

# LIT KIT 5: Phonics

## R-CONTROLLED SYLLABLES

**Kit 5** helps your child read R-controlled syllables, where the vowel is followed by the letter "r." In R-controlled syllables, the "r" controls the sound of the vowel; the vowel typically does not sound short or long. R-controlled syllables include words like "car," "bird," "turn" and "her."

### WHAT'S INSIDE?

This kit includes nine decodable books covering three important skills:

- **Skill 1: ar.** Your child will learn to read words with the "ar" sound, as in "smart" or "chart."
- **Skill 2: or, ore.** This skill helps your child read words with the "or" sound, as in "form" or "store." The "or" sound can be spelled "or" or "ore."
- **Skill 3: ir, ur, er.** Your child will practice reading words with the "er" sound, as in "her," "bird" or "curl." The "er" sound can be spelled "ir," "ur" or "er."

### HOW TO USE THIS KIT:

#### READ

Refer to the back of this guide for more on reading decodable texts together.

- **Start with Skill 1:** Begin by reading books that focus on the "ar" sound. Point out how the "r" changes the sound of the vowel. Practice words like "smart" and "starch" and encourage your child to repeat the words aloud.
- **Move to Skill 2:** Move on to the "or" sound. Focus on words like "more" and "store" and help your child identify how the vowel sounds change when the vowel is followed by the letter "r."
- **Practice Skill 3:** The final skill focuses on the "er" sound, as in "bird" and "curl." Help your child notice the different spellings (ir, ur, and er) that make the "er" sound.

#### EXTEND

Try this writing activity to build on the skills in this kit!

- **Grow a Word Garden.** On a piece of paper, write one R-controlled vowel for each sound and spelling across the bottom of the page: ar, or, ore, er, ir, ur.
  1. Grow the Words: Have your child think of and write 2-3 real words for each sound and spelling above the R-controlled vowel, as if it were growing out of the vowel!
    - For example, → ar: cart, star, smart
    - → or: fork, storm, story
    - → ir: bird, shirt, first
- Decorate the page like a garden, with flowers or vines growing the word "leaves."
- Choose words from at least three different patterns and help your child write a sentence with each. Encourage complete, silly or surprising sentences!
  - For example, "The star wore a shirt with forks on it."

### TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS:

- **Play with Sounds:** As you read, pause to ask your child what sound they hear when "r" follows the vowel. Encourage them to make connections between similar words like "smart" and "chart."
- **Find Real-World Examples:** Look for words with R-controlled syllables in your everyday environment, such as on signs, in stores or on food labels.
- **Break it Down:** Help your child break down longer words into syllables, so they can decode R-controlled vowels more easily. Words like "smarty" or "popcorn" can be broken into syllables.
- **Repeat and Practice:** Rereading the books will reinforce these skills. Ask your child to find words in the text that have R-controlled vowels.



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<https://www.slpl.org/lit-kit/>



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## HOW TO USE DECODABLE TEXTS:

Decodable texts give children the opportunity to practice the phonics strategies they have learned in the classroom. When children read these books, they use their blending and segmenting abilities to decode the words in the text.

### *Before reading the book:*

1. Look at the cover and ask your child to read the title or read the title with your child.
2. Ask your child what they think the book will be about.
3. Look at the inside front covers and back covers of the book to see if there is a practice word list.
4. Ask your child to read these words first as a review before reading the book.

### *During reading:*

1. Encourage your child to slide their index finger under the words as they read them.
2. If your child gets stuck on a word, wait a few seconds before you step in to help.
3. If your child needs help or asks for help, try 1-2 of the strategies below to help them figure out the word.

***"Look at the letters in the word. What letters do you see? Can you say the sounds?"***

(This prompt encourages children to focus on the printed letters and connect them to sounds.)

***"Say the sounds in the word slowly as you slide your finger under them."***

(If your child struggles with saying the sounds, you can say the sounds and ask them to repeat them after you.)

***"Blend the sounds together as you slide your finger under them."***

(After saying each sound separately, your child can try to put the sounds together.)

***"I will read this word, and you say the word back to me."***

(Use this prompt for words your child does not know and cannot sound out after trying the other prompts.)

After your child figures out the word they were stuck on, make sure they go back to the beginning of the sentence to build fluency and improve comprehension of the text.

If your child reads a word incorrectly and they don't correct themselves, ask them to go back to that word. You can help them with any of the suggested prompts above. Remember to keep it positive. If you or your child start to feel frustrated, it might be time for a break!

*Please keep this insert inside the kit.*

