

NARRATIVE PROFILE

Saxon® Phonics and Spelling is a research-based and classroom-tested literacy program that enables children working at different skill levels to develop a solid reading foundation. The program was developed to provide targeted instruction in the most important foundational skills of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, spelling, alphabetizing, handwriting, fluency, checking for understanding, and support for vocabulary development. This program may be used in conjunction with other reading programs, providing students with the information they need to become more successful, independent readers.

EVIDENCE BASE/EFFICACY

A study conducted by PRES Associates, Inc. with nearly 700 students using the program showed that students using the program significantly improved over the course of the school year in the areas of spelling, phonics, and reading words, including high-frequency and sight words. The program worked with female and male students who spoke a language other than English at home, including special and non-special education students. Using the program improved teachers' levels of preparation and knowledge to teach reading, spelling, and writing. The program was highly regarded by 94 percent of teachers. The report concluded that "students who used this program outperformed students who did not in the areas of spelling, phonics, and reading words." Research studies for *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* meet the **strong evidence level** as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). To view additional research and efficacy studies please visit the research library at www.hmco.com/research/library.

MOTIVATION & ENGAGEMENT

Saxon Phonics and Spelling motivates students by including colorful, easy, average, and challenging leveled fluency readers that offer appealing opportunities for reading practice. All three levels of each fluency reader focus on the same theme, but differences in genre, sentence complexity, syntax, and word count allow teachers to adapt reading practice to all ability levels. Daily alphabet activities help children practice and recite the alphabet while engaging them through fun games that teach them how to recognize and sequence letters. Explicit instruction, multisensory approach to learning (including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), multiple small- and whole-group activities, hands-on games, and active learning opportunities provide students with multiple opportunities to build confidence and foundational skills.

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

Saxon Phonics and Spelling is a literacy program developed to provide targeted instruction for at-risk and struggling readers, providing instruction in the most important foundational skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, spelling, alphabetizing, handwriting, fluency, checking for understanding, and support for vocabulary development. The program enables children working at different skill levels to develop a solid reading foundation.

GRADES
K-3

INSTRUCTIONAL CATEGORY

Supplemental

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

Foundational Reading

EVIDENCE LEVEL*

Strong

RTI TIERS

Tiers II, III

* HMH's evidence ratings are based on the U.S. Department of Education's non-regulatory guidance for ESSA. Evidence ratings issued by clearinghouses and independent research agencies (e.g. Evidence for ESSA) may differ due to varying criteria used to judge evidence.

***Saxon Phonics and Spelling* Narrative Profile**

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Saxon Phonics and Spelling ensures children develop the understanding of phonemic awareness that is critical to reading acquisition. The program's instruction places special emphasis on this critical skill, particularly for kindergarten and students in first grade. Phonemic awareness is taught through explicit and systematic instruction in all 140 lessons at the kindergarten level and in the first seventy lessons at the first grade level. Early phonemic awareness instruction provides children with the essential foundation in the alphabetic principle which is then reinforced throughout the remainder of *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* as part of the daily lessons. Through regular play and engaging oral activities that involve skills such as identifying sounds and syllables, rhyming, blending, phoneme segmentation, and phoneme deletion, children gradually develop phonemic awareness. Daily phonemic awareness instruction may be found in lesson plans with clear and direct instructional paths and skill objectives at the kindergarten level. These skill-building activities are part of the daily lesson warm-up instruction.

The phonemic awareness preassessment is provided in kindergarten to gauge children's readiness. Phonemic Awareness Practice Activities for Teachers provides additional activities that can be implemented on a one-on-one basis or in small groups to help children raise their levels of phonemic awareness. The Phonemic Awareness Practice Activities for Parents suggests exercises parents can conduct with their children to reinforce classroom instruction. All of these items are contained in the Kindergarten Teacher's Resource Binder. An additional phonemic awareness assessment (Teacher's Resource Binder) is provided for first through third grades to diagnose difficulties. Guidance is provided to help teachers take the information gathered from this assessment and implement activities to help children develop this critical skill. With *Saxon Phonics and Spelling*, all children are given ample opportunities to gain phonemic awareness, which allows them the best chance to become successful readers.

PHONICS

The phonics instruction in *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* is explicit and systematic. Children are taught the sounds, the letters that make the sounds, and how and why these letters come together to form words. All forty-eight of the most regular letter-phoneme relationships described in the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) studies are covered thoroughly. In each Phonics and Spelling K-2 lesson, a single, accessible phonics increment or concept is introduced. These concepts are then continually practiced and reviewed in every subsequent lesson so students are able to read and spell words of increasing complexity. Evidence of this practice is found in each lesson in the Teacher's Manuals as well as each student worksheet.

Phonics instruction is reinforced and each element of Orton-Gillingham's language triangle (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning) is incorporated through a variety of engaging and motivating activities. Children participate daily in paced activities related to key phonics concepts such as letters, sounds, spelling, and sight words. Additional card decks provide individualized practice or remediation through games of varying difficulty levels. Evidence of this practice is found in each lesson of the Grade K-2 Teacher's Manuals under Lesson Warm-up and Application and Continual Review, and under Review of Decks and Worksheets in Grade 3. Worksheets allow children to apply what they have learned and allow teachers to track children's progress daily. The program provides children with many opportunities to read for meaning through the use of decodable student readers and worksheets that have been carefully written to support the phonics instruction. Fiction and nonfiction decodable student readers are provided at each grade level so that children can practice reading with confidence.

Controlled vocabulary is used throughout the series. Children read only those letters/letter clusters, sounds, and sight words that they have learned to decode so they are able to achieve automaticity without struggling over unknown sounds, letters, or words. *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* enables children to have many successful reading experiences.

***Saxon Phonics and Spelling* Narrative Profile**

FLUENCY

In the *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* program, repeated exposure to high-frequency words at an appropriate level allows children to be successful and gives them the confidence necessary to achieve fluency. A specific section of each homework page for Grades K–2 is devoted to daily practice of high-frequency words. Each week students in Grade 3 receive both a reading and a spelling word list to practice during the week.

Saxon Phonics and Spelling fluency readers provide explicit, systematic practice to help children achieve automaticity with high-frequency words. The fluency readers, available in three distinct reading levels (easy, average, and challenging), provide engaging fiction and nonfiction text that children may independently read in pairs or in small groups. The three levels of each fluency reader are centered on the same theme, but they have differences in genre, sentence complexity, syntax, and number of words per page. Each fluency reader is written so these elements are most appropriate for the level of the children reading them. Ranging in number from forty-five in kindergarten to 105 in third grade, fluency readers give each child many opportunities to read according to his or her ability. Accompanying Fluency Masters are available for children who need more exposure to high-frequency words. These materials combine to give children the support they need to learn to read for meaning and with expression.

Each fluency reader is controlled by what the children have been taught in *Saxon's* phonics program and features concentrated practice with high-frequency words. Fluency readers give each child many opportunities to read according to his or her ability. Repeated exposure to high-frequency words at an appropriate level allows children to be successful and gives them the confidence necessary to achieve fluency.

VOCABULARY

Saxon Phonics and Spelling addresses vocabulary development and acquisition by laying a solid foundation in phonics and fluency so children are better able to enhance their vocabularies through independent reading. Sight words and high-frequency words are strategically introduced and then reviewed often. The program's reading and spelling word lists, found in the Teacher's Resource Binders, contain hundreds of decodable words as well as sight words, all of which are incorporated into lessons or student readings during the year. The inclusion of high-frequency words in the program is informed by the Dolch high-frequency word list. Repeated exposure to high-frequency words at appropriate levels allows children to be successful and gives them the confidence necessary to achieve fluency. The program focuses on concepts such as morphemes, suffixes, and prefixes, allowing children to better assimilate into their vocabulary words that are similar to those they have already learned.

COMPREHENSION

Saxon Phonics and Spelling provides children with the skills and practice they need to become fluent readers, thus opening the door to increased comprehension. Through the decodable readers and the fluency readers, lessons include instruction in print awareness and story vocabulary, preparing children to comprehend what they read. Instructions in both of these concepts are found in each reader lesson of the K–3 Teacher's Manuals. Fluency is cultivated through explicit, systematic practice of high-frequency words, and as children achieve or increase their fluency, they are better able to read for understanding.

Questioning strategies provided for the teacher allow all children to participate in checking for understanding activity, regardless of which level book the child may have read. An annotated bibliography of award-winning children's literature is included in the Teacher's Resource Binders to help teachers find read-aloud material to accompany the lessons and improve children's oral and listening comprehension.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Saxon Phonics and Spelling can be targeted to Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instructional needs delivering robust instruction and engaging materials that provide a wide array of instructional modifications. Diagnostic and prescriptive assessments allow teachers to place students in instruction that best meets their learning needs. Through a clear and comprehensive instructional design, students work with systematic integrated learning that builds on previously taught concepts and grows daily with new skills.

The program offers:

- **Incremental Learning:** Instruction is given in small increments and reviewed daily to ensure mastery.
- **Controlled Practice:** Children are never asked to read letters or combinations they have not been explicitly taught.
- **Integrated Phonics and Spelling:** Simultaneous instruction helps children master sound-symbol associations.
- **Diacritical Marks and Phonetic Rules:** Visual cues and explicit rules assist children in unlocking the language code.

SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS AND STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In *Saxon Phonics and Spelling*, the instruction is reinforced and each element of Orton-Gillingham's language triangle (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning or multisensory approach) is incorporated through a variety of engaging and motivating activities. Students participate daily in cue-card activities related to key phonics concepts such as letters, sounds, spelling, and sight words. Additional card decks provide individualized practice or remediation through games of varying difficulty. This kind of practice is found in every lesson: grades K–2 Teacher's manual under the Lesson Warm-up; for grade 3, Application and Continual Review and under Review of Decks and Worksheets.

The materials in *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* and the systematic presentation of the skills and concepts enable English learners and special education students to construct meaning and develop understanding of the concepts and skills that are introduced and reviewed and reinforced. Students' visual, auditory and tactical senses are engaged, with these materials, thereby meeting the needs of all students. In order to assist in ongoing success for all students, the program includes modeling, pacing, scaffolding, direct and explicit instruction of the skills.

ASSESSMENT & PROGRESS MONITORING

Progress monitoring is built into the program. Oral and written phonics assessments, sight word evaluations, spelling tests, and optional reading fluency assessments are also built into the program. Posttests allow schools to evaluate program effectiveness and track student performance. Designed to meet screening, diagnostic, instructional, and evaluative objectives, assessments gauge how well children are learning and retaining concepts to determine how best to adjust the pace of instruction.

Assessments are both diagnostic and prescriptive in nature. Oral and written assessments, sight word evaluations, and spelling tests are built into the program at regular intervals. If an assessment indicates a deficiency in concept knowledge, teachers can follow the recommended remediation activities that accompany the assessment. In many instances, the recommended remediation includes the use of the program's Kid Cards. The *Individualized Practice and Remediation: Hands-On Games and Activities* booklet in the *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* Teacher's Manual provides suggestions for games that will help improve students' weak areas. These same suggestions and activities can be used to address deficiencies, which are identified by the DIBELS benchmarks as needed. Remediation activities and classroom and individual assessment recording forms are available to track results.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Fluency readers offer diverse fiction and nonfiction stories that use controlled decodable text and feature attractive and engaging illustrations. Written at easy, average, and challenging levels, these colorful readers provide practice reading high-frequency words to help children build fluency. All three levels of each fluency reader focus on the same theme, but differences in genre, sentence complexity, syntax, and word count allow teachers to adapt reading practice to all ability levels.

SCHOOL-TO-HOME CONNECTION

The program includes Parent Letters, Parent Notes, Homework Folders, and Phonemic Awareness Practice Activities for Parents that give parents exercises that they can conduct with their children to reinforce classroom instruction. Students can also bring their decodable readers home to practice their reading skills with their families, reinforcing what they are learning in the classroom. The Parent Letters introduce parents to the concepts and skills that will be taught during the year. There are three individual letters and each one has a different focus: Phonics and Spelling; Fluency; and Handwriting. Each Parent Letter introduces the parent to the concepts and skills their child will be taught throughout the year as well as gives suggestions, activities, and strategies parents can do to help their child at home.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Together with the experts from Literacy Solutions™ and Math Solutions®, HMH Professional Services helps schools and districts achieve measurable gains with a flexible approach to professional learning centered on student outcomes. To ensure effective program implementation and student growth, consultants collaborate with leadership to co-develop a plan for improvement, goals for teacher and student learning, and metrics to monitor progress. Ongoing professional development helps the district build and maintain a community of learners working together to improve instruction.

HMH Professional Services works with the school or district to personalize professional learning through a blended approach, including online and on-demand courses, coaching, embedded program resources, and other opportunities for teachers to shape their own learning. Teachers benefit from a flexible experience that is ongoing and focused on goals addressing their unique needs.

GETTING STARTED

Foundational Getting Started courses help educators learn how to use their HMH programs in the context of lesson planning and classroom instruction. These interactive sessions allow participants to experience lessons from both the teacher and student perspectives, plus get hands-on practice accessing and integrating the digital resources into their instruction. Each Getting Started course comes with a comprehensive Professional Learning Guide for extra support. Additionally, teachers benefit from on-demand professional resources embedded within the program at point of use.

FOLLOW-UP & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Follow-Up sessions build upon the foundational knowledge of Getting Started to help teachers take full advantage of their HMH program's components, assessments, differentiation, and digital tools in meeting the needs of their students. Topics are classroom-focused, hands-on, and offer opportunities to apply understanding. Follow-Up sessions are modular and flexible, with topics and lengths designed to meet the needs of different groups of teachers within the same district and even within the same school.

Beyond program implementation, practice-based courses bring best practices and innovative approaches to equip educators with the most effective, research-based instructional strategies.

Saxon Phonics and Spelling Narrative Profile

Topics range from mastering foundations and addressing content standards to honing best practices and planning effective remote instruction. Beginning with an instructional needs assessment and strategic plan, HMH teams work to personalize the professional learning experience to raise student achievement and transform school-wide performance.

COACHING & COLLABORATION

Job-embedded instructional coaching provides a sustainable, data-driven, and personalized approach to helping each teacher meet their individual learning goals. HMH's research-based coaching model is student-focused and proven to help teachers improve their practice and raise student achievement. Coaching can include:

- Model lessons to illustrate instructional techniques
- Support for implementing effective teaching practices
- Differentiation strategies to meet the needs of all students
- Focus on developing and deepening content knowledge
- Analysis of student work samples to assess learning and determine instructional next steps
- Facilitation of professional learning communities, cadres, and collaborative planning

To make coaching even more accessible, the HMH Coaching Studio provides a platform for teachers and coaches to stay connected, share resources, upload and reflect on classroom videos, and make continuing progress on learning goals. Through the HMH Coaching Studio, teachers have access to goal tracking, model lessons, collaboration spaces, video-powered coaching, and more. Teacher's Corner, an online hub of professional learning and teaching support resources, provides opportunities for collaboration where educators can also participate in learning events, webinars, social media, and more to share ideas and learn together.

To learn more about how effective practices, frameworks, and expert opinion from research literature has been translated into the program and practices of HMH Professional Services, please visit:

www.hmhco.com/research/professional-services-research-foundations.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

***Saxon Phonics and Spelling* kits for grades K–2 include the following:**

Teacher's Manuals—three volumes

Classroom Materials (non-consumable) including the following:

- Four sets of average-level fluency readers (Kindergarten—60 books; Grades 1 and 2—104 books)
- Review Decks with storage container—letter, picture, spelling, sight word cards; Grades 1 & 2 also include affix, alphabet/accent cards
- Kid Cards with storage container
- Wall cards—alphabet, vowel rules, spelling rules, syllable division
- Posters—colors, numbers, Leo and Wriley classroom management; Grades 1 & 2 also include letter clusters; Grade 2 also includes sight words
- Pronunciation guide compact disc (for teacher use only)

Student Materials include the following (24- and 32-student kits):

- Student worksheets
- Letter tiles
- Alphabet handwriting strips
- Black-and-white decodable readers (16 in Kindergarten; 52 in Grade 1; and 26 in Grade 2)
- Spelling Dictionary and Reference Booklets

Saxon Phonics and Spelling Narrative Profile

Saxon Phonics and Spelling kits for Grade 3 include the following:

Teacher's Manuals—two volumes

- Student worksheet masters

Classroom Materials include the following:

- 3 sets of average leveled fluency readers (105 books)
- Review Decks with storage container—letter, picture, spelling, sight word, affix cards
- Kid Cards with storage container
- Wall cards—alphabet, vowel rules, spelling rules, syllable division
- Posters—letter clusters, Leo and Wriley classroom management
- Pronunciation guide compact disc (for teacher use only)

Student Materials including the following (24- and 32-student kits):

- Alphabet handwriting strips
- 35 black-and-white decodable readers
- Spelling Dictionary and Reference Booklets

hnhco.com/saxon-phonics-spelling

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