

**PHONICS: Rate Super Kids for addressing the needs of each group of students**

	poor	average	good	excellent	neutral
Below grade level	17	2	0	2	0
On grade level	7	3	7	3	1
Above grade level	12	2	6	1	0

It is a solid phonics program for on grade level and above grade level students. It is very lofty with its expectations for struggling students.

My kids are reading more complex words than in previous years. I am very happy with the program. I have less outside planning... I feel like I am working smarter not harder. This is the strongest component of the program. It is fine for your average and high students but moves much too fast for the lower students. It jumps right into decoding 4-5 letter words with all vowel sounds and many children are not comfortable with their vowel sounds and 3 letter words at the beginning of the year. A 3 week review is not enough to prepare them for the program. We also jumped right into -ed inflectional endings and multisyllabic words. They are all 'decodable' but this is very overwhelming for first graders at the beginning of the year. I find that my lower students do not have confidence reading due to this. The 'leveled' library books are not truly leveled, just longer. So students who are having difficulty do not have text they can access without major support. I am using Raz-Kids and the leveled book room to get text into their hands and teach skills they are struggling with.

The first grade students are expected to blend three consonants at the beginning of the school year. There is no review of CVC words. Students are still showing a lack of short vowel competency. Starting the year off teaching consonant digraphs is not developmentally appropriate when the children are struggling with short vowel sounds.

This program does not meet the needs of the children in my class. It is sad that the children that it is meant to help support, it does not support at all because they need a more scaffolded program. The below level children are completely lost. The decoding is very far above the low children. The decoding is not enough for the middle children. The upper level children don't need the decoding in the fashion. It's a disaster!

The order of the phonics is not conducive to 1st grade learning. The on level children would be fine in any program. The above level children are bored. The approaching kids, it's too hard. There is no mid-point.

The word patterns are very difficult. The program assumes the children all know their short vowel sounds.

Phonics is strong in the program but it assumes that the children have had Superkids in previous years. This will be a problem for new children coming from other districts. I do not think that all of the phonics elements are developmentally appropriate for 1st grade tch vs ch or doubling consonants before adding ed or ing. These skills are taught in 2nd and 3rd grade typically and are confusing for my average and low readers.

The spelling portion of this program completely ignores what research says on how reading develops. 1st graders are learning the same spelling patterns as third graders! The professors I have spoken to this that this program is in poor interest of the children we serve. It is a one size fits all approach to spelling. It doesn't allow for differentiation based on children's needs.

**COMPREHENSION: Rate Super Kids for addressing the needs of each group of students.**

	poor	average	good	excellent	neutral
Bleow grade level	17	2	0	2	0
On grade level	13	2	5	1	0
Above grade level	12	4	4	1	0

All comprehension is orally done during reading groups. There is very little written comprehension. The program is also a spiral program so the comprehension strategies are not taught to mastery and only covered in depth a couple days within the unit. I am supplementing a lot to beef up the comprehension. I have found written response questions for the stories and I am using the close reading strategies we learned last year at PD. I spend multiple days on a strategy so the students are actually able to talk about it and use it properly. There is also very little nonfiction. We have one story at the end of every unit and half of the 'leveled' library books are nonfiction. The nonfiction usually does not match our state standards in science and social studies so I am supplementing with other reading material so I get the most out of my instruction. My team has gone back to the district scope and sequence for comprehension skills as it relates to Superkids.

I feel that the comprehension piece is lacking at this point in Superkids. With very few opportunities to read informational texts as part of the program, I am concerned that my students are not frequently identifying main ideas and key facts. There is also no comparison (as of yet) between informational and literary texts. This concerns me as I know it is a skill assessed on future assessments.

**WRITING: Rate Super Kids for addressing the needs of each group of students.**

	poor	average	good	excellent	neutral
Below grade level	12	7	1	1	0
On grade level	10	3	6	2	0
Above grade level	12	4	5	0	0

I actually like the daily writing component. It is developmentally appropriate for the children.

I like the daily writing component though I use it in a different order to meet the building writing plan requirements.

My kids are spelling words better and have better hand writing. Using punctuation and capital letters correctly.

The approaching kids can follow. There is not enough meat to the writing, really, all of the program. The dictation writing is helpful with conventions. The on or above level children are bored.

The dictation sentences are nice for the on level children. The sentences are laborious for the below children and not enough for the high children! The children will have nice handwriting but this is not balanced literacy and there are not many writing opportunities.

The writing component to Superkids is weak. We have been able to use parts of it though (some writing prompts and the rubrics), but the actual lessons need some "beefing" up.

The writing in Superkids instructional guide is not challenging enough for first grade. I do like the daily writing component which is different from the other; however, there is not enough time to get it completed daily.

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This is the weakest part of the program. Handwriting and sentence dictation is the focus. We only spend a couple days on writing during a unit if the 'embedded' writing is used. There are additional writing units that are daily but they skip around with the topics and what is being taught. Some are not first grade skills. My students are writing much less than in the past and their stories are not as in depth following the program. I am focusing on one mode of writing according to the Common Core for my grade level and utilizing Writer's Workshop, as I have been trained in it through the district. My team has gone back to the district scope and sequence for writing.

**Are you currently supplementing from resources outside of Super Kids?**

Yes	20
No	1

**General Comments:**

Foundations is a much better phonics program and is widely used in districts around the United States. I would prefer to use it for the spelling component. I would have liked to pilot Lucy Caulkins new reading program. Perhaps it would be a good idea to utilize our partnership with John Carroll University. What reading programs do the professors there think are most appropriate and why. We have this great resource that is hardly ever utilized. Why are we not asking the people that have spent time researching programs? It seems that some administrators have too much of a personal interest in the program. When we are asked about the program one of them shuts us down almost immediately. I don't feel comfortable having a professional conversation with this administrator about the program. It is very clear that our opinion (teachers who work with elementary school children daily) is not valued. Thank you for taking the time to ask our opinion!

## First Grade - SuperKids Survey – December 2015 21 responses

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I am not happy with this program. I find the expectations in terms of what kids are able to do to be very low, except for the phonics piece. I am utilizing resources that the district has purchased and information from trainings the district has provided, some as recently as last year, to meet the needs of my diverse learners. NO program meets the need of all students and telling me to teach with fidelity undermines my professional judgement on what is best for my students to reach grade level and beyond. DIBELS and the report cards do not align with what is being taught in Superkids. I also don't appreciate the way communication is being handled and the 'shaming' that is going on when people do not like the program or do not want to spend their personal afternoons in trainings.

I am supplementing materials for center work and developing writing comprehension questions for the stories so the students have to respond in writing. I am using Foundations materials with my lowest groups who lack phonemic awareness skills.

It would be nice to see what it would be like to teach kids who had the SK curriculum in K not just starting fresh in first grade.

On days where the program only focuses on word work, I meet with my children in small groups and use material from Reading A-Z. I will also supplement more with non-fiction text after winter break.

The technology piece is awesome! It is great to have the lessons on the Smartboard every day. The Big Book of Decoding is also great. And I think the handwriting instruction has been beneficial for all of my students. I just wish the texts themselves were more varied, diverse, and complex.

There is no differentiation. Everything SK has to offer is decodable with limited controlled vocabulary that is often out of date. All children receive the same work. All of leveled readers have the same vocabulary in them. The only difference is the amount of print per page. This is being passed off as acceptable. Forget about 's Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. There is not meeting a child where they are at to drive them forward.

### Assessments:

The assessments that the district is mandating, the TRC and DIBELS, are not aligned to what is being taught. Some buildings are not even giving the MOY DIBELS. The children are showing weaknesses with leveled text outside of the SK program. There is a significant lack of grade level sight words being taught. Children are not showing the growth that we have come expect at this point in the school year and are not reading well outside of the SK materials. This is a substantial concern in regards to our SLOs.

### Report Card:

The new report cards were made to follow the pacing guide that was built by the current administration. However, SK does not follow the pacing guide, and therefore we are working to fit square pegs into round holes.

### Spiral Curriculum:

Do I need to mention EDM? The spiral of SK is not allowing our struggling students to master any of the concepts. The former district pacing guide did allow us to teach individual skills and strategies to mastery.

This is not the proper curriculum for my class. I have a diverse group of learners and their needs are not being met. If I had just an intervention group then this program would be appropriate, but not for the entire grade level and certainly not for the entire district. It should be considered as an intervention program but not the single resource. I was told we would not have to supplement and if we are supplementing all of this, doesn't anyone realize that there is inequity in that. All teachers should be able to use this as like Treasures. Using Treasures would have been better than this.

This series is hurting our children. Children should be seeing more than just cartoon characters during reading class and they should be reading books that are not all decodable. There are not enough readers for the children. There are not enough sight words for the children. There are not enough opportunities for the children to have small group. This is a very outdated program and everyone is afraid to say this because of an administrator's preference for the program. This administrator continues to say that people love this program when teachers at my building and in my grade level are crying and not able to get through the day because of the set back this series is going to cause in the children's reading. No one would choose a series that does not have a regular list of spelling words, guided reading and writing, and some elements of cooperative work. This series is horrible. All central administration should be made aware of the tragedy that is about to ensue!