

Martin and Áine Murphy

Murphy Reading



Learn
to read
with fun
and games

www.murphyreading.com



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Introduction

Children love games; they enjoy them, get satisfaction from them and learn rapidly. Children pick up the rules of games and understand how to win games as it is a natural way to learn throughout nature, whether a lioness teaching her cub how to hunt, or a chimpanzee's mother teaching them how to identify when food is ripe to eat, or a proud mum or dad teaching their child how to kick a ball. Games are fun for children, parents and teachers, and the Murphy Reading games are fun for all!

First and foremost this programme is suitable for all children. Murphy Reading has been used successfully by both teachers in a classroom and parents in the home as an introduction to reading for four year olds right through to those children who have experienced difficulty and lack of success in learning to read by other means over a period of years!

Other reading programmes claim to be multisensory, but Murphy Reading is unique in using all five senses; seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and touching, to not only recognise and read words but to read with a very high level of comprehension from the first day.

Children love playing games and Murphy Reading is formalised into a series of games which are easy to play, easy to learn and a source of great fun for all children who play them. Everyday household items are used and no special apparatus is needed. You will find videos on the website www.murphyreading.com. These videos demonstrate how to play a number of Murphy Reading games. The emphasis of this programme is fun, fun, fun!

This book is written in everyday language for both teachers and parents to be able to play the Murphy Reading Games easily and effortlessly.

Some people learn to drive a car and must understand exactly how the engine and brakes work, whilst other people can learn to drive the car without knowing how it works.



Both methods of learning can produce very skilled drivers. In the same way some people will want to understand the theory behind Murphy Reading in order to enjoy playing the games with children, while other teachers and parents do not need to understand the theory but will be equally gratified with the results.

The book is therefore written with clear and concise instructions on how to play the Murphy Reading games and also some optional basic theory for those who wish to understand why the games are so successful and why children learn to read with comprehension so rapidly. Throughout the book you will find the theory sections in a grey coloured box.

NOTE: the games must be played in the order in which they are numbered to achieve rapid results. The Murphy Reading games are not a pick 'n' mix of successful teaching methods but are a well defined sequential reading method which just happens to be fun and enjoyable for parents, teachers and children alike.



Learning Naturally

When we watch a baby, or small child examining something new like the remote control of a television, the first thing that the child does is examine it with their hands and eyes then they put the remote in their mouth and they may even shake it.

What is actually happening here is that the child is examining the object using their senses of seeing, touching, tasting and hearing. How the brain learns is through the five senses. If we want to put information into a computer we use the keyboard to input the knowledge electronically.

A child learns by inputting knowledge through one of the senses and the child learns very quickly by inputting knowledge through more than one of the senses. Children learn at the quickest rate by using all of their senses. That is why a multisensory approach is the quickest way for a child to learn.

As well as the five senses there are also sub-senses:

Sense: touch

Sub-senses: rough, smooth, hot, cold, soft, hard, heavy, light

Sense: sight

Sub-senses: colour, size, bright, dark, shape

Sense: taste

Sub-senses: sour, sweet, nice, yucky, spicy, bland

Sense: smell

Sub-senses: sweet, chocolaty, floral, spicy, over powering

Sense: hearing

Sub-senses: loud, soft, crunchy, piercing, rumbling

Of course a lot of these sub-senses interplay with each other e.g. shape interplays between sight and touch. Another example might be a hard crunchy sweet which would sound crunchy, feel hard, smell chocolaty and look yellow.



We increase a child's learning ability by making them more aware of their senses and their sub-senses. Not only do the Murphy Reading games teach a child to read easily and with fun but they also increase their learning ability in general.

How did our children learn to talk easily and effortlessly? It is just a natural learning experience.

Our first word was probably Mummy or Mammy. This was our most important word as we depended upon her for food, warmth and security. We remembered what Mummy looked like, what Mummy felt like, what Mummy sounded like, what Mummy smelled like and also the taste of the food that Mummy fed us. Mummy is probably the most multisensory word we ever learn and that's before we develop an emotional attachment!

We probably then learned the names of all the people in the household and then various names for food. Different families have different words for things e.g., "bobo" for bottle, etc. These were words we learned very quickly indeed. Can you think of all the senses involved in learning words?

Why are very young children fascinated by the television: sight (moving pictures, colour, size), hearing (loud, soft, voices, music), touch (smooth, rough)..... lots of young children recognise the word TV or telly or television very early on and now you know why.

Once a child has learnt words then they begin to talk in sentences. We allow children to talk in sentences whether they make sense or not without introducing them to the concept of right and wrong.

Imagine a little girl running around a room and knocking her head on the wooden arm of a chair. The child runs to her mother and she comforts the child and then when the child is comforted the mother taps on the arm of the chair and says "bad bold chair". The child will try to mimic the mother and say something like "bwad bwold cwair".



Now a very interesting thing occurs. The mother does not say that the child is wrong, she smiles and repeats the phrase "bad bold chair "and again the little girl repeats "bwad bwold cwair". The mother does not correct the child because she knows that eventually the child will learn to say bad bold chair in a manner that everybody would recognise. The concept of right and wrong is not used by the mother and yet most children learn to speak fluently and effortlessly before they go to school.

Imagine how ridiculous it would be if when the little girl says "bwad bwold cwair" that the mother would insist she pronounce each word correctly? How slow would progress be and would the child ever learn to speak fluently and effortlessly? Would learning to talk be fun, interesting and satisfying? No, learning to talk is "evolutionary", it is not a sudden process. Most children learn to talk before they go to school for the following reasons:

The child wants to talk because they see and hear other people talking and they want to mimic the same idea.

When learning to talk children are allowed to make mistakes.

Parents and siblings very often laugh and chuckle at the mistakes that children make when learning to talk and it is a source of fun for both the parents, siblings and the child learning to talk! Mistakes are a necessary part of learning to talk, that is the natural way to learn. We do not inhibit the child's progress by continually pointing out mistakes and stopping to correct them at every step of the way.



The Principles of Murphy Reading

**The first principle of Murphy Reading is:
When learning the child is always right!**

Before a child goes to school a typical child will learn to talk in the present tense, past tense and future tense. A child learns to crawl, walk, run and jump before they go to school. The child learns the geography of their home and the supermarket; they know where their favourite food is in the supermarket! Children know how to play games with each other and how to socialise with each other before they go to school. Children know when parents are in a good mood or a bad mood by just looking at the parent's face. All of this has been learned without the concept of right and wrong!

**The second principle of Murphy Reading is:
Learning to read can be a game that children enjoy!**

Children love to play games, they want to play games and they learn a great deal through playing games. We all enjoyed playing games when we were young and we never forget those games!

By playing the Murphy Reading games all children can learn to read with full comprehension and also learn to enjoy reading.

It is preferable that the games are carried out for short periods of time and as often as possible over a continuous period of time. Obviously every child is different and therefore parents and teachers will spend a varying length of time each day with different children. We recommend spending between ten and twenty minutes a day playing the Murphy Reading games. A number of short sessions during the week are more effective than sitting down for a one hour session once a week. It has been our experience that parents and teachers directed to do the programme with children aged 4 to 5 years, played the games four or five days a week, playing the games for 15 to 20 minutes a session.

Orthogonal View



If you look at the two photographs of The Customs House in Dublin the two photographs appear totally different. To a child they may appear to be two totally different buildings. One picture is taking facing directly at the centre of the building and this picture looks as if it is in two dimensions. The second picture is taken from the side and it appears that the building is in three dimensions. In the same way if a reader looks at a word straight on, as shown in photograph 1 below, the word appears to be in two dimensions. Whereas if the reader looks at the word from the side, as in photograph 2, the words will appear to be in three dimensions.



Very often children who are starting to read seem to be able to read words quite easily one day, but not the next, but then again the following day they can read them. Teachers often put this down to lack of concentration but it may not be so. It is very important that the child's nose is directly opposite the middle of the words when reading. This is why when you are playing the Murphy Reading games with a child the words need to be in front of the child as shown in Photograph 1.



Playing the Murphy Reading Games

There are 30 Murphy Reading games in this book. It is vital that the games are played in the order they are laid out in. They have been designed in a specific way to achieve fast and effective learning through developing various aspects of the learning brain.

At the beginning of each game you will find an explanation of the theory for the game in a **grey** coloured box. As mentioned previously, this is optional reading.

We recommend that you read through the game before you sit down with the child to play the game. This means that you are familiar with the **"How to play the game"** step by step instructions and you have everything you need to play the game which you will find in a **cream** coloured box. It is important that the child is having fun while you play the Murphy Reading games at all times with minimum distraction.

You will also find video clips on our website www.murphyreading.com demonstrating how to play a number of the games.

Murphy Reading is designed to not only introduce children to reading but to introduce children to reading with full comprehension. It is very important that you complete each game at the child's individual learning rate. You play the games one at a time and when you feel the child is ready then you progress on to the next game. You do not begin a new game until the child has completed the previous game and can use their new words confidently. This is the reason we have numbered each game and do not give a specific time frame for how long it takes to complete all 30 games. Remember every child is different!



Game 1 - The Sweets Game

The purpose of this game is to teach the child to "tune" their senses of taste, touch, smell and sight. Also they learn to identify their first words. These words belong to the category of words "sweets".

On our website www.murphyreading.com you will find a video demonstrating how to play The Sweets Game.

What you need:

A packet of jelly tots, buttons and smarties, scissors, yellow box on page 146 and yellow sweet word cards page 123

How to play the game:

Lay out two of each sweet. As you lay them out tell the child what each one is called. Make sure you lay them out orthogonally.

Stage 1

1. Ask the child to pick up each sweet and feel it.
2. Ask the child the following questions:
 - Is it hard or soft?
 - Is it squidgy?
 - Is it big or small?
3. Ask the child to close their eyes and explain that you are going to put the different sweets into their hand one at a time and ask them to name it by feeling it.
4. Place one of the sweets into the child's hand and ask the child "Feel that sweet in your hand and tell me which sweet you think it is?"

Game 1 - The Sweets Game

5. Repeat this with each sweet.
6. Ask the child to smell each sweet.
7. While the child is smelling the sweet ask them the following questions:
 - Does it smell nice?
 - Does it smell chocolaty?
 - Does it smell like a flower?
8. Ask the child to close their eyes and explain that you are going to put the different sweets into their hand one at a time and ask them to name it by smelling it.
9. Give the child one of each sweet to taste.
10. While the child is tasting the sweet ask them the following questions:
 - Does it feel big or small in your mouth?
 - Is it hard or soft?
 - Is it crunchy?
 - Is it chewy?
 - Is it smooth or rough?
11. Ask the child to close their eyes and explain that you are going to put the different sweets into their hand and ask them to name it by tasting it.
12. Lay out one of each sweet and explain to the child that you are going to call out the name of one sweet and ask them to pick up the sweet you call out.
13. Call out one sweet at a time, ask the child to give you the sweet you call out.

Stage 2



1. Lay out the 3 empty sweet packets orthogonally.
2. Give the child 2 of each sweet all mixed in a pile.
3. Ask the child to put the sweets under their packet as shown in the photograph above.
4. Ask the child to close their eyes while you jumble up the packets.
5. Give the child the pile of sweets again and ask them to put the sweets under their packet.
6. Repeat again as above.
7. If the child has completed this with ease there is no need to repeat it again.

Stage 3



1. Cut off the front of each packet of sweets saving the side with the name of the sweets written on it.
2. Lay out the 3 packets.
3. Ask the child to sort the pile of sweets this time placing the sweet under the cut-off packet as shown in the photograph above.
4. Ask the child to close their eyes while you jumble up the packets.
5. Repeat as above.

Stage 4



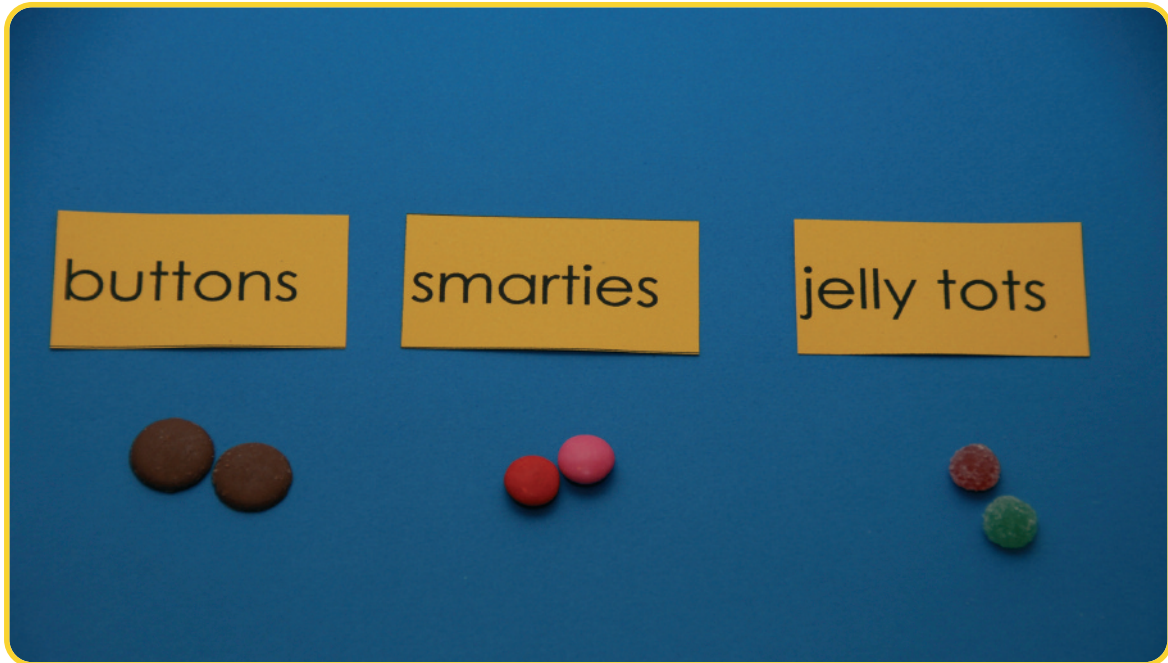
1. Cut out the name from the sweet packet.
2. Lay out the sweet names.
3. Ask the child to sort the pile of sweets this time placing the sweet under the packet name.
4. Ask the child to close their eyes while you jumble up the packet names.
5. Repeat as above.

Stage 5



1. Take the yellow sweet word cards from page 123.
2. Put the sweet packet name under the word card.
3. Ask the child to sort the pile of sweets this time placing the sweet under the yellow word card and packet name.
4. Ask the child to close their eyes while you jumble up the yellow word cards and sweet packet names.
5. Repeat as above.

Stage 6



1. Remove the packet name and only lay out the yellow word cards.
2. Ask the child to sort the pile of sweets this time placing the sweet under the word card as shown in the photograph above.
3. Ask the child to close their eyes while you jumble up the word cards.
4. Repeat as above.
5. When you are finished playing The Sweets Game place the yellow word cards into the yellow box.

This will take 10 minutes and should definitely take no more than 15 minutes. It works very quickly.



Game 1 - The Sweets Game

It is very important that this is a game for the children. You can see that we call them games because they are games.

It is very important to go over yesterday's words before introducing new words. This applies for every day you work with a child. Show the child each yellow word card and ask them what sweet is written on each word card. If you find the child is having difficulty doing this repeat stage 5 of The Sweets Game.

Extra Words

Introduce maltesers and jelly babies in the same way as above. When the children can sort maltesers and jelly babies using the yellow word cards ask them to sort all 5 sweets.

Using the method above for The Sweets Game introduce the following sweets: rolos, minstrels and fruit pastilles.

Number of words we can now read = 8