Written and illustrated by

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A Progressive Phonics™ book

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Quick Start Guide

Read the book WITH your child. You read the “regular” text, and he/she reads the big, red words, sort of like reading the different parts in a play.

Help your child sound out the words as needed.

Read the book several times. This helps develop the eye muscles and left-to-right reading patterns that are necessary for reading.

Don’t rush it. Bodybuilders don’t train in a day – neither does a child.

If your child is having difficulty, he/she may need more practice with the alphabet. Get some fun books about the alphabet, and read them many times. Then come back to Progressive Phonics.

And most important of all, HAVE FUN!
Words taught in this book:

at  bat  cat  fat  hat  mat
rat  sat
bad  had  pad  sad
bag
am  ham  Sam  yam
can  Dan  man  ran
cap  map  nap

The above list includes the following Dolch** words:

am  at  can  ran

**Dolch words: This is a list of 220 words that comprise 50%—80% of all written texts in English. These words were identified by Edward William Dolch, PhD., in 1948; the theory is that children who can read these words rapidly and without conscious effort will be well on their way to becoming good readers. The “Dolch List” is the backbone of many English reading programs, including Progressive Phonics.
Look **at** my **cat**.

His name is Hello Yellow.

And look **at** him eat

a bowl of yellow jell-o.
Look at his hat. His hat is very yellow. Did my cat make his hat from a bowl of yellow jell-o?
And look at that **mat**.
That funny **mat** is yellow.
I think my **cat sat**
on a bowl of yellow jell-o.
A **fat cat sat** on a big, **fat mat**, right beside a big, **fat rat**.
If the **fat cat sat** on the **rat**, would the **fat rat** be as flat as the **mat**?
Do not throw a ball at me.
Because of this hat, I cannot see. The hat is so big it covers my eyes. I need a hat that’s more my size.
bad
had
pad
sad
Is my toy **cat** good? Is my toy **cat** **bad**? I never know if she is happy or **sad**. My toy **cat** never plays with a ball. All she does is nothing **at** all.
When I was a baby, I had a yellow duck. When I was two, I had a red truck.
When I was three, I had a chimpanzee. Everyone said he looked a lot like me.
My mother said I had to take a nap. My sister said I had to feed the cat. My brother said I had to tie his shoe. Everyone tells me what to do. I think I’ll scream until I am blue.
bag
I had a bag of candy, but I guess the bag was bad. The bag ate my candy, and now I feel so sad. Wait a minute!
If the **bad bag** ate the candy, why is sugar on my nose? And if the **bag** was **bad**, why is chocolate on my clothes?
I am Sam, and I am nice. Today for lunch, I am eating rice. But the rice in the bowl doesn’t look yummy. I am sure those worms don’t belong in my tummy.
“I am a yam,” said a yam to me, “and I am as happy as a yam can be. I am ready to be eaten if you want to eat a yam... but it would be better if you ate the ham.”
can
Dan
man
ran
I can eat a can of carrots, I can, I can, I can. Like this can of carrots I am holding in my hand.
But they say a can of carrots can break my teeth, so would it be better to eat a can of meat?
A Man Ran

A pair of shoes ran down the street. A man ran too, but he had bare feet. “Wait for me!” said the man as he ran. The shoes just laughed, “Catch us if you can!”
cap
map
nap
I always wear my baseball cap. I never take it off, not even for a nap. One day my cap fell off my head... I didn’t have hair, I had flowers instead.
Although this **map** is a little bit scary, the **map** shows where the treasure is buried.

So I put a pirate **hat** on my pirate **cat**, and we went
outside with our pirate map. But the map was wrong, the map was bad. We only found a frog on a lily pad.
Part Two

NOTE TO TEACHERS/PARENTS

In Part Two, we teach the two “types” of fonts for the letter “a”:

sans serif font
(sans = without)

serif serif font

We are teaching this because many children’s books use a “serif” style of font. (Serifs are short lines and “curls” that are attached to a letter’s basic shape. Serifs help make printed letters easier to read.)

If you read a variety of books with your child/students, it’s a good idea to introduce serif fonts sooner than later.

If your child/student is very young, or if he/she struggles with this information, you may want to skip this section and come back to the subject when your child has more experience with reading.
How we write the letter “a”:

The basic shape is a ball with a stick.

First we draw the ball, and then we draw the stick.

Everyone’s handwriting is a little different, but we can see that each letter “a” has a ball (squished or not) and a stick:
How it looks in books:

Some books use the same kind of letter “a” that we use in handwriting, but many books use a special letter “a” for books:

The letter “a” grows a little “arm.”

The ball and stick shape is under the arm.

The special letter “a” for books/ can look different in different books, but the basic shape is the same – each letter “a” has a little “arm”: 
The reason why...

Sometimes, the letters in books are small – especially in books for older children and for grown-ups.

This can make it hard for some people to see the difference between the letter “o” and the letter “a”:

So they change the letter “a” to make it easier to read:

Let’s practice reading the special letter “a” for books...
It is **bad** to eat with a **bat**. It **can** make a big, **bad** mess. I tried it yesterday, and then I **had** to wash my dress.
It is **bad** to eat with a **bat**.

It **can** make a big, **bad** mess. I tried it yesterday, and then I **had** to wash my **dress**.

(The text on this page is for reference and/or in case a child struggles with the new font.)
My dog, **Dan**, ran down the road. He **ran** to catch a **cat**, oh, no! But the quick little **cat** ran up a tree. Then the little **cat** laughed, “Hee, hee, hee.”
My dog, Dan, ran down the road. He ran to catch a cat, oh, no! But the quick little cat ran up a tree. Then the little cat laughed, “Hee, hee, hee.”
(Read this page WITH your child.)
(He/she reads the big, red words.)

I am so hungry, I am so sad. Why is food so bad, bad, bad? I had ham and yam for dinner today, but they jumped off my plate and ran away.
I **am** so hungry, I **am** so **sad**. Why is food so **bad**, **bad**, **bad**? I **had** **ham** and **yam** for dinner today, but they jumped off my **plate** and **ran** away.
Suggested activities:

Younger children:

Flash cards and memory games using alphabet letters and simple words.

Finger painting, especially to make shapes (circles, squares, lines, triangles) and to make different alphabet letters.

Tracing, connect-the-dots, mazes, etc.

Beginner-style handwriting exercises.

Older children:

All the above plus:

More handwriting (writing actual words, not just tracing letters).

Photocopy a page from a book (such as Dr. Seuss’s Cat in the Hat) and have the child find and circle words with a “book style” letter “a.”
The End

Next:
Progressive Phonics
Book 2: Short Vowel “e”

ProgressivePhonics.com