



Carden Educational Foundation

Teaching and Publishing the CARDEN METHOD®

THE CARDEN READING METHOD

Listening, speaking, reading, spelling, and writing!

These are interrelated components of the language arts and the Carden Reading Method. The Carden Method® is a true, total language arts curriculum. It equips young students to include all these essential elements of language among their first achievements. The person who listens attentively, speaks clearly, reads accurately, and writes successfully has a social security which no one can remove.

THE FIVE CHANNELS OF LEARNING TO READ

- Phonics and Word Structure
- Word Grouping
- Identifying the Key Word
- Composing a Title
- Recall of Events in Sequence

PHONICS AND WORD STRUCTURE

- Make practical use of personal vocabulary
- Unlock words when reading
- Construct words when spelling
- Select the *right* word when writing and speaking
- Enrich your mental image
- Pronounce words clearly when speaking
- Avoid confusion between *b* and *d* in reading, spelling, and writing

A child's vocabulary has been acquired through thinking while listening and speaking. That vocabulary is part of their personal mental image of life. Great joy and satisfaction come when they are led to discover that sounds may be written as letters and words.

Carden phonics presents the beauty and melody of English. For example, it takes into consideration the differences between staccato and legato sounds of English consonants.

Contrast the staccato of *g* with the legato of *m*. By itself, the sound of *g* is short, abrupt. To sustain the sound, add *uh*, pronounced lightly. This enables the youngster to glide easily into the next sound. It avoids any disconnect between this consonant and the next sound in the word. So we say the sound of *g* is *guh*. This helps the youngster sound out words with *g*, such as *gate*, *gas*, *begin*, *giggle*, *piglet*, *big*, and *league*.

M, on the other hand, has a sustained sound. It is not short, abrupt. The sound of *m* is the one the youngster has been using: *mmm*, as in, "Mmm, this is good." It is the sound of *m* in words like *moon*, *drum*, *ham*, *swimmer*, *thimble*, and *lamb*.

So what about that *b* after the *m* of *lamb*? Students take delight in finding out what that *b* is doing for the lamb!

Carden word structure synthesizes with phonics. Consider three examples.

- 1) We hear the sound "us" at the end of a word. Word structure tells us that if the word is a noun, write *us*. If the word is an adjective, write *ous*. You do not want a *callus*, and you do not want to be *callous*. Students need to know that phonics alone does not determine the spelling of a word.
- 2) Words coming into English from the Greek language spell the vowel sounds of *i* with *y*. Students see and hear this in words like *type*, *myth*, *python*, *typical*, and *symmetry*. Students need to know that words brought into English from other languages may adjust the spelling of certain sounds.
- 3) How will the reader pronounce *record*? If it is used as a noun, it is **rec ord**; if it is used as a verb, it is **re cord**. Grammar sometimes dictates the spelling and pronunciation of a word.

Students use their Carden techniques of phonics and word structure to recognize words when they are reading, to build words when they are spelling, to pronounce words when they are speaking, and to write words when they are listening.

Mastery of language arts enables students to convey their personal mental images to others with ease. Children are aware of the power that language imparts to them. They develop the self-respect that yields legitimate self-esteem.

The ability to sound out words is but a beginning. There are four more necessary channels in learning to read. Without them, a person has limits to gaining knowledge and understanding when reading.

COMPREHENSION

Comprehension relies on

- rhythmic grouping of words and the accenting of the key word(s) within the sentence;
- an ever-increasing vocabulary, which has to be planned and nurtured daily by a definite program;
- awareness of the individual fact within the sentence;
- awareness of the sequence of facts within the paragraph, the story, and the book; and
- the relationship of one fact to another.

These abilities enable the student to progress in the next two channels of learning to read—*word grouping* and *identifying the key word*.

However, the student does not achieve the complete ability to read until he or she can

- see that the specific statement is an expression of a general idea, which involves success in drawing inferences;
- organize the thoughts within the reading material, which involves experience in evaluating the quality and relevance of those thoughts in relationship to the topic;
- have a command of words that enables the reader to express personal thoughts in general terms, which involves success in making generalizations;
- compare and contrast the various elements of reading material, which involves skill in interpreting the content, distinguishing fact from fiction, and anticipating outcomes;
- associate the reading material with personal life experience and merge them, which involves using emotions in responding to what is read.

With these abilities, especially acquired in *composing a title* and *recall of events in sequence*, a student will genuinely read and think.

WORD GROUPING

- Avoids word-by-word reading
- Uses punctuation as an aid to the natural rhythm of expressing ideas
- Presents ideas to the mental image
- Helps the writer put ideas in the reader's mental image
- Helps the speaker put ideas in the listener's mental image

From the beginning, children experience ideas that come from groups of words. They learn to read thoughts rhythmically. They learn how words form groups that answer fundamental comprehension questions, such as *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *how*, and *why*. For them, rhythmic reading is as natural as rhythmic speech. *Word grouping* is the second channel of learning to read. Word grouping begins with the first story in the Carden primers.

The young student reads, "Pete paints a boat." (Flesh-Kincaid grade level is .8)

That sentence is not made up of a series of words with short sounds. The legato of the long vowel sounds provides the natural rhythm of spoken English. To have begun with short vowel sounds would produce sentences with a staccato effect that works against the concept of rhythmic reading, as in *Dot had a big red jug*.

Students use their understanding of Carden phonics and word structure to sound out a word they do not know.

The Carden primer has no picture of Pete or a boat. Readers see Pete in their own minds. The Pete they see has immediate relevance to themselves and their lives. Socioeconomic and other differences among people are absent. Each reader can give his or her own description of Pete. The boat is in their mental image, too. One may see a rowboat and another a sailboat. A picture would have destroyed their mental image. They would have been focusing upon an artist's mental image of the text. Students may enjoy drawing their own picture in vivid colors to illustrate the story. *They* are interpreting text.

The words of the sentence answer questions for comprehension. *Who* paints a boat? What *does* Pete *do*? *What* does Pete paint?

The reader reads the *who*, pauses briefly, and groups the *doing* and the *what* together (paints the boat).

Because they group words with understanding, Carden® readers avoid

- word-by-word reading: Pete | paints | a | boat. The mind of the word-by-word reader has to put four ideas together before understanding can occur.
- a combination of word-by-word reading and nonsensical word grouping: Pete paints | a | boat. By grouping the *who* and the *doing* together, the natural rhythm of English speech has been broken.

Reading that simple sentence well is preparation for the intricacies of language that follow. If grammar were to be taught as an end in itself, then the road to interpreting text would not have been adequately prepared for the traffic it must bear. Students need an understanding of grammar that works for them in

sentence analysis. Grouping the words that answer the *who* and the *doing* questions breaks the natural rhythm of English speech. The ability to analyze the sentence accurately is a key factor of successful interpretation of text. Identifying the verb of the simple sentence enables students to ask the right comprehension questions.

This is a simple beginning, and it is a very good one in view of what is coming. As sentences become more complicated, word grouping becomes more difficult. Sentences will not just have a few words. They will have phrases and clauses, and these will involve a number of comprehension questions. The *who* may become hard to find. Think about how the sentence above could increase in difficulty. Here are some possibilities. The numeral inside parentheses tells the Flesh-Kincaid grade level.

- Yesterday Pete painted a boat. —It begins with one word answering *when*. (5.2)
- As soon as he can, my brother Pete will paint a boat that he purchased at auction last Saturday. —It begins with an adverbial clause answering *when*, follows with a noun phrase, changes the tense of the verb from past to future, and ends with a *what* that has an adjectival clause. Should the reader pause before the adjectival clause or group the *what* and the adjectival clause together? (6.9)
- Pete painted a boat carefully in his backyard after he had finished his chores yesterday. —Should the reader pause before the adverbial clause or should the words answering *where* (a phrase) and *when* (a clause) be grouped together? (9.1)
- Because Pete had invited his cousin to go fishing with him next week, he painted a boat carefully in his back yard yesterday. (10.8)
- Toward the end of last week, Pete, who is one of my brother's friends, painted a boat that he had purchased at auction with handsome colors of light tan trimmed with dark brown. —It begins with a *when* phrase, has a new *who* with an adjectival clause, changes the tense of the verb, has a *what* with an adjectival clause, and ends with an adverbial phrase answering *how*. (11.5)
- Toward the end of last week, Pete, who is one of my brother's friends, painted a boat that he had purchased at auction with handsome colors of light tan trimmed with dark brown, and this morning my brother telephoned him to warn him that the governor had declared a mandatory evacuation of the island. —Through skills developed with grammar as a tool of comprehension, the student reads rhythmically: *When* [Toward the end of last week,] | *who* [Pete, who is one of my brother's friends,] | *doing and what together* [painted a boat that he had purchased at auction] | *how* [with handsome colors of light tan trimmed with dark brown,] | *joining word* [and] *when* [this morning] | *who* [my brother] | *doing and what together* [telephoned him] | *why* [to warn him | that the governor had declared a mandatory evacuation of the island]. This sentence has two independent clauses, each of which has a *who*. (12.0)

Correct word grouping enables the ideas of the sentence to easily enter the mind.

Carden® students are not afraid of grammar. They know how to use it as a tool of comprehension. In school, at home, and elsewhere, they use it when reading, writing, and speaking.

IDENTIFYING THE KEY WORD

- Points to the main idea of the sentence
- Emphasizes the main idea
- Sees the focus of the sentence
- Clarifies the mental image
- Guides interpretation of text by the reader
- Guides interpretation of speech by the listener
- Guides interpretation of purpose by the writer
- Aids in outlining the text by providing subheadings

What is the key word? It is the important word that reveals the main idea of the sentence. It embodies the meaning of the sentence.

Identifying the key word is the third channel of learning to read.

It may be

- a noun. Ann is a doctor.
- a pronoun. I did not laugh, but she did.
- an adjective. Bill saw three cows.
- a verb. The crow tries to sing.
- an adverb. Jane ran very fast.
- a preposition. The fly is still inside the car.
- a conjunction. He saw both Jack and Jill.
- an interjection. "Ouch!" screamed the child.

It may be more than one word, as in

- an adverbial phrase. The cat is sitting ***in the corner***.
- an adjectival phrase. The cat ***in the corner*** is asleep.
- an adverbial clause. We shall go home ***after the game is over***.
- an adjectival clause. The prize was won by the boy ***who is in our class***.
- a noun clause. The truth is ***that April likes chocolate ice cream***.

How can you find the key word of a sentence? Look for it! The key word is what you see in your mental image.

Example 1: **Pete paints a boat.**

This sentence is by itself, so it is alone in the context provided by the writer. Upon what does the sentence focus?

The reader begins with *Pete*, observes that he *paints*, and sees *what* Pete paints. The key word is *boat*. The reader emphasizes the key word: Pete | paints a **boat**. Why did the writer say *Pete paints a boat*? To tell the reader *what* Pete paints. The reader sees that Pete paints a boat.

Example 2: **Pete sold Bill the boat that he had painted.**

The reader begins with *Pete*, observes that he *did* something [sold], learns the name of the person *to whom* he sold something [Bill], and the thing that he sold to Bill [the boat that he had painted]. The key word is *Bill*. The reader emphasizes the key word: Pete | sold **Bill** | the boat that he had painted. Why did the author write *Pete sold Bill the boat that he had painted*? To tell the reader *to whom* Pete had sold the boat.

COMPOSING A TITLE

- Interprets the key word with a noun of classification
- Expresses the main idea of the sentence with a noun of classification and presents the relationship of the remainder of the sentence to it
- Identifies the main idea
- Sees the focus of the sentence
- Clarifies the mental image
- Interprets text by the reader
- Interprets speech by the listener
- Interprets the writer's purpose
- Aids in outlining the text by providing main headings

What is the title? It is the main idea of the sentence. It embodies the meaning of the sentence.

Composing a title is the fourth channel of learning to read.

To compose a title, classify the key word with a noun of classification. Express the remainder of the sentence in relationship to the key word. The key word may be any part of speech, but the title begins with a noun that classifies the key word. Consider these key words and titles.

- a noun. Ann is a **doctor**. Ann's Profession
- a pronoun. I did not laugh, but **she** did. The Person Who Laughed Although I Did Not
- an adjective. Bill saw **three** cows. The Number of Cows That Bill Saw
- a verb. The crow **tries** to sing. The Attempt of the Crow to Sing
- an adverb. Jane ran **very** fast. The Speed With Which Jane Ran
- a preposition. The fly is still **inside** the car. The Location of the Fly With Respect to the Car at This Moment
- a conjunction. He saw both Jack **and** Jill. The Fact That He Saw Both Jack and Jill

- an interjection. “**Ouch!**” screamed the child. The Child’s Scream

It may be more than one word, as in

- an adverbial phrase. The cat is sitting **in the corner**. The Place in Which the Cat Is Sitting
- an adjectival phrase. The cat **in the corner** is asleep. The Cat Which Is Asleep
- an adverbial clause. We shall go home **after the game is over**. The Time When We Shall Go Home
- an adjectival clause. The prize was won by the boy **who is in our class**. The Boy Who Won the Prize
- a noun clause. The truth is **that April likes chocolate ice cream**. The Truth

Is there only *one* correct title possible for a sentence? Vocabulary may limit the reader’s ability to compose a title based upon the classification of a key word.

Consider one of the previous sentences: Ann is a **doctor**.

Students may give a number of correct titles.

- Ann’s Job
- Ann’s Occupation
- Ann’s Profession

If the sentence were *Ann is a doctor in the play*, more than one title is possible.

- Ann’s Part in the Play
- Ann’s Role in the Play
- Ann’s Character in the Play

Students discuss the possibilities. They evaluate how accurately a noun classifies the key word. They justify their choices.

Choosing key words and composing titles are abilities acquired by students as they learn to think as they read. They learn to interpret text for themselves.

If their ability to interpret is measured by means of a multiple choice test, they are responding to someone else’s interpretation.

Understanding sentences leads to understanding of paragraphs, which leads to understanding of the chapter, which in turn leads to understanding the book.

RECALL OF EVENTS IN SEQUENCE

- Involves organization of thought
- Develops ability to write different kinds of summaries
- Uses a variety of presentations, such as according to time, to the alphabet, to subject matter, to ascending order of importance, and to descending order of importance
- Reasons from the specific to the general, or from the general to the specific, or both approaches
- Evaluates material read and states its significance
- Equips readers or listeners to make wise choices as to whether to use a paraphrase, a précis, an essay, or other avenue to respond appropriately to concepts and ideas expressed in print or in speech

Consider an example.

Students read *The Mole* (Grade 2):

The mole is small. It hides all the time. It is gray. People say the mole is bad. They say it is bad because it makes holes in the grass.

Frank likes the mole. He has a small mole. He likes to watch it. It is smart. It can hide away.

Have you seen a mole?

When asked what these sentences are about, they respond with a paraphrase in their own words. They might express the content of the story in this way:

The story is about a mole. It begins by telling us that the gray mole hides all the time. People say it is bad because it makes holes in the grass. Frank likes his mole and watches it. He thinks it is smart because of the way it can hide away. The story ends by asking the reader if he or she has seen a mole.

When asked what these sentences are about, they may respond in their own words. They express the content of the story as a paraphrase.