

Why Students Should Finish Language / Literacy

Have you ever heard students complain that the Language or Literacy exercises are boring, or too hard, or too easy? Students can come up with many reasons why they shouldn't have to finish the Language and Literacy products.

Don't fall for it! – The truth is students usually want to quit because the Language exercises are HARD and finishing them takes grit.

But this doesn't look like school – Faced with student complaints, you may find it hard to justify finishing the **sound exercises**. After all, they look more like games than like academic content. These exercises are designed to look like video games, but they are not providing mindless entertainment. If you stay the course, the sound exercises will help your students develop cognitive skills, listening skills, and phonological knowledge. Despite their grumbling, your students are laying the ground work for learning to read and achieving academic success in your classroom.

Why are sound exercises hard for your students? - Reading researchers agree that most struggling readers have poor phonological awareness (the ability to hear sounds in words). While there are many reasons that children struggle with reading, poor phonological processing is one of the main culprits. The beauty of the sound exercises is that they target listening closely to the sounds of the English language and making distinctions at the phoneme level.

Which exercises are “sound” exercises?

Fast ForWord product	Sound Sequencing	Phoneme Discrimination	Phoneme Matching
Language	Sky Gym	Moon Ranch	Hoop Nut
Language to Reading	Jumper Gym	Polar Planet	Tomb Trek
Literacy	Space Racer	Galaxy Goal	Spin Master
Literacy Advanced	Sky Rider	Meteor Ball	Lunar Leap

The Language/Literacy series is not just about phonological awareness. A child should finish the language products even if they are strong in decoding / phonological awareness because these exercises also work on the cognitive skills which are critical to be able to read and comprehend what you read. After successfully completing the Language or Literacy series, the result is a student with a strong working memory, sustained attention, fluent auditory processing, efficient word and phoneme recognition, letter-sound correspondence as well as the ability to comprehend spoken language and English grammar – foundational skills that will make for a strong reader.

Which exercises are “word” exercises?

FFW Product	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Listening Comprehension
Language	Robo Dog		Robo Dog	Elebot + Space Commander
Language to Reading		Paint Match + Polar Planet	Cosmic Reader	Cosmic Reader
Literacy	Star Pics		Star Pics	Star Pics + Stellar Stories
Literacy Advanced		Laser Match + Laser Ball	Galaxy Theater	Galaxy Theater

Students build the following cognitive skills while simultaneously strengthening language and reading skills:

- ✓ Sustained and Focused Attention – the ability to maintain focus and attend to stimuli
- ✓ Working Memory – the ability to retain information for immediate use, critical for learning
- ✓ Auditory Processing – the brain's ability to efficiently and accurately process auditory stimuli
- ✓ Sequencing – the ability to put information in the correct order