



# TEACHING READING: PHONICS INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

Lada Kratky

**Reach**  
HIGHER

 **NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC**  
LEARNING

BRINGING THE WORLD TO THE CLASSROOM  
AND THE CLASSROOM TO LIFE

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During her 18 years of teaching in K–2 classrooms, as well as teaching Descubriendo la lectura and Reading Recovery, Lada Kratky has fostered a love of reading in hundreds of English-speaking and Spanish-speaking children. She is the author of numerous children's books and classroom resources and has authored both English and Spanish early literacy programs. She has been a featured speaker at national, regional, and local educational conferences, as well as institutes and training workshops across the country, presenting strategies and techniques for effective early literacy instruction.

Ms. Kratky's monographs include: [Reach into Beginning Reading](#), [Make Every Minute Count!](#), [Early Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners](#), and [Patterned Text](#).





# Think of your young students.

## In the chat box

- What makes a **good reader**?
- What **skills** do you expect your **young readers to demonstrate**?



# What is reading?

- Reading is getting to the **message in the text**.
- As readers read, they have to pay attention to several things: **letters, vocabulary, illustrations, language, message**.
- Readers learn to read by reading, **a skill that becomes stronger with practice**.



**When thinking about teaching reading,  
we often focus on phonics**



# What is phonics?

## POLL

- **Concepts of print**
- **Phonological Awareness**
- **Letter knowledge**
- **Blending and decoding**



# What are the concepts of print?

- Recognize that **print carries meaning.**
- Recognize that **print represents spoken sounds.**
- Recognize **cover and title page.**
- Determine **where a story starts.**
- Recognize **word boundaries.**
- Identify **capital and lower case letters.**
- One to one **correspondence.**



# Using poetry to teach concepts of print

## I Use a Pencil

I use a **brown pencil**.

I use it to **write**.

I use a **brown pencil**.

I use it to **write**.

I write my **numbers** and

I write my **name**.

I use a **brown pencil**.

I use it to **write**.

**Developing Concepts of print**

Introduce the **song or chant**. Get kids **engaged**.

Say:

- Point to the **title**.
- Where do I start to **read**?
- Which **way** do I go? And now?
- Point to a **capital letter/ to a period**.
- Let's count the **words in this sentence**. [1=1]
- Point to the **first word** in this sentence.
- Point to the **last word** in this sentence.
- You know **I**. Point to **I**.
- Say '**name**.' What sound do you hear at the beginning of '**name**'? Find '**name**.'



# Using poetry to teach phonemic awareness

- Young learners have **little awareness of the sounds** they articulate when speaking.
- Rhyme and rhythm in poems and chants as well as music **engage** the young learners and make them aware of sounds in words.
- Further phonological awareness activities **develop sound awareness** tasks like identifying the initial, medial, and final sounds.

# Fuzzy Wuzzy

“

Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear.

Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair.

So, Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy, was he? ”

---

# Learning with chants and songs

- Chants and songs **engage** students.
- They **encourage** students to join in.
- By doing so, they **practice saying** new words.
- They **learn** new concepts.



## Retell a Story

Listen and chant.

# The Little Duckling

Chant 

**First**, the little duckling  
Hatches in a nest.  
Mother Duck says  
He's not like the rest.



**Next**, the bigger ducklings  
Don't want to play.  
The little duckling cries.  
**Then**, he runs away.



Finally, he's happy,  
Swimming in the pond.  
For now the little duckling  
Has grown into a swan.

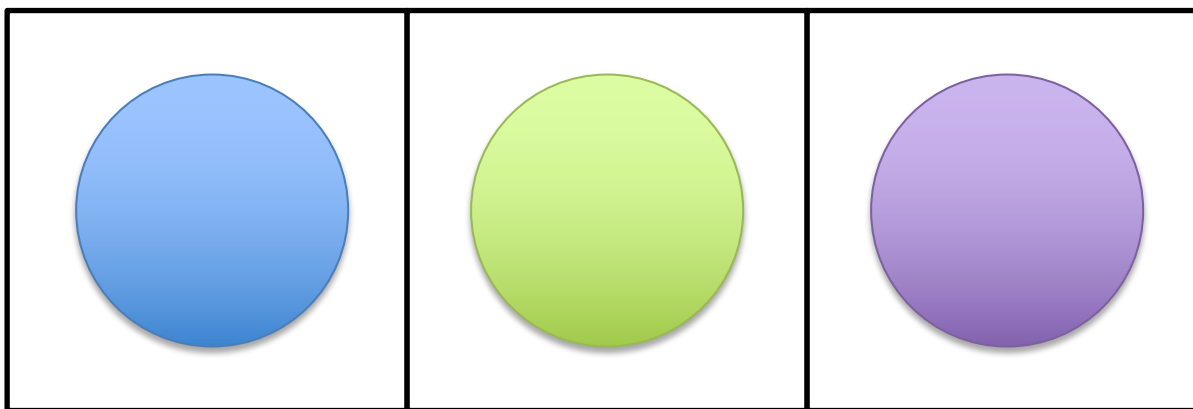


# Phonemic Awareness

- Definition
  - **The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words**
- Children who have phonemic awareness skills are likely to **have an easier time learning to read and spell** than children who have few or none of these skills

# Phonological Awareness Activities

- Children learn to **count words in a sentence** using their fingers.
- Children clap to **count syllables** in words.
- Children learn to **say a word slowly** using sound boxes, starting with words made of continuous sounds.





# Counters

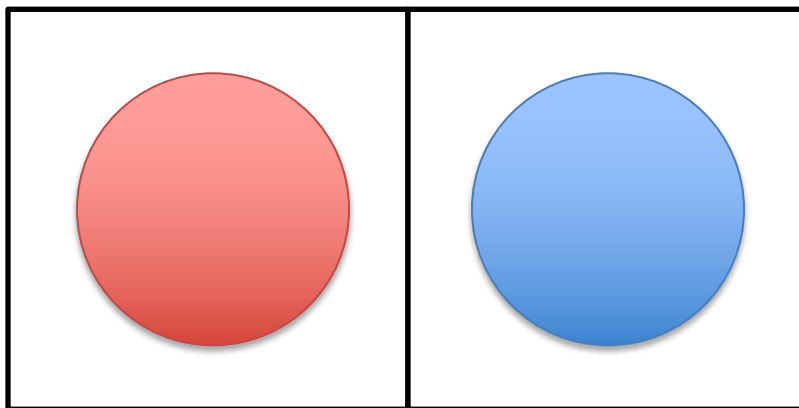
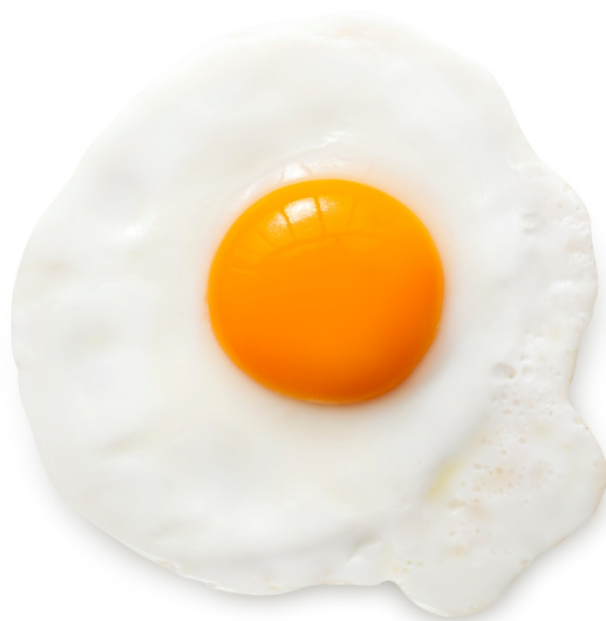


# **Hearing Sounds in Words Using Sound Boxes**

- Use words with **3-4 sounds**.
- Use words with **continuous initial sounds**.
- Use words you can **illustrate**.
- While saying the word slowly, **push a chip into each corresponding box**.
- Ask: ***What is the first sound you hear in 'sun'?***

[while pointing to the first box]

- *What **sound** do you hear next?*
- *What is the **last sound** you hear in 'sun'?*

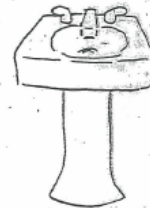
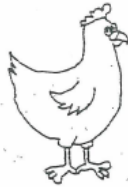
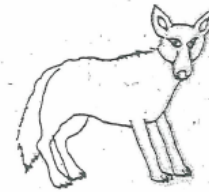
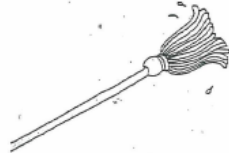
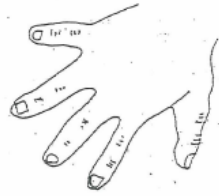
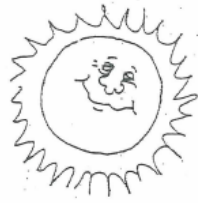




# Words to Use in Sound Boxes

- Initial continuous sounds: **a, e, i, o, u, f, h, j, l, m, n, r, s, v, w, y, z**
- Can be illustrated: **sun, moon, foot, hand, sock, leg, nose, fish, mop, mask, six, fox, hen, sheep, seal, sink, leaf, man, nest, hay, nut**

Sounds -



# Progress in Hearing Sounds in Words

- At first, the child will need boxes, a picture and chips.
- Once the task is learned, the activity becomes just oral.
- At the end, the analysis becomes silent.

# Key Components of Foundational Skills

- **Phonological Awareness**
- **Phonics**
- **Vocabulary**
- **Fluency**
- **Comprehension**

Alphabet knowledge, **specifically letter naming**, has historically been **among the reading readiness skills** used for the prediction of **reading achievement**

- Snow et al., 1998

# Using the ABC Chart

- **Recite** the letters while pointing to each one.
- After **saying** the name of a letter, **point** to the object that starts with that letter and name it. [A-a apple]
- When finished, ask children to **show**:
  - Show me the R. [etc.]
  - Show me the letter you hear at the beginning of Sam. [etc.]
  - Show me the letter you hear at the beginning of table. [etc.]



		a A 	b B 	c C 
d D 	e E 	f F 	g G 	h H 
i I 	j J 	k K 	l L 	m M 
n N 	o O 	p P 	q Q 	r R 
s S 	t T 	u U 	v V 	w W 
x X 	y Y 	z Z 		

i e m s  
t a h v

# Making Words - Blending

Children receive a specific set of letters. **[a, m, s, t]**

- Say *am* slowly. Show me *am*. **Read it with your finger.**
- Put your finger under the last letter. Let's change that letter to make a new word. Say *at*. What do you hear at the end? Change the last letter to make *at*. **Read it with your finger.**
- Let's add a letter to make a new word. Say *sat*. Add the letter you hear at the beginning of *sat*. **Read it with your finger.**

o r m s

a b c d

m e t v

a s i h

# Making Words - Blending

- at
- sat
- hat
- fat

- fan
- an
- ant

# Making Words Using HFWs

- **the** = them then they
- **my** = by try fly sky
- **see** = tree free three
- **me** = we be he
- **like** = bike hike Mike
- **look** = book took cook hook
- **and** = hand band land sand
- **go** = so no
- **to** = do
- **is** = his this



# Learning High Frequency Words

1. **Display** the word.
2. **Say** the word.
3. **Explain** the word. Use it in a sentence.
4. Children **say** the word. They **spell** it. They **say** it again.
5. Children **use** the word in a sentence.

Have children **write it on a WOWO board**. Up high, down low, in the middle.

Check it.

Have kids **play My Pile Your Pile**.

**Display the word** in the Word Wall.

# Practice teaching high frequency words

- the
- she
- one
- are

- to
- does
- how

**Fluency = Comprehension**

What is fluency?

# How does a reader achieve fluency?

## Automaticity leads to fluency

- A reader learns to read by reading.
- The more children read, the better they get at it.
- Their letter recognition becomes automatic.
- Their high frequency word recognition becomes automatic.
- They become familiar with chunks.
- Their vocabulary expands.
- They become fluent readers who read to get at the message of the text.

# Learning Vocabulary

## Science Vocabulary

### Key Words



### Talk Together

Look at this living plant. Talk about its parts.  
Use the diagram to make up a story. Retell the story to a friend.

## Read a Folk Tale

### What happens in the folk tale?

A folk tale has a **plot**. A plot is what happens in a story.



A seed sleeps.

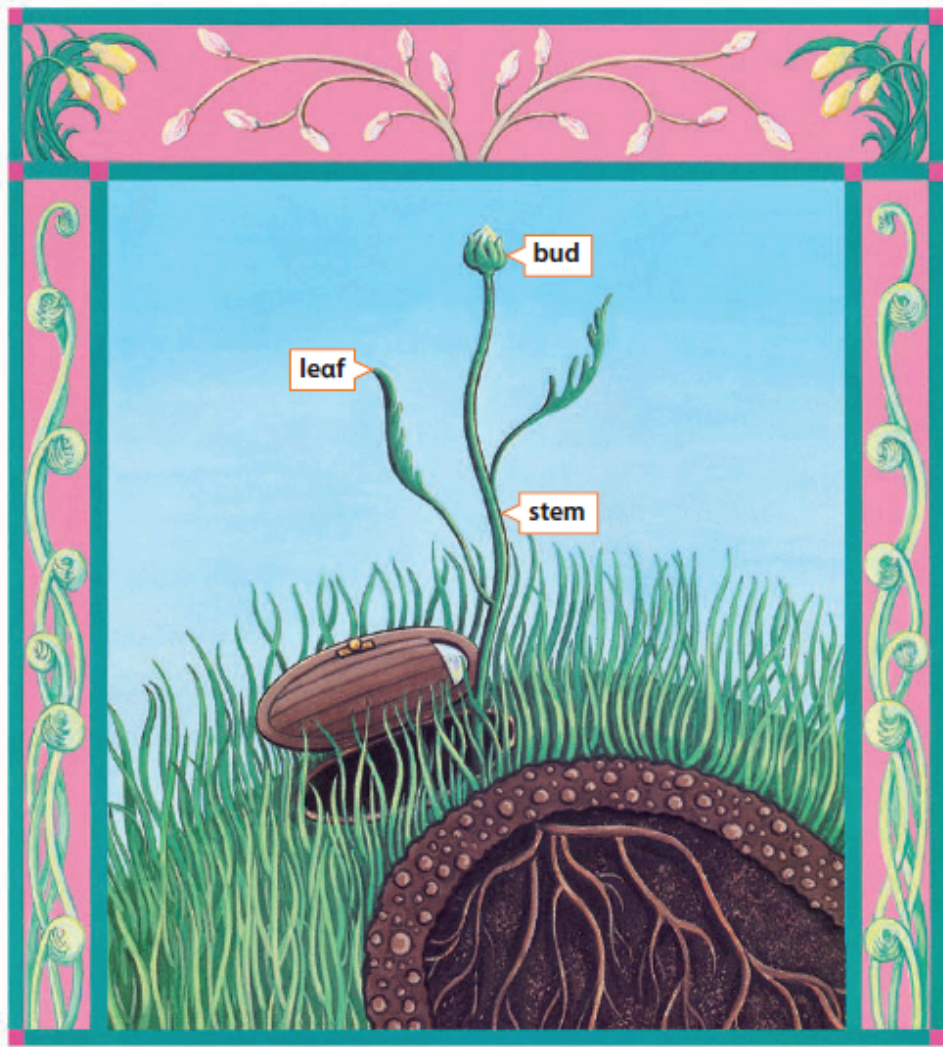


The seed becomes  
a flower.

### Reading Strategy

**Monitor** your reading. What happens to the seed?





The door opens. A **leaf** grows. Then a little **bud** grows.



One **petal** opens. Then many more open!



# Writing

Whatever you do in **writing supports reading and vice versa.**

**Talk is essential** to writing.

# Writing

- **Shared writing** – teacher demonstrates a think aloud approach.
- **Independent writing** – the student explores the writing process, writing independently in response to a reading or class discussion.
- **Power writing** – Children write as much as they can as well as they can in one minute. Builds writing stamina.
- **Interactive writing** – Children, together, write a meaningful message. They practice counting words in a sentence, initial cap., final period, hearing sounds in words, phonics.

# Power Writing

- **Power Writing** – Builds stamina and automaticity in students' writing. They draw pictures or write words, then sentences and ideas, in timed segments.
  - Write all the words you can in one minute.
  - Look at the picture. Write all you can about it.

**Interactive Writing** – a small group activity;  
students have their own erasable tablet;  
teacher is able to watch over each student.

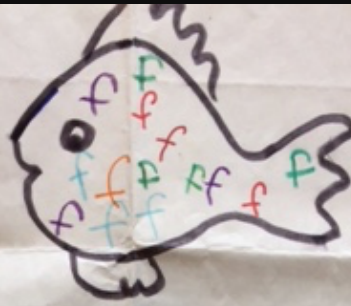
- After a conversation, **children decide on a meaningful message.**
- Children **count the words in the sentence** and **identify the first word.**
- Children **write the initial sound or the whole word**, depending on their level.
- **Writing continues**, either sound by sound or word by word, leaving spaces between words, rereading written text to say the next word.

# Interactive Writing

Allows students to practice:

- **Concepts of print**
- **Directionality, initial capital letter, final period**
- **Space between words**
- **Letter sound correspondence**
- **Arriving at a meaningful message**
- **Writing and rereading that message**

**The Importance of Writing** – Writing makes one think and clarify one's thoughts and opinions.



I like to

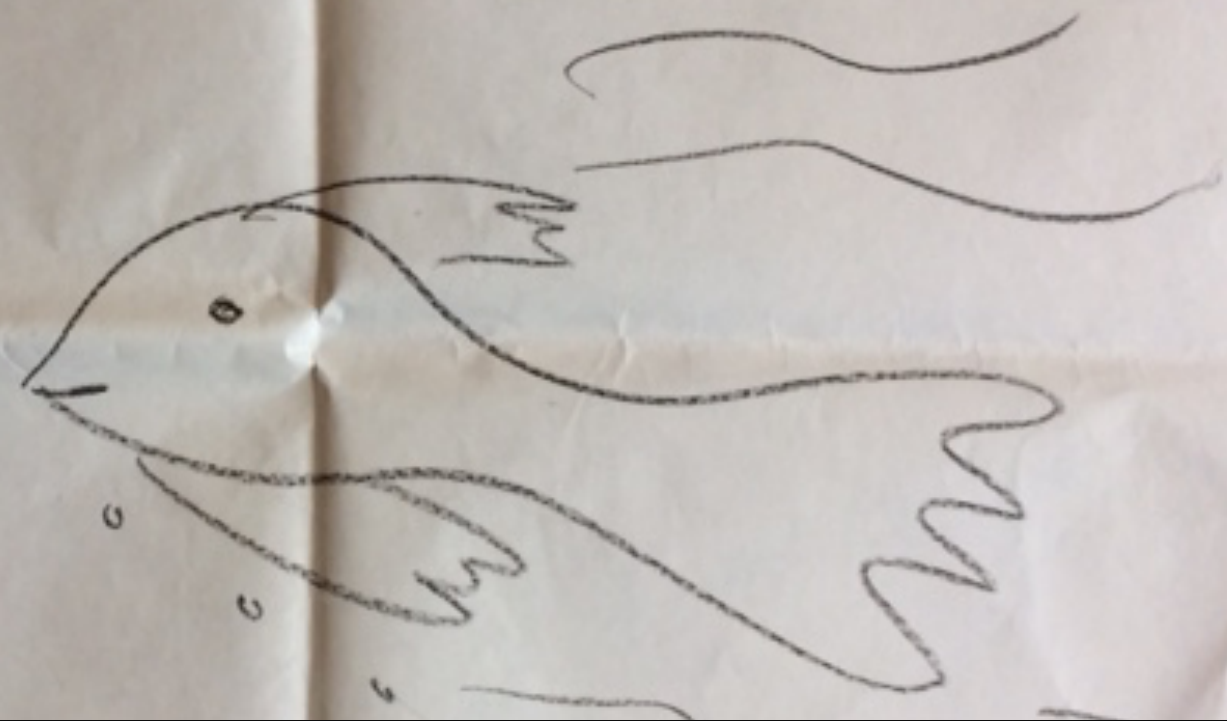
eat fish.

Joshua  
Rebecca  
Robby  
Brittany  
Quinn

f i l l n t  
i k t t t i



my fish  
fast. is



9-5-00

I like to hug  
my teacher.

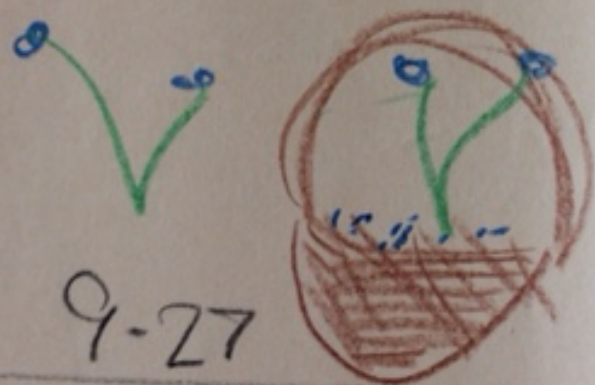


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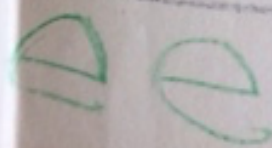
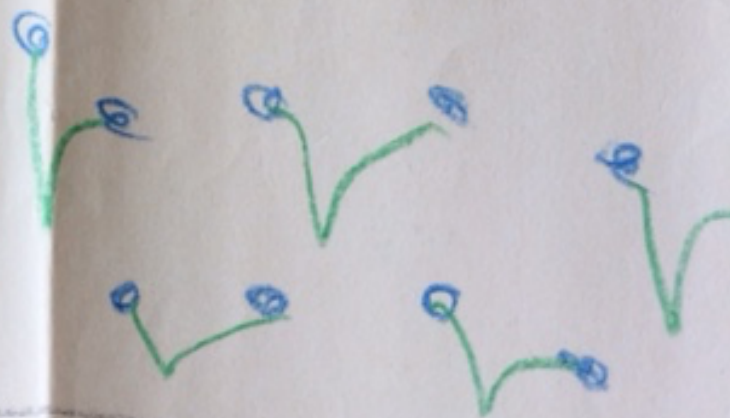
O/ Gris Jess  
E/ Om Joe

I like picking  
berries for my  
mom.

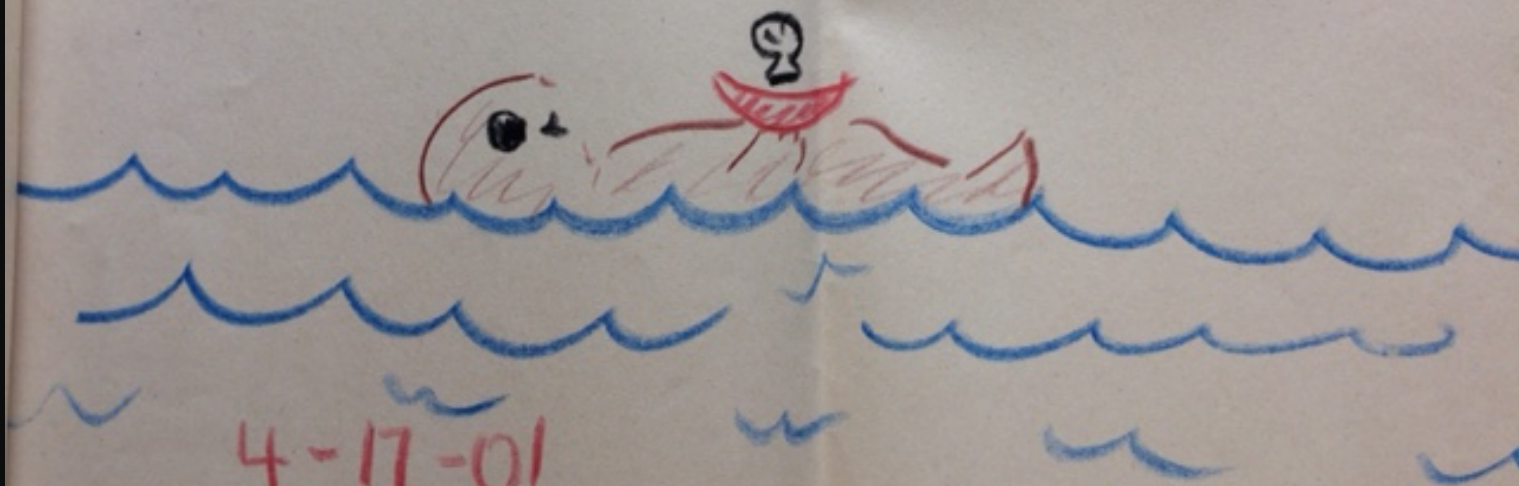


9-27

El Cam Jac  
Jim Jess Ch



The little Otter likes to  
eat on his back.



4-17-01

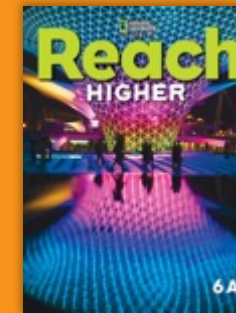
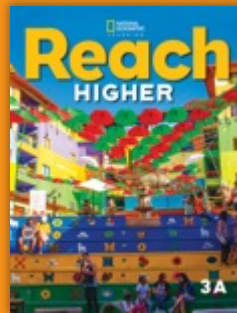
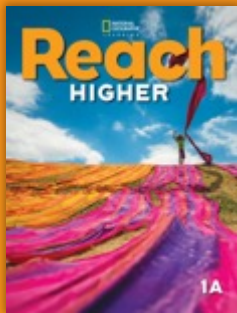
Jessica



Boost Academic Talk to Boost English Language Gains

# Reach HIGHER

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# THANK YOU!

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