



## Video Guide for: Reading Mastery Training Series Disk Two: Why is Reading so Hard?

8:57 minutes

### Video Guide Purpose:

This presentation guide is to be used as a tool for stimulating discussion about the important points raised in the video. It is only intended to be a framework for discussion. Presenters of the video should feel free to add to the focus items which have been included. Other topics related to the events in the video may come up after the video is viewed.

### Video Summary:

“Why is Reading so Hard?” presents the problems faced by many children as they are learning to read. The video addresses how the Reading Mastery program uses carefully constructed print conventions and careful teaching to minimize confusion for beginning readers. The end result of the “funny” print and structured teaching program is that all students can have the experience of becoming successful readers.

### Note:

Although all five teachers are using Reading Mastery successfully in the video, you will see slight differences in presentation from teacher to teacher. In a school provided with support from the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI), some of these differences would be corrected by NIFDI support personnel.

### Focus Items:

The next section includes a list of possible focus items to be used by the presenter. Some points of discussion are bulleted after the focus items, but they include only a sample from the video. Presenters and participants will likely find other topics to discuss depending on their own personal experiences.

- 1. The video makes a point of demonstrating what makes learning to read a difficult process for children. Some examples from the video include:**
  - Lines that make up each letter are just squiggles on paper.



# National Institute for Direct Instruction

- Variations in the sounds that some letters make in words (e.g. the letter “o” in the words old, hole, hound, hoist, hood, hot, cow, bow, bough, bought, sow and sow; the letter “a” in the words hat, hate, pan and pain; the letters “ea” in the words beast, tread, steak, beak, and great).

**How does this information fit with your previous understanding of the beginning reading process?**

- 2. The video mentions several print conventions that Reading Mastery uses to simplify the process of learning to read.**
  - a. What are some of those conventions?
    - A line over a vowel means that the long vowel sound is pronounced.
    - Some letter pairs are joined and presented as a distinct sound (th, sh, etc.).
    - Letters that are not pronounced in a word are much smaller than the others, indicating that they should not be included when blending.
    - Pairs of letters that are often confused are altered to make them look less alike (b&d, p&g, h&n, etc.)
  - b. How does the unusual orthography minimize confusion for beginning readers?
- 3. The video states, “Within a year, the more advanced kindergarten students are reading complex stories with understanding and expression.” How does this compare with your experience with kindergarten readers?** (Note: the video shows kindergarten students reading at lesson 75 of RM2 Classic, which in the Signature version is RM1, lesson 75. This means students have completed the first level of the program and nearly half of the second level.)

**Note to presenter:** The next page should be reproduced and handed out to participants for the purpose of taking notes as the video is viewed and for reference during discussion.



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**b. How does the unusual print minimize confusion for beginning readers?**

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