

Student's name: _____

Six-digit family number: _____

PROGRAM 4

PARENT GUIDE AND CLASS WORKBOOK

How to reach us

Please call 800-964-2030 and listen to the menu choices to reach customer service or to leave a message for the teacher. Have your family number ready.

Teacher's Name: _____

Mailbox #: _____

Make-up Lessons

If your child misses a lesson, it is sometimes possible to schedule a make-up lesson at a nearby location. Please call customer service (not the teacher) to find out about make-up lessons.

Class Materials

Please be sure you have all of these:

1. This *Parent Guide and Class Workbook*
2. *Word-Attack Puzzle Book*
3. Booklist: *Recommended Reading for Children and Young Adults*

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INTRODUCTION TO PARENT GUIDE

By participating in this program and completing the home practice assignments, your child can expect to make substantial gains in reading comprehension, word-attack, vocabulary, and study skills. Improvement in these crucial skill areas will enable your child to read more fluently, to read with greater understanding and enjoyment, and to complete school assignments more easily.

We also want to instill and reinforce the habit of reading for pleasure. Students who read for pleasure develop larger vocabularies and stronger writing and speaking skills. For this reason, all of the activities and materials in our program are designed to engage your child's imagination, build confidence, and stimulate a love of reading. Your child is at a critical age in his or her reading development, as students in fourth and fifth grade find themselves facing increasingly difficult books in school. We want your child to develop the skills, confidence, and enthusiasm for books necessary for success in the coming years.

This parent guide provides an overview of the program. Use this guide during the program to clarify home practice activities. After the program has ended, your child should continue using the strategies described here, in order to build upon the confidence and skills he or she has gained.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Your parental support is crucial in helping your child benefit fully from this program. While your child's teacher will be responsible for teaching the skills, you can best support your child's progress by getting involved in the following ways:

1. ***Supervise your child's home practice.*** Students will learn to love reading only when their skills are well developed, and they read easily and fluently. Just as musicians practice every day in order to acquire the ease and confidence that makes their music pleasurable, readers must also practice their skills. Most of the skills your child learns in class will be new and unfamiliar; they will become effortless only when practiced regularly at home. The home practice assignments are outlined later in this guide; help your child internalize the skills taught by ensuring this practice is completed each week.
2. ***Make sure your child comes to class on time and prepared.*** It is important that your child arrive on time for each lesson. This will ensure that your child receives all of the instruction, and will prevent disruptions of class for your child's teacher and classmates. Students should bring to each class this workbook, the *Word-Attack Puzzle Book*, the book they're reading at home, and a pen or pencil.
3. ***Communicate with your child's teacher.*** If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's participation in the program, you should speak to the teacher directly. You may leave a voice mail message at the number listed on the first page of this workbook, and the teacher will return your call as soon as possible. Our teachers are valuable resources for parents and are happy to answer any questions you have. On occasion, your child's teacher may also contact you about your child.

4. *Attend parent meetings.*

- First class: Your child's teacher will conduct a parent meeting during the last 15 minutes in order to orient parents to the program.
- Last class: During the last 15 minutes of the last class your child's teacher will conduct a final parent meeting in order recommend ways students can continue to build on the progress they have made in class.
- Additionally, please attend the last 15 minutes of lessons 2, 3, and 4. During this time, your child's teacher will review the homework assignment and briefly discuss with parents any new skills covered that day.

5. *Attend one or more entire class sessions with your child.* We invite and encourage you to stay through all or part of any class with your child. You may attend as many classes as you like. This is a great opportunity for you to become more familiar with the skills and activities introduced by the teacher. By participating in class, you will be certain that you understand how best to support your child during and after the program.

6. *Praise your child sincerely and enthusiastically for his or her efforts and accomplishments.* Success builds on itself, and a child who feels a sense of accomplishment is more likely to take on other challenges with confidence and excitement.

GUIDE TO SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

As your child enters fourth and fifth grade, his or her reading assignments will become increasingly challenging. Students at this age need to read with good comprehension and to organize their thoughts about what they read. Students also need to increase their vocabulary and word-attack skills, as much of their new reading will contain unfamiliar words. All of the techniques described here will help your child read both fiction and nonfiction more easily.

Tellbacks

To do a tellback, students stop after a period of reading and describe, in their own words and in as much detail as possible, what they have just read. Tellbacks will increase your child's attention span and will help him or her concentrate and become more absorbed in books. Tellbacks will also help your child understand his or her reading, because tellbacks encourage students to follow a sequence of events, to identify with characters, and to visualize. Finally, tellbacks will help your child remember reading material better and for a longer time.

In class, students do tellbacks aloud, about every 5 minutes, with a partner. At home, your child will also do tellbacks aloud, preferably to you or another adult. The frequency of your child's tellbacks depends upon both the difficulty of the reading material and your child's own level of comprehension. In difficult material, he or she should do tellbacks more often. In easier books, tellbacks can be less frequent.

WEEK ONE

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Below are activities you might be assigned to work on in class.

***My Father's Dragon* Chapter 2**

Elmer packs some strange things for his journey. What do you think he'll do with each of these things?

Chewing gum _____

Two dozen pink lollipops _____

Rubber bands _____

Six magnifying glasses _____

Seven hair ribbons of different colors _____

What would you pack to go to Wild Island? _____

***My Father's Dragon* Chapter 3**

Pretend you are Elmer, writing in your diary. Why are you going to Wild Island? What danger do you think you'll find there? Are you scared? Excited?

Dear Diary,

I'm on my way to Wild Island! I feel _____

My Father's Dragon Chapter 4

The mouse in this chapter certainly has a tilly way of salking—I mean, a silly way of talking. He gets the beginning sounds of his words all mixed up! How would the mouse say these things?

Example: Run for the beach.

Bun for the reach.

Find that boy!

He's running on the path.

Get in the boat.

Now, make up some of your own things that the mouse might say:

What you say

What the mouse would say

HOMEWORK

Complete all four parts of the Week 1 homework (pages 8-10).

Week 1, Part 1 (45-60 minutes)

Date: _____

Materials: The book you've chosen, *Word-Attack Puzzle Book*, pen or pencil.

- ☐ Spend 30-45 minutes reading in your book, stopping to do **tellbacks** every five minutes.
- ☐ Complete pages 8 and 9 in the *Word-Attack Puzzle Book*.

Week 1, Part 2 (45-60 minutes)

Date: _____

Materials: The book you've chosen, pen or pencil.

- ☐ Spend 45 minutes to an hour reading in your book, stopping to do **tellbacks** every five minutes.
- ☐ As you read, create a **list of main events** for one chapter. After every tellback, write down the main events from that section. Use the space on the next page. Review the example below before starting.

Sample List of Main Events

1. Elmer becomes good friends with an old alley cat.
2. Elmer's mother hates cats and refuses to give the cat any milk.
3. Elmer continues to feed the cat for 3 weeks.
4. Elmer's mother throws the cat out, but Elmer goes and finds him.
5. The cat tells Elmer there might be a way for Elmer to fly.
6. The cat tells Elmer about his travels to Wild Island and Tangerina.

Name: _____

List of Main Events

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Week 1, Part 3 (45-60 minutes)
Materials: Your book, pen or pencil.

Date: _____

- ☐ Spend 40 to 50 minutes reading in your book, stopping to do **tellbacks** every five minutes.
- ☐ Review the first two steps for reading long words below. Apply the steps to the **bold** words in the eight sentences that follow. Be ready to explain in class the steps you took to read the words.

Reading Long Words

1. **Take the word apart and put it back together.** Look for any small parts of the word you know and say them aloud. Try different vowel sounds for the parts you don't know.
2. **Read the sentence aloud.** This will help you make sure you really know and understand the word.
Check: Do you know the word and understand what it means?

- 1 The **heaviest** pumpkin will win the contest.
2. We've looked everywhere, but we can't find our salt shaker, and nobody can explain its **disappearance**.
3. He is the **bowling** champion of the USA.
4. My teacher does not put up with **impoliteness** in the classroom.
5. The baby giraffe was **unsteady** on his feet.
6. Dave is strong in many classes, but he does have **weaknesses** in math class.
7. Did you face the challenge, or did you act **cowardly** and run away?
8. We don't have a dog because my brother is **allergic** to dogs.

Week 1, Part 4 (45-60 minutes)

Date: _____

Materials: Your book, pen or pencil.

- ☐ Spend 30 to 45 minutes reading in your book, stopping to do **tellbacks** every five minutes.
- ☐ During the last 15 minutes, prepare for finishing *My Father's Dragon* by thinking like the character. Elmer's wildest dream is to fly an airplane. What is your wildest dream? Describe your dream in detail below. What if you had a chance to do it now?

Draw a picture of your dream.



What books did you read this week? _____

Bring to Class:

**This workbook, *Word-Attack*
Puzzle Book, the book you
are reading outside of class,
pen/pencil.**

Parent's Signature: _____

Parents: Please join us for the last 15 minutes of every class. During that time, we review new skills, go over homework, and you'll be able to see the class in action.

You are also welcome to sit in on the entire class. We think you might enjoy it.