

Are you looking for a phonics program to help your kids learn to read? I've put together some of the phonics readers that we used with my three kids. As you'll see, all three of my kids had different preferences!

I know I have a lot of new readers, and several people reached out to me recently who have preschoolers and are just starting out on this homeschool journey. I realized that my posts about teaching my kids to read were somewhat buried here in the blog. I thought I'd put together a more organized post and share the books and resources we used as the kids started sounding out words. I hope this is useful to some of you! :)

If your child is still trying to figure out the letter sounds, they might not be quite ready to use phonics readers. Instead, you might want to play lots of games with them. If that is the case, you might want to check out these posts instead.

- [Preschool at Home: Learning Letters](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Alphabet Activities](#)
- [File Folder Games \(Pre-Reading Activities\)](#)



It is better to wait until your child is ready than to push them. Every child is ready at a different age. My son was learning to read at age 3 1/2 or so... while youngest daughter was almost 5 before she was ready. Some kids aren't ready until even later! If they aren't ready, you might jump into some cool science activities or learn about space or history instead. Remember, your child is ***never behind!***

Phonics Readers:

Once your kids have the patience and interest, you can try having them sit with you to read. This varied for my kids. My son was three when he started using the phonics readers. My daughter, DD was four. And my youngest was four and a half or so. Some kids are much older. I spent approximately 10 minutes with them every single day. I think that was the key. In fact, I waited before I started working with DD because we were in the middle of an international move.

Each of my kids had their own pace and style of learning. For example, while my oldest learned to read extremely young, my youngest was much more interested in writing. Don't be surprised if it takes you a while to find the books, rhythm and routine that works best for your child.

My son started with the [Bob Books, Set 1: Beginning Readers](#).(affiliate link) Those worked well for him.

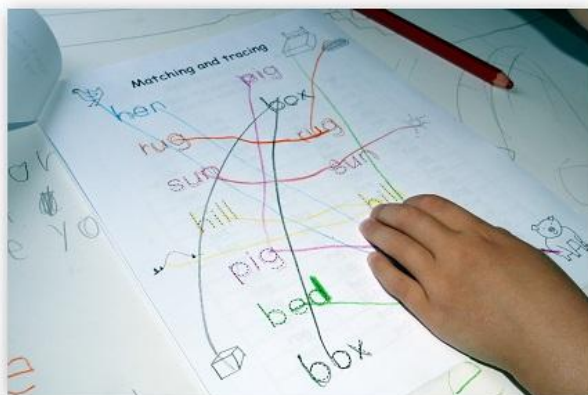


I wanted to add that when I worked with the kids, especially in the beginning, we spent a lot of time "smashing" words together. "Sss" "aaaa" "mmm" and with a big CLAP "Sam!!" I tried to make it kind of a game. We aimed for 5 to 10 minutes EVERY day, but we stopped when the kids were done.

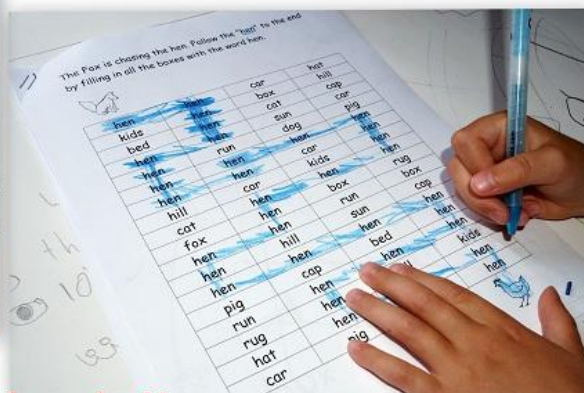
My second child, DD, also started with the *Bob Books*, but moved on to a different series (below). And I also started my youngest, ED with the *Bob Book Series*. I wound up making a number of worksheet packs to accompany the Bob Books for my youngest, who was excited about writing words, loved to color, and had amazing pencil skills from a very young age. These would *never* have worked with my son, but ED sure loved them! These packets are free here on the blog.

Here are links to the Bob Book Series. We have free packets that go with the first two sets (Beginners and Advanced Beginners)

- [Bob Books, Set 1: Beginning Readers](#) (affiliate link)
- [Bob Books Set 2-Advancing Beginners](#) (affiliate link)
- [Bob Books Set 3- Word Families](#) (affiliate link)



Bob Book Activity Pages



homeschoolden.com

Animal Antics:

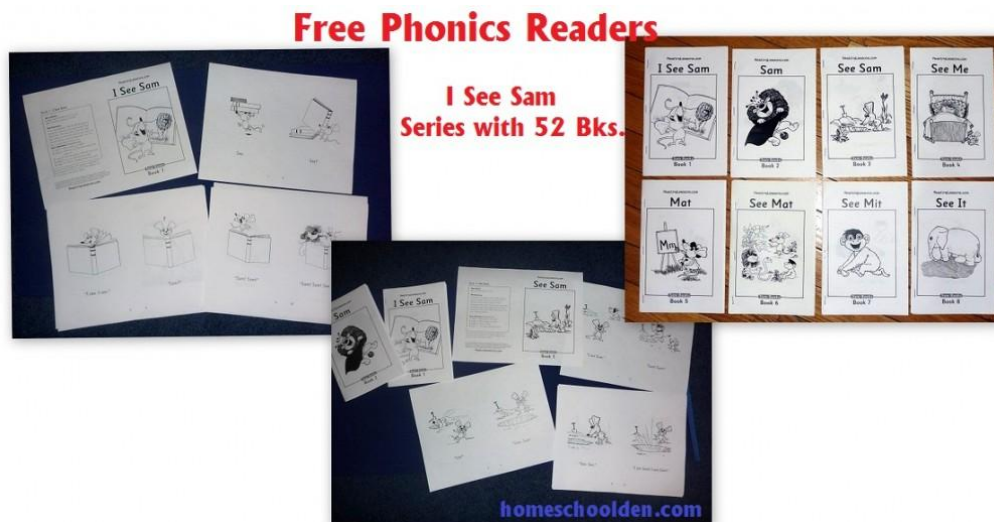
My daughter, DD, was not as interested in the *Bob Books* as she was with [Animal Antics](#). (affiliate link) My daughter *really* loved these and enjoyed the illustrations and story line better than the *Bob Books*. She worked hard to finish the entire pack (of 10 books. That those books built slowly... A cat. A fat cat. A fat cat sat. A fat cat sat on a mat. (You get the idea.) These worked really, really well for her. You can find them here: [Animal Antics Now I'm Reading! Level 1](#) (affiliate link)



DD also used the Starfall Books: [Starfall: Learn to Read](#) (affiliate link) but at the moment these appear to be out of print and are quite expensive. Their website is really wonderful, though and still free to use!! Be sure to visit [Starfall.com](#)

Sam Books:

When my youngest was ready to start reading, she wasn't particularly drawn to the *Bob Books* either. We used a free set of phonics readers called the [Sam Books](#). We usually spent about 5-10 minutes a day reading together. We actually wound up using all 52 books!



I downloaded and printed out this series free over at [Dr. Mariott's website](http://Dr.Mariott's%20website). We used all 52 of these readers with ED, my youngest. They really worked well for her because they progressed very slowly adding just a couple of words in each new book. We generally read one new book per day snuggled up together our big lounge chair! (It makes me smile remembering that!) :)

This beginning reading program was developed in 1977 and since it was federally funded, federal law requires that the program be placed in the public domain.

A couple of years ago, readingteacher.com took this series and animated them. From what I understand, the animated, interactive version of "I See Sam" is now a free service. You may want to check that out, though when I was working with my kids, I preferred having them on my lap as they worked on their reading.



What to use after the *Bob Book Series* or *Sam Book series*??

The Next Step (for us): Primary Phonics Series

After we had finished with those sets, my kids were ready for the next step. For us, the [Primary Phonics Readers by EPS](#) (*affiliate link*) were absolutely wonderful. I found them to be a perfect transition after all three of the kids finished the *Bob Books*, *Animal Antics* type readers. These readers have a bit more of a meaty story to them.

- [Primary Phonics 1 Storybooks](#) (*affiliate link*)
- [Primary Phonics Storybook Set 2](#) (*affiliate link*)

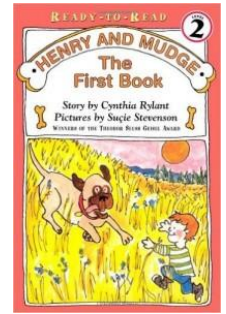
At 16-pages, they were long enough to be challenging, but not so long that the kids were turned off. Even though, by the time we started them the kids knew most of the basic C-V-C words I started them all on Level 1, followed by Level M-1 (update: I'm not sure if these are available anymore or not) before continuing on to Levels 2 through 6.



[Primary Phonics: Storybook Starter Sets](#): (*affiliate link*) As I said, this program has 6 levels, although some levels have two sets of storybooks. Each set consists of 10 books. The books are about 16 pages each. Here is a sample of part of [Mac and Tab](#). The books in Sets 1 and 2 have just one sentence per page, the books from later in the series might have two or three sentences per page. The link I gave before is for the pricing information. We did not use any of the workbooks or supplementary materials. You can also find out more about their materials here at their website: [Primary Phonics Program](#).



Once my kids finished with the entire Primary Phonics Series, they were ready for independent reading. We purchased easy readers off of ebay and kept rotating through all of those books. And one of the first series of books the kids started reading was the Henry and Mudge series. There are a lot of books in this series, but here is the first: [Henry And Mudge First Book](#) (*affiliate link*)



We also started borrowing heavily from our local library (that's why several of the librarians know us really well! :)



I hope you found this helpful!! ~Liesl

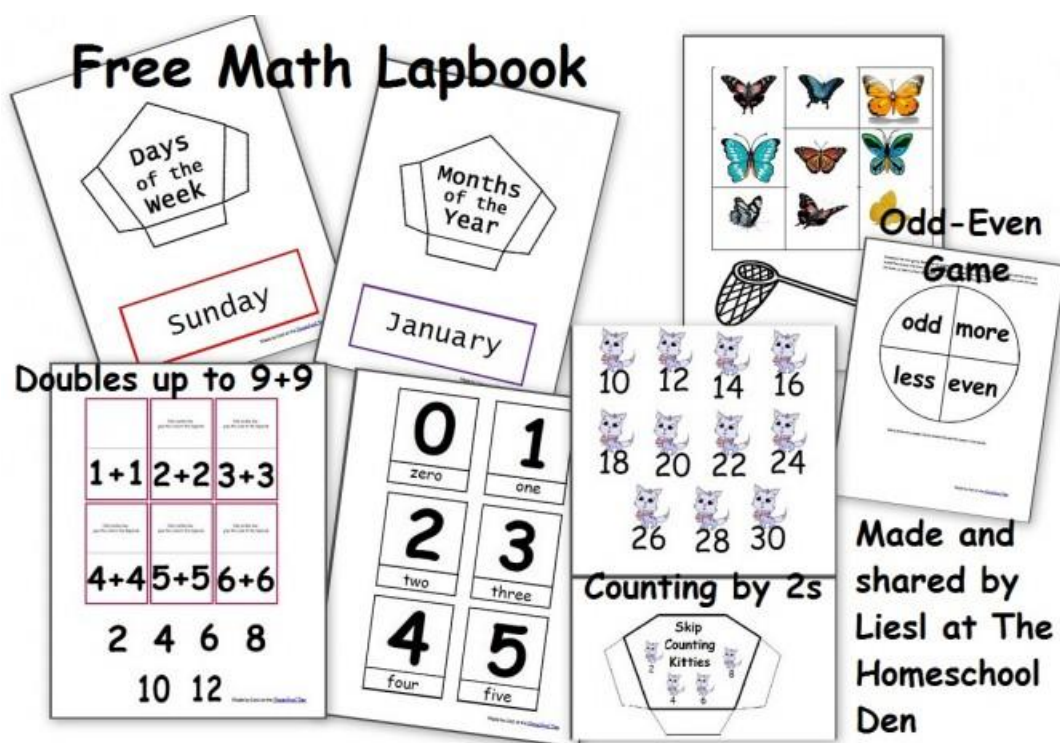
Disclosure: Please note that some of the links above are affiliate links, and at no additional cost to you, I will earn a commission if you decide to make a purchase.

You might be interested in these related posts:

- [Preschool at Home: Learning Letters](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Alphabet Activities](#)
- [File Folder Games \(Pre-Reading Activities\)](#)
- [Long A Sounds /ay/ – a, ai, ay, a-e, ei, eigh, ey –Sorting Cards and Board Game!](#)



Don't Miss our [Free PreK-K Math Lapbook](#):



Other related posts you might be interested in:

- [What Has My Preschooler Been Doing Lately?](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Activities you can do with your 2-4 Year Olds, Fine Motor Skills](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Learning Letters](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Alphabet Activities](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Handwriting](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Science for 2-4 Year Olds](#)
- [Preschool Montessori: Vertebrate and Invertebrate Study and Free Cards](#)
- [Preschool at Home: A Few Math Ideas for the 2 1/2-3 year old crowd](#)
- [Preschool Math Activities \(K4\) Montessori Math and More](#)
- [Preschool at Home: Lapbooks](#)
- You might also be interested in the post: [Homeschool Preschool Year in Review](#) which was a recap of many of our preschool activities this past year.
- [Preschool Geography](#): Activities for learning about where we live in the world, Montessori world map work and more
- [Preschool Geography: Maps and More](#)
- [The Seven Continents and World Landmarks](#)
- [Various Free Montessori 3-Part Cards](#)