



## READING WORKS

# Blends

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This book is supported by the **READING WORKS** *Nuts and Bolts Teaching Manual*

The Manual provides practical, creative, new and re-energising TEACHING METHODS and IDEAS that deliver the goods.

Teachers will feel the satisfaction of seeing all their learners thrive well beyond what might have been considered possible. They will love the high-level rigour, easy-to-follow, no-gaps material provided in every book of the **READING WORKS** series.

And - learners of every ability will discover the power of success that can last a lifetime.

Win-win.

## Tips for getting the most from this book

- ✓ Go through each page using a wide variety of methods and approaches. Talk about and play with the words.
- ✓ Have your learners spell everything they write accurately rather than guess.
- ✓ Study the how and why of punctuation.
- ✓ Ask a lot of questions to activate deductive reasoning.
- ✓ Observe and understand the protocols of word order.
- ✓ Improvise duologues, monologues and dialogues to stimulate thinking and to practise putting thoughts into speech.
- ✓ Discuss meanings, exceptions, similarities.
- ✓ Select three unrelated words at random from a page. Make up a story incorporating these words. (Teacher models to demonstrate how to create stories. Oral work is best for this because writing can slow down the creative energy.)
- ✓ Use an analytical eye to study the words and their meanings of each column.
- ✓ Teach learners to enunciate clearly the sounds of every word that they say.
- ✓ Best of all – enjoy taking every learner well beyond what was thought possible.

There are three parts to this book which take the learner on a graduated process of learning.

**Stage 1** presents each blend of letters with their sound, along with an informative illustration to reinforce understanding and aid memorisation. (The pictures are repeated in the following stages for easy identification.)

**Stage 2** adds a simple sentence to show the sounds in spoken and written text to add context, further comprehension and conversation topics. These conversations are vitally important because they add a social aspect to learning.

**Stage 3** advances the reader ever onward with more complex but accessible sentences and word combinations. These demonstrate a higher-level syntactical flow of language, punctuation *in situ*, meaning and context.

READING IS ALL ABOUT KNOWING THE SOUNDS OF LANGUAGE AND MATCHING THEM TO THEIR WRITTEN SYMBOLS AND MEANINGS.

# Blends – words and pictures

*A blend is where two or three consonants are written together and keep their individual sounds when spoken.*



How to use this book. Ideas for teachers and parents:

Make sure that single-letter sounds in the *Vowels* and *Consonants* books are very secure and have an automatic response before embarking on this book. Work through each blend with good tongue placement, exaggerated mouth movements and speech clarity.

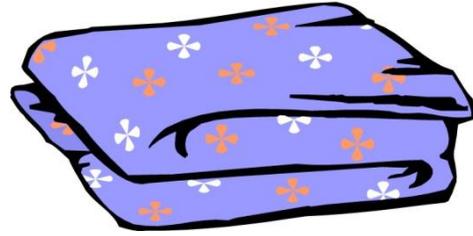
Slow and steady is better than rushing because it gives more time for your learners to hear each sound and manipulate the mouth shape with ease to enunciate changes. Punctuation mark observance and vocal expression need full attention 'in transit'.

Use this book for reading, spelling, comprehension, vocabulary, oral language, speech clarity, creative improvisations, in-depth discussions, English usage, grammar, learning language protocols, active listening, and - the often-forgotten general knowledge.

NOTE: The digraphs *sh*, *th* and *qu* are included in this book (with another letter) because they are so commonly seen together.

bl

blanket



cl

clown



br

broom



cr

crown



# Blends with simple sentences



Do some tongue lapping, mouth widening and puckering exercises as warm-ups. Make up nonsense words that have the tongue, cheeks and lips moving like a strange creature from a distant galaxy.

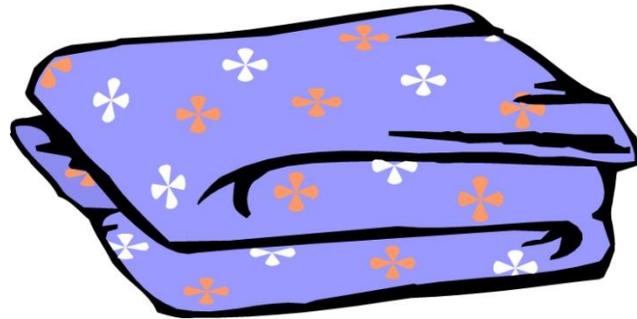
Many learners will start to work out the simple sentences without much prompting, while others will need gentle reteaching until they are ready to fly alone. Discussions about the individual sounds and how they go together to make each blend can be done with lots of individual mirror watching and face-to-face mouth copying. Discuss how sounds are formed using the muscles of the mouth and tongue. Breathing, L-R eye movement, plus loud/soft syllabic fluency each play their role in reading tuition and student learning.

Add energetic touches with mouth-exaggerated quizzes such as, 'Listen to these words. Count on your fingers how many start with *bl*. Are you ready?' *blue bling bucket blanket blow awake black cat bone blink table bland blizzard*.

The magic words for all language work are **repetition, imaginative teaching methods, involvement and enjoyment.**

bl

blanket



Blake liked his new  
blue blanket.

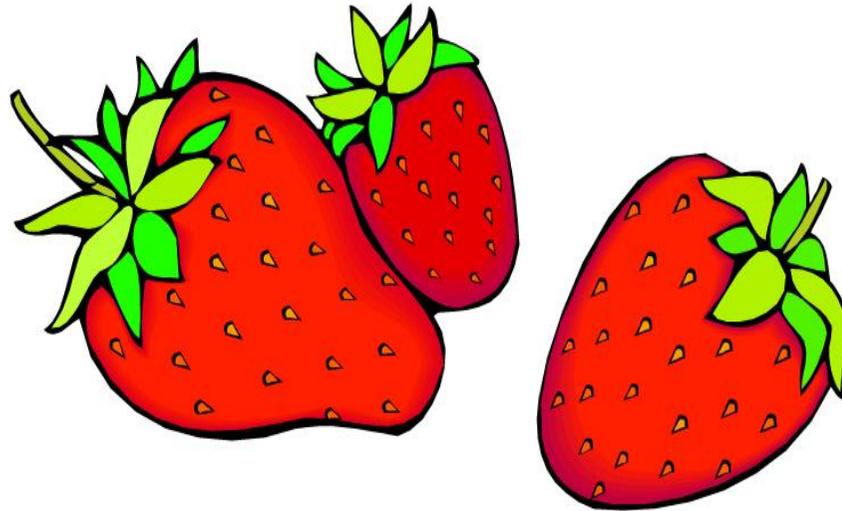
br

broom



'This is my best  
brown broom,' said  
Brenda.

## Blends with complex sentences



strawberries

Learners reaching this stage will be becoming more independent and competent readers, hence these more advanced sentences.

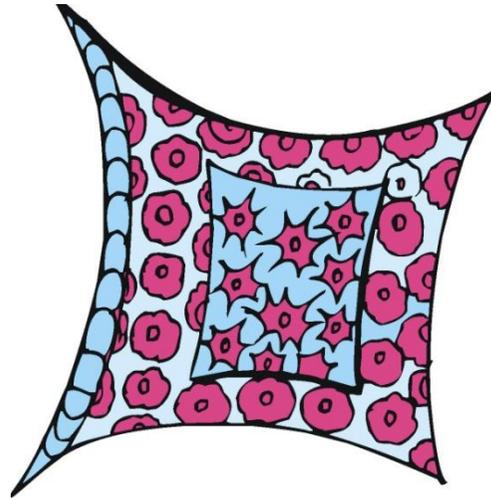
Some oral language tips: Stretch out the vowel sounds, and use plenty of air and tongue/mouth action for the consonants. Add junctures (small gaps) between words so that they don't run into each other. Be fussy about the end consonant sounds of words such as *but*, *had*, *cap*, *run* and so on.

To provide variety to keep the many repetitions lively, play all sorts of take-it-in-turn games. Some ideas: Change pace, volume and pitch. Teach how to add more subtle shades of emotion via facial expressions and vocal tone such as mirth, sorrow, irritation, impatience, excitement. Expressive devices such as these help maintain the mental vigour for both listeners and readers. Active listening is another aspect of reading that is essential. Add physical movement and alternate standing and sitting.

Sometimes go beyond the sentence provided by continuing the story. Also say and/or write new sentences to go with the pictures.

bl

blanket



Blake found this blanket on the Black and Blue table at the Tumble Bumble Jumble sale.

br

broom



'Brian! Bring me my big brown broom. I have to be home for breakfast before daybreak!' Brenda shouted to her brother.