

■ Introduction	9
Philosophy	9
The Five Developmental Stages of Spelling	10
Curriculum Sequence and Placement Guidelines	13
■ About <i>Americana</i>	15
Getting Started	15
Overview	15
Needed Items	15
The Core Activities	15
Daily Worksheets	15
Tips for Success	15
Instructions for <i>Americana</i> Lessons 1–14	17
Lessons 1 and 2: Vowel Chunks	17
Lessons 3 and 4: Consonant Chunks	18
Lessons 5 and 6: Vowel and Consonant Chunks	18
Lessons 7 and 8: Bossy <i>r</i> Chunks	18
Lessons 9 and 10: Vowel, Consonant, and Bossy <i>r</i> Chunks	19
Lessons 11 and 12: Endings and Silent Letters	19
Lesson 13: Tricky <i>y</i> Guy	19
Lesson 14: Tricky <i>y</i> Guy, Endings, and Silent Letters	20
Instructions for <i>Americana</i> Lessons 15–36	20
Weekly Activity Guide	21
Guided Reading	21
Chunking	21
Copywork	24

First Dictation.....	24
Second Dictation.....	25

Frequently Asked Questions	27
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■ Resources	29
-------------	----

Passages for Dictation	29
-------------------------------	-----------

Answer Key	37
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Glossary	49
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Bibliography	51
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Instructions for Americana Lessons 1–14

Lessons 1 and 2: Vowel Chunks

- Read the passage on the left-hand page together, following the directions carefully. Be prepared to spend a little more time in the beginning until you and your student become familiar with the core activities.
- Lesson 1 introduces vowel chunks. The vowels are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and sometimes *y* and *w*. A vowel chunk is a combination of vowels that usually make one sound in a word. Examples are *ea*, *oo*, and *ou*. Focusing on letter patterns in the context of a story helps a student learn the irregular sounds of the English language. A complete list of vowel chunks can be found on page 21.
- Have the student use a yellow pencil or highlighter to mark or circle the vowel chunks. As you move through *Americana*, different letter patterns will be assigned different colors. Using these colors consistently will help your student visually learn the spelling patterns. Use the color-coded **Answer Key** in this *Handbook* to make sure the chunking is complete on each page.
- Even though the same passage is repeated throughout the lesson, the student should mark the vowel chunks each day in order to reinforce the spelling patterns. On the first three days, after the student has marked the vowel chunks in the passage, have her copy the passage on the lines provided, stopping after 10 minutes. Then help her mark the vowel chunks on her written copy, using the left-hand page for a guide as needed.
- On Day 4, you will dictate the passage for your student to write. Cover the left-hand page in the workbook with a piece of paper and read the story from the **Resources** section in this *Handbook*. Tell the student to relax and not worry; you will provide all punctuation and capitalization and help him with difficult words. You will do this activity for just 10 minutes—no more! Read the passage word by word and have your student continue writing until he struggles with a word. Stop to help, but don't stop the clock. It is important to address misspellings as they occur without worrying about time. After 10 minutes, stop and count the number of words written correctly. You can read more important information about dictation on page 24.
- On Day 5, the student will have a second opportunity to write the passage from dictation. This dictation is a little different, as you will not tell the student how to spell any words. Instead, challenge him to try difficult words

until they look right. The time spent on dictation should still be limited to 10 minutes. You may provide correct punctuation and capitalization. If the first dictation was completed easily, you may want to skip this second dictation.

Answer Key

Sometimes a word has overlapping chunks. For example, a vowel chunk may overlap with a Bossy *r* chunk (*heard*), or a consonant chunk may overlap with an ending (*really*). In the answer key, we have tried to remain consistent with the focus of each lesson. In lessons with multiple chunks, we marked vowel chunks before Bossy *r* chunks, but Bossy *r* chunks before consonant chunks.

If the student chooses a different chunking pattern than the one marked in the answer key, please do not consider it incorrect. Instead, take a moment to talk about the word and the overlap of chunks. You might ask the student which letter pattern he thinks would be most helpful for him to remember and let him mark that one. Remember that the goal is to create a visual memory for non-phonetic words.

1A-E Vowel Chunks

What is red, white, and blue? The American flag! It has 13 red and white stripes. They stand for the first 13 colonies. It has 50 white stars in a blue rectangle. Did you know that the stars stand for our states? The flag did not always have 50 stars. The number changed each time our country added a new state.

Vowel Chunks 12