

The Story Behind Adapting the School Edition of Smart Start in Language Arts for a Home Education Edition

Someone once asked me how I was able to adapt the school edition of Smart Start in Language Arts for home education. The idea was derived from a response made to a teacher who desired to slow the pace of the school edition material for her class. At the time, I created this single sheet to show how to split each school day's work into two days. (Note: This sheet is currently included in the school edition of Smart Start in Language Arts). Later, I used this idea to write the Smart Start home education edition by creating a two year program from my single year of material.

I made the home education Smart Start edition easy to follow by integrating the reading, spelling and writing components into the lessons. I also eliminated the separate sections used in the school edition and split the lessons from Smart Start in Language Arts school edition into two days worth of material. The first day's lesson focussed on introducing new reading concepts. Conversely, the second day focused on teaching sight words through a repeated sight word book, printing, spelling, and writing sentences. The resulting format eliminated the separate sections and simplified teaching reading, spelling, and writing skills. In addition, I wrote two teacher's manuals (one for each grade) containing detailed lesson plans with answer keys. Together the student programs and teacher's manuals form a comprehensive language arts program which strikes the balance between reading and writing skills foundational for beginning literacy success.

NOTE: The grade one program must be completed in order for the grade two program to make sense.

Suggestions for using Smart Start in Grades 1 and 2
Grade 1: Days 1—72 Grade 2: Days 73-150

Timetable

Split the work for each SS Day into two parts. Complete the first part on one day and the second part on the next as shown below:

Day 1

1. Carpet Time:

- Introduce reading/decoding concept.
- Introduce new sight word.
- Review reading concepts and sight words on word wall.
- Play puppet game with reading/decoding concept. Teacher defines all new vocabulary for students.
- Teacher explains each page of lesson to students for independent work.



2. Student Reading Lesson Worksheets Provide Independent Application of Skills.

- Students complete SS reading lessons independently EXCEPT THE SENTENCE WRITING
- Teacher listens to students read SS reading lesson story & records marks and missed words.
- When finished students independently read their **Repeated Reading Book** and then proceed to free time (games such as puzzles, board games, SS Games CD)

3. Spelling and Printing

Students have spelling practice every day. See spelling section of the book. Printing exercises are located in SS Companion.

4. **Story Time:** Teacher reads aloud picture books and has a comprehension and vocabulary building discussion with students.

Day 2

1. **Carpet Time:** Review what was learned on previous day. (see above)

2. **Create Repeated Reading Book for Sight Word Memorization**
Teacher and students make one page in their repeated reading book which places new sight words in the context of a sentence/story paragraph. Every page in the book is read every day to help with memorization of sight words.



3. **Word Pack Flashcards (begins on Day 34) or Independent Reading (begins after word pack flashcards have been completed)** from the classroom library of decodable text readers and book interviews.

4. **Spelling and Printing** (see Day 1 above for instructions)

5. Sentence Writing from SS Lesson

- Teacher brainstorms (with the class) strong action words for the sentence students will write independently in their lesson work. Teacher models several sentences prior to students writing.

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