

Where to start:

Some students need to start at the beginning. This has been set as the default starting point, and if your child has barely begun to read, this is where they will need to begin.

It will be too easy for others. You can deal with this in two ways

1. Go to the free assessment tool on the Agility with Sound website. This is quick and easy to administer and has been designed for parents and teachers to use. There are three tests available, but if you only want to figure out the starting point, use the decoding test. As soon as your child slows down when reading these words, obviously needs to concentrate, stop. That will tell you where to start.

To change the starting point, go to the admin tab and click on your child's name. This is where you set a new starting point.

2. The second option is to start at the beginning but move your child on if it seems too easy, that your child is doing it all effortlessly. Your child will be asked to change the sounds to make new words. Continue to the end of a chain to check if the next task that pops up, the fluent blending, it is just as effortless.

The first four levels in Wordchain 1 all build the same skills. If the first is too easy, try level 5 of Wordchain 1, where they are dealing with sh, ch and ck. Too easy? Try the next level. If that is simple, you will be able to skip to Wordchain 2.

Fluent blending in Wordchain

This is important. You will need to sit with your child to see how quickly they can read the words. **If they get flustered and upset, do not do the timing.** Ask your child to tell you when they are happy to do it. It should always be a positive experience for them. Some might be happy to read the words without the timer or read just the first line. Make it work for you both.

There is a printable chart on the website. Use this to mark progress – this video shows you how to do this. Students usually love seeing themselves going up the chart. Ignore the score. That is for your child's benefit, and is otherwise meaningless.

How often should my child log in?

A short period every day is much more effective than a long session once a week. Multiple short times is better still. Your child will need as much practice as they can get, but concentrated thinking is tiring, and for many, 10, maybe 20 minutes at a time is enough.

Your child's teacher may allow Wordchain to be part of their homework. You can link your child's teacher in to see what they are doing by going here*** and adding the teacher's email address. If your child works with a private tutor, they can be added here too.

The colour coding of letters

You will notice that some letters are green and others red. Green means consonant sounds, sounds made with lip, tongue and/ or teeth. Vowel sounds are made by opening the mouth, lips, tongue and teeth are out of the way. This is not the same as vowel or consonant letters. The u in quick is making a consonant sound; the igh in light is making a vowel sound. If you talk to your child about these letters, **always** use the sound they make, not the letter name.

Do you need **decodable books** to back all this up? Check out our series of decodable books for older students (age 8 and upwards; some in the later levels are suitable for intermediate or secondary students only). These follow the Wordchain sequence precisely. They are available digitally, but digital with a twist. As the child reads, they come to green buttons. Click that button to hear the author speaking to the reader, questioning, prompting, adding thoughts – guiding them through the thinking of competent comprehenders. Go to the Comprehendit tab on the Agility with Sound website to find out more.