



DESTINATION **Reading**[™]

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Frequently Asked Questions



DESTINATION
Reading[™]



Destination Reading FAQ

Q. What is Destination Reading?

A. Destination Reading is a comprehensive K-3 electronically-based reading curriculum that enables students to read fluently and with understanding while approaching new language challenges with strength and confidence. Divided into two courses, the K-1 level focuses on emergent and beginning readers. It helps children grow from non-readers with limited textual experiences to fluent readers and writers. The second course focuses on grades two-three. It supports readers and writers in improving their fluency, comprehension and range of application — effectively strengthening their overall language and communication skills.

Q. How was Destination Reading developed?

A. By listening to your needs, we designed a product that was founded in science and built for today's active classroom. Through research, focus groups, educator surveys and children's feedback, Riverdeep has built a product that enables teachers to effectively reach learners with a variety of skills while assessing learning with the most appropriate mechanisms.

Q. Who guided your product development?

- A. Reading and Language Development Specialist Dr. Victoria Purcell-Gates made significant contributions to the development of Destination Reading. A noted researcher and author, Dr. Purcell-Gates is recognized as one of the country's leading thinkers in literacy and reading instruction. Her primary objective with Destination Reading was to identify the reading standards that should be included in the program, and to review instructional content and learner feedback.
- B. A five-person Instructional Design Team created the appropriate unit scope and sequence and designed the instructionally effective activities. All the members of the team hold advanced degrees in reading, including Dr. Henry Olds, Reading Specialist.
- C. Kathleen Hanson provided input from her experience as a Speech-Language Pathologist.

Q. How has the most recent research affected Destination Reading's development?

A. Current, proven research was combined with classroom observations and teacher focus groups to create the most well-thought-out and researched product on the market today. Destination Reading teaches children to read with a balanced approach that explicitly teaches phonics, decoding and comprehension skills within and around language, and literature-rich activities. Skill instruction is embedded within leveled, authentic texts. *[See attached bibliography.]*

Q. Does Destination Reading meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act?

A. Yes. Destination Reading is based on leading scientific research and meets relevant portions of the act, such as:

No Child Left Behind Act	Destination Reading
Reading First State Grants (Title I, Part B, Subpart 1): State grants are awarded based on evidence that they have significantly increased the percentage of third grade students reading at the proficient level.	The Learning Management System that accompanies Destination Reading allows teachers and administrators to document their students' success.
Reading First State Grants (Title I, Part B, Subpart 1): Subgrantees must select and administer screening, diagnostics and classroom-based instructional reading assessments to determine which students in kindergarten through grade three are at risk of reading failure.	Destination Reading provides screening, diagnostics, and classroom-based instructional reading assessments that enable teachers to determine which students are at risk of reading failure.
Reading First State Grants (Title I, Part B, Subpart 1): Subgrantees are required to provide professional development (in the essential components of reading instruction) for teachers of students in kindergarten through grade three and special education teachers of students in kindergarten through grade twelve.	A network of experienced Riverdeep Educational Consultants supports each implementation of Destination Reading. Top-quality professional development is also available from Teacher Universe.
Even Start (Title I, Part B, Subpart 3): Identify and provide activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based research.	Destination Reading is based on the latest scientific research on literacy and reading instruction.





Q. Does Destination Reading meet state standards?

A. Yes. Destination Reading’s Scope and Sequence were determined by carefully reviewing state standards for reading instruction. Integrating scientifically based research augmented those standards, which resulted in a leading edge reading curriculum. Destination Reading is correlated to each of the 50 states’ learning standards — see the correlation attachment for more details.

Q. Is there a strong home-school connection with the Destination Reading materials?

A. As an Internet- and software-based curriculum, Destination Reading’s accessibility naturally facilitates and encourages the home-school connection. The Teacher’s Guide contains a letter to send home to parents describing how and why the curriculum will be taught. Each of the 41 units in Destination Reading contains home-school connection letters that list homework assignments, Take Home sheets, and optional literature packs. Destination Reading’s Internet site provides opportunities to access student assignments at home.

Q. How was the reading level of the texts and materials determined?

A. Several factors were considered in leveling the texts:

- Length of the whole text
- Length of sentences and paragraphs
- Amount of text on each page, and its size
- Number of illustrations, and how closely the illustrations mirror the text
- Difficulty of the words: Can a word be decoded with the phonics rules students have learned so far? Has the word been taught as a sight word? Have students encountered this word in previous stories?
- Familiarity of the topic: Students generally find it easier to understand texts about familiar topics (such as families) than texts about new or abstract ideas, such as gravity

In creating the texts, Riverdeep balanced the need to create materials that students can master with the need to create texts that are interesting and relevant, and which use natural-sounding language.

Q. Can I integrate Destination Reading with my standard curriculum?

A. Destination Reading is a learner-centered reading program that is easily integrated into your standard curriculum. Implement it as an engaging and effective centerpiece to any well-balanced, fully realized reading, writing and language curriculum, or easily and effectively integrate Destination Reading on an as-needed basis to supplement your existing activities. Its scope and sequence is correlated to state standards and also to most major basal reading programs. Destination Reading is designed to be flexible and easy to customize to your needs.

Q. How are Destination Reading’s curriculum units organized?

A. Using the whole-part-whole philosophy, all skills are taught within the context of a “whole”, such as a story, newspaper article or poem. The “whole” is followed by skill-building activities. These have illustrative instructional examples and problem-set words that are taken from the text to which the learner has previously been exposed. Once the skill building is done, students proceed to a second “whole” — such as another text, a writing activity, or a make-and-take activity.

Grade Level	Curriculum at a Glance
Kindergarten	Fundamental print concepts; alphabetic principles; phonemic awareness; phonics; three-letter words; early reading.
First Grade	Continued phonics and phonemic awareness; automatic word recognition; vocabulary; comprehension strategies; narrative fiction and informational texts; decodable texts; writing activities.
Second Grade	Comprehension; advanced phonics; word study; elements of fiction; elements of non-fiction; writing; early grammar.
Third Grade	Advanced continuation of second-grade topics plus research skills; reading for task-related purposes; reading graphics-based text.

Destination Reading FAQ

Q. What are the different ways I can implement Destination Reading?

A. Riverdeep understands that implementation is dependent on your needs, teaching style and site goals. With that in mind, here are just a few of the ways you can implement Destination Reading in your classroom:

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Reading Lab: | With a new activity for every day of the school year, Destination Reading is perfect to implement in your reading lab. |
| Whole Class: | Complete the activities as a large group using a projector or LCD screen. |
| Small groups: | If you use reading centers in your classroom, you can use Destination Reading for your technology center. |
| Individualized Instruction: | You can create individual assignments for each learner that can be correlated to your standard curriculum. |

Q. I have successfully taught reading for many years. How will I benefit from Destination Reading?

A. Destination Reading's activities will reinforce the reading skills and strategies you currently teach. The effective use of technology in the classroom motivates and encourages students. The multiple learning styles incorporated in the Destination Reading program address students' different strengths and unique learning styles.

Q. How does this program meet the wide range of abilities, skill levels and learning styles in my classroom?

A. Destination Reading is appropriate for learners at various levels, giving a boost to students who are struggling while motivating able learners to extend their reach by providing:

- A variety of text genres that appeal to a variety of learning styles
- Exploration-based activities that engage logical thinking
- Hands-on make-and-take activities
- Virtual manipulatives that aid conceptual learning
- Instructions that appeal to auditory and visual learners
- Engaging characters and dynamic animation that increase students' time on task

Q. How is Destination Reading different from other reading software?

A. There are many good educational products on the market. Destination Reading is better equipped to meet the needs of emerging and new readers than any other product because it:

- Employs exceptional instructional design
- Can easily be integrated into your standard curriculum
- Is flexible and can adapt to any teaching or learning style
- Provides more varied texts and more activities than any other program
- Contains multiple text genres to engage multiple varieties of learners
- Allows language skills to be learned in the context of real language use and then applied to real language tasks
- Employs guided reading with developmentally appropriate content
- Exposes learners to a wide variety of literature
- Meets relevant portions of the No Child Left Behind Act
- Provides interesting and engaging learning environments with colorful graphics, animation and sound
- Promotes technology skills
- Meets state standards

Q. How is writing integrated into Destination Reading?

A. Destination Reading contains writing-based activities within its whole-part-whole-based curriculum. Beginning with the First Grade Curriculum, every unit has at least one writing activity.

Some types of writing activities for First Graders include:

- Making predictions
- Writing exaggerated sentences
- Summarizing specific information from previously read texts
- Writing real or silly compound words
- Writing about a new character for the story they just read, given a set of descriptive words
- Writing a new adventure given story starters
- Writing what they would like to learn before reading an informational text

Activities for Second and Third Graders include:

- Writing sentences using phonics words
- Writing non-fiction or fiction sentences
- Writing exaggerated sentences
- Making predictions
- Writing stories, reports, informational texts or folk tales
- Comparing and contrasting
- Drawing conclusions
- Formulating questions
- Recalling and summarizing specific information



Q. How do the writing activities specifically occur within the program?

A. Writing is treated as one activity type within the framework of learning how to read. Writing is used in conjunction with comprehension activities, phonics skill building and instruction, and in-sentence creation. Many writing tasks are set up on a “follow the model” basis, in which Destination Reading provides a model of a type of genre and then asks learners to repeat it.

For example, the Tall Tale unit might include two writing activities:

Activity A: You just read a Tall Tale. Tall Tales include lots of exaggerations. Take these plain sentences and turn them into exaggerated sentences.

Activity B: You've read a Tall Tale. Tall Tales include characters who are larger than life. Create your own character that is larger than life.

Q. Are Kindergartners exposed to writing activities?

A. As they build language skills, Kindergartners are exposed to “pre-writing” through a variety of activities, including clicking and dragging word tiles to fill in missing words and using word tiles to fill in sentences that build rhymes, animal books, or silly stories.

Q. How many instructional activities does Destination Reading contain?

A. Destination Reading contains nearly 500 activities. This comprehensive program is so robust that students can interact with a new activity each day throughout the entire school year.

COURSE 1

Contains 17 units and 201 activities.

COURSE 2

Contains 24 units and 284 activities.

Destination Reading FAQ

Q. In Course 1, students can click on all text in the skill-building activities, but not in Course 2. Why is that?

A. In Course 1, since many children are not yet readers, we provide the “click on words” feature for them. This helps them build reading skills while enabling them to read simple passages without frustration. In Course 2, we encourage students to read on their own, and we provide increasingly more opportunities for them to do so. We have included on-screen skill-building activities in which students cannot click on words or phrases to hear them read aloud. We were careful to choose texts for these activities that students would have already developed the skills to read on their own, either by sounding out, remembering as a sight word, or having been introduced to it in a text.

Q. What about skill-building activities in Course 2 that deal with phonics? Can students click on the text in those activities?

A. In skill-building activities that deal with phonics and the sounds letters make, we made sure that the on-screen text is clickable. Due to the very nature of phonics, which is all about letter sounds, we wanted to give students opportunities both to see the text (words, sentences and phrases), and, more importantly, to *hear* them. This decision was strongly influenced by current research.

Q. In Course 1, when a student clicks on a word in a text (story, article, poem, etc.), he or she only hears the single word read aloud. In Course 2, when a student clicks on a word in a text, he or she hears the entire sentence read aloud. Why are these different?

A. Teachers have told us that by second grade they want their students to be focusing on words in the context of a sentence.

Q. Can a student ever hear an entire reading passage read aloud?

A. Yes. Almost all Destination Reading stories, articles, poems, etc. have a green “read aloud” button at the top of each page. When the child clicks this button, the entire page is read aloud in rich, narrative fashion. A wide variety of ethnically diverse voices are reflected in these narrations. This feature reflects the importance of providing young learners with many opportunities for hearing expressive narrations.

Q. Some of the stories in Course 1 don’t have interactive media and students cannot click on the words. Why is that?

A. In Course 1 we have provided some texts for students to read on their own. These texts are referred to as “decodable texts.” We have provided these opportunities for children so that they can practice reading on their own, preventing them from relying on the narration provided in the program. They are decodable in that students will be able to recognize or sound out at least 80% of the words found in these texts using the skills presented and learned at that point in the Destination Reading curriculum.



Destination Reading Bibliography

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Over 25 classroom observations in:

Public schools and private Catholic, Jewish and Montessori schools.

Edmark/Riverdeep Reading Programs:

Over 30 years of experience in developing quality reading programs:

Bailey's Book House; Imagination Express series; Let's Go Read 1 and 2, Stories and More; Animal Friends; and Time and Place, Talking Walls; 1 and 2 ThemeWeavers; Nature and Animals, (EdVantage) Writing Trek.