

UltraPhonics™ Tutor 2

*The New Performance and Value Leader
in Orton-Gillingham Tutoring Software*

Curriculum Description

The UltraPhonics Tutor curriculum focuses on five primary goals:

- providing a structured-phonetic, multisensory teaching program which emulates a master Orton-Gillingham reading tutor, replicating as many components of the method as current technology allows
- providing students of all ages with a positive learning environment for reinforcing skills
- providing dramatically enhanced reading, writing, and spelling instructional effectiveness for parents, tutors, and teachers
- providing consistent reinforcement of linguistic concepts and rules with a rotating word bank
- providing a system for teaching groups of students while tailoring the rate and sequence of new material to each individual

(1) The Orton-Gillingham Approach

The **UltraPhonics Tutor** curriculum includes the eight essential instructional elements needed to successfully teach students with dyslexia as outlined in publications of the International Dyslexia Association. These elements are:

1) Multisensory: Instruction involves immediate, intensive, and continuous interaction between what the student is seeing, hearing, and feeling in the speech mechanisms and the writing hand. All language elements taught are reinforced by having the student listen, speak, read and write.

In **UltraPhonics Tutor** the student uses a light pen or a mouse to trace over newly taught phonograms and to spell and write letters, words, and sounds from dictation. Writing reinforces learning. This program will identify confusions and determine the level of mastery for each student.

2) Alphabetic/Phonetic: The student is taught the sound-symbol connections which are then reinforced in isolation and in words for reading and spelling. The essence of the phonetic approach is to make letter-to-sound connections as simple and comprehensive as possible.

3) Synthetic/Analytic: The student is taught how to blend sounds together, to break blends into parts, and to analyze and compare rules, sounds, and place value in order to make correct decisions for reading and spelling.

When using **UltraPhonics Tutor** the student hears the sounds pronounced while seeing the letters move together to make familiar words. The student also learns how to segment words into separate speech sounds before beginning to spell. **UltraPhonics Tutor** teaches

the student how to do this and then requires that the student click on buttons, one for each sound in the word, with the mouse or light pen before the word is written. Drills which require locating sounds and filling in blanks make the student apply the process to many words.

4) Structured: The student learns one sound association, linguistic rule, or sight word and practices using it with previously taught material before learning the next piece. If the student has significant difficulties, new material may be delayed until earlier material is retained.

In **UltraPhonics Tutor**, each new piece of the language taught is specifically reviewed two more times through drills and spelling practice. If confusions occur later in another context, additional review is provided.

UltraPhonics Tutor has also divided the linguistic rules into teachable segments and provided practice and correction routines for each segment.

5) Sequenced: Linguistic concepts are taught in a logical sequence that will minimize potential confusion.

The **UltraPhonics Tutor** curriculum is organized to separate commonly confused linguistic elements. The sequence for introducing new material can be altered to allow more practice and assurance with one element before a potentially confusing concept is introduced. This flexibility in presenting information allows the product to be tailored specifically to each individual's needs.

The logic and order of **UltraPhonics Tutor's** curriculum was determined by nationally recognized Orton-Gillingham authorities such as Arlene Sunday, based on their training in the Orton-Gillingham Approach and many years of using this approach while teaching students of all ages and training teachers.

6) Cumulative: The student learns newly introduced elements while prior elements are incorporated and reinforced based on lack of practice and particular student difficulties.

UltraPhonics Tutor's Mastery Exam section consistently provides drills and spelling tasks using all of the linguistic information previously taught. Special attention is given to the elements which have been confusing.

7) Repetitive: The concepts are repeated until the student gains mastery.

The product provides consistent review of confusing elements by combining them with securely retained elements while supplying different words for practice. Since the amount of repetition needed for mastery varies, **UltraPhonics Tutor** will emphasize repetition based on each student's demonstrated skill level.

8) Cognitive: The student should understand the "linguistic logic" underlying word formations and patterns

and be able to demonstrate such understanding while writing words.

During the introductory and review portions of the lessons, **UltraPhonics Tutor** explains rules and generalizations both verbally and with on-screen demonstrations.

(2) Targeted Students

UltraPhonics Tutor's original goal was to develop a program for students with developmental reading disorders, also known as dyslexia, and to target the reading and spelling level rather than the age or grade level of the student. This program is not limited to students with diagnosed learning difficulties. It is appropriate for all individuals who need a multisensory phonics approach in order to learn to read and spell. This can include some individuals who are learning English as a second language. An individual mastering the information included in the Version I curriculum will be able to read at the late fourth to middle fifth grade level.

UltraPhonics Tutor provides a sound academic program for students of all ages. The ability to move through the program and learn new information about words will translate into increased skills in reading and writing. This motivates younger students and adults.

Another motivating feature of the product is the use of verbal "praise phrases" given after a correct response. The student will never hear a negative statement when a mistake has been made, but will be asked to try again. When a student cannot correct an error, the correct information is shown or pronounced. The student is asked to trace or repeat a response and then praised for success at that point. Nothing succeeds like success!

The student's interaction using the mouse or light pen is facilitated by a variety of clear, visual cues: segmentation buttons appear prior to spelling tasks, writing lines appear when it is time to write, and a "continue" button individualizes the speed for moving ahead. The student masters essentials of this interactive program without distraction and can focus on what is being taught.

To exit **UltraPhonics Tutor** at any time during a learning session, there is a "Stop" button. The student can start at that point at a later time.

(3) Reading, Writing, and Spelling Instruction

The product's curriculum includes

- consonant sounds
- consonant blends – st, fl, br, mp, etc.
- short vowel sounds – a, e, i, o, u
- vowel pairs – ee, oo, ai, ay, au, etc.
- r-controlled patterns – er, ir, ur, ar, or
- consonant -le patterns -ble, -dle, -ple, etc.

UltraPhonics Tutor teaches over forty linguistic rules along with their phonic elements. These rules explain when to use -k or -ck at the end of a word, how the vowel-consonant-e pattern operates, how to add suffixes to root words, and so forth. **UltraPhonics Tutor** identifies thirty-nine confusing linguistic elements, and provides

discrimination drills to help students make appropriate choices.

There are over 3300 words used in Versions 1 and 2, providing an expansive vocabulary.

(4) Teaching Methods

Three primary teaching methods are used in the **UltraPhonics Tutor** curriculum. Introducing sounds and symbols involves showing the letter(s) to be introduced, showing the letter(s) being formed on the screen, pronouncing the sound, and explaining any rule involved. The student is asked to trace and write the letter(s). Then the student blends the new unit with others already learned and spells words using the new sound.

UltraPhonics Tutor teaches non-phonetic words one at a time, stressing the names of the letters and the pronunciation of the word with review and practice opportunities provided.

The third teaching method involves linguistic rules. The drills associated with introducing a particular rule are designed to stress the understanding and the application of the rule.

UltraPhonics Tutor reinforces every new piece of language information three times. When a student doesn't understand, the introduction is repeated in order to emphasize that concept until the student can demonstrate understanding. If confusion persists, a signal is sent to the parent or teacher to indicate that intervention may be needed, but the program will continue to use the introduction procedure until the student achieves mastery.

UltraPhonics Tutor also has a built-in Mastery Exam which routinely provides practice drills and writing exercises using previously taught material. When errors are noted, the program loops back to review concepts and words to assure success and strengthen "memory pegs."

(5) Individualized Instruction

UltraPhonics Tutor chooses different procedures based on the student's progress through the curriculum, and determines when to introduce new concepts, when to review concepts already introduced, and when to do a comprehensive Mastery Exam. The focus is always on linguistic concepts and rules rather than memorizing individual words.

An individual profile sets the starting point each time the student logs on. The profile also records the student's confusions in order to provide further review and practice exactly as needed. **UltraPhonics Reports**, the included **UltraPhonics Tutor** report generator, helps teachers, parents, or adult students see progress in the curriculum, elements taught, elements mastered, and those still causing problems. As appropriate, **UltraPhonics Reports** sends signals indicating a student is having difficulties and may require intervention to move through the program efficiently.