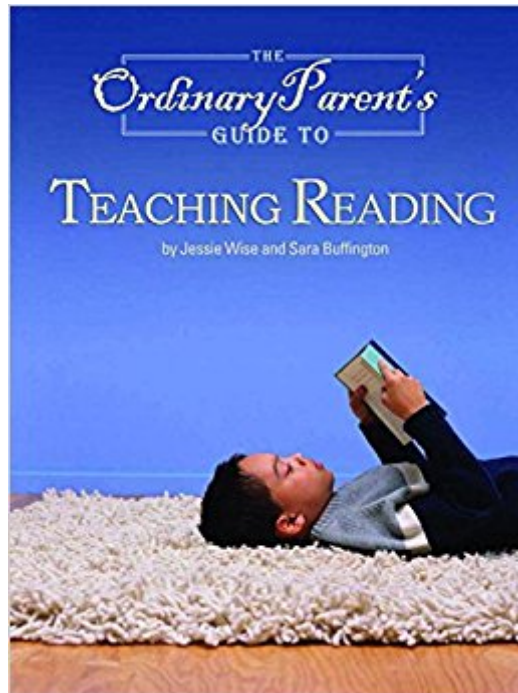




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# The Ordinary Parent's Guide To Teaching Reading



## Synopsis

A plain-English guide to teaching phonics. Every parent can teach reading—no experts need apply! Too many parents watch their children struggle with early reading skills—and don't know how to help. Phonics programs are too often complicated, overpriced, gimmicky, and filled with obscure educationalese. The Ordinary Parent's Guide to Teaching Reading cuts through the confusion, giving parents a simple, direct, scripted guide to teaching reading—from short vowels through supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. This one book supplies parents with all the tools they need. Over the years of her teaching career, Jessie Wise has seen good reading instruction fall prey to trendy philosophies and political infighting. Now she has teamed with dynamic coauthor Sara Buffington to supply parents with a clear, direct phonics program—a program that gives them the know-how and confidence to take matters into their own hands.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jessie Wise, a former teacher, is a home education consultant, speaker, and writer. She has decades of experience as a classroom teacher, elementary school principal, private tutor, and educational consultant, and is the co-author of the best-selling *The Well-Trained Mind* and the groundbreaking elementary grammar text *First Language Lessons for the Well-Trained Mind*. She lives in Charles City, Virginia. Sara Buffington has experience as a teacher and children's book editor. Now a freelance writer, Buffington is the co-author of *The Ordinary Parent's Guide to Teaching Reading* and *First Language Lessons, Level Three*.

I waited to write this review until I had used this book for a while with more than one of my children. I have been using this book for three years, with three different children (now 2nd, 1st, and kindergarten). With all of my children I DID NOT use this resource to teach the letter sounds. I found Leap Frog's Letter Factory to be an effective tool before I discovered this book and chose to stick with it for all of my children. So, we picked up AFTER letter sounds in all instances. I am going to outline what I used this book for and how I found it helpful. I will point out that all of my kids are reading ABOVE grade level (1-2 years ahead of what is recommended). This book is a great scope and sequence for what phonics rules to teach and in what order. We basically went through each lesson in order. With my oldest I completed the book around the latter part of first grade. My younger children are not quite as far along as he was at the end of kindergarten, so it may take longer. I found the repetitiveness to be an asset. I found the book easy to navigate and it was easy to flip back to previous lessons and do quick reviews. I actually LOVE that the book has no flashy colors or pictures. This is INTENTIONAL. In schools children are taught to use picture clues to figure out words. I taught in public school for three years and have a MaEd. and I can tell you THIS IS NOT READING. It is a common practice and I NEVER saw it help a child, other than to encourage guessing. In The Ordinary Parent's Guide the child can only "read" by focusing on the words...right from the start. Yes, the words are small, but I found my kids had no problem quickly learning which words were for them and which were for me. I placed a simple piece of paper under what they needed to read and that was that. Font and small type was a non issue for us. The kids adapted almost right away. I would suggest, however, NOT using this as your entire reading curriculum. It was the MAIN part of our reading, but in and of itself it was dry and boring...effective yes, exciting NO, NO, and NO. So, we moved through our lessons, while I enriched reading time with exciting read alouds (this is where I asked reading questions about character, setting, plot...etc.) Until the students are reading independently AND fluently it is useless to ask them comprehension questions about their own reading, so I do this through read alouds (decoding words at the early ages it quite enough). Once the kids started reading well enough, I began to check out easy readers and Bob Books from the library and moving through those in addition to their regular lessons. The kids enjoyed reading "real books" rather than just the reading lessons. I found Scholastic's book finder to be an invaluable resource for checking out books on each child's level, while gradually increasing difficulty. I also introduced more sight words than The Ordinary Parent's Guide. I found when checking out books from the library or reading Bob Books (such great readers that build in level gradually) they needed to be familiar with more sight words earlier than

they are presented in this book. I simply couldn't wait until they were covered, so we made a word wall and did many earlier. So, there you have it. This book is not perfect, but is a great resource and a great backbone to any reading program. In my case, this is evidenced by three early reading normal kids. I previewed the 100 easy lessons book, but found it didn't cover enough and I firmly believe it takes more than 100 phonics lessons to have a fluent reader (just my personal/professional opinion). The Ordinary Parent's Guide has been the best, most thorough scope and sequence I've seen....just add some fluff to your reading time to keep kids engaged. Honestly, there is NO single magical resource that does EVERYTHING a reading program needs to do...common sense, adjusting, and listening to your kids is necessary no matter what is chosen. Good luck!!

In use this on conjunction with phonetically sounding out the letters to teach my kids to read. I did also purchase their cards and use it with the book. Simple and clear to teach from.

I bought this book and my daughter did not enjoy or respond to the method used to teach reading outlined within. Others might be more receptive, however for us it was a struggle from Day One, and quickly became an unhappy chore, complete with balking and arguments. I put the book aside, eventually selling it for close to what I paid - thankfully, since it was still in perfect condition (we did not even make it through the vowels). Soon after, my daughter taught herself to read, and now reads at or above grade level. If you give it a fair chance and it isn't working, do not blame yourself or your child.

I cannot say enough good things about this book. The method is so logical and well thought-out. The book begins with teaching the different letters and their sounds (vowels then consonants), then moves on to simple 3-letter words with short-vowel sounds, then four letter words with combination sounds in them (like double-consonants and "ck" words), then digraphs, etc. It is truly the BEST \$20 I will ever spend on my child's education. People spend many times more than that in flash cards, videos, computer programs, but I absolutely believe that this book is all you will need for a good foundation in reading. I purchased both this book and "Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons." I returned the latter, because it seemed very cumbersome and unclear. In "100 Easy Lessons," the author wrote "th" as if it was one letter - a child needs to understand that those two letters make one sound, but a child will not see things written that way in normal fonts. That book also taught long vowel sounds very early in the process. I feel like "100 Easy Lessons" used too

many "training wheels" for teaching reading. I know it has wonderful reviews, and it may work for most people, but I far prefer "The Ordinary Parent's Guide to Teaching Reading," and would absolutely choose it over "Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons" any day.

If you have been discouraged or if you are just nervous this book is awesome!! It lays everything out and makes it easy for you and the kids!!

Tried several other programs before finally finding this one. Wow, I can't express how much I wish I would have found it first. Every other program was tedious and mind numbing. I was beginning to wonder if I would ever teach my daughter to read. Thank you so much for this program! Got my daughter reading above her grade level in half the time I expected.

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