

Lesson One

Preparing Students, Introducing the oa Friends, Special Reading and Vocabulary Steps

Summary: This lesson begins with an optional section on preparing your students for the Stevenson Program. Then it introduces the first vowel pattern (oa) using a mnemonic clue. Students apply this clue to decode words using a word attack strategy called the Seven Special Reading Steps. They also cover the first four of the Seven Special Vocabulary Steps.

Materials: For the teacher: Beginning Level Teaching Cards Numbers 6 and 7 (if available). The teacher can also create illustrations for the same purpose using the examples in this manual. Standard materials for teachers always include a chalk board, white board or flip chart. For each student: pages 1-3 from the *Overlapping Student Book* and page 1 from *Basic Blue Reading Book One* (optional). Standard materials for students always include paper, pencil and eraser. (See Introduction.)

Integrals: Integral 6. Knowledge of letters is assumed in this book. (This includes many of the Beginning Green Level Integrals. See Introduction.)

Please Note: The Stevenson Program differs from other approaches to reading, spelling and language arts. This manual is designed for teachers and students in particular situations, and is only one of several ways of starting the program. If you are not familiar with Stevenson, we highly recommend that you read the Introduction to be sure you have the appropriate materials.

Part 1: Preparing Your Students (Optional)

Many of you will be working with students who have struggled for several years with reading and spelling. These students are probably frustrated. The frustration may be mild or extreme or anywhere in between, but whatever the level, it is worth addressing. Students need hope that the same level of frustration they have felt in the past is not going to continue. It will also be helpful if they can better understand their situation.

This manual will address many serious learning issues. To do so, it has to ensure that students have a strong foundation of basic skills, and to do that, students will have to review or re-learn certain simple tasks. Therefore, you not

As mentioned in the Introduction (pages xi and xii), you could use this manual simply to teach basic phonics to general education students in the early grades. In such a situation, Part 1 is unnecessary.

only want your pupils to be willing to work on a subject that has frustrated them in the past, you want them to be willing to start that subject again at a simple level. Some preliminary discussion can help gain their cooperation as well as provide the needed hope.

Below you will find one version of some key points that can be helpful in preparing your students for the instruction that will follow. We recommend that you read this version, and then also read Appendix A, which provides more details that you may choose to add. You know your students. You can decide just how much information to share and just how much encouragement they need. You may even feel your students do not need any special preparation at all. In such a case, proceed directly to Part 2.

You can read the following passage aloud or paraphrase it by putting into your own words:

Learning to read and spell is not simple. Your brain has to work with the sounds in our speech and with the visual symbols we call letters. It has to sort out patterns in both the sounds and the symbols. It has to connect all these things with different meanings. Making sense of words is actually very complicated.

The human brain is amazing. It not only takes in what we hear and see and smell and taste and feel, it also connects all these things in millions - maybe billions or trillions - of different ways. Different parts of our brains tend to do different things. Some parts are used mostly for things like music, other parts are used for things like pictures, other parts for things like words and others for things like numbers. But most of the time, when we read or speak or do math or draw a picture or sing, we use several different parts of our brains at one time. We create different pathways in our brain to make sense of different experiences. Today, scientists know a lot about many parts of the brain, but nobody really understands all the parts of the brain or how all the parts work together.

Everybody's brain is unique. No one has a brain quite like yours. But everyone's brain does some things more easily than others. Some people can sing easily. Other people's brains have to work very hard to hit the correct notes. Some people can look at pictures and remember every detail, but they can't remember the letters in words. Some people remember words instantly, but don't remember faces well. Some people read easily, but have to work hard at drawing pictures. Some can draw beautifully, but can't do math. Some people can do some kinds of math, but not other kinds of math. There are many possibilities. You can be very, very smart, and some things can still be very hard for you.

You might have had some trouble learning to read or spell, but that doesn't mean you are not smart. The good news is that we can try to teach your

brain to read and spell by using different pathways in your brain than we tried to use before. We can also do some exercises to try to make some of the weak pathways stronger.

English is a difficult language to read and spell. It is more difficult than Spanish or Italian, for example. The order in which you learn to read and spell English words can make it easier or more difficult for you, so one thing you can do is learn things in a different order than you did before. If you learn certain kinds of words first, they can form a good foundation for learning other kinds.

You are about to start a new reading and spelling program. It teaches some things differently than they were taught to you before. Many of the things you will be asked to do may seem strange. You are going to be shown how words can be like sandwiches and cakes. You are going to be asked to treat some letters like people. You are going to write words in houses. Some of you may think that these activities are funny and fun. Some of you may think they are simply weird. But they have an important purpose. These activities are intended to include many different parts of your brain in reading. The order in which you learn English words will be different too. In some ways it may seem like you are starting over, but you are really not. This time, learning to read and spell should be easier and faster. The program you are about to try has worked well for many other students who had trouble learning to read. So we thought you could try it too.

You may wish to expand these points using Appendix A, or include more information on other days as you progress through the program. Some students may not need any explanation. Again, please use your judgement as to how much explanation seems appropriate.

Part 2: The Story of the oa Friends

Read the shaded text below or paraphrase it by putting it into your own words:

I am going to tell you a story about two letters. We are going to talk about these two letters like they are people. This may seem like an odd story, but I am sure you will remember it.

Create an illustration like the one to the right on the board. If available, you can use Beginning Level Teaching Card 6 (however, you should use the dialogue below rather than the dialogue on the back of the card). Read or paraphrase:

These guys [point to o and a at the top] are friends, and they often go together in our English language. The round guy o, stands first in line, so he gets to make his sound. But he can't say his /o/ sound unless he has his friend, the round guy who leans on a stick, letter a, beside him. Letter a is

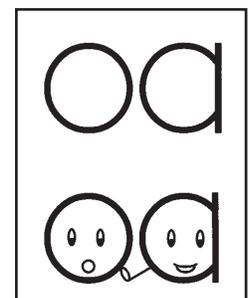


Figure 1.1
Beginning Card 6 or
Your Illustration

second in line so he has to be quiet, but he has a special job. Letter a has a tiny, invisible foot which can kick round o. He does not kick o very hard because they are friends - just hard enough to make o say his /o/ sound **loud and long** - /o-o-o-o/.

Next ask students to print round o on their papers. Ask, “Who is o’s friend?”
(a) Direct students to print round a who leans on a stick right after o. Then have them print the oa friends a few more times.

Draw students’ attention back to your drawing of Figure 1.1 (or to Beginning Level Teaching Card 6) and ask the following questions:

- Whom do you see? (the friends o and a)
- Who is first in line? (o)
- Who shouts his sound? (o)
- Why does o get to shout his sound? (because he is first in line)
- What if o forgets to say his sound? (a kicks him)
- Then what does he say? (/o-o-o/)
- So what sound do o and a say **together**? (/o-o-o/)

Next, tell students that there is one very simple, but very important, step that they need to take every time they try to figure out a new word. They need to **look at the whole word**. Tell them you are going to ask them a question and you want the whole class to speak up clearly and answer together:

- What is the first step you take when you want to read a new word?
(Look at the whole word!)

Now students are ready to learn the essential Stevenson decoding strategy called the Seven Special Reading Steps. You can either hold up Beginning Level Teaching Card 7 and follow the instructions on the back, or you can print the word goat on the board, then follow the dialogue below:

- What is the first step you take when you read a new word? (Look at the whole word.)
- Do you see the two friends? (yes)
- Who is first in line? (o) Who speaks? (o) What does a do if o forgets to speak? (a kicks him) Then what does o say? (/o/) So what sound do o and a make **together**? (/o/) Please say it loud and long. (/o-o-o/)
- What sound does the first letter in this word make? [Point to g.] (/g/)
- Slide the sound of the first letter into the sound the friends make. (/go/)
- [Repeat the previous step several times with students who find it difficult to blend /g/ with /o/.]
- What sound does the last letter make? (/t/) Add this last sound to the rest of the word. (/go/ /t/) What is the whole word? (goat)

Next draw students’ attention to the word coat and proceed:

It is quite important for students to say the /o/ sound loud and long. See Reading Step 2 in Appendix B for details.

If students cannot answer these questions easily, do not proceed until they can.

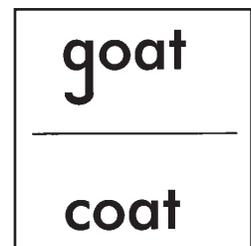


Figure 1.2
Beginning Card 7
or Your Illustration

Do not expect your students to memorize these steps. Simply guide them through the process. They will learn the process by doing it.

You did such a good job reading the word goat, I want you to try another word. [Point to coat.] Do not shout out the word, even if you know it. Let's read the word just as you did the other one.

Adjust the dialogue you used for goat as you guide the class to decode coat using the Seven Special Steps.



You may assign page 1 in the *Overlapping Student Book* either now or later. The top section reinforces the story about the oa friends and the bottom section requires decoding and visual discrimination. Some students benefit from this practice, and the activity creates a change of pace. However, Page 1 is considered optional because the activities may seem too simple for some students. In most cases, teachers will know from their experience with their students whether or not to assign this page.



Have students turn to page 2 in the *Overlapping Student Book* and take turns reading the words in the list in Section A at the top of the page. If a student reads the word automatically correctly, simply move on. If a student reads the word incorrectly or struggles, immediately lead him or her through the Seven Special Steps.

Next, prepare your students to read some sentences in their reading books by reading or paraphrasing the following:

Look at Section B on page 2 in your student books. In between the oa words that we have been reading are some other words. You may already know these words, and if you do, that's great. Just say them. If you do not know these words, I will say the word for you. Sometimes we call these words Feed Words because often I will **feed** them to you. Don't worry about how many of these Feed Words you know or don't know. You will learn them all eventually.

On the other hand, the words with the oa friends in them you have to read yourself. If you have trouble, I will help you figure out the word. We will use the steps we have learned so far, and I am sure we will succeed.



Have students take turns reading the sentences in Section B of page 2 in the *Overlapping Student Book*.

coat

You should have students practice this procedure again even if they can read coat automatically. Soon they will apply the steps to words they cannot read automatically.

Many students struggle with b and d confusion while reading long after they have mastered other letters. If that is the case with any of your students, you can use Appendix C to address this issue.

PLEASE note the comments about Feed Words in the margins on the facsimile page of the Student Book at the end of this lesson and on page xiii of the Introduction.

Part 3: Vocabulary Building and the Effect of r on oa Words

For a warm-up, print load and foal on the board and have students decode these words, using the Seven Special Steps as necessary.

load foal

Your students are not likely to be familiar with the word foal. This is an opportunity for you and they to learn the Stevenson Seven Special Steps for Vocabulary Building. Learning vocabulary is vital to effective reading comprehension. The Stevenson Vocabulary Steps are: **Imaging, Demonstrating, Defining, Illustrating, Categorizing, Composing and Testing**. Your students will cover only the first four steps at this time. You can implement the steps by simply reading or paraphrasing the passage that follows. The margin comments will identify the steps.

We are going to learn a new word. The word is foal. Get ready to make a picture of a foal in your minds. Now imagine a mother horse who has a baby horse standing beside her; another name for a baby horse is a **foal**. Now let's pretend that the mother horse and the baby horse are here in this room with us. Can anyone stand up and show me how tall the mother horse would be? [If your volunteer student is way off base about the size of a horse, you should demonstrate roughly the correct size.] Next, can anyone show me how big the **foal** would be? [Again, correct the next volunteer if necessary.] Good. Now we are going to chant together a **definition** of a foal. A definition is a group of words that gives the meaning of a word. Chant with me three times: A foal is a baby horse. (A foal is a baby horse. A foal is a . . . , etc.) [If some students have trouble with the whole definition, break the sentence into parts. A foal is / a baby horse.] Now let's do some drawing. [Hand out paper and crayons or markers.] Draw a mother horse and her foal. Then draw an arrow pointing at the foal and write the word foal under the picture.

Imaging

Demonstrating

Defining

Illustrating

The Vocabulary Steps are very valuable. They are also more flexible than the reading steps. As long as you complete the first step first, the others can be done in any order that works well for you. Some steps will simply not be practical. Not all new vocabulary words will lend themselves to definitions, demonstrations or illustrations. However, the more of these steps you do, the sooner you can imprint the meaning of the word in the child's long-term memory.



You can assign the top half of page 3 in the *Overlapping Student book* now if students need a change of pace. Otherwise, you can assign it later. It is optional, but many students enjoy drawing and the simple act of reading and drawing these simple sentences is a good way to determine if students are decoding accurately and comprehending what they read.

Next print the word soar on the board for both decoding and vocabulary work. Even if you feel students have the ability to figure out the word without assistance, take them through the decoding steps as you see below, after which you will continue by discussing the final sound:

soar

What is the first step we take when we meet a new word? (Look at the whole word.) Do you see the two friends? (yes) What sound do they make

together? (/o/) Let's hear it loud and long. (/oooo/) What sound does this first letter make? (/s/) Good. Let's slide this first sound onto the sound the friends make. (/so/) Good. [Point to r.] What sound does this last guy make? (/r/) Let's put that sound at the end. (/sor/) That's good. The word is soar. Did you notice how the /r/ sound at the end changed the sound of the oa friends a little? (Yes)

This last point is important, but it might not be obvious to some students. If necessary, model the process of adding a /r/ sound to the end of /so/, and demonstrate how /so/ /r/ becomes /sor/ several times. You may exaggerate the sounds to help students see that the /o/ sound in /so/ is slightly different than the /o/ sound in /sor/. Tell pupils that the /r/ sound at the end of words does “tricky things” often. They will get used to it, but they should be ready because, as they learn to read, they will see r play tricks often.

Now, you need to help students understand the meaning of the word soar. Follow the dialogue below which uses the Vocabulary Steps covered thus far:

Now this word soar does not mean a cut or a bruise. When you talk about having a sore on your arm, or a sore foot, you are using a word that is spelled differently. This word soar has the oa friends, and I'm going to tell you what it means. Get ready to make a picture in your minds. Pretend you see a bird flying. She flaps her wings then she stops and holds her wings out still, as she glides through the sky. When the bird glides through the air, she soars. Let's all stand up and pretend we are flying - but don't touch each other. Flap your wings. Then stop - and glide. You are soaring! Great. Now sit down. Let's all chant together three times the meaning of the word soar. To soar means to glide in the air. (To soar means to glide in the air. To soar means . . . etc.) [To make the chanting more rhythmic, you can break the sentence in half “To soar means / to glide in the air.”] Great. Now you can each draw me a picture of a bird soaring in the sky. Under the picture you can print this word soar. [Point to soar on the board.]

Imaging

Demonstrating

Defining

Illustrating

When your students have finished illustrating soar (which they can do later in class if it is more convenient) move on to the word roar. Print the word on the board. Tell students that you want them to read another word with the tricky /r/ sound at the end. This time let students figure out the word if they can. If they struggle, take them through the Seven Special Reading Steps as you did with the word soar. Once they have sounded out the word, they will probably know what it means. However, you can certainly have some fun demonstrating the word as you or they roar like lions.

roar



Have students take turns reading the sentences in Section C of page 3 in the *Overlapping Student Book*.



For additional practice, students can read section A on page 1 of *Basic Blue Reading Book One*. You will find this page reproduced at the end of this lesson with comments in the margin.

Hints on Pacing

If you examine this lesson, you will notice that the actual content is small. However, that does not mean you have to complete it quickly. Since this is the

first lesson, it is important that both you and your students are comfortable. It is certainly possible to go through all three parts of the lesson, complete with student book pages, in a single 45 minute or one hour teaching session. On the other hand, you could also use three separate, shorter sessions for this lesson. The initial discussion in Part 1 can be very important. You could take the opportunity to elicit some of your students' feelings about reading and about school; or your particular students may not need such a discussion at all. Part 2 will be fairly easy for students, but it might be comfortable to cover the material in fifteen or twenty minutes, drop it and review it the next day as you introduce the vocabulary words in Part 3. After Lesson Two or Three, we recommend that you commit a full teaching session to Stevenson (preferably every day) and that you cover as much as you can in a mastery fashion. However, for the first lesson or two, it is fine to start slowly and let everyone get comfortable with the specifics of the Stevenson Program.

Additional Reinforcement

This first lesson is sufficiently simple that you will probably not require much additional reinforcement. As mentioned previously, if students are still confusing b and d in their reading, use Appendix C. If any of the other material in Lesson One is very challenging to your students, you should probably switch to the full Beginning Green Level, which moves more slowly. However, in future lessons, there will be times when certain new skills will be difficult for some of your students. When that happens, this section entitled *Additional Reinforcement* will suggest activities to provide extra practice. In some cases, these activities may involve appendices from this manual or other materials from the Stevenson Program. In other cases, the activities can be done with common classroom materials. One excellent source of reinforcement materials is Partners in Associational Learning (a.k.a., PAL), which can be found on-line at www.homestead.com/quesst. From time to time we will refer you to their items also.

Modifications

At this point, you are not likely to need to make many modifications. However, one modification that is fairly common among special education students involves handwriting. Certain students (for example, some Cerebral Palsy pupils) may have such serious difficulty with their fine motor coordination that they cannot be expected to print or write. The simplest alternative is to use a keyboard if possible. Students who cannot handle a keyboard can sometimes use letter cards or tiles to create words. If

you have a classroom aide who can devote sufficient time, she or he can take dictation from the pupils and act as their hands. The student can orally answer comprehension questions or select words for fill-in sentences. The student can also spell orally when that is required. Obviously, a pupil with severe fine motor impairment would not be expected to complete all of the same writing and spelling activities as other students. However, you should try to make sure that such a student completes at least some of these activities, if possible, since they enhance learning considerably.

Commentary

- All of the qualities of the Stevenson Program that make it unusual are not necessarily obvious in one lesson, but you will see them unfold in time. In this lesson, you can see that letters are treated like people who have particular interactions. This presentation allows us to handle phonics patterns and rules in a less abstract and more memorable way than conventional approaches. (Some people call it a more “right-brained” approach.) You can share this point with your students, and explain that this approach is one way that the program tries to engage different pathways in the brain. In addition to visualizing letter patterns, students are also taught to visualize the meanings of vocabulary words. Visualization is a key element in effective reading comprehension. With the Stevenson Vocabulary Building Steps, the underlying mental image is reinforced in a variety of ways. Again, the idea of the program is to engage a variety of pathways.
- The Seven Special Reading Steps and the Vocabulary Building Steps may not seem particularly important on first encounter, but they are. Most students who are struggling with reading try to decode words starting with the first letter and moving left to right. Then they frequently produce the wrong vowel sound because they do not see the structure of the whole word. The Stevenson Reading Steps force students to look at the whole word first and then focus on the vowel pattern before tackling the rest of the word. Students and teachers alike may need some time to become accustomed to this word attack strategy, but it will pay great dividends in increased reading accuracy. Similarly, the Vocabulary Steps will increase the effectiveness of your teaching efforts.
- Most students using this Overlapping Strategy will have been taught short vowel (a.k.a., closed syllable) words like hat, lip, op, etc. as their first phonics structures. Do not be surprised when they continue to sound out a short vowel when they are decoding the long vowel words in this lesson. If, for example, a student says /o/ for oa, simply say, “Letter o sometimes makes that sound, but when he is with his friend a, he says /o/. The Stevenson Program starts with long vowel words for several reasons (see the Commentary in Lesson Three) that will help students progress in the long run. However, for some students, it may take several lessons to adjust to the long vowel sound.

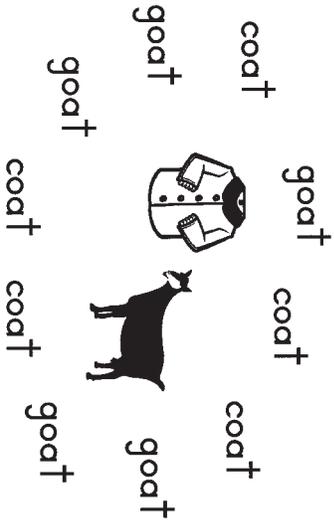
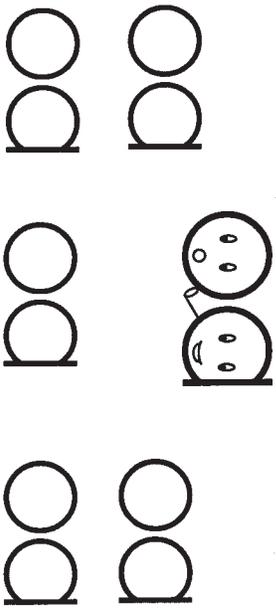
You do not have to assign page 1 below at all if you feel it is too simple for your students. However, even older students, if they are learning disabled, sometimes need to practice simple tasks. You can tell older students that the first activity is a way of anchoring the visual image of o and a in their long term memory. The bottom activity is a way of testing to make sure they are careful when they read. You can tell them that it "requires good visual discrimination."

Name _____ Date _____

Overlapping Student Book

Lesson 1, Part 2

Teacher: In the top section, review the clues for ga and have students draw the faces and magic feet onto the other ga's. In the bottom section, have students read each word and draw a line connecting it to the appropriate picture. This page is considered optional if older students find it too easy.



Feed Words: by can in is likes on

While older students may not find the sentences to be interesting reading, you can challenge them to read with complete accuracy. You can give them the Feed Words, but insist that they figure out all the other words (although you can, and should, guide them with the Seven Special Reading Steps if they struggle).

Lesson 1 - IR

- A**
- | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 1. load | 6. soap | 11. toad |
| 2. goal | 7. road | 12. foam |
| 3. coat | 8. loan | 13. soak |
| 4. boat | 9. coal | 14. goat |
| 5. moan | 10. loaf | 15. Joan |

- B**
1. I can loan Joan a coat.
 2. The soap can soak.
 3. The toad is on the road.
 4. The foam is on the soap.
 5. The coal is by the road.
 6. The load of coal is by the goal.
 7. A load of soap is on the road.
 8. Joan likes the foam soap.
 9. The goat can moan.
 10. The coal is in the boat.

Feed Words: and at can it make on with you

Once again, you do not have to assign the top half of page 3 if you feel it is too simple. This activity is intended to demonstrate students' ability to visualize and comprehend what they read - and you can make that point to older students.

As simple as it is, all students should read Section C so you can determine if the effect of r on oa is giving them trouble.

Name _____ Date _____

Overlapping Student Book

Lesson 1, Part 3

Teacher: Students read the sentences at the bottom of each box and draw (make) a picture that represents the sentence. Make is considered a Feed Word. Do not judge students' artistic ability. Any representation that they can explain is acceptable.

Make a foal on a road.	Make a foal with soap on it.
------------------------	------------------------------

Lesson 1 - IR

- C**
1. Can a goat soar?
 2. Can a toad roar?
 3. Can a goat roar and moan?
 4. Can a boat soar on a road?
 5. I can roar at a goat.
 6. Can Joan roar?
 7. Can coal soar and roar?
 8. Can you roar?

Feed Words: and be can could did does for from go had has have he his if in into is like make not of on to will would you

You do not have to cover all of the sentences in Section A if you feel your students are handling oa words well and you are eager to move on.

Basic Blue Reading Book One

IR 1

- A**
1. A load of coal is on the road.
 2. Joan could soak the coat in soap.
 3. The goat will not go on the road.
 4. A boat is in the moat, and Joad is in the boat.
 5. Joad could loan his boat to Joan.
 6. A toad would not roar, and a goat would not soar.
 7. Joan would not like to soak in a moat.
 8. Joad does not like to load coal into a boat.
 9. The toad did go from the road to the moat.
 10. Joad did not go to the goal.

- B**
1. Joan and Gail could wait for the mail.
 2. Joad has to wait on the road for Joan.
 3. A goat would have pain if he had a nail in his tail.
 4. Joad would moan if he had to wait in the rain and hail.
 5. Gail has a goal to sail a boat.
 6. A toad would not like to be in a pail.
 7. Gail has fair hair, and Gail can be vain.
 8. Would you roam on a main road in the rain?
 9. Joan does not like to fail.
 10. A vain maid would make Joad moan.