

ENGLISH



**K-3**  
Foundational  
Skills



**GRADE 3**  
**FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS UNIT 4**

# **Frankie Figures It Out**

Reader

EDITION 1

Grade 3

Foundational Skills 4

# **Frankie Figures It Out**

**Reader**



Acknowledgement:

Thank you to all the Texas educators and stakeholders who supported the review process and provided feedback. These materials are the result of the work of numerous individuals, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.

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## Chapter

# 1 Frankie Forgets

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A curious and **active** little girl, Frankie, lived with her mom, her dad, and her little brother, Cal. She was always looking for the next adventure. Frankie had a million questions about the world, but sometimes she was a little too busy being curious instead of staying **focused**.

One day, as Frankie was getting dressed for school, her mom walked past her bedroom and said, “Don’t forget to make your bed, Frankie. Also, put your pajamas in the laundry basket and brush your teeth before we leave.” *Oops! I forgot!* thought Frankie.

After school, Frankie went to the park with her dad and brother. She and Cal played together on the jungle gym while her dad read a book under a tree nearby. Cal wanted to play their favorite game, “Mighty Monster,” a game where one of them pretends to be a monster and catches the other. Frankie decided to be the monster first and took off running beneath the jungle gym to tag Cal. She raced between the poles, her fingers just the slightest bit out of reach. Just then, Cal ran up the stairs, heading for the slide. Frankie thought of the perfect plan to catch him. She turned quickly and **sprinted** towards the slide. When she was halfway up the slide, her dad called her name sharply.

“Frankie, no climbing up the slide! That isn’t safe. Please come back down.”

“Oops! I forgot!” said Frankie under her breath, as she slid back down.





The next day was Friday, and Frankie's class was going on a field trip to the zoo. The students could not contain their excitement. They walked around with their teacher, Ms. Chen, and saw reptiles, elephants, and monkeys. Zookeepers explained the **habitats** and habits of each type of animal. As the class walked past the flamingos, Frankie saw something thrilling. It was her friend Alonso's favorite animal: a meerkat. "Look, Alonso," said Frankie eagerly. "Meerkats! Let's go see them."

"Cool!" exclaimed Alonso.

Alonso and Frankie took off, running as fast as they could toward the meerkat **exhibit**. They heard Ms. Chen calling after them, shouting, "Alonso! Frankie! No running or you will frighten the animals. Please stay with the group." *Oops! I forgot!* thought Frankie.





That night, Frankie's family gathered at the dinner table and talked about their days over pizza and fruit juice. Frankie's mom inquired about the field trip to the zoo. Frankie recounted the highlights from the trip, repeating animal facts she learned that day and describing the amazing critters. Then, she recalled what Ms. Chen said. Frankie explained that she and Alonso were excited to get to the meerkats first, even though they were supposed to walk and stay together.

Frankie thought about what her dad had said at the park when she climbed up the slide. She remembered her mom always asked her to make her bed, put her things away, and wash her dishes after dinner.



She asked curiously, “Why do we need so many rules, Mom?”



Chapter

# 2 Rule Detective

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Frankie's mom understood. Knowing how she felt, Mom explained, "Rules are like an unseen base that maintain our **society**. They help us live together in peace. They help keep everyone safe and happy."

Frankie frowned. "I don't mean to argue, but I still don't understand. Would things really be all that different if there were no rules?"

Her mom said, “Without rules, the world would be hard to live in. Just imagine if we didn’t have any rules while driving. That’s how it was 100 years ago. It would be dangerous even to approach a car. And what if people didn’t have to wear seatbelts?”

Frankie said, “So rules are just to keep yourself safe?”

“It is also about keeping other people safe,” said Mom. “If there is a car accident, not only could the passengers be hurt, but police and rescue workers helping to clear the accident could be at risk.”

Her mom continued, “It’s important to have fun, and rules help us **ensure** everyone can have fun and stay safe at the same time.”

“I won’t disagree with that!” said Frankie.

Frankie’s mom thought about what her daughter had said while she chewed her pizza. She thought of a fun and helpful idea that would allow Frankie to learn about the value of rules.

With a warm smile, she said, “Let’s figure it out together. Let’s be on the lookout for rules while we run errands tomorrow. We’ll be like detectives. We’ll look for examples of rules in action!”

Frankie's eyes got wide. Her mom often had clever ideas. Plus, tomorrow was Saturday, the perfect day for an adventure. She grinned at her mom and said, "Yes, please!"



Frankie's dad winked at his daughter and poked her with an elbow. "What fun things might you do if there were no rules? Maybe you could fill the house with sand and make an indoor beach!" Dad joked.

Frankie and Cal talked together while they ate dessert about the exciting things they could do with no rules. Cal suggested eating ice cream for breakfast. Frankie thought that sounded much better than her usual oatmeal.

Frankie was lying in bed with her head on her pillow that night. She dreamed of being a detective who knows everything about meerkats and pizza, monsters, and ice cream!





Chapter

# 3 Swimming Lessons

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The next morning, Frankie jumped out of bed. Unfortunately, there was no time for breakfast ice cream. Instead, Frankie's mom grabbed her a granola bar and fruit juice to eat on the way to their first stop.

Their adventure began at the local **recreation center**, where Frankie had swimming lessons. After putting on her swimsuit, Frankie walked with her mom from the locker room to the pool deck. *What rules could there be at a pool?* she thought. *This place is all about fun!* “No rules.” She stood on the pool deck and took off running.





Suddenly, two things happened at once. Just as she heard a lifeguard's whistle, Frankie felt her foot slip on the wet tile. She spun her arms wildly, unable to keep her balance. Right before she crashed to the ground, her mom caught her. She helped Frankie up as the lifeguard, Marissa, came over.

“Are you okay?” asked Marissa. “It’s important not to run on a pool deck. You could easily slip and fall. I am trained to help and rescue people when they get injured. But I would rather avoid that in the first place!”

Frankie looked up at her, feeling **subdued** now that Marissa had come over to check on her. She was uncomfortable knowing she was wrong to run.

“I’m sorry. I won’t do it again.”

As Marissa walked away, Frankie’s mom looked worried. She hugged her daughter. “Are you sure you are okay? I was so worried you would hit your head.”



Frankie looked up at her mom. “It was scary when I thought I would fall. I guess we discovered our first rule in action: No running on the pool deck.”

Frankie walked carefully to the **bleachers** as her mom gave her a small, worried smile. The instructor, Landon, had everyone practice their skills at different **stations** in the pool. He worked with Frankie to review her turns as she pushed off the wall, kicked, and then swam back, cruising back to the wall.

Frankie was working hard, and she listened carefully to Landon’s tips. After she got the hang of it, he told her to take a break and catch her breath.

Sitting on the stairs, Frankie looked around the pool. She saw other kids swimming with the careful guidance of the instructors. Some older kids were practicing dives in the deep end. Frankie began thinking about the pool rules again. She realized it was important for her to stay in the shallow end. If she went into the deep end right then, she might crash into someone diving. That would have been dangerous. “Hmm,” thought Frankie to herself. “Maybe that rule is important, too.” It definitely helped keep the pool organized. Everyone could safely have fun, and no one got any bruises.



Chapter

# 4 The Market

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Frankie and her mom went to a busy market next. It was **packed** with people selling and buying all sorts of things. Brightly colored fruits filled the stalls, and the smell of fresh bread filled the air. Frankie and her mom were there to buy some ingredients for dinner. Frankie's mom spoke with the farmers while carefully choosing a bag of cashews. Frankie noticed a sign that said "Reusable Tote Bag" and thought having a bag to carry your groceries was a good idea. Frankie **drifted** over to a man who was offering samples of brownies. Frankie asked to try one, and the man gave her a little square piece on the end of a toothpick. After her morning swim, Frankie was quite hungry and thought the brownie was the most delicious thing she had ever tasted!



The flavor was unbelievable. She was hungry for more.

Excitedly, Frankie ran back to her mom. “They are selling brownies over there! Please can I buy one? They are so yummy.”





Frankie's mom looked over at the baker, and she agreed to give Frankie some cash for one of the brownies. By the time Frankie had gotten the \$5 bill from her mom, a line had formed in front of the baker. She looked at her mom and asked, "Can I get in the front of the line?"

"Let's be detectives," said her mom. "Somehow all of those people knew to form a line. Think about this: How do you feel when Cal skips your turn in a game?"

Frankie thought about this and realized her mom had a point. When Cal skipped her turn, it made her angry. Peeking around the line at the people waiting in front of her, Frankie counted four of them.





She certainly did not want them to feel angry or upset.

Frankie decided that it would be a mistake to cut the line. She would wait her turn instead; it was more fair that way. While waiting, Frankie noticed that all the lines were orderly. Everyone was taking their turn nicely. Frankie thought the market would be hectic if people disrespected the lines. “Lucky these people don’t have Cal or me skipping in front of them,” she thought. “Otherwise, everyone at this market would be so angry right now. If we all wait our turn, everything goes smoothly.”

Even though she had to wait, Frankie’s brownie tasted amazing when she finally got to eat it as she and her mom walked through the market.

## Chapter

# 5 The Office

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After the market, Frankie’s mom needed to return to her office for an hour. “Saturday office visits are always unexpected. We have a big book about a musician coming out soon, and everyone is working nonstop to prepare for it. I hope you are not unhappy about coming with me.”


That was fine with Frankie—she loved visiting her mom’s publishing office. The office **clerk**, Luke, always had a little bowl of candy on his desk that he refilled before the office opened each day. Frankie waved to Luke and grabbed a piece of candy from the dish on his desk.

Her mom pointed to a chair in the corner of the big office space.





“Here you go, artist,” she said as she handed Frankie some paper to draw on while she waited. As Frankie unwrapped a new pack of markers, she looked around the office at all the busy grown-ups working together. Her mom worked with many different people who were specialists or experts in certain parts of book publishing. Some of them **edited** books. Others drew the cover art. Others sold the books. And she could not forget the custodian and the office clerk! Frankie thought about how many people were part of making just one book come to life. She was grateful to know everybody in the office did their part.

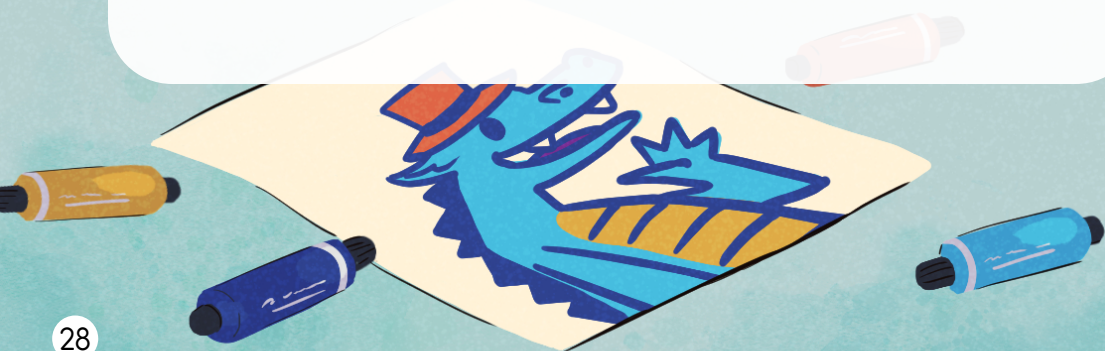
An illustration of a young girl with red hair in pigtails, wearing a pink and white striped shirt and blue overalls, sitting on the floor and drawing a mad scientist. She is surrounded by various art supplies like markers and a pencil case. In the background, a person is sitting at a desk with a laptop, talking on a phone, and another person is standing and holding a stack of books. The scene is set in what appears to be an office or a study.

As she finished a drawing of a mad scientist, she started thinking like a detective again. What if there were no rules in her mom's office?

What if Luke wasn't at the front desk to help people or if her mom did not show up to work? Who would reread the books before printing them? Frankie wondered if any books would make it onto a shelf.

Frankie completed a new drawing of a dragon wearing a top hat as her mom returned from her desk. Her mom said, "That's a great picture. Did you have a good time?"

"I sure did! I got to be an artist and a detective at the same time!" Frankie responded. She returned the markers to their box and folded up her artwork.







As they got in the car again, Frankie asked her mom what working with so many people felt like. “I get to work with so many smart and creative people. I love my job, but it would be much harder if I had to do it all alone. Knowing we work together to get books into the world feels good. That’s why it’s so important for everyone in the office to do their part. We can get more great books out there that way.”

Frankie thought her mom had a good point. Without the different jobs in the office, she and other kids would miss out on great books. Maybe an office was a good place to have a few rules.



Everyone worked toward the same goal in her mom's office. The rules helped them get there.



## Chapter

# 6 The Library

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Soon, Frankie and her mother arrived at the library, but this was different from the local **branch** Frankie was used to. This library was huge! Her mom explained it was the main library branch in their town. Frankie's eyes widened with amazement. She was used to being around books and loved her local library branch. But this was something different. Frankie's jaw dropped as she looked around, **preoccupied** by her incredible surroundings.

There were thousands of books, maybe even more. Frankie didn't think she could begin to count them all. There was a section with travel books for tourists. There were books that taught job skills like how to become a **pharmacist**.



She saw books about prehistoric times and modern history. She saw stories about big dreams, making mistakes, and how to **rebound** after a challenge. She saw stories for college students and preschool students.



She saw books about magicians, biologists, historians, and athletes. At least five librarians were walking around pulling down books, scanning them, or putting them back on the shelves.

“Isn’t it beautiful?” asked her mom. “I don’t think I have taken you to this library since you were a baby. They have so many great options. Maybe you can find a book to read.”

Frankie wandered down the rows of books. Each book had a sticker on the back, but Frankie thought she must be misreading them, or maybe they were misspelled. Frankie needed help to make sense of the jumble of numbers and letters. As she came around the corner, a librarian came out from the children’s section.







“Hello!” she said. “My name is Sofia. I’m a librarian, which means I am in charge of organizing and taking care of the books. Can I help you find one?”

Frankie looked up at Sofia. “I am looking for a book about cartoonists. How can you find the book I’m looking for? There are so many on the shelves. Do you know where all of these books are by heart?”

The librarian chuckled and said, “I definitely don’t know all their places by heart. What I do know very well is the **system** we use to organize the books. Here, let me show you.”

Sofia led Frankie to the end of a bookshelf. Frankie saw a sheet of paper with letters listed on it. Noticing something else, Frankie said, “It’s in the order of the alphabet!”







“Exactly,” replied the librarian. “We have codes that help us keep all the books in the right place. Then, when people return a book to the library, we can put it back where it should be. That way, the next person can find the same book. It won’t disappear on some other shelf and never be found again.”

Frankie looked at the section next to them. “Are these comic books? I want to be an artist when I grow up.”

“Yes, they are,” said Sofia. “Each one is organized by the author’s name.”

“What if two people have the same name?” asked Frankie. “I have two friends at school with the same last name.”

“Great question,” said Sofia. “Look right here. These books are both by people with the last name Brown. But this person’s first name is Alan. Since the letter ‘A’ comes first, that book will be first on the shelf.”

“That’s a tricky rule,” said Frankie.

Sofia replied, “It might seem hard at first, but you get used to it with practice. This system lets us help library visitors, and everything runs more **smoothly**.”

Sofia helped Frankie find a book. Then, Frankie and her mom walked out of the library into the sunny afternoon. “I had no idea libraries worked like that,” said Frankie. “I just put my books anywhere on the shelf at home. That would be a big mistake at a place like the library.”



“That’s right,” replied her mom. “Having rules in the library is pretty useful.”



Chapter

# 7 The Zoo

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“I thought we could have one more stop on our big adventure,” said Frankie’s mom. “How would you feel about a trip to the zoo? I know you went with your class yesterday.”

“I love the zoo!” said Frankie. “Let’s do it.”

When they got to the zoo, Frankie and her mom got popcorn to share while they walked. They saw a veterinarian checking on a zebra, who seemed to disagree about taking medicine. They saw a zookeeper rebuild a broken toy for a monkey and another person feeding some animals.









The two watched as zookeepers brought colorful fruit for the birds, meat for the big cats, and a bowl of kale for some **unhurried** tortoises. As they watched, Frankie saw how the zookeepers entered the habitats. They were being careful and clearly knew the habits of the animals. As much as Frankie loved to see the animals, she would have been nervous to hand a steak to a big tiger. She would leave that to the professionals.

She thought like a detective again. Frankie saw that no one was hopping over the fence to play with the animals. Everyone seemed to know that wasn't a good idea. The fences were there for a reason. They kept people safe, and they kept the animals safe, too. They prevented everyone from getting hurt. Even if the animals were nonviolent, it was still important to respect their space.




Later, a kid nearby cried loudly as Frankie and her mom stood and looked at the meerkats. The meerkats ran to their tunnels, scared by the noisy cry. Frankie thought back to her field trip the day before. It made sense to walk quietly in the zoo. She didn't want to scare the animals!

Frankie's mom noticed they allowed visitors to pet the kangaroos as they walked past that area on their way back to the parking lot. Frankie was thrilled—she had never touched a kangaroo before! A zookeeper told them the rules for the kangaroo area. They had to stay on the sidewalk and were only allowed to touch the kangaroos on the back. Curious as always, Frankie asked why they weren't allowed to touch them on the front of their bodies.









“Great question! **Zoologists** have learned kangaroos can move forward more easily than backward. If they want to hop away, they feel safer and more comfortable going forward. If they want space from people, needing to move backward quickly might stress them out. It would be a risky mistake to touch them from the front.”

“Wow,” said Frankie’s mom, “I had no idea! Thank you for letting us know. We will be sure to respect them.”

“I want to follow the rules so the kangaroos are happy,” agreed Frankie. “And I want to stay safe in here with them, too. We need to get back home to Dad and Cal **unharmmed!**”



## Chapter

# 8 Back Home

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At the end of the day, Frankie was feeling happy and thoughtful. She had so much fun at the recreation center, the market, the office, and the library, not to mention the zoo. They had **detected** quite a lot of rules today. Frankie found following the rules did not feel disappointing. She learned about the reasons behind the rules today. They made perfect sense! Finding a library book would be difficult, and swimming would be dangerous without a few rules.

The family sat down together to dig into some tacos on flour tortillas for dinner. As they ate, Frankie told Cal and her dad all about the big adventures she went on with her mom.

She shared her swim lesson story of almost falling on the deck. She told them about the brownie she waited in line at the market to buy. She showed them the drawing she did at her mom's office and handed Cal a bright blue candy from Luke's desk. She described the unbelievable library. She told them how the librarian kept all the books from being misplaced.





She and her mom even did a few **impressions** of the animals they saw at the zoo that afternoon. Cal loved it when their mom pretended to be the zebra who was grouchy about taking medicine. Frankie said she might want to be a zoologist or a veterinarian someday.

After Frankie finished her story, her dad raised an eyebrow. He said, “It sounds like the pair of you had an amazing and fun day, but you also detected rules almost nonstop.”

Frankie’s mom smiled. “What do you think, Frankie?”



Frankie returned her mom's smile. "I learned today that rules are pretty important whether I like them or not. It might be frustrating to not be allowed to do something you want to do, but I saw today how much we need them. They are there to keep everyone safe, and you can still have fun while following the rules."

"That's a great point," added her mom.

"It is healthy to be curious about rules. It's also good to know those rules are there to protect us. They help our community and society live, work, and play together in peace."



Later that night, Frankie lay in her bed, tired from the day. She thought about her day and felt happy she didn't get eaten by a tiger or jumped on at the pool. She felt glad she found a new library book and saw her mom working at the office. Even though the day was full of rules, Frankie was not unhappy. She knew she understood these rules, and today, she had learned the reasons behind them. Her mom came in to say good night. Frankie thanked her for the big adventure.

"I know there are so many rules we have to live with," said her mom. "But I had fun learning about them today with you."

"So did I," said Frankie. "I can see how the rules help keep people safe."









They said good night, and her mom began to close the door. Frankie called out, “Mom, next week, can we play the Rule Detective game again?”

Her mom smiled. “I’m glad to hear you enjoyed it!”

From that day on, Frankie thought about the reason behind the rules she had at school, at the pool, in town, and at home. She liked how rules allowed **plenty** of fun and joy and kept everybody safer.



# Glossary

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## A

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**active (AK-tiv):** being busy, especially with physical activities; having lots of energy

## B

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**bleachers (BLEE-chrz):** rows of seats at a sports game or concert that have stairs to climb

**branch (branch):** a local shop or meeting place that is part of a larger company or organization

## C

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**clerk (klurk):** someone in a workplace whose job it is to help other people do or find things

## D

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**detected (duh-TEK-tuhd):** noticed or discovered something using one's senses

**drifted (DRIF-tuhd):** slowly and smoothly moved towards something



# E

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**edited (EH-duh-tuhd):** made changes to something that is written

**ensure (uhn-SHUR):** to make sure that something happens

**exhibit (uhg-ZI-buht):** a place where people can go to look at things to enjoy or learn from

# F

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**focused (FOH-kuhst):** having your attention directed at what you want to do without distraction

# H

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**habitats (HA-buh-tats):** the natural environments of animals and plants

# I

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**impressions (uhm-PREH-shns):** clever or funny ways of imitating sounds or speech

# P

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**packed (pakt):** extremely full of people; very crowded

**pharmacist (FAAR-muh-suhst):** a scientist that prepares medications to treat illnesses and keep people healthy

**plenty (PLEN-tee):** a large amount; as much or as many as one needs

**preoccupied (pree-AH-kyoo-pied):** thinking or doing something so much that you do not pay attention to other things

# R

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**rebound (REE-bownd):** to bounce back after hitting something or after something happening

**recreation center (reh-kree-AY-shun SEN-ter):** a public space where people of all ages can go to participate in different activities

# S

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**smoothly (SMOOTH-lee):** without bumps, challenges, or interruptions

**society (suh-SAI-uh-tee):** people or animals that live together in a community that usually has certain rules to follow

**sprinted (SPRINT-tuhd):** ran extremely fast for a short distance

**station (STAY-shn):** a place where people are assigned to do a certain job or activity

**subdued (sub-DOOD):** more quiet than usual and maybe a little sad

**system (SI-stm):** a particular way or method of doing something



# U

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**unharmed (uhn-HAARMD):** not hurt or damaged

**unhurried (uhn-HUR-eed):** not in a rush, taking one's time

# Z

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**zoologists (ZOO-aa-luh-juhsts):** scientists who study animals and their behavior

## **About this Book**

This book has been created for use by students learning to read with the program. Readability levels are suitable for early readers. The book has also been carefully leveled in terms of its “code load,” or the number of spellings used in the stories.

The English writing system is complex. It uses more than 200 spellings to stand for 40-odd sounds. Many sounds can be spelled several different ways, and many spellings can be pronounced several different ways. This book has been designed to make early reading experiences simpler and more productive by using a subset of the available spellings. It uses *only* spellings students have been taught to sound out as part of their phonics lessons, plus a handful of Tricky Words, which have also been deliberately introduced in the lessons. This means the stories will be 100% decodable if they are assigned at the proper time.

As the students move through the program, they learn new spellings and the “code load” in the decodable Readers increases gradually. The code load graphic on this page indicates the number of spellings students are expected to know in order to read the first story of the book and the number of spellings students are expected to know in order to read the final stories in the book. The columns on the opposite page list the specific spellings and Tricky Words students are expected to recognize at the beginning of this Reader. The bullets at the bottom of the opposite page identify spellings, Tricky Words, and other topics that are introduced gradually in the unit this Reader accompanies.

**TRICKY WORDS:**

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adventure, delicious, library, lifeguard

**Code Knowledge added gradually in the unit for this Reader:**

- Decode multisyllabic words with vowel teams
- Decode multisyllabic words with digraphs
- Identify the meaning of words with affixes

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