

Recommended Apps for Primary School Students

In 2013, an article featuring recommended language and literacy apps was shared in The Bulletin. Technology moves quickly and many changes and improvements have been made to the apps originally featured. Other useful apps have also been created in the meantime.

The list below features apps that may be used throughout primary school as activities to support and reinforce target learning areas. Although the use of technology (including apps, iPads and tablets) in education is fast evolving, it is important to remember that an app is simply a tool in the teaching and learning tool kit. It doesn't replace good quality teaching practices nor does it replace the teacher.

The apps listed below are all currently (August 2018) available on iPad via the App Store. A note has been made in the 'Note' section of the table when an app is also available on android devices via Google Play. This list is not exhaustive but presents a good overview of the range of high quality apps currently available.

AUSPELD regularly shares links to free apps via their Facebook page, facebook.com/AUSPELD/.

Like or Follow the AUSPELD page for notifications when recommended apps become available free of charge.

Target Area: Phonological Awareness

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost	Note
Hearbuilder Phonological Awareness <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	K-Year 2	Phonological awareness – segmenting sentences into words, segmenting words into syllables, blending syllables, rhyming (identifying and generating). Phonemic awareness – identifying initial and final sounds, deleting sounds, segmenting and blending sounds in words, manipulating sounds in words. Provides clear goals to reach for each level and gives specific feedback when goals not reached.	Lite: Free Full version (see Hearbuilder website)	Must create an account to sign in and access all levels. Also available on Google play.
Syllables Splash <i>Smarty Ears</i>	K-Year 1	Activities to develop syllable segmentation. Words can be presented in pictures or written words (for older students).	Lite: Free Full: \$12.99	Lite version only allows segmenting practice for 5 words
Beginning Sounds – Endless Phonics Reader <i>Innovative Mobile Apps</i>	K-Year 2	Select a target (e.g., 'basketball') and find 3 words (pictures) that have the same initial sound (e.g., 'balloon', 'bus', 'butterfly').	Full: \$1.49	Multisyllabic words used – younger children may have trouble identifying initial sound
Chimp Fu <i>Nessy Learning Limited</i>	PP-Year 6	Activities to develop an understanding of all 6 syllable patterns.	Full: \$4.49	Can be used with up to 5 players and progress is recorded.
Sound Beginnings <i>Preschool University</i>	K-Year 2	Simple games for identifying the initial, medial and final sounds in words. Indirectly targets vocabulary (choosing correct word – and then identifying its initial sound – to describe the picture)	Free	Cannot choose word length, Some multisyllabic words used (eg, 'underwear')

Target Area: Phonics

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost	Note
Initial Code <i>Sounds-Write Ltd</i>	K-Year 1	Official app for the Sounds~Write phonics program. Activities to further develop blending, segmenting, sound spelling correspondence, word reading and writing, sentence reading and writing. Activities are conducted in line with the exact 'script' in the Sounds~Write teaching program (including gestures).	Lite: Free Full: \$7.99	Units 1-11 included Comprehensive instructions for parents included (must be played with a teacher, tutor, etc.)
Abc PocketPhonics Full Version: Letter, sounds & writing + first words <i>Apps in My Pocket</i>	Ages 5 and under	One of the best phonics apps. Strongly linked to structured synthetic phonics and comes with a parent guide.	Lite: Free Full: \$10.99	Lite version includes activities only for practicing listening to and writing letters
Hairy Letters/ Hairy Phonics / Hairy Words <i>Nessy Learning</i>	Kindy +	Develops letter formation. Includes games to practise blending sounds to form short words.	Full: \$4.49	(As above) Available on Google Play for \$4.89
Oz Phonics <i>DSP Learning</i>	PP -Year 1	5 different apps for phonics development 1. Introduction to reading 2. Phonemic awareness and letter sounds 3. CVC, CCVC words, consonant blends, sentences 4. Consonant blends, CVCC words, digraphs, spelling 5. Long vowel spelling & R-controlled vowels	Each app (full) – \$2.99 - \$4.99 Bundle - \$13.99	Feature: Australian accent, NZ accent available Limited availability on Google Play
SoundLiteracy <i>3D Literacy, LLC</i>	PP +	Instructional tool that uses letter tiles to build and spell words. Helps reinforce the sound based approach to spelling Blank tiles included to select your own targets for the activities.	Full: \$14.49	Students must play with a tutor, speech therapist, teacher, etc.
Cambugs Letter Sounds <i>Cambugs</i>	K - PP	Flash card game to facilitate parents to assist children with letter sound knowledge. Instruction for parents on prompting and providing feedback. Includes the 26 letters of the alphabet.	Free	
Twinkl <i>Twinkl Limited</i>	Kindy – Year 3	A range of apps designed to support children to further develop skills taught in Phases 1 to 5 of the Letters and Sounds program.	Some free, others \$1.29-\$8.99	
Ladybird: I'm Ready for Phonics with Captain Comet <i>Penguin Books</i>	PP -Year 1	12 Levels of activities to <i>support</i> a student's progress in synthetic phonics Aligns with the Letters and Sounds phonics program.	Full - \$3.99 Bundle including the app below - \$4.49	Available on Google Play for \$2.79
Ladybird: I'm Ready to Spell <i>Penguin Books</i>	Year 1 - Year 3	Three interactive games to practice spelling.	Full - \$2.99 Bundle including the app above - \$4.49	Available on Google Play for \$2.99
Teach your monster to read – Phonics and Reading <i>Teach Monster Games</i>	Ages 3-6	Children create a monster and take it on a magical journey over three extensive games - meeting a host of colourful characters along the way and improving their reading skills as they progress.	\$7.99	Available on Google Play for \$7.99
Touch and Write Phonics <i>Fizzbrain LLC</i>	PP-year 5	Extension of the Touch and Write handwriting app. A fun way for children to practice vowels, blends, digraphs and trigraphs as they write with a variety of mediums.	\$4.49	

Target Area: Reading (Fluency and Comprehension)

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost	Note
Little Learners <i>Learning Logic</i>	K+	Little Learner books for Stages 1-7 of the Little Learners Love Literacy sequenced reading program	\$13.99 – 16.99 per stage- (5 books/ stage) Bundle of 10 stages - \$99.99	
One Minute Reader <i>Read Naturally</i>	Year 1 +	Structured reading program aimed at improving reading fluency and comprehension. Also targets vocabulary development. Includes non-fiction stories that are modeled by a fluent reader in the program that the student can read along with.	Lite – free Separate app for each of the 5 levels (\$30.99 each)	
AbiTalk Second Grade Reading Comprehension Fiction <i>Abitalk Inc.</i>	Ages 6-8	Twenty stories about everyday life (150 words per story) that introduce new vocabulary and concepts, followed by multiple choice questions, true/false questions and matching activities to measure comprehension.	Lite-Free	“Developer needs to update this program for it to work on iOS 11.”
K12 Timed Reading & Comprehension Practice <i>K12 Inc.</i>	Year 1 +	A series of short stories for young readers per grade level (fiction/non-fiction). Includes fluency timer (calculates words per minute) and comprehension questions.	Full: \$5.99	Requires independence as a reader: fluency timer will not be accurate if readers skim over text without actually reading and understanding. Available on Google Play for \$4.21
Reading Comprehension <i>Interactive Learning Success, LLC</i>	K – Year 4	Three separate apps to download (K-1, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4). Engaging stories to improve reading fluency and confidence. Each story followed by a series of multiple choice comprehension questions.	Full – free	
Reading Comprehension Camp <i>Smarty Ears</i>	Year 2 – Year 7	Customisable stories and quizzes to encourage auditory and reading comprehension as well as story generation skills.	Full - \$30.99	

Target Area: Writing (Handwriting and Written Expression)

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost	Note
LetterSchool Free (Full: LetterSchool Block Letters) <i>Sanoma Media</i>	K +	Simple and rewarding game for practicing letter formation	Lite: Free Full - \$10.99	Does not link letters to sounds (reads letter name when formation complete) Available on Google Play for \$6.99
iWriteWords <i>gdipius</i>	K +	Engaging activities for practicing letter formation in isolation and in short words	Lite: free, Full: \$4.49	(As above)
Hairy Letters <i>Nessy Learning</i>	Kindy +	Develops letter formation. Includes games to practise blending sounds to form short words.	Full: \$4.49	(As above) Available on Google Play for \$4.89
Sentence Builder <i>Abitalk Inc</i>	K – Year 2	Focuses on correct sentence structure along with skills in pronunciation, grammar and punctuation. Able to customise pictures, words and sentences.	Lite - free Full: \$9.99	Available on Google Play for \$1.92
Touch and Write Australia <i>Fizzbrain LLC</i>	K-year 3	Four versions available – Victorian Modern Cursive, QLD Beginners, Block Print and South Australian Font	\$4.49	

Target Area: Vocabulary / Grammar

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost	Note
Let's Name Things Fun Deck <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	Ages 3+	Flash cards that prompt "Let's name things that... (e.g., things that are noisy). Encourages students to practice naming (vocabulary) and categorisation. Game includes flashcards with no means of measuring accuracy of responses.	Free	Must be played with a partner who can determine correctness of responses and provide feedback. Available on Google Play
WH Question Cards: Who, What, When, Where, Why <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	Pre-primary (PP) +	Activities for asking the correct WH questions and answering WH questions (by multiple choice). Questions can either be read or heard by students. Activities include multiple choice (asking or answering questions) and matching games. Provides feedback if response correct/incorrect but no specific feedback to improve performance.	Lite: Free (includes "Who cards") Bundle \$17.99	Limited availability on Google Play
Using I and Me Fun Deck <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	K +	Listen to/read sentences (with pictures) and fill in the blanks to practice 'I' and 'me' personal pronouns.	Free	Provides corrective feedback when incorrect responses given Available on Google Play for \$2.15
Kid's vocabulary, grammar & language learning games <i>Tribal Nova</i>	Ages 5 and under	Language development and early literacy activities.	Free	
Eggy Vocabulary <i>Blake eLearning</i>	Ages 3+	A set of games designed to help children build vocabulary. Involves reading and/or hearing words and matching pictures. Includes 252 vocabulary items.	Full – \$2.99	Based on Reading Eggs
Vocabulary Practice: Greek and Latin Root Words Vocabulary Game <i>Always Icecream & Clever Dragons</i>	PP+	Useful app for learning and practicing etymology of words used in educational settings. Quiz includes 250 Greek and Latin root words that provides corrective feedback throughout.	Full – \$2.99	

Target Area: Other (Literacy)

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost
Text Grabber <i>ABBY</i>	Any	Picture to text reader. Also acts as a translator.	Free
Autodesk Sketchbook <i>Autodesk Inc.</i>	Any	Drawing app.	Free Available on Google Play
Britannica Kids <i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i>	Any	A selection of apps to support learning in Science and Society and Environment (e.g., Coral Reefs, US Presidents)	\$2.99 - \$7.99 Available on Google Play
iTunes U <i>Apple</i>	Secondary	Online depository of lessons. Teachers can load recorded PowerPoints or learning materials for students to download.	Free Available on Google Play
iBooks <i>Apple</i>	Any	Electronic book reader	Free Available on Google Play
Free Books Pro (full version) <i>My Books (free)</i> <i>Digital Press Publishing</i>	Any	Electronic book reader	Free Pro version - \$1.49 Available on Google Play
Kindle <i>AMZN Mobile LLC</i>	Any	Electronic book reader	Free Available on Google Play
Easy Dyslexia Aid / Easy Spelling Aid <i>Nuapp Productions Ltd</i>	Any	Voice to text app that allows children to record their thoughts and get the correct spelling for unknown words.	\$2.99 Available on Google Play for \$1.99
BookRecorder <i>SAWAS and DS Company LTD</i>	Any	BookRecorder makes it easy for children, teachers, parents and grandparents to record their own audiobook.	Free

Target Area: Auditory Comprehension

Name of App	Age	Description	Cost	Note
Hearbuilder Auditory Memory <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	Kindy (K) – Year 8	Listening activities for: Memory for numbers Memory for Words Memory for Details; Sentence Completion; Memory for WH Information. Provides clear goals to reach for each level and gives strategy ideas when goals not reached.	Lite – free Full version (see Hearbuilder website)	Must create an account to sign in and access all levels. Might need some help with American vocab (e.g., quarter). Available on Google Play
Hearbuilder Following Directions <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	Pre-K – Year 3	Follow directions of increasing difficulty (more steps to the instruction). Provides clear goals to reach for each level and gives feedback when targets not met.	Lite – free Full version (see Hearbuilder website)	Must create an account to sign in and access all levels. Available on Google Play
Hearbuilder Sequencing <i>Super Duper Publications</i>	K – Year 6	Sequencing picture cards to match spoken phrases. Provides clear goals to reach for each level.	Lite – free Full version (see Hearbuilder site)	Available on Google Play
Fun with Directions <i>Hamaguchi Apps for Speech, Language and Auditory Development</i>	Ages 5 and under	Interactive games that require players to respond to simple and complex directions. Skills of listening, following directions, colours, spatial concepts, auditory memory and auditory processing also required.	Lite – \$1.49 Full - \$24.99	
More Fun with Directions <i>Hamaguchi Apps for Speech, Language and Auditory Development</i>	Ages 5 and under	Interactive and engaging games to practice listening, following directions, colours, comparatives (larger/smaller) spatial concepts, auditory memory and auditory processing.	Lite – \$1.49 Full - \$24.99	
Picture the Sentence <i>Hamaguchi Apps for Speech, Language and Auditory Development</i>	Ages 4+	Practice language and auditory processing tasks at the basic sentence level. Encourages children to create mental images from what they hear.	Lite – \$1.49 Full - \$14.99	
Splingo's Language Universe. <i>The Speech and Language Store LLP</i>	Ages 18 months – 4 years	Develop listening and language skills. Instructions range from a very early level of language development (e.g. single word recognition) to much more complex (e.g. instructions combining several aspects of language at once).	Full - \$4.49	Available on Google Play for \$3.20

Note: Apps listed as Lite are usually supported by advertising and can be restricted in the number of games or levels available. Apps listed as Full generally have no ads and all levels/features are unlocked. Lite versions of these apps are designed for you to review the suitability of an app prior to purchasing.

