



# Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom

By Irene Fountas, Gay Su Pinnell

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In 1996, Gay Su Pinnell and Irene Fountas presented *Guided Reading*, the most comprehensive guided reading resource ever published. Hailed for its practical, systematic approach, the book showed hundreds of thousands of teachers how to address the needs of the whole classroom as well as individual readers. Now, with the publication of *Word Matters*, Pinnell and Fountas offer K-3 teachers the same unparalleled support, this time focusing on phonics and spelling instruction.

*Word Matters* presents essential information on designing and implementing a high-quality, systematic literacy program to help children learn about letters, sounds, and words. The central goal is to teach children to become "word solvers": readers who can take words apart while reading for meaning, and writers who can construct words while writing to communicate. Where similar books are narrow in focus, *Word Matters* presents the theoretical underpinnings and practical wherewithal of word study in three contexts:

- word study that includes systematically planned and applied experiences focusing on the elements of letters and words
- writing, including how children use phoneme-grapheme relationships, word patterns, and principles to develop spelling ability
- reading, including teaching children how to solve words with the use of phonics and visual-analysis skills as they read for meaning.

Each topic is supported with a variety of practical tools: reproducible sheets for a word study system and for writing workshop; lists of spelling minilessons; and extensive word lists, including frequently used words, antonyms, synonyms, and more. Armed with these tools-and the tried-and-true wisdom of Gay Su Pinnell and Irene Fountas-teachers can help students develop not just the "essential skills," but also a joyful appreciation of their own literacy.



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**Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom** By Irene Fountas, Gay Su Pinnell **Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

### **About the Author**

Irene C. Fountas, a professor in the School of Education at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has been a classroom teacher, language arts specialist, and consultant in school districts across the nation and abroad. She works extensively in the literacy education field and directs the Literacy Collaborative in the School of Education at Lesley University. Together with Gay Su Pinnell she has authored numerous books, videos, and websites with Heinemann that are now considered standards in the field of literacy instruction and staff development. Their latest innovations are The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention and The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, a comprehensive assessment system for grades K-8. Fountas and Pinnell have influenced the classroom practices of teachers nationwide through bestselling books such as: The Fountas & Pinnell Prompting Guide 1 (2008) When Readers Struggle (2008) The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Book List, K-8+ (2009-2011 Edition, Print Version) The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades K-8 (2007) The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades K-2 (2007) The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades 3-8 (2007) Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing About Reading, K-8 (2006) [www.FountasandPinnellLeveledBooks.com](http://www.FountasandPinnellLeveledBooks.com) Leveled Books, K-8: Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching (2005) Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children (1996) Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy (2001) Interactive Writing: How Language & Literacy Come Together, K-2 (2000) The Primary Literacy Video Collection Series of DVDs: Guided Reading; Classroom Management; and Word Study (2006) Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom (1998) The Reader's Notebook Help America Read and Coordinator's Guide (1997) In addition, through Heinemann's firsthand line of classroom materials, Fountas and Pinnell have authored Phonics Lessons (Grades K, 1, and 2), Word Study Lessons (Grade 3), Sing a Song of Poetry, and their corresponding word and picture cards. These materials are used in thousands of classrooms throughout the country. Fountas and Pinnell together present workshops nationwide on a variety of literacy-instruction topics through Heinemann Professional Development.

Gay Su Pinnell is a professor in the School of Teaching and Learning at The Ohio State University. She has extensive experience in classroom teaching and field-based research, and in developing comprehensive approaches to literacy education. She has received the International Reading Association's Albert J. Harris Award for research and the Charles A. Dana Foundation Award for her contributions to the field of education. She is also a member of the Reading Hall of Fame. Together with Irene Fountas she has authored numerous books, videos, and websites with Heinemann that are considered standards in the field of literacy instruction and staff development. Their latest innovations are The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention and The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, a comprehensive assessment system for grades K-8. Fountas and Pinnell have influenced the classroom practices of teachers nationwide through bestselling titles such as: The Fountas & Pinnell Prompting Guide 1 (2008) When Readers Struggle (2008) The Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Book List, K-8+ (2009-2011 Edition, Print Version) The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades K-8 (2007) The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades K-2 (2007) The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades 3-8 (2007) Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing About Reading, K-8 (2006) [www.FountasandPinnellLeveledBooks.com](http://www.FountasandPinnellLeveledBooks.com) Leveled Books, K-8: Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching (2005) Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children (1996) Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy (2001) Interactive Writing: How Language & Literacy Come Together, K-2 (2000) The Primary Literacy Video Collection Series of DVDs: Guided Reading; Classroom Management; and Word Study (2006) Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom (1998) The

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