and are spoken when pictures are touched.</p>	\$3.99
	<p>Blue Hat, Green Hat - Boynton by Loud Crow Interactive Inc. Touch the animals to prompt them to move and respond. Touch "OOPS" to cause a different surprise on each page. Tilt your device to watch things slide and cascade. Dress the turkey with colorful pop-in/pop-out clothes.</p>	\$3.99
	<p>PopOut! The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Loud Crow Interactive Inc. Relive this age-old classic tale of a mischievous rabbit's romp through a grumpy farmer's field as pull-tabs, spin-wheels, and spring-mounted elements bring each of Beatrix Potter's wonderful original illustrations to life. A beautiful classical piano soundtrack accompanies a charming vocal performance mixed with the soothing sounds of birds, bonfires, and wind rustling through the fields. Explore every scene and discover the many delightful life-like interactions at your fingertips."Read to Me" with word highlighting or read it yourself and hear individual words spoken with the tap of a finger</p>	\$4.99
	<p>Nursery Rhymes with StoryTime by ustwo™ Play with Humpty Dumpty, Jack & Jill, Three Blind Mice and other classic nursery rhyme characters. The illustrations are outstanding and complement the text.</p>	\$0.99

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION: Literacy Knowledge (Teens and Adults)		
	<p>Shakespeare In Bits by Mindconnex Learning Ltd. Available in a free trial version. This is a multimedia approach to learning Shakespeare through re-enactments with professional audio and unabridged text. Each title includes professional animation and soundtrack. The text, presented side-by-side with animated action, has portions highlighted as they are spoken. Also includes study notes and integrated analyses. A single purchase can be used on multiple IOS devices. Available for in-app purchase: Romeo & Juliet, Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Hamlet, Julius Caesar.</p>	\$14.99
	<p>Poems By Heart from Penguin Classics by Penguin Group USA This app provides a structured, drag-and-drop format to memorize classic poems from master wordsmiths including Shakespeare, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson, and more. The free trial version comes with 2 poems.</p>	\$0.99 / bundle

iPad / iPhone App Evaluation for Literacy Instruction

Elaine Cheesman, Ph.D.

Title of App, Developer (price): _____

Domain and Element(s) – Check all that apply.

Word Recognition

__Phonological Awareness, __Alphabet, __Decoding/Encoding, __Sight Recognition, __Automaticity / Fluency

Language Comprehension¹

__Background Knowledge, __Vocabulary, __Morphology, __Language Structures, __Verbal Reasoning, __Literacy Knowledge

Evaluation: 1- poor 2-good (with a few errors) 3-outstanding

1 2 3 **Research-Based & Accurate.** (supports one or more research-based content elements above; error-free)

Notes: _____

1 2 3 **Images & Sound.** (enhances the purpose and non-distracting)

Notes: _____

1 2 3 **Feedback.** (timely, both positive and corrective, non-distracting)

Notes: _____

1 2 3 **User-Friendly.** (engaging, can move easily between tasks, accessible instructions)

Notes: _____

1 2 3 **Versatile.** (has depth & breadth, scaffolds to build skills, can be customized, adjustable settings)

Notes: _____

Conclusions

Would you recommend this app to others? __Yes __No __Perhaps

Qualifiers / Comments: _____

¹ Language Comprehension includes: Background knowledge (related facts, schemas), Vocabulary (inter-related words), Morphology (prefix, Latin root, suffix, Greek combining forms), Language Structures (parts of speech, syntax, semantics, cohesive devices), Verbal Reasoning (inference, metaphor, organization), Literacy Knowledge (print concepts, genre).