

Zaner-Bloser

The Superkids

Reading Program

How *Superkids* Instruction Reflects Scientifically Based Reading Research



The Science of *Superkids*

The *Superkids Reading Program* is a comprehensive English language arts curriculum crafted specifically for K–2 students and how they learn. The systematic, explicit instructional path solidifies foundational skills and builds knowledge to grow students’ confidence as readers. Students who complete *The Superkids Reading Program* are prepared for the depth of reading required in grade 3 and beyond.

Reading Research at the Core

When author Pleasant Rowland created *The Superkids Reading Program* in the late 1970s, she sought to provide her students with a research-based program that also brought joy to the classroom. After studying the literature of leading developmental psychologists, reading experts, and education theorists, Rowland developed *Superkids* and found tremendous success with the students who loved its characters and the teachers who loved its results.

Today, scientifically based reading research, sometimes referred to as the *science of reading*, supports much of what Rowland suggested about learning to read—that students benefit from instruction in decoding (word recognition) and language comprehension. Since its introduction, *Superkids* has been continually improved to follow the most up-to-date research findings.

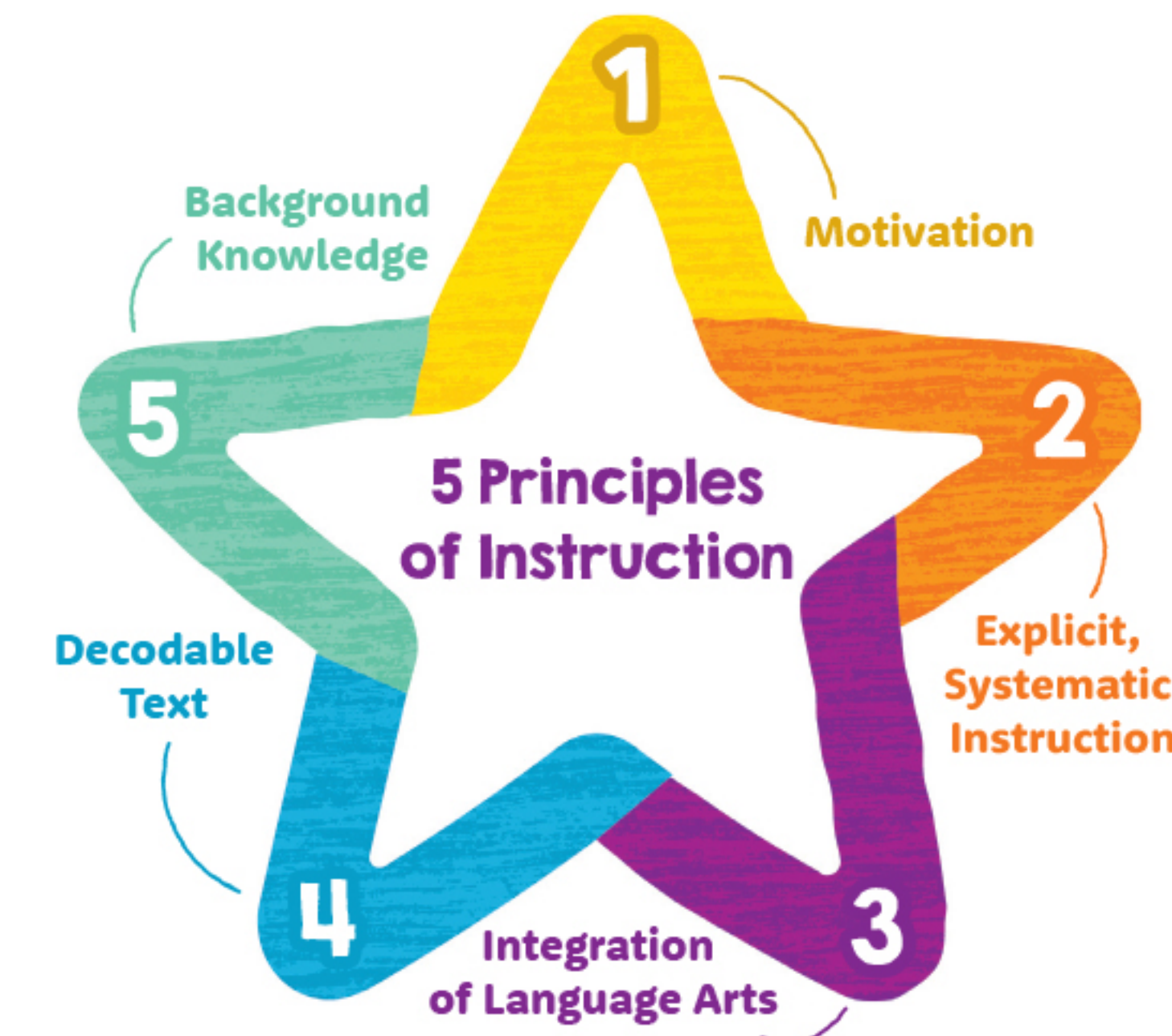


Evidence-Based Guiding Principles

Superkids follows an explicit and systematic instructional path and includes best practices for teaching reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The program’s structured literacy approach includes multisensory instruction and follows a gradual

release of responsibility model, helping students build confidence in their skills as they progress.

The program is built on five evidence-based principles for teaching literacy in grades K–2.



- 1 Motivation is a key factor in students’ success in learning to read.
- 2 Explicit and systematic instruction gives students a reliable way to learn.
- 3 Reading is most effectively taught when integrated with all the language arts.
- 4 Decodable text ensures success, enabling students to really read, not guess.
- 5 Building background knowledge is essential to making meaning from text.

Alignment to Theoretical Models

Reading researchers have developed two particularly useful theoretical models to describe how children learn to read: the **Simple View of Reading** and **Scarborough’s Reading Rope**.

Superkids has been carefully crafted to ensure that all elements of these theoretical models are explicitly

and systematically taught, fulfilling students’ needs to acquire certain skills to achieve skilled reading. See pages 4–5 to learn more about how *Superkids* aligns to the Simple View of Reading, and see pages 6–7 to learn about how the program aligns to Scarborough’s Reading Rope.



Visit zaner-bloser.com/science-of-reading-resource-hub for additional resources and to learn about scientifically based reading research.

A Simple Equation for Success

Gough and Tunmer’s model,¹ known as the Simple View of Reading, states that **reading comprehension** (the end goal of instruction) is the product of strong **word recognition** skills and strong **language comprehension**. Strong language comprehension cannot compensate for weak word recognition, and vice versa. The Simple View of Reading is represented by this equation: word recognition x language comprehension = reading comprehension.

Superkids develops the essential reading skills of the Simple View of Reading through explicit, systematic instruction. These charts provide an at-a-glance view of which subskills are taught in each grade level.



Word Recognition			
	K	1	2
Phonological Awareness			
Count syllables	•	•	•
Rhyming words	•	•	•
Phoneme articulation	•	•	•
Identify beginning, medial, and ending sounds	•	•	•
Blend and segment sounds	•	•	•
Isolate phonemes	•	•	•
Substitute phonemes	•	•	•
Manipulate phonemes	•	•	•
Distinguish long and short vowel sounds	•	•	•
Phonics and Spelling			
Sound-symbol correspondence	•	•	•
Short vowel sounds	•	•	•
Blending	•	•	•
Digraphs		•	•
r-Controlled vowels		•	•
Simple suffixes		•	•
Long vowel sounds		•	•
Vowel variants		•	•
Silent e	•	•	•
Syllable division		•	•
Silent consonants			•
Spelling	•	•	•
Spelling (encoding) rules	•	•	•
Sight Recognition			
Recognize Memory Words	•	•	•
Spell Memory Words	•	•	•
Read Memory Words in sentences	•	•	•
Automaticity and Fluency			
Accuracy	•	•	•
Expression	•	•	•
Appropriate stress	•	•	•
Appropriate rate	•	•	•
Natural phrasing, pitch, and volume	•	•	•

X

Language Comprehension			
	K	1	2
Background Knowledge			
Activate prior knowledge	•	•	•
Develop vocabulary	•	•	•
Discuss read-alouds	•	•	•
Make connections to own experiences	•	•	•
Vocabulary			
Categorize pictures and words	•	•	
Identify word meaning	•	•	•
Position words (prepositions)	•	•	
Figurative language	•	•	•
Homophones and homographs		•	•
Multiple-meaning words	•	•	•
Antonyms and synonyms	•	•	•
Context clues	•	•	•
Language Structures			
Parts of speech	•	•	•
Sentence types	•	•	•
Complete sentences	•	•	•
Word ordering in sentences		•	•
Verb tenses		•	•
Prefixes and suffixes	•	•	•
Structural analysis		•	•
Verbal Reasoning			
Listen and respond to oral presentations	•	•	•
Follow oral directions	•	•	•
Draw conclusions	•	•	•
Understand figures of speech (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia, similes, puns)	•	•	•
Make connections	•	•	•
Literacy Knowledge			
Print and book awareness	•		
Capitalization	•	•	•
Punctuation	•	•	•

=

Reading Comprehension			
	K	1	2
Comprehension Strategies			
Access prior knowledge	•	•	•
Preview text	•	•	•
Monitor comprehension	•	•	•
Identify text features	•	•	•
Answer and generate questions	•	•	•
Identify text genres	•	•	•
Visualize	•	•	•
Summarize and retell	•	•	•
Use graphic organizers	•	•	•
Use study and research skills		•	•
Take notes		•	•
Use reference resources		•	•
Comprehension Skills			
Identify main idea and supporting details	•	•	•
Identify a story’s lesson	•	•	•
Identify text structure		•	•
Make and confirm predictions	•	•	•
Characterization	•	•	•
Make inferences	•	•	•
Determine cause and effect	•	•	•
Compare and contrast	•	•	•
Recognize plot	•	•	•
Understand sequence	•	•	•
Identify story elements	•	•	•
Understand dialogue	•	•	•
Understand fact vs. opinion	•	•	•
Identify author’s purpose		•	•
Interpret information from graphs, diagrams, and charts	•	•	•

Note: In addition to the skills listed here, *Superkids* also integrates handwriting, writing, and grammar skills into instruction—for a comprehensive English language arts program. See the scope and sequence.

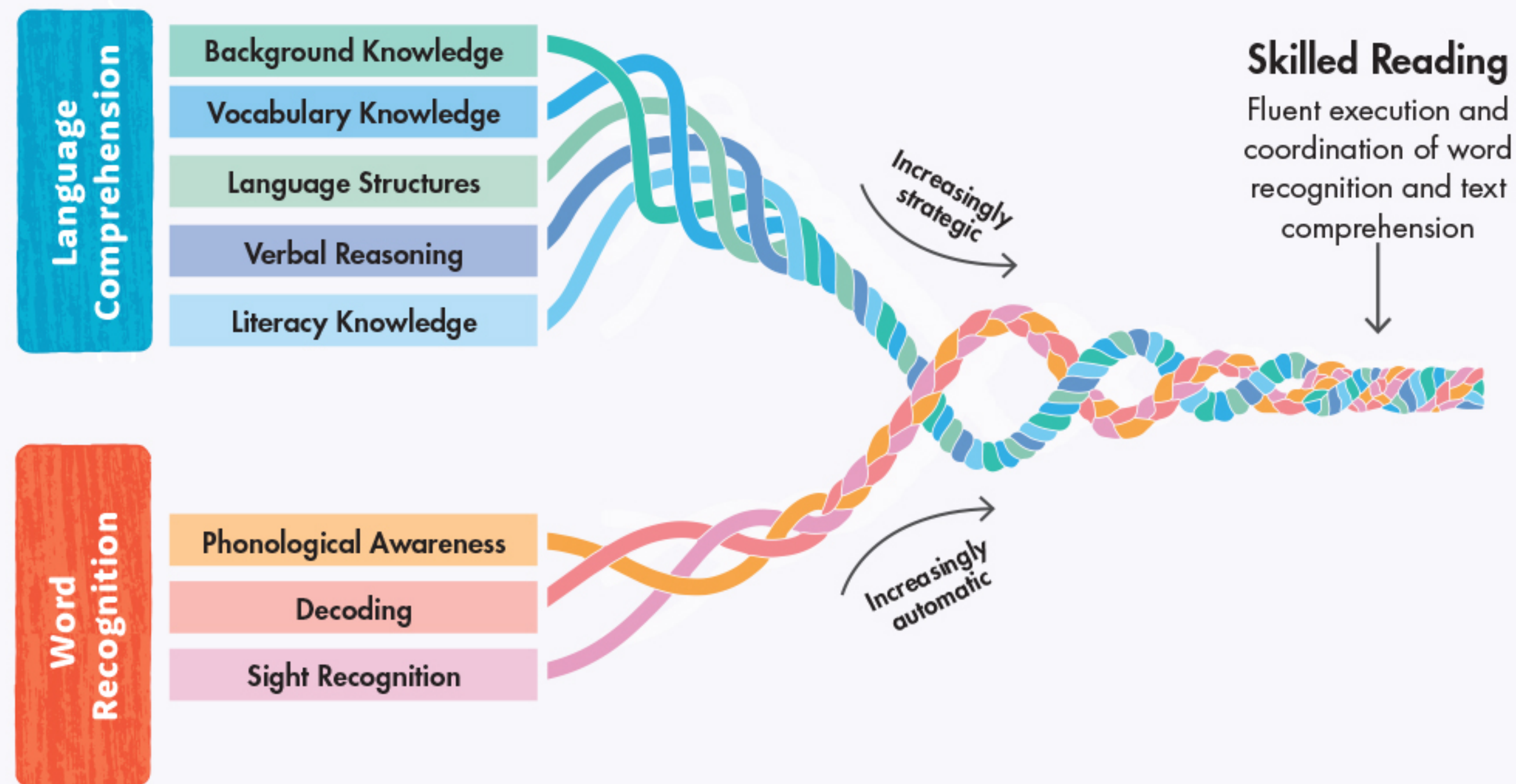
¹Gough, P., & Tunmer, W. (1986). Decoding, reading, and reading disability. *Remedial and Special Education*, 7 (1), 6–10.

Weaving Many Strands to Create Skilled Readers

Hollis Scarborough's Many Strands Woven into Skilled Reading model,² commonly known as the Reading Rope, presents the subskills of word recognition and language comprehension as strands in a rope that become more and more united as skilled reading develops.

Superkids systematically and explicitly develops each subskill on the reading rope to help students become increasingly automatic and strategic as they achieve skilled reading.

Scarborough's Reading Rope



²Scarborough, H. S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook for research in early literacy* (pp. 97–110). New York: Guilford Press.

Language Comprehension

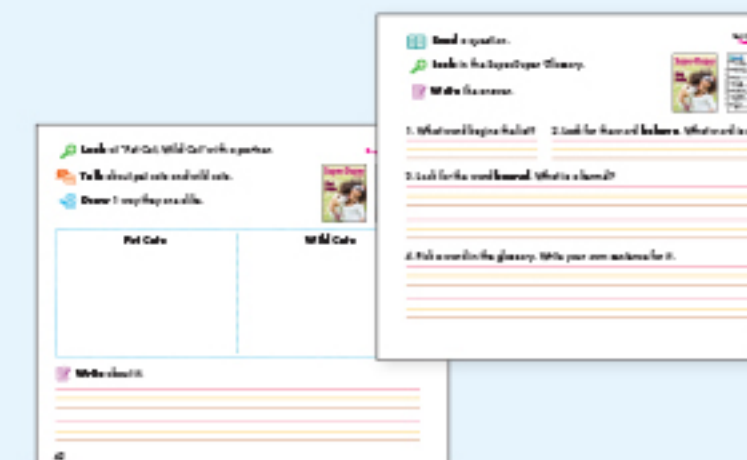
Examples of instruction within *Superkids*



Big Topic Cards

Background Knowledge

Big Topics and Essential Questions help students build robust knowledge of varied topics throughout each school year.



Grade 1 Reading Skills Book 1

Verbal Reasoning

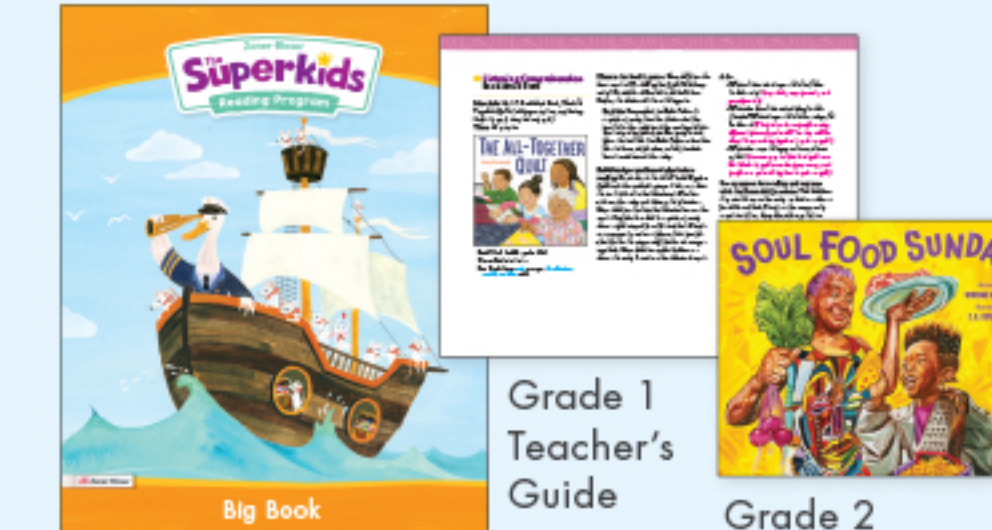
Students are asked to practice and apply what they've learned, demonstrating knowledge, vocabulary, comprehension skills, key ideas and details, craft and structure, and reader's response.



Words to Know Cards

Vocabulary Knowledge

Words to Know for each unit are sophisticated, high-utility words that help students develop a strong academic vocabulary.

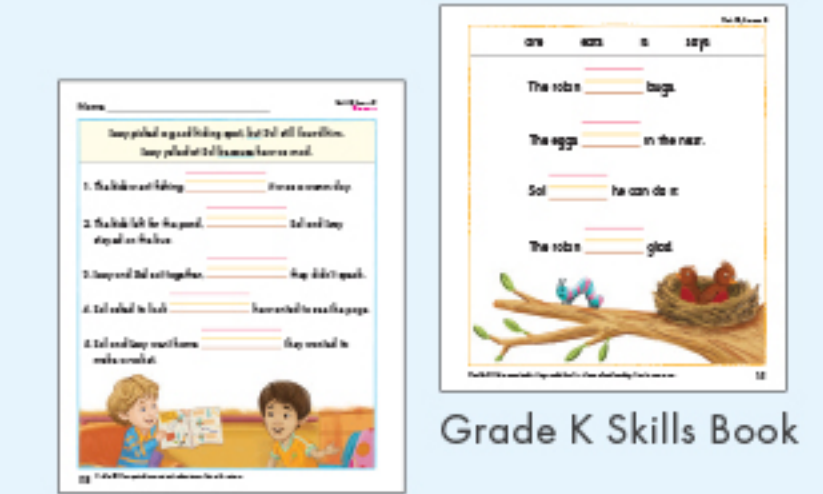


Grade K Big Book

Grade 2 Read-Aloud

Literacy Knowledge

Students are introduced to print concepts and text features and develop genre awareness and comprehension strategies.



Grade 1 Word Work Skills Book 2

Language Structures

Grammar skills are taught in the first week of each unit and reinforced in the second week.

Word Recognition

Examples of instruction within *Superkids*



Phoneme Articulation Video

Phonological Awareness

Students begin by learning the letters of the alphabet and one sound for each letter, expanding their letter-sound knowledge as they progress through the program.



Grade 1 Word Work Skills Book 1

Decoding

Students apply their phonological awareness skills to blend letter-sounds to read decodable texts, gradually decoding and encoding longer and more complex words.



Grade K Skills Book

Grade 1 Word Work Skills Book 1

Sight Recognition

Students use processes like orthographic mapping to build their automaticity, eventually recognizing words by sight with minimal effort needed for decoding.

Zaner-Bloser
The Superkids
Reading Program

Grounded in **RESEARCH**. Infused with **FUN!**



Visit zaner-bloser.com to learn more about
The Superkids Reading Program.