



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I use *Quick60* in my classroom?

You can use *Quick60* books with one or more of your lowest reading groups. The lesson plans and books are very prescriptive and designed to give students all the basic skills they need to know in order to read and spell. Instruction is explicit and systematic.

Alternatively you may choose to have a group or groups of students withdrawn to follow the *Quick60* programme with a reading specialist, another teacher, or a teacher aide.

### Do I need any extra equipment to implement *Quick60*?

You will only need a black or white board for your demonstrations, and a writing book for each student. We have designed the lesson this way purposely so that lack of equipment will not result in lack of teaching. If you buy *Quick60* you get the teacher lesson plans free. You also get sentences to cut up, high-frequency words ready to be pasted onto card, and spelling lists. Of course if you have access to equipment such as plastic letters or letter tiles, you are welcome to use them.

### How long does a *Quick60* lesson take?

The *Quick60* lesson is divided into seven distinct segments - Quick Quiz, New Word, Quick Read, Quick Check, Quick Write, New Skill, New Book.

These can be taught all on the same day, or split depending on the time you have available, and the expertise of the person delivering the programme. An experienced teacher or reading specialist, will be able to move the students through the lesson more quickly than a less experienced teacher or teacher aide. A good point to break the lesson if you are spreading it over two days, is after the Quick Write and before the New Skill.

**I've read a lesson plan and it seems very prescriptive. It doesn't allow for much input from the students. Why is this?**

*Quick60* is prescriptive because we have placed an initial emphasis on getting students to learn to look at, and use print. The letters, letter clusters and high-frequency words are introduced and revised consistently throughout the books.

Because we designed *Quick60* with struggling readers and English Language Learner Students in mind, we didn't want them to spend time guessing. When they guess, they often guess wrong and compound their difficulty. For this reason, we have limited their input to what we know they know, from what has already been taught.

The emphasis in the lesson plans is on reminding students what they know, rather than asking for a response. For this reason also, the comprehension questions at the end of the new book are limited to recall from the book rather than asking for opinions or inferences.

**Why is there an emphasis on phonics in *Quick60*?**

We believe that one of the reasons that students get behind with reading and spelling is because they fail to learn to look closely at the print. To be fully rounded in literacy acquisition, we believe that students need to be proficient in comprehending text, understanding vocabulary, reading fluently, and also using print to access unknown words and checking that what they have read is correct.

The second set of *Quick60* focuses more on vocabulary and comprehension.

**How can students move up the levels so quickly?**

They can move quickly because the *Quick60* programme is very structured. Skills are introduced systematically, taught explicitly, and reinforced in the books that the students have multiple opportunities to read. Daily writing opportunities also reinforce skills. *Quick60* also provides daily formative assessment, which helps you make better decisions, and leads to better student performance.

**How is *Quick60* levelled?**

Levelling is very subjective. There is no specific formula. Even computer-generated levelling programmes throw out different levels for the same book depending on how they weight their criteria.

Our feeling is that a book level can only ever be a guide. It helps you select a book that your students should be able to read given their current skill set. We have levelled *Quick60* to help you match your students to the book as closely as possible, for example:

- The skills are introduced in a particular order from easy to difficult, each building on the one before and there are several examples of the targeted skill in each book.
- High-frequency words are introduced and appear at least four times in the book where they are introduced.
- Wherever possible, we have repeated content words within a text so that your students have multiple opportunities to read them, rather than encountering them only once.
- The book length increases with the difficulty level.
- Photos are labelled to help English language learners and those students with limited life experiences.

Taking all this into account, we anticipate that your students should be able to read every *Quick60* book at their instructional level that is 90–94% accuracy if you teach the programme in the order we suggest.

Each *Quick60* book has an accompanying colour-coded check sheet that is identical to the text. The colour-coding shows which high-frequency words and which phonic/vocabulary-skill words are new and which have already been taught. It also shows which words have not been taught but that students should be easily able to read using the sentence structure, context and photos.

As well as using these colour-coded sheets to check on-going reading progress, we suggest you use them to guide your introduction to the new book. Different groups of students reading at the same level, often need a different emphasis placed on the introduction to a new book so that the book is not too difficult.

## **Why are the Alphabet Books not taught in alphabetical order?**

The Alphabet books are taught in this order because some letters occur more frequently in words than others. Some of these “heavy-duty” letters for example, m, t, p, s appear in the second half of the alphabet. Teaching these “heavy-duty” letters first helps your students in different ways:

- Your students can quickly use the combinations to make words that they can use in their writing, for example, knowing just the first six letters m, a, t, s, p, c enables students to write words such as mat, cat, pat, sat, am, at,

tap, Sam, sat, Pam, pat, cat correctly. It also helps them write many of the letters in words that are important to them for example, mum.

- Your students can quickly use the heavy-duty consonants to help them read the words that they will meet in their first reading books, e.g. cat, come, see, said, me, my, to, dad, man, hat, at, am etc.
- Your students will not be confused by having to learn letters that look alike, close together. For example b d, m n, p q, could confuse some beginning or struggling readers, whereas m t a s etc look different.

Although z is not a common letter, we put it near the beginning of our teaching sequence for motivational purposes. We have found that most students quickly learn z because of its shape and its relationship to the words zoo and zebra. We have also found that they feel smart because they know the last letter of the alphabet!

### **Why are there no fiction books in the *Quick60* programme?**

There are three main reasons why there are no fiction books in the *Quick60* programme. Our research has shown us that:

- there are plenty of fiction books in classrooms already.
- older struggling readers, particularly boys, prefer fact to fiction.
- fiction is predictable. We want our students to learn particular skills, not guess from a predictable context.

### **Does the *Quick60* programme support the books being sent home?**

No, the programme stands alone without the books going home. The best way to make the home-school connection is to have the students write their daily dictated sentence in a special writing book. This book goes home each night for the student to re-read the sentence and illustrate what they have written. The book is then returned to school the next day. If the student forgets the book, they can write the next day's sentence on a sheet of paper, which can later be pasted into the book.

Writing the daily sentence in a book provides both teacher and parent with ongoing evidence of the student's writing and spelling progress.

Keeping the book at school also ensures that it is not lost or damaged.