

- ☐ Build comprehension
- ☐ Develop fluency
- ☐ Create phonemic awareness
- ☐ Understand phonics
- ☐ Grow vocabulary

An Educators' Guide to

STEP INTO READING®

in the Classroom



THIS GUIDE INCLUDES:

- A Letter to Educators
- A Letter to Caregivers
- Teaching Tips for How to Use STEP INTO READING® in the Classroom
- Thematic Booklists

Welcome

to **STEP INTO READING™**, where children can begin and progress on their exciting journey to reading with confidence and enjoyment.

STEP INTO READING®'s leveling system recognizes different developmental stages of emergent readers and is designed to deliver a successful reading experience at each step. With over 650 titles in print, children are sure to find accessible books about topics that interest them—from books with favorite characters, both classic and on-screen, to engaging stories featuring familiar childhood moments and milestones, to fascinating non-fiction complete with full-color illustrations and/or photographs.

STEP INTO READING® offers five steps to reading success.



Step 1: For preschool to kindergarten

Step 1 offers big type and easy words, rhyme, and rhythm. These are perfect for children who know the alphabet and are eager to begin reading.



Step 2: For preschool to grade 1

Step 2 includes basic vocabulary, short sentences, and simple stories. This level is for children who recognize familiar words and can sound out new words with help.



Step 3: For grades 1 to 3

Step 3 books provide engaging characters, easy-to-follow plots, and popular topics. This level is for children who are ready to read on their own.



Step 4: For grades 2 to 3

Step 4 books feature more challenging vocabulary, short paragraphs, and exciting stories. This level is for newly independent readers who read simple sentences with confidence.



Step 5: For grades 2 to 4

Step 5 books include chapters, longer paragraphs, and high-low topics perfect for reluctant readers. This level is for children who want to take the plunge into chapter books but still like colorful illustrations or photographs with their text.

About the

STEP INTO READING®

Series

In addition to original fiction and books with favorite characters, there are STEP INTO READING® Phonics Readers, Science Readers, Math Readers, Comic Readers, History Readers, Biography Readers, Sports Readers, and Leyendo a Pasos Spanish Readers—a complete literary program with something to interest every child.

A PHONICS READER

STEP INTO READING® Phonics Readers offer

a unique way to turn daily reading into a pleasant and valuable experience. These books are designed to help your child learn about the sounds that letters stand for, how letters are put together to make words, and how words can be put together to make sentences.

A MATH READER

STEP INTO READING® Math Readers can help children develop important

mathematical thinking. Each book includes an age-appropriate math element, an enjoyable, leveled reading experience, and lively art to encourage and support children's natural affinity for the subject.

A COMIC READER

STEP INTO READING® Comic Readers are a perfect step in learning to read. They

provide visual cues to the meaning of words and helpfully break out short pieces of dialogue into speech balloons. These books are designed to engage learners and to provide an empowering reading experience that is also fun!

A NON-FICTION READER

STEP INTO READING® Non-Fiction Readers includes a huge selection of

high-interest non-fiction topics to engage young readers—look for Biography Readers, History Readers, Science Readers, and Sports Readers. Topics include animals, important historical figures and moments, weather, prehistoric life, natural science, and much more! Reading non-fiction can help children build their vocabularies, learn how to compare different concepts, and grow their store of background information. It also helps raise questions and motivate children to find answers.

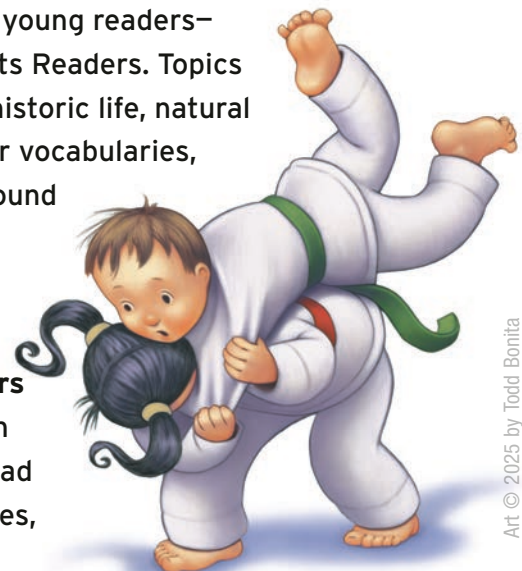
A LEYENDO A PASOS READER

STEP INTO READING® Spanish Readers

provide a wide array of favorite titles in Spanish. They are the perfect books to help Spanish speakers learn to read or to teach children Spanish. With familiar characters and engaging stories, Leyendo a Pasos can help foster a love of reading.



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LETTER TO EDUCATORS

Dear Educator,

As an educator who has taught reading in elementary schools for more than twenty years, I can say with confidence that the **STEP INTO READING®** series has been a great supplemental tool for teaching kids how to read.

What is the **STEP INTO READING®** series?

STEP INTO READING® offers five steps to reading success and has more than 650 titles available—there is something of interest for every level and every reader! Each step includes engaging stories and colorful art or photographs to give every child an enjoyable reading experience. The leveling system recognizes different developmental stages of emergent readers and is designed to deliver a successful reading experience at each step.

In your classroom, I know you have dedicated instruction for phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to teach reading. Offering the **STEP INTO READING®** series in your classroom library as a choice for independent reading or as a part of a lesson can be a great supplemental teaching tool to any explicit, structured literacy program that you are already using.

Using the **STEP INTO READING®** series, you can help your students:

- ☐ **Build comprehension**
- ☐ **Develop fluency**
- ☐ **Create phonemic awareness**
- ☐ **Understand phonics**
- ☐ **Grow vocabulary**

With **STEP INTO READING®**, kids can step into history, step into magical worlds, step into a science lab, and start to build a love of reading for pleasure and learning.

Patty Smith, MA
Boston Public Schools
Elementary School Teacher
LETRS training



LETTER TO CAREGIVERS



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Dear Parent or Guardian,

We know how important it is for caregivers and teachers to work together to give children the best start. Reading together at home is one of the most effective and important ways you can help your child. Children should be encouraged to read with an adult and read independently. This not only supports children's progression in reading but helps them build a love of reading for pleasure and learning.

One supplemental tool that we use to help teach reading is the **STEP INTO READING®** series.

What is the **STEP INTO READING®** series?

STEP INTO READING® offers five steps to reading success and has more than 650 titles available—there is something of interest for every level and every reader! Each step includes engaging stories and colorful art or photographs to give every child an enjoyable reading experience. The leveling system recognizes different developmental stages of emergent readers and is designed to deliver a successful reading experience at each step.

We use the **STEP INTO READING®** series to help children:

- ☐ **Build comprehension**
- ☐ **Develop fluency**
- ☐ **Create phonemic awareness**
- ☐ **Understand phonics**
- ☐ **Grow vocabulary**

At home, you can use the **STEP INTO READING®** series to support your child in becoming an effective and confident reader, too.

I recommend you use the segmenting strategy when reading with your child. To do this, choose a few words from the text that your child may find tricky. To read the word, it is necessary to segment the word into its individual sounds.

For example: "ran" / "r-a-n"

Start by having your child listen for the first sound in a word, next try listening for the end sounds, and then the middle sounds (middle sounds are hardest to hear). Begin with simple three letters words (**example: tap or hot**), and build from there.

With **STEP INTO READING®**, kids can step into history, step into magical worlds, step into a science lab, and start to build a love of reading for pleasure and learning. We hope you enjoy these texts at home as much as we do in school!

Patty Smith, MA
Boston Public Schools
Elementary School Teacher
LETRS training



Vocabulary Activity

The following is an example of an instructional routine for specific word instruction (Center on Teaching and Learning, University of Oregon, 2013; Fien et al., 2015).

Vocabulary: Specific Word Routine

Materials: Vocabulary words with student-friendly definitions to display for all students to see (for example, written on cards, chart paper, sentence strips, or displayed on a whiteboard)

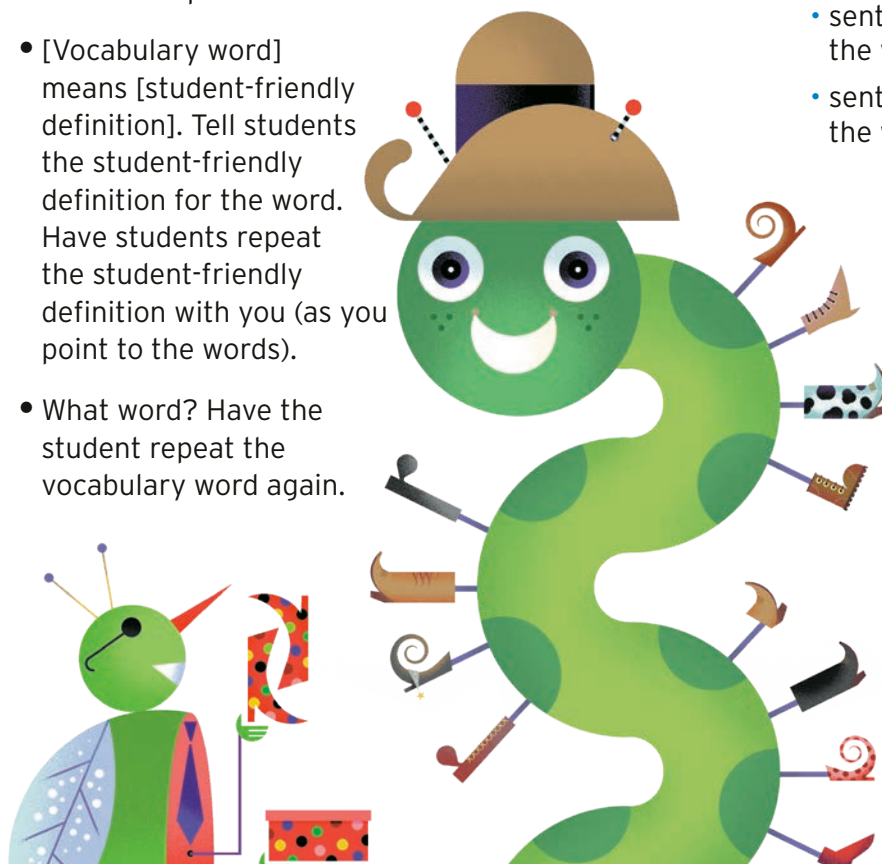
Explain to students that they are going to learn the meaning of new vocabulary words and will practice using those words in sentences.

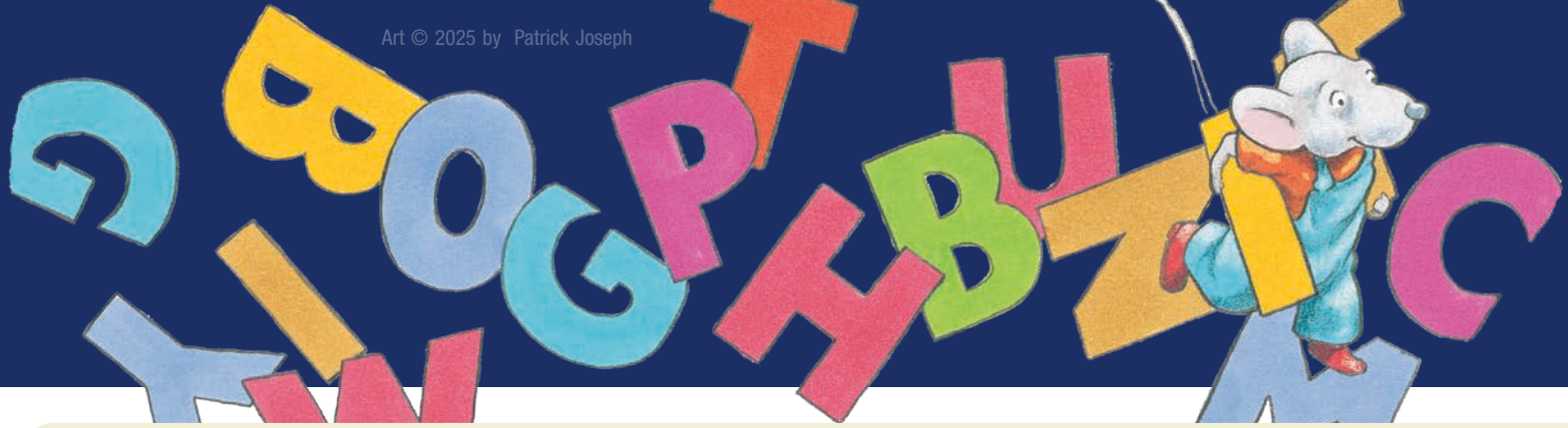
1. Practice for students only:

Have students sit by their preassigned talk partners. Use the below routine for each vocabulary word.

2. Routine for each vocabulary word:

- This word is [vocabulary word]. Introduce the new vocabulary word.
- What word? Have the students repeat the vocabulary word.
- Repeat steps 1 and 2 for difficult-to-pronounce words.
- [Vocabulary word] means [student-friendly definition]. Tell students the student-friendly definition for the word. Have students repeat the student-friendly definition with you (as you point to the words).
- What word? Have the student repeat the vocabulary word again.
- Provide examples of the vocabulary word that will help your students understand the word. Here are some options:
 - pictures
 - acting out the word
 - novel sentences using the word
 - sentences from read-aloud texts containing the word
 - sentences from student texts that contain the word
- Check for understanding by asking students questions that they can only answer correctly using the vocabulary word.
 - Ask the students questions that will prompt a complete understanding of the use of the vocabulary word and its meaning.
 - Ask students to generate examples or nonexamples to show that they understand the correct use of the vocabulary word.
- Ask students to create a sentence that uses the vocabulary word. Use the routine from number 2 for each vocabulary word.





Phonemic Awareness Activities

1. Encourage listening

- Select a **STEP INTO READING®** text to read aloud together. Encourage children to listen closely and pronounce the sounds in each word. Help them listen for individual sounds in words—pull them apart and put them together.

2. Speak slowly and use repetition

- When modeling reading a **STEP INTO READING®** text, speak slowly and use repetition. If your students are struggling to hear sounds within a word, say the word slowly and repeat the word.

This will make it easier for them to hear the individual sounds. The goal is to help them develop an ear for sounds.

3. Create word cards

- Choose words from the **STEP INTO READING®** text that you are reading that have three sounds (for example, *cow*, *bat*, *dog*, *lip*, *sun*, *pot*, and write the words on separate cards.
- Let your students choose a card, read the word together, and then hold up three fingers. Ask them to tell you the first sound they hear in the word, then the second, then the third.

4. Create a print-rich environment

- Printed words allow children to see connections between sounds and letters. Choose words from the **STEP INTO READING®** text to write on your board. Draw your students' attention to sounds by making the sounds as you point to each letter.



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Phonics Activities

1. Playdough letters

- Give kids a card with the ending of a word (like-at) from the **STEP INTO READING®** text you are reading together and have them make the first letter out of playdough after you say a word aloud.

2. Hop the sounds

- Before you read your next **STEP INTO READING®** text, mix things up by taking kids outside, telling them a word from the new text you are about to read together, and having them hop for each sound they hear.

3. Create a sound wall

- Word walls have been a popular tool in classrooms. Now sound walls are becoming the preferred tool. Select about ten words from the **STEP INTO READING®** text you are reading together. Group the words by their phoneme (stops, fricatives/affricative, nasals, liquids, glides) with a picture of how the mouth looks when making that sound and examples. This new approach can help kids understand how to form sounds. Introduce the sounds, model them, put the sounds on the wall, and practice throughout the year.

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Activities to increase fluency

1. Student-adult reading

- In student-adult reading, the student reads one on one with an adult. The adult can be you, a parent, a classroom aide, or a tutor. The adult reads the text first, providing the students with a model of fluent reading. Then the student reads the same passage to the adult, with the adult aiding and encouraging. The student rereads the passage until the reading is fluent.

2. Choral reading

- The **STEP INTO READING®** series is a great choice for choral reading. In choral, or unison, reading, students read along as a group with you (or another fluent adult reader). Of course, to do so, students must be able to see the same text that you are reading. They might follow along as you read from a big book, or they might read from their own copy of the book. For choral reading, choose a book that is not too long and that you think is at the independent reading level of most students. Patterned or predictable books are particularly useful for choral reading because their repetitious style invites students to join in.
- Begin by reading the book aloud as you model fluent reading. Then reread the book and invite students to join in as they recognize the words you are reading. Continue rereading the book, encouraging students to read along as they are able. Students should read the book with you three to five times total (though not necessarily on the same day). At this time, students should be able to read the text independently.

3. Partner reading

- In partner reading, paired students take turns reading aloud to each other. For partner reading, more fluent readers can be paired with less fluent readers. The stronger reader reads a paragraph or page first, providing a model of fluent reading. Then the less fluent reader reads the same text aloud. The stronger student gives help with word recognition and provides feedback and encouragement to the less fluent partner. The less fluent partner rereads the passage until he or she can read it independently. Partner reading need not be done with a more and less fluent reader. In another form of partner reading, children who read at the same level are paired to reread a story that they have received instruction on during a teacher-guided part of the lesson. Two readers of equal ability can practice rereading after hearing the teacher read the passage.

Comprehension Activities

1. Visualization

- Encourage students to create pictures in their mind as you read or as they read independently.

2. Predicting

- While reading a **STEP INTO READING®** text together, ask students what they think will happen next in the text.

3. Summarizing

- While reading a **STEP INTO READING®** text together, ask students to summarize a section of the story in one sentence.

4. Main idea

- After reading a **STEP INTO READING®** text, identify the main idea together as a class.

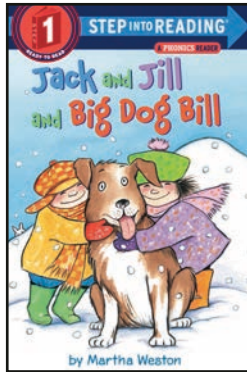




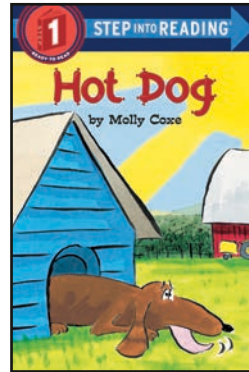
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Titles to Stock Your Classroom Library

Step into A Phonics Reader



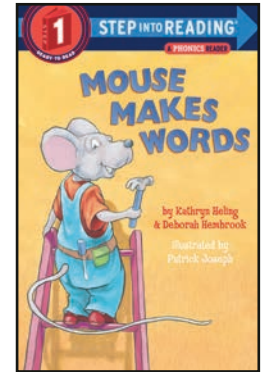
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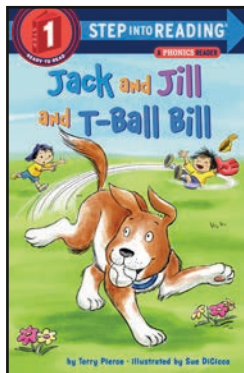
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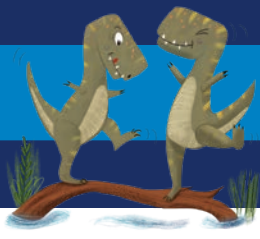


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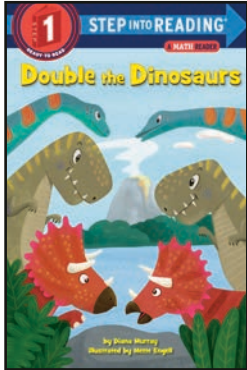


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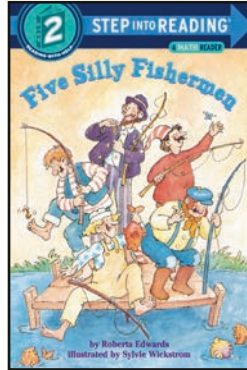
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Step into **A Math Reader**



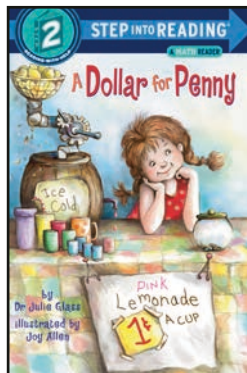
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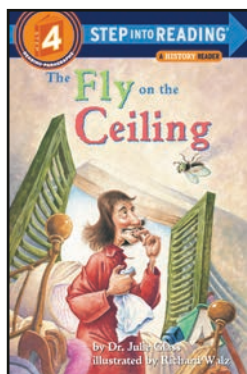
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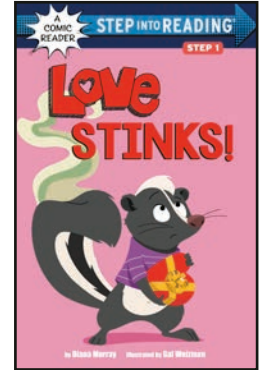


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Step into **A Comic Reader**



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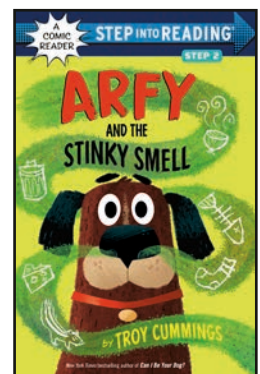
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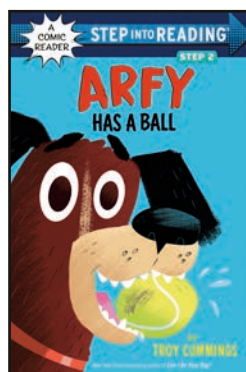
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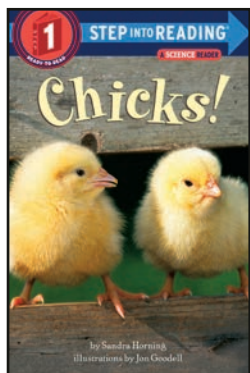


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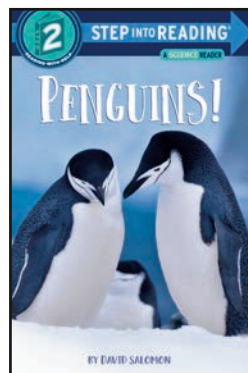
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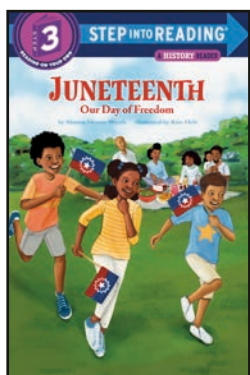
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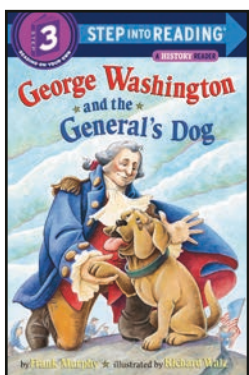
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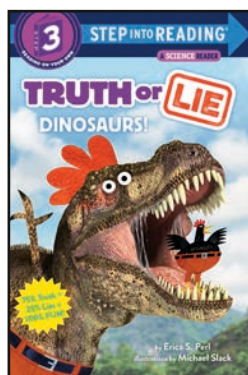
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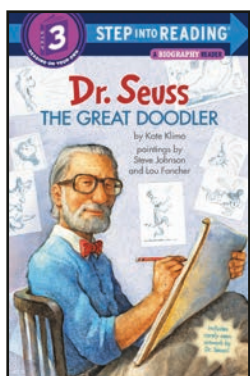
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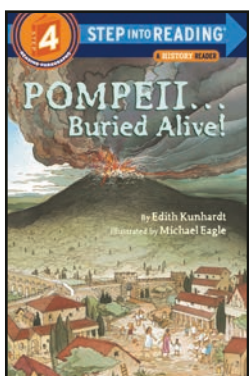
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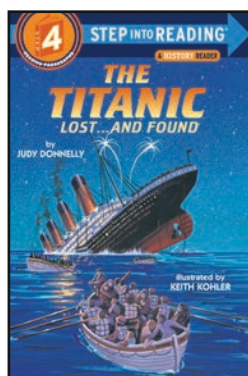
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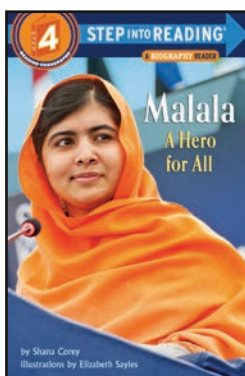
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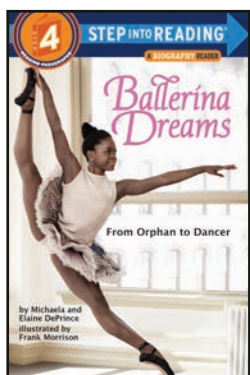
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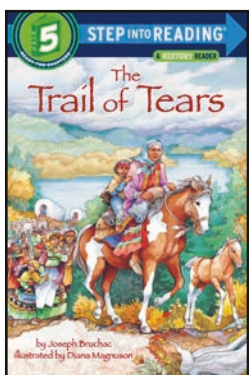
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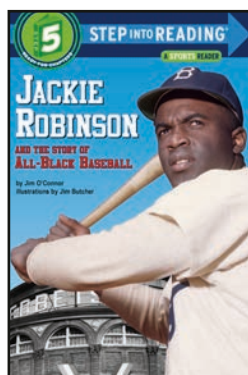
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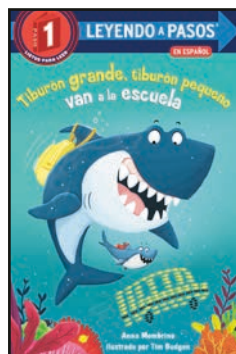
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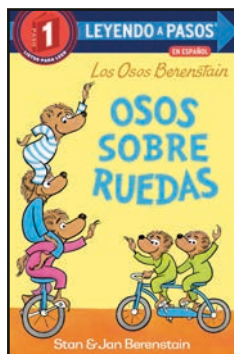
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Guide Writer

This guide was written by Patricia Smith, who has been a Boston Public School teacher for more than twenty years. She holds certifications in Early Childhood PreK–3 and Moderate Disabilities K–12. In addition, she holds a bachelor's degree in child psychology and a master's degree in literacy, curriculum, and instruction.