

Elementary Reading Programs

The Elementary DI reading program consists of six programs. Reading Mastery I and II reach children to read. Reading Mastery III and IV teach children to learn history, geography and science from text. Reading Mastery V and VI teach children to analyze Literature.

Some students are in **Fast Cycle** or **Horizons** reading programs. These are the same as the Reading Mastery programs, except that they move twice as fast. Students in Fast Cycle I complete all the material in Reading Mastery I in about half a year. Similarly, Fast Cycle II and Horizons III and IV cover all of the material in Reading Mastery II, III and IV, in about half the number of lessons. To understand what your child is learning in these programs, you will need to look at the description for the corresponding Reading Mastery program and double the lesson number for your child's group. For example, if your child is in Fast Cycle II, Lesson 30, you should look at Reading Mastery II, Lesson 60, to get an idea of what is being taught.

“What did you learn in school today?” *Information for Parents*

Reading Mastery V
Literature

This level of the program focuses on literature -- short stories, poems and two novels. Many of the selections are classics, such as *The Prince and the Pauper* and “The Ugly Duckling.” Compared to RM III and IV, this level of the program does not emphasize science and social studies information. Instead, students concentrate on the skills they will use for complex adult literature. These skills include understanding cause and effect, putting events in order, making inferences and predictions, and understanding characters and setting. Students also learn how to use outlines, maps, glossaries and indexes. They continue to learn new words and improve their comprehension skills.

Usually, before students read a story, they are taught background information that will help them understand the story better. For example, in lessons 50-52, students learn about the Yukon gold rush and sled dogs. This information prepares them for the story that follows, Jack London’s “Buck,” about a Yukon sled dog. Almost every story in the program has at least one factual article to go with it, because the stories are generally about topics students have not encountered before -- Greek and Roman gods, Medieval London, and the Chicago activist Jane Addams, for example. This means that as they study literature, they are still learning facts about the world. The information passages also help students build skills they can use to read and study textbooks.

For every lesson, students complete a short writing assignment. For example, in lesson 6, they write a paragraph describing Dorothy’s house from *The Wizard of Oz*.

By now, your child should be able to tell you about the story he or she is reading in school, including the title, characters, and if it has a moral or lesson. Here are a few of the selections students read in RM V:

Lessons 6-32 *The Wizard of Oz* (novel, Frank Baum)
 36-42 “A Horse to Remember” (story, Luisa Miller)
 45-46 “The Cat that Walked by Himself” (story, Rudyard Kipling)
 49 “In Time of Silver Rain” (poem, Langston Hughes)
 66-71 “Jackie Robinson” (biography, Duane Jefferson)
 76-78 “The Golden Touch” (Greek myth, Nathaniel Hawthorne)
 98-120 *The Prince and the Pauper* (novel, Mark Twain)

Most students enjoy reading the stories, so they are motivated to work hard. Another motivation comes from the program’s point system. Teachers award points for good work in reading out loud, doing workbook pages and other activities.