Using extended continuous text with beginner readers

Presented by
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Many years of frustration for ESL teachers Hazel Davidson & Dorothy Court, caused by lack of reading & spelling resources suitable in linguistic features and content for adult beginner learners

Finally concluded only solution was to write resources themselves.
Resources born of frustration
Readers + workbook + sound CD

2001
Out of print
New edition 2015

2004
Basic Australian geography

2005
Skills & knowledge of Aboriginal people

2005
History of gold in Australia

2008
Australian levels of government & electoral system

2012
Where money comes from, debt, budgeting

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with beginner readers
New in 2014

Cousins: Koala & Wombat

by Hazel Davidson
Pictures by Dorothy Court

Not just cute cuddly marsupials. Evolutionary history, similarities and differences between koalas & wombats, some modern environmental challenges
Spelling resources for beginners
Phonics-based, spelling rules, photocopiable hand cards, wall charts & exercises

2002, 2nd ed. 2011
Sounds of alphabet, exercises on short vowels

2005
Digraphs, exercises on long vowels

2005
Sound CD
Australian pronunciation of sounds from both books
Resources for refugees with no prior literacy

From Sugarbag on Damper Publishing

Collation of teaching tips, work sheets & reading texts by many experienced teachers

(All profits from A Whole New World donated to refugee charities)

2006

Practical tips for teachers, photocopiable charts, handcards, reading texts & worksheets

2006

Songs for learning English “lined slowly, then sung at a moderate pace

Edited by Dorothy Court
Hazel Davidson
and Margaret Hounslow

All profits from this project to the Romero Centre, Médecins sans Frontières and other charitable organisations helping refugees
Resources for refugees with no prior literacy

Written by Hazel Davidson & Dorothy Court

Funded and published by TELLS (TAFE English Language & Literacy Services)
Why extended continuous text?

Students like books
Satisfaction in finishing a book
Provides meaningful context
Adult level & quantity of information
Building students' general knowledge about Australia & the world
Golden rules

NEVER hurry low level students.
Wait till everyone is finished task.
(Teacher may be bored but students are intimidated.)

Beginner students generally like repetition
   - provides predictability, reassurance & confidence.

Usual preparation
   - look at & talk about pictures,
   - maybe pre-teach a few unfamiliar words etc.
     (See Workbooks for vocab lists & Easy text for cut & paste exercises)

Discuss story - ask about similar events/experiences/places
   in students’ lives. (Reading is about meaning, not just decoding)

Reinforce
   - point out same or similar sounds/spellings/words
     in other contexts
   - manipulate words/pictures, sentences, information
     (Look at our spelling books & Workbooks for examples.)
Not intended as whole program

Presupposes concurrent:
- work on social issues for class/individual students
- work on learning strategies
- work on specific language issues problematic for students
e.g., pronunciation, verb usage, vocabulary building etc. etc.

Choice of texts

We use our own texts but you may choose others
- far more available now than 10 years ago
  e.g., TELLS beginner readers
Presentation in 2 parts:

• Lowest level students
  - very little English &/or no print literacy in any language

• Students with basic decoding skills in English but
  - low levels of confidence
  - infrequent use or avoidance of reading & writing
  - limited vocabulary & sentence structure
  - limited general knowledge
What do we do?

For students with no print literacy in any language

1. **Alphabet** - names & sounds
   - whistle
   - hand cards (available from *English Spelling Vol. 1*)
   - letter to sound; sound to letter
   - drill everyday till most known
   - continue with digraphs, spelling rules, sight words etc
2. Choose a text

e.g., *Holiday in 2004* from *A Whole New World*

(Photocopy & staple together to form a separate book.)

Ten pages of easy-to-read text in simple past tense, describing a camping holiday which included encountering various forms of Australian wildlife, fishing and swimming.

Other reading texts in *A Whole New World*:

*John and Hazel live in Brisbane*  
(Simple present, daily routine)

*What is happening now?*  
(Present continuous, *he, she, it, they*)

Of course, you may choose similar level texts written by other authors.
3. Decode **Ho / li / day**

Divide each word into syllables on slide onto white board. Sound the word pointing to each letter. Ask students to repeat the sound after you. (Throughout the whole process students repeat after you.)

i) /h/, /o/  *(DON’T write phonetic symbols for students)*
   Then the syllable /ho/

ii) /l/, /I/
   Syllable /lI/

iii) /d/, ay says /ei/
   Syllable /deI/

iv) Word /holidei/
   Say slowly, then at normal speech pace.

*Go through this process for each phrase, then repeat the whole phrase. Then the sentence. Very slow process. Cover only one or two pages in a session. At the beginning of each new session, reread the earlier sentences with the students repeating.*
For students with basic decoding skills
(and possibly English as home language)

1. Choose text
e.g. Cousins: Koala & Wombat

Written at 3 different levels
(Easy, Medium, Hard):
ACSF 1, 2, 2-3
ISLPR 1, 1+, 2-2+

You may of course choose other
texts written by other authors at
similar levels of linguistic
difficulty.
2. Choose version in students' comfort zone
(See comparative texts in teachers' notes in *Workbook*)

A very old land

Long, long, long ago
there was a very big land
in the south of the world.

We call that land Gondwana.

*Easy* text Dyslexie font 16 pt
(www.studiostudio.nl)
Chunked for meaning, single principal clauses,
no passive verbs
History

 Millions of years ago there was one big land in the south of the world.
 We call that land Gondwana.

Medium text

*Chunked for meaning, slightly more difficult, with slightly more content.*
Pre-History

About 500 million years ago there was a single huge landmass in the south of our planet. Scientists call it Gondwana.

Gondwana included modern Africa, Antarctica, Australia, India, New Guinea, New Zealand and South America.
3. Work through text

- Don’t rush (No need to finish in single session – serialise!)
- Read for meaning (Not decoding to please teacher but source of pleasure &/or information for all)
  Discuss, link to known facts/experiences
  Discuss illustrations
  Discuss unfamiliar words & concepts
  If book incomplete at end of session, reread earlier sections at beginning of next session to keep flow of meaning
4. Work through some or all of exercises at the equivalent level in workbook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Easy level</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medium level</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hard level</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alphabetical order</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound/spelling (phonics)</td>
<td>Possessive adjectives</td>
<td>Possessive adjectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>Its/it’s</td>
<td>Its/it’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Spelling of /i/</td>
<td>Spelling of /i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs (simple present, is/are, was/were, can, must, like to, want to)</td>
<td>Verbs (simple present - positive, negative, interrogative)</td>
<td>Verbs (simple present - positive, negative, interrogative; simple past regular, irregular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural nouns</td>
<td>Similar to/different from</td>
<td>Syllabification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detailed listening</td>
<td>Sentence writing</td>
<td>Unstressed syllables</td>
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<td>Detailed listening</td>
<td>Summary notes</td>
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<td>Paragraph writing</td>
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<td>Detailed listening</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Examples of exercises from Workbook:

Exercises – Easy, Page 1

1.
ancestor  a burrow  claws
dig        fight       Gondwana
marsupial baby  pouch  thumbs

a)  

b)  
c)  

d)  

e)  
f)  

g)  

h)  
i)  

Using extended continuous text
with beginner readers
Scaffolding for independent writing for reluctant writers:

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Training to hear both stressed and unstressed words to prevent loss of meaning:

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5. Consider attempting next level of text and exercises

Many students will attempt a higher level of difficulty with the scaffolding provided by familiar content and illustrations. If they can be persuaded, they are generally quite chuffed at themselves and their new skills.
A few pictures from the books
Thank you for listening.

I’m happy to try to answer questions.

You can email me for a copy of the ppt or with questions that may occur to you later: davidson.hazel@gmail.com

You can find details about all of our materials on our website:

www.sugarbagondamper.com