



Homestead Readers

A Cowboy Story

and other stories

by Kimberly Young

with contributions from Patti Dillistone

homesteadreaders.com

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Why Homestead Readers

How are Homestead Readers different from other leveled books on the market labeled as early reading books? Unlike many early reading books, Homestead Readers progress through well thought-out phonics steps to give the student mastery of one skill before moving on to another skill. The new skill(s) for each story is explained at the beginning of the story, so the adult is prepared to help their student learn the new reading skill if they don't already know it.

Most other early reading books introduce all kinds of words at the same time without the student having the skills to decode those words. This often results in the student looking at the picture to guess what the words are saying rather than truly reading. This is a hard habit to break. Just because a book has few words on a page does not mean the page will be easy to read.

Have you never taught phonics? Don't worry. It really is not hard. Phonics is the key for students to be able to decode words they have never seen before. This is an important skill to have! The beginning of each story in the Homestead Readers series will have an explanation of how to go about teaching a student how to decode the words that use the new phonetic concept for that story.

Beginning Reading Tips

- Each story begins with a list of the new words in that story. Practice reading these words until the student can read them fluently. Then, proceed to the story.
- Have the student point with his finger under the words as he reads. This will enable him to keep his place.
- It is important that the student learns to decode the word for himself. If they incorrectly read a word, tell him to try it again by breaking the word down into its individual sounds.
- Never tell the student a word. You may help by telling him to sound out the word again, but let him do the decoding. If he is tempted to look at the picture and guess, cover up the picture. After he has read the words and explained what he has just read, then let him look at the picture.
- After reading a page, ask the student to explain in his own words what happened on that page. This immediate feedback is your way of checking on his reading comprehension. It is important that he can decode the words as well as understand what those words mean all together.
- Ask the student to read each book several times before moving on to the next book. Practice makes perfect, and success breeds success.
- A letter cluster is a group of letters that make one sound (sh, ch, etc.). It can be helpful to have the student copy the words and put a circle around the letter clusters to help them remember to say these letters as one sound.

Review Word List

Skills introduced in Levels 1-11

stop

age

cow

ewe

wage

cowboys

hay

sheep

cowgirls

play

shearing

gator

Chad

Storm

corn

check

horses

shorn

chase

tractor

three

spring

stockman

good

things

coats

stress

nothing

winter

different

Review Word List

Skills introduced in Levels 1-11

out	looking	gently
outside	try	hefty
ground	sticks	healthy
tools	safe	barley
branches	fire	wool
toasters	clippers	grow
night	partner	bowl
right	water	new
tight	burn	kind
fleece	turned	medicine

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Donut Gets A Hair Cut

“dge” as in “fudge”

When we see “d”, “g”, and “e” at the end of a syllable and these letters are preceded by one vowel, these three letters make the “j” sound, as we hear in the word “fudge”.

Word List

edge

hedge

budge

nudge

fudge

fridge

fidget

gently



Today was shearing day. Grant helped bring the sheep in from the grass pen.

“Come around the edge of this hedge, Grant,” said Dad. “There is a ewe in that bush.”



Grant and Dad hauled the ewes to Mr. Chad's farm. Mr. Chad would be shearing the sheep.

“Dad, this ewe will not budge,” Grant said. Dad gave her a gentle nudge, and she leapt off the edge of the trailer.



Mr. Chad gently took the first ewe out of the pen. “That is Donut!” Grant said to Mr. Chad. “She is my very own ewe.”

“She is a fine looking ewe,” Mr. Chad told Grant. “Hold still Donut! Do not fidget or budge. I will have your winter coat off in no time.”