



**Just Right
Reader**

Just Right Reader's Response to the **Kindergarten Phonics IMRA Report 2024**

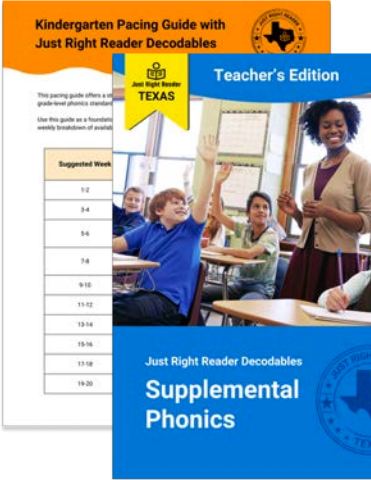
We appreciate the thorough review conducted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the committee for the Texas IMRA 2024 adoption cycle. Just Right Reader's Kindergarten Phonics Program is designed to align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). It is supported by evidence-based research, particularly in the Science of Reading. This response addresses comments and areas of concern noted in the review, clarifying any misunderstandings and providing further evidence of the robustness and efficacy of the Just Right Reader Kindergarten Phonics Program. With our research-based structure, differentiated supports, and 100% alignment to TEKS, the program is well-suited to meet the literacy needs of Texas students. We welcome further discussions to address any additional questions.

SECTION 1:

Course, Unit, and Lesson Design

(Responding to Sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)

Just Right Reader Kindergarten Phonics Program is comprehensive and intentionally designed for effective instructional delivery:

- **Course-Level Design (1.1):** While it was noted that ELPS alignment was absent, TEA’s guidance (as stated in the Quality Review workbook) clarifies that phonics-only programs are not required to provide ELPS alignment. We want to clarify that our program includes a comprehensive, research-based *Scope and Sequence* fully aligned with TEKS. The phonics progression in the *Scope and Sequence and Pacing Guide* offers teachers a clear roadmap for each week’s instruction, with options for multiple instructional calendars. Unit and lesson internalization is included in the professional development proposed for Texas.
- 
- | Suggested Week |
|----------------|
| 1.2 |
| 3.4 |
| 5.6 |
| 7.8 |
| 9.10 |
| 11.12 |
| 13.14 |
| 15.16 |
| 17.18 |
| 19.20 |
- **Unit-Level Design (1.2):** The Unit Overviews in the Teacher’s Edition provide clear summaries of skills aligned to TEKS, covering weekly objectives and pacing. This high-level roadmap is supported by detailed weekly overviews that guide teachers on instructional strategies and materials required for each lesson. Our research-based and spiraled phonics sequence ensures repeated practice and mastery of core concepts, addressing claims that our materials lack sufficient background content knowledge.
 - **Lesson-Level Design (1.3):** The claim that our lesson plans lack structured, detailed objectives is inaccurate. Every decodable book is paired with a scripted lesson plan that outlines objectives, instructional methods (including modeling, guided practice, and independent practice), and assessments to ensure mastery of phonics skills. For example, in the lesson plan for *In the Bag*, students engage in phonemic awareness activities such as segmenting and blending sounds using Elkonin Boxes, followed by guided reading of the lesson decodable, independent reading practice, a writing application, and a comprehension review.

SECTION 2:

Supports for Learners and Differentiation

(Responding to Sections 3.1, 3.3)

The JRR program is designed with explicit scaffolding and differentiation tools to ensure the success of all students, including those who require additional support.

- **Scaffolding and Differentiation (3.1):** Each lesson provides multiple opportunities for scaffolding, starting with teacher modeling in the *Phonics Review* section. Teachers introduce the phonics skill using manipulatives such as Elkonin Boxes and letter tiles to support students as they segment and blend new words. Differentiated activities, such as *Reading Workouts* support students needing additional phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, or comprehension practice. Additionally, new vocabulary is introduced during guided practice to ensure all students have the necessary background knowledge before independent reading.
- **Support for Emergent Bilingual Learners (3.3):** Contrary to the assertion that our program lacks cross-linguistic connections, we have embedded resources tailored to emergent bilingual students, including the *Emergent Bilingual Support Guide*. This guide accommodates different language proficiency levels, ensuring bilingual learners can engage with the content. Furthermore, our instructional videos, accessible via QR codes, are available in English and Spanish, providing additional scaffolding for bilingual learners and fostering family engagement.

Phonemic Awareness

(5 minutes)

- 1. Introduction**

Say: Today we are listening for words that begin with the sound /j/.
- 2. Use picture cards to show /j/ (3 that begin with /j/ and 1 that does not)**

Say: Look at these pictures. Some of them begin with the sound /j/ and one does not. I will say the name of each picture and you will repeat it. The pictures show (name pictures). Which picture does not begin with /j/?
- 3. If students do not identify the correct picture**

Say: Listen as I say the name of each picture again. Then say the name of each picture twice, emphasizing the beginning sound the second time. (e.g., jelly, /j/ jelly. Does that begin with the /j/ sound? Yes! What about jump, /j/ jump? Yes! Now let's try queen, /kw/ queen. Does that begin with /j/ ? No!)
- 4. Repeat with more pictures, if needed**

Phonics Review

(5 minutes)

- 1. Introduce the letter Jj**

Say: Now I want to show you the letter that makes the /j/ sound. (Hold up the Jj letter card.) This is the letter J. This is an uppercase J and this is a lowercase j. The uppercase J starts with a big line down, then it curves around. Sometimes an uppercase J has a little line across the top. The lowercase j also starts with a big line down, then curves around, and has a dot. J makes the sound /j/.
- 2. Practice**

Say: Say the letter J with me as I point to the letter. J, j. Now let's say its sound. /j/, /j/.

Emergent Bilingual Support Guide
Aligned to the Science of Reading and TEKS

Just Right Reader Decodables

SECTION 3:

Phonics Rule Compliance and Foundational Skills

(Responding to Sections 4.2, 4.3, 5.D.1, 5.D.2)

The Just Right Reader Phonics Program offers systematic and intentional opportunities for cumulative practice and mastery of foundational skills.

- **Phonics Rule Compliance (4.2, 4.3):** The review acknowledged strong phonics instruction but noted a lack of cumulative review and feedback. The Just Right Reader program uses spiraling to repeatedly review concepts once they have been introduced. This includes repeated practice of a phonics skill within a current book set and then use of the skill in successive book sets. *The Pacing Guide* also outlines specific weeks for cumulative review, ensuring students revisit previously taught phonics skills throughout the year. For example, weeks 33-34 are designated for a comprehensive review of the decodable texts and skills taught in sets 1-15a. Review is also addressed in the *Assessment and Progress Monitoring Guide*, which provides guidance and tools to track and measure students' mastery of grade-level phonics skills. Suggested feedback for common errors is provided in the *Prompting Guide*.
- **Phonological and Phonemic Awareness (5.D.1, 5.D.2):** The review incorrectly stated that our phonological and phonemic awareness activities lack a systematic sequence. Each lesson begins with phonemic and phonological awareness exercises that include sound isolation, segmentation, blending, and manipulation of phonemes. For instance, in the *In the Bag* lesson plan, students use Elkonin Boxes to segment the word "fin" into three sounds and blend them back together. Students then practice segmenting and blending with a new list of words and teacher guidance followed by applying the phonics skills to the lesson decodable and a writing application. The program further reinforces phonemic awareness with activities in the *Reading Workouts* for additional practice.

The image shows a lesson plan for 'Phonics Review: CVC Words with Short i' (5 minutes). It includes an introduction, a 'Set 7 In the Bag' section, and a 'Lesson Plan' table. The table has columns for 'Learning Objective' and 'Materials and Preparation'. Below the table are 'Key Skills' and 'Find all teacher resources here:' with a QR code and a URL. At the bottom, it says 'Visit JustRightReader.com for more information.'

Phonics Review: CVC Words with Short i
(5 minutes)

1. Introduction
Say: Today, we will practice reading words with short i. Remember, a CVC word has a consonant, vowel, and short sound.
Just Right Reader

2. Use Elkonin Boxes
Hold up a card with the word 'fin' written on it.
Say: This is the word 'fin'. What are the sounds in 'fin'?
Say: There are three sounds in 'fin' because it has three letters.
3. Model a word
Say: Now I will write the word 'fin' on the Elkonin boxes.
4. Continue
Say the following words for each set of Elkonin boxes.

Set 7 In the Bag
CVC Words with Short i

Learning Objective	Materials and Preparation
Students will identify and read CVC words with short i.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copy of In the Bag for each student• Elkonin boxes• Dry-erase markers• Picture of fin• Paper and pencil• Reading Observation Form• Prompting Guide

Key Skills

CVC Word: A consonant, vowel, consonant word where the vowel makes the short sound.

Find all teacher resources here:
<https://bit.ly/jrresources>
password: jrteacher

Visit [JustRightReader.com](https://www.JustRightReader.com) for more information.

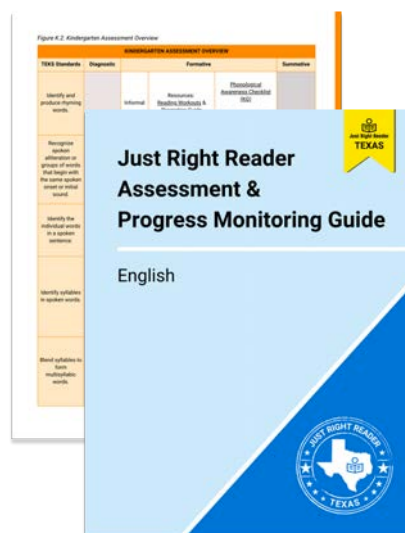
SECTION 4:

Assessment and Progress Monitoring

(Response to Sections 4.4, 4.5)

Just Right Reader’s comprehensive *Assessment and Progress Monitoring Guide* provides clear, systematic tools for measuring student progress and adjusting instruction accordingly.

- **Assessment (4.4, 4.5):** We provide multiple forms of assessments, including diagnostic, formative, and summative tools, in addition to in-the-moment informal assessment and tracking in every lessons. An *Assessment and Progress Monitoring Guide* also includes clear instructions for administering assessments, analyzing data, and using that data to guide instructional decisions. Teachers can track individual student growth using the *Phonics Skills Checklist* and the *Small-Group Reading Observation Forms*, which provide specific guidance for monitoring and accelerating learning. The results are compiled in a Monthly Progress Report to guide instructional adjustments, ensure each student reaches mastery, and identify students ready for acceleration.



SECTION 5:

Sound-Spelling Patterns

(Response to Section 5.E.1)

- **Sound-Spelling Patterns (5.E.1):** The Kindergarten Scope and Sequence is spiraled, so students will continue to be exposed to previous skills even if they are not the focus of the current lesson. Monthly review is included in the *Assessment and Progress Monitoring Guide*, and the *Pacing Guide* also suggests weeks for cumulative review. Each lesson begins with a Phonics Review section, in which the teacher models sound-spelling patterns with manipulatives, followed by guided practice for students with manipulatives. The sound-spelling patterns are reinforced through decoding in guided and independent reading, as well as through writing activities.