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Reading, Phonemic Awareness, Listening & Speaking



CCLS: ELA Phonological Awareness, Print Concepts, Reading: Literature, Vocabulary Acquisition, Speaking & Listening

**Learn With Homer** by Homer Free or complete program in-app purchases \$17  
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/learn-with-homer/id601437586?mt=8>

Learn With Homer is a comprehensive learn to read app for children ages 3-6. The program is filled with varied reading, phonics, language and learning activities to help young children start learning how to read. A colorful map on the main page leads children to the activities which include: Learn to Read, Discover the World, Story Time, Music, Drawing and more. The program is designed sequentially so that children learn, play and practice with interactive activities before moving on to the next level. Comprehension activities are included after lessons so children can see how well they were listening. This app can be helpful for kids who have speech and language issues; they can record themselves practicing letter sounds or words and hear how they sound when speaking. Students can also draw pictures and record descriptions of what they have learned to save and share. Up to three users can have individual accounts on the app, and parents can view the reading progress of each child on the account.

Homer has an endless supply of learning activities to keep children engaged. The Discover the World activities teach children about Marvelous Mammals, the five senses, reptiles, U.S. Presidents, conservation, and flight just to name a few. All this teaching is presented through beautiful photographs, colorful illustration, text, narration and interactive activities.

In the Learn to Read section, students practice letter sounds, letter recognition, sight words and phonics all while be encouraged and praised by Homer and friends. They use these skills as they move through each section which is balanced with teaching and practicing activities. This allows children to learn a skill and apply it right away. Students are shown how to blend sounds together to read a word and then have repeated chances to practice, record and perfect this skill. The program allows children to have some control over their pacing so they can repeat a screen or move on to the next.

In the story section, there is a nice balance of folklore including Aesop's fables, poetry, original Homer stories and first readers. The students have the choice of Read to Me or I'll Read It, making the story activities more versatile for different abilities. The artwork and illustrations are beautiful throughout the stories and the entire program.

One particularly engaging feature of this app is the opportunity for children to record themselves speaking and hear the playback immediately. Homer will ask the user a question or to describe something they learned and the children press the button to record themselves. The huge smiles when my students hear themselves speaking is

priceless. After they listen a few times, children may hear their mistakes in articulation or language and can try again so that they can record more clearly.

After using this app in class with my kindergarten students, I found it well worth it to purchase all the activities in the full app. The pacing is appropriate and my struggling readers were able to feel successful with reading activities and gain some confidence in their skills. My class now asks me when we are going to do more Homer, because the app makes learning to read fun and easy!