

Reading Blaster & IMPROVING BASIC PROGRAMS OPERATED BY LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES (TITLE I, PART A)

FUNDING PURPOSE:

Title I, Part A – Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantage

The bulk of federal NCLB funds are devoted to *Title I, Part A*. “The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.”

TITLE I, PART A REQUIREMENTS AND READING BLASTER KEY ELEMENTS:

The *Reading Blaster* product line consists of the following individual titles: (1) *Reading Blaster Ages 4-6*, (2) *Reading Blaster Ages 5-7*, (3) *Reading Blaster Ages 6-8*, (4) *Reading Blaster Ages 9-12* and (5) *Spelling Blaster Ages 6-9*. Below are selected *Title I, Part A* requirements followed by the key elements of the *Reading Blaster* product line that relate to these requirements. This alignment is focused on the school version with teacher support materials.

HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION ALIGNED TO STANDARDS

Title I, Part A Requirement: Ensuring that high-quality academic assessments, accountability systems, teacher preparation and training, curriculum, and instructional materials aligned with challenging State academic standards so students, teachers, parents, and administrators can measure progress against common expectation for student academic achievement. *Knowledge Adventure* is dedicated to creating multimedia products that will help ensure student’s educational success and life-long love of learning. The company encourages a student’s natural love of learning by combining the latest educational innovations with the latest computer technology. *Reading Blaster* is an award-winning and student-tested supplemental education program for children in the classroom. The program is aligned to national academic standards and has been recognized with national awards.

Instructional Materials Aligned with Academic Standards... The *Reading Blaster* product line is correlated to the following national standards:

- *National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Standards*
- *International Reading Association (IRA) Standards*

In addition, some titles in the product line support *Early Reading First Mandate* and support the *Reading First Mandate* that states that students are systemically and explicitly taught the following five skills: (1) Phonemic Awareness, (2) Phonics, (3) Vocabulary Development, (4) Reading Fluency, and (5) Reading Comprehension. Detailed product correlations are located at: <http://www.knowledgeadventure.com/school/teacher/correlations.aspx>.

Content Areas... The *Reading Blaster* product line provides motivating experiences for common expectations for student academic achievement in elementary education. The content areas in each individual title are listed below:

- ***Reading Blaster Ages 4-6*** (Grades PreK-1) - Students master essential pre-reading skills through alphabet, phonics, and word-knowledge activities. Problem-solving challenges develop basic literacy skills and prepare students with the thinking skills needed for comprehension. The curriculum skills focus on:
 - Using matching concepts to distinguish letter, sounds, and words;
 - Recognizing uppercase and lowercase letters; and
 - Placing letters in alphabetical order.
- ***Reading Blaster Ages 5-7*** (Grades K-2) – This program develops basic reading skills through engaging activities that strengthen phonics skills, build language mechanics skills, and introduce more than 1,500 vocabulary words. Students begin to read short passages of illustrated text. The curriculum skills focus on:
 - Recognizing beginning and ending sounds;
 - Recognizing short and long vowel sounds;
 - Identifying nouns, verbs, and adjectives;
 - Using punctuation and capitalization;
 - Spelling three- to six-letter words;
 - Building words from sounds; and
 - Reading short picture books.

- **Reading Blaster Ages 6-8** (Grades 1-3) - Students develop language arts skills with high levels of auditory support in this title. By focusing on developing phonics, spelling, language mechanics, and vocabulary skills, this program helps students acquire the tools to read and listen effectively. The curriculum skills focus on:
 - Understanding sentence structure;
 - Creating compound words and contractions;
 - Identifying syllables, prefixes, and suffixes;
 - Using punctuation and capitalization;
 - Discovering antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms;
 - Learning over 2,000 new words; and
 - Using past and present tenses correctly.

- **Reading Blaster Ages 9-12** (Grades 4-6) – Students develop critical thinking skills as they learn to read for details, find the main idea, make inferences, draw conclusions, and build reading vocabulary in this title. Using context clues and parts of speech rules, students discover word meanings and build reading comprehension skills. The curriculum skills focus on:
 - Developing reading skills;
 - Using antonyms and synonyms;
 - Working with analogies; and
 - Improving grammar skills.

- **Spelling Blaster Vocabulary Ages 6-9** (Grades 1-3) - Phonics-based activities introduce spelling rules and patterns to over 1,700 words to help students develop superior spelling skills in this title. By mastering multiple word-attack strategies, students learn to spell with consistency. The curriculum skills focus on:
 - Building words using phonics rules;
 - Recognizing spelling patterns and word families;
 - Using phonics and rhyming words; and
 - Editing and completing misspelled words.

Awards and Recognition... The *Reading Blaster* product line received the following awards:

- **Reading Blaster Series**
 - *Children's Software Review* – 5-Start Rating
 - *Parenting Magazine* – Best Children's Software
 - *Home PC* – Best Reading Software for Kids
 - *Family PC* – Family PC Recommended
 - *Family PC* – Top 20 Products of the Year
- **Reading Blaster Ages 4-6**
 - *California Instructional Technology Clearinghouse* – Exemplary Rating
- **Reading Blaster Ages 9-12**
 - *Thunderbeam* – 3-4 Star Rating
 - *Oppenheim Toy Portfolio* – Gold Award
 - *Coalition for Quality Children's Media* – Kids First Award
 - *Technology & Learning* – Picks of the Month Rating

MEETING NEEDS OF ALL CHILDREN

Title I, Part A Requirement: Meeting the educational needs of low-achieving children in our Nation's highest-poverty schools, limited English proficient children, migratory children, children with disabilities, Indian children, neglected or delinquent children, and young children in need of reading assistance. The *Reading Blaster* product line encourages success for all students. Instructions are given by an on-screen character in each game module. Additionally, each individual game module has a help button where students can have instructions read as often as necessary. The titles have various levels so activities can be geared to the student's abilities and needs.

DISTRIBUTING AND TARGETING RESOURCES SUFFICIENTLY

Title I, Part A Requirement: Distributing and targeting resources sufficiently to make a difference to local educational agencies and schools where needs are greatest. To provide purchasing flexibility for educators, *Knowledge Adventure* sells product in Teacher Editions (2 Users), Lab Pack (5 users), or Network Versions (unlimited users). *Knowledge Adventure* works with educators in order to target resources sufficiently to make a difference to local education agencies. Educators can call for a volume discount after five licenses. *Knowledge Adventure* sells all its award winning software through educational resellers; contact information is located online.

IMPROVING AND STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TEACHING

Title I, Part A Requirement: Improving and strengthening accountability, teaching and learning by using State assessment systems designed to ensure that students are meeting challenging State academic achievement and content standards and increasing achievement overall, but especially for the disadvantaged. State assessment systems are designed to ensure that students meet challenging academic achievement and content standards. Frequently, states incorporate national standards when creating these state assessment systems. The *Reading Blaster* product line is correlated to the following national standards:

- *National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Standards*
- *International Reading Association (IRA) Standards*

In addition, some titles in the product line support *Early Reading First Mandate* and support the *Reading First Mandate* that states that students are systemically and explicitly taught the following five skills: (1) Phonemic Awareness, (2) Phonics, (3) Vocabulary Development, (4) Reading Fluency, and (5) Reading Comprehension.

PROVIDING ACCELERATED EDUCATION

Title I, Part A Requirement: Providing children an accelerated educational program, including the use of schoolwide programs or additional services that increase the amount and quality of instructional time. To provide accelerated education for students, it is important for students to be able to progress in their individual learning. *Reading Blaster* offers several methods of progress acceleration depending on the title.

- **Reading Blaster Ages 4-6** (Grades PreK-1) – There are five levels of content and game play difficulty in *Reading Blaster Ages 4-6*. Students will be “bumped up” a level automatically after they have mastered all of the previous level. Students can also change levels any time the Level button is available on the Toolbar. There is a Progress Tracker that records each student’s progress. Students can view their completion of the five progressively challenging activities. Students must meet a mastery level if in the automatic level.
- **Reading Blaster Ages 5-7** (Grades K-2) – This title includes a Progress Tracker that records each student’s progress. Students can view their completion of the ten activities with five levels of reading content. Students must meet a mastery level if in the automatic level.
- **Reading Blaster Ages 6-8** (Grades 1-3) - Students can view their completion of the six activities with five adjustable levels of reading content. Students must meet a mastery level in order to progress. This title includes a Smart Chart which tracks student’s progress, outlines every skill for every level of difficulty and clearly charts a player’s progress by displaying a bar graph for each activity at each level. Students have the opportunity of improving their cumulative percentage score by replaying levels.
- **Reading Blaster Ages 9-12** (Grades 4-6) - Over 75 mystery reading passages and three levels of difficulty offers progressive learning challenges for students. On-screen help for skills development is provided. Students can review their progress or change levels on the program’s entry screen explaining the game or while in an activity within the haunted house.
- **Spelling Blaster Vocabulary Ages 6-9** (Grades 1-3) – In this title, students complete seven spelling activities with multiple levels of difficulty. Students can select which word set they wish to practice. “Spell Track” monitors misspelling trends. Teachers can change edit the words used in play or load a custom word list. Teachers can also change the mastery requirements from 70% to 100%.

PROMOTING SCHOOLWIDE REFORM/USING SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED INSTRUCTION

Title I, Part A Requirement: Promoting schoolwide reform and ensuring the access of children to effective, scientifically-based instructional strategies and challenging academic content. All of the products from *Knowledge Adventure* begin with research and fact finding from the experts in the field. The *Reading Blaster* series is based on the latest scientific research regarding how children learn and how technology can be used to enhance and support that experience. By using research, professional writers, and beta testing, *Knowledge Adventure* creates products that provide supplemental support for early literacy and help ensure that teachers and students receive positive and rewarding results. A white paper entitled, *Research Basis for Reading Products – Blaster and JumpStart*, provides specific research details and is located at:

http://www.knowledgeadventure.com/school/teacher/pdf/Reading_White_Paper.pdf

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Title I, Part A Requirement: Significantly elevating the quality of instruction by providing staff in participating schools with substantial opportunities for professional development. *Knowledge Adventure* provides white papers, correlations to standards, testimonials and other information to advance educator’s knowledge of learning. Each software level within the series is accompanied with a Teacher’s Guide that contains classroom lessons and reproducible activity sheets that will complement the student’s experience with the software. Each of the hands-on-lessons focuses on one or more of the skills presented in the software. Lessons are not software-dependent. Teacher’s Guides vary depending on the level of the title, more specifically:

- **Reading Blaster Ages 4-6** (Grades PreK-1) - Each activity contains a detailed teacher instruction page explaining the lesson and at least one reproducible sheet (blackline master) for student use.
- **Reading Blaster Ages 5-7** (Grades K-2) – Each activity contains a teacher page explaining the lesson and at least one accompanying reproducible sheet (blackline master) for student use.
- **Reading Blaster Ages 6-8** (Grades 1-3) - These lessons provide further reinforcement of the reading concepts covered in the game. Each lesson contains an outline explaining the learning objectives and procedure for the activity. In addition, there are extension activities that provide a more in-depth and challenging look at the concepts.
- **Reading Blaster Ages 9-12** (Grades 4-6) - Each lesson can be used as an introduction to a given skill or as a follow-up to one of the computer activities. *Reading Blaster Ages 9–12* offers a print kit, which allows teachers to print the stories of each of the missing Bizarroville characters. Unit 2, "Bizarre Tales," offers many reading comprehension activities to go with these stories. Unit 3, "Dr. Dabble’s Diversions," offers three culminating activities.
- **Spelling Blaster Vocabulary Ages 6-9** (Grades 1-3) – This Teacher’s Guide combines highly motivational software and stimulating resource material to reinforce spelling skills in the classroom.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Title I, Part A Requirement: Affording parents substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. Parents can purchase home versions of *Reading Blaster* from the Knowledge Adventures website.