

# Learning®



Teachers' Evaluation Comments  
16th Annual  
Teachers' Choice™ Award 2010

**Learning® Magazine**  
**16<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
**Teachers' Choice<sup>SM</sup> Award for the Classroom 2010**

Below you will find the comments for your product. As you read the comments, please note that this is the literal text from the evaluation forms. We have not differentiated comments between the teachers on each team. Although we encourage teachers to provide comments, it is not a requirement. Therefore, you may notice if you had multiple entries, the responses may be more or less in depth depending on the team of teachers. We do not use comments in the scoring process. They are provided as insight into the panel's thoughts on your product.

We hope you find the responses helpful and continue to participate in the Teachers' Choice Awards in the future. Applications will be available in January 2010 for the 17th Annual Teachers' Choice Awards program.

<b>Product</b>	<b>1603</b>
<b>Er-u-di-tion</b>	
<b>Company</b>	<b>Acumen Associates LLC</b>

**What aspects of this product did you like the most?**

I like the color-coded cards that are leveled so that any child in your classroom can play. I like the independence of the game. Once introduced, the game can be played without teacher assistance. The gameboard is foldable, colorful and has choices for the players to make.

I loved that this game included various levels of word cards and that each level was color coded.

Having the leveled words made it easy to individualize for my students. Anything that involves friendly "competition" is a winner with my kids and motivates them.

I loved that they have made a game out of sight word recognition. Student's become bored with constantly calling out sight words from flash cards. This gave a new and fun spin to sight words!

The skill levels of my students vary widely in my class; this product addressed all of my individual students' needs without requiring one level of play at a time. We were able to employ the different levels of cards at one time, with each child knowing from which pile to choose. It was a wonderful, fun way to diversify learning!

I was most impressed by the fact that this game was differentiated so that a heterogeneous group of students can all play together. It is so important to remember that all of our students are not the same and they all need different things. The creators of this product had this in mind and I thank them for it.

**How would this product need to improve to better support your curriculum?**

Extend the game by making another level or two. Write cards with science or social studies words.

The game board was a little confusing for my students to follow. The directions state that it is designed to go top to bottom and left to right, the way we read, however, the path on the board went left to right and right to left. Also, the stop and yield signs were confusing for them at first because there were no directions on the board to tell what the signs meant. Once they had directions from me about the signs, they were able to play successfully.

Having a few more options on the board other than the stop sign and yield sign would make the game more interesting. Perhaps some more challenges like spell the word for extra moves.

It would be nice if this product was made for 6 players instead of 4. All of my reading groups consists of 5-6 students. There are not many educational games out there for more than 4 players.

We played this game nearly every day while we were testing it; I observed different combinations of children playing together. Even after that much use, I do not have any suggestions for improvement.

I think that the product fits our curriculum well. As always each school/county/state has their own set of high frequency words, so those will always vary and cannot be fixed for each individual school. With that being said, I did like that they chose a solid set of words that all students need to know. The other thing I thought about was the color of the pawns. I

would like for them to correlate with the decks of cards, so that those students who are playing can remember which deck they need to pull from.

## **How did you make use of the product, or integrate it into your lesson plans?**

I used this product to encourage word study of sight words, to build on the prior knowledge of words, and to move into word meaning to assist with comprehension. My lower level kids especially enjoyed the fact that there was something on their level they could understand.

I used this game with several of my small group guided reading lessons. This was a game I was able to use for all levels of readers, high, middle, and low.

I first played the game with small groups so they understood the rules. Then I put it on our "free time" shelf for them to play as they finished up work. Because the cards are leveled, I am able to tell different children which color cards to use.

I found this game was wonderful for both my struggling readers and my English as a Second Language learners. These are the students that have to try so hard to read and it was so nice to finally see them enjoy reading. This was a great tool to call back small groups of those students during literacy time.

During our literacy time, the children do their "word work" in centers, spending 20-30 minutes at each of 3 or 4 centers each day. I used this game as one of their centers. The first few times we played, I played with them to teach them the rules. Because it is so simple but so engaging, the children could play independently after a short time.

I used this game during a few of my guided reading lessons and also in my spelling groups. In guided reading groups I was able to use multiple types of words because not all of my students are in the same spelling groups, however it was different in my spelling groups. Using the game in my spelling groups allowed me to use the same decks with the whole group because they all have the same needs there.

## **What skills did your students learn from this product?**

Word study, pronunciation through repetition, comprehension with practice as we learn the meanings of the words.

By playing this game, my students received much needed sight word practice. They were able to review words they already knew but also were introduced to and able to practice new words.

Excellent sight word review, plus it was nice having the phonetic spelling and definition on the cards as well.

Students learned to recognize their basic sight words with this game. They also learn vocabulary and the tenses of verbs.

They gained the obvious: their sight word fluency improved. My higher-performing children began to expand their vocabulary because of the extension of defining or using the word in a sentence. This also benefitted my lower-performing readers by expanding their verbal vocabulary; they also began to recognize how they can use reading strategies to break down and decode larger words. I also observed a great deal of strategy sharing, peer mentoring, problem-solving skills (conflict resolution), and cooperation/compromise. I was very pleased with those side-effects!

Using this game gave my students another opportunity to practice spelling words, gain vocabulary, and work together.

They really liked this game because it allowed them to apply what they are learning in another way.

## **If funds were available, would you recommend this product to a teacher at the appropriate grade / age level? Please explain why or why not.**

Yes, I think it could be used with pre-K, kindergarten, first grade, second grade and even up through third grade.

It is leveled so that it is versatile.

If funds were available, I would definitely recommend this product to a teacher of the appropriate grade/age level because this is a game that provided practice for all of my students regardless of their reading level. I didn't need three or four different games to reach them all.

I would recommend this game to other teachers. It was a valuable reinforcement of sight word vocabulary that any grade could use.

I would recommend that other teachers buy this game. It not only teaches sight words, but also vocabulary and tenses of verbs. The game can be played by both master and struggling readers.

I would absolutely recommend this game. It is effective not only for elementary aged children at all levels of reading, but is also a wonderful tool for ESL programs for both children and adults. It is a fun, low-risk way for English Language Learners to practice phonemic skills and decoding strategies. Because of the way the game works, no one is stuck at the first square because of weak reading skills; everyone gets to move forward at least once each turn and feel some

success.

I would certainly recommend this product to other teachers. It is one of those products that really has the students in mind and as a teacher I am always looking for products like that.