

Welcome to Core First Learning!

Core First Learning is a web-based communication program that supports the language, communication, and literacy development of your students. The goal of Core First Learning is to help your students read, find, and use core words through a series of reading, writing, and language activities that complement each other. It is an effective and fun way to teach core words.

Like all Boardmaker Instructional Solutions, Core First Learning is delivered through Boardmaker Online. Interactive curriculum, automatic data collection, and complete accessibility for all students are just some of the features that make this program effective and easy to implement.

Getting Started:

Three complete sets, each with 12 word units, comprise Core First Learning. This means you have a minimum of 36 weeks of language/literacy instruction free with your subscription to Boardmaker Online. Each of the 36 word units follow a predictable routine and span five days. The time span can be adjusted however, to meet the unique needs of each student. You can deliver each set in any order. Once you subscribe, all three sets will appear in your account. Follow these five steps and you'll be delivering evidence-based Core Word instruction to all your students:

Step 1: Establish a Roadmap: Start by reviewing and printing the **Quick Lesson Guide**. This document is a roadmap. It tells you everything you need to know to begin teaching on day one and then also, what to expect in the coming days. It includes the order of activities, the titles of each word-specific book, and the relevant instructional prompts that align with each day and each activity. Since Core First Learning provide a predictable, weekly instructional routine, you will quickly integrate the approach into your practice after very little time. Additionally, depending on the AAC solution, we provide various supports, like printable core word boards, and device overlays for ease of implementation. You'll want to review those, as well.

Step 2: Explore Your Complete Lesson Plans: Select the folder of the first word you will teach. Inside, you'll see a pdf called, Complete Lesson plans. View or print this document. It is a step-by-step, day-by-day guide for implementing this program. It will be especially useful at the beginning of the program, and then less necessary as you become familiar with this predictable instructional routine. This document is a lengthier version of the quick lesson guide and provides more support when you need it.

Step 3: Familiarize yourself with the Assessment Opportunities: There are several ways to collect data and demonstrate student progress while using Core First Learning. The first thing to do is review your Assessments folder before beginning each set. Inside, you'll find a multiple-choice assessment activity that can be used as a pre-test, a post-test, or both. Another way to collect data in an ongoing way is to print out the results of individual activities. This particularly applies to writing activities. Lastly, by selecting "students" within the Student Management Center, you can track performance and match activities or lessons to your students' goals. These methodologies together can provide you with a robust way to determine student growth.

Step 4: Get to Know Your Nav Bar: To the left of each activity, you will find a gold navigation bar. This bar provides a range of options that allow you to teach, assign, deliver, or store your activities and lessons.



This button allows you to play the activity from your web browser. You might need this when you are doing a group lesson and when you want to help students know what to expect from an activity before you assign it.



This button allows you to assign activities directly to students in their individual accounts. When a student logs in, they will only see the assignments that were assigned by a teacher. The gray bubble helps you keep track of how many times you've assigned that particular activity or lesson set. Additionally, each activity automatically converts to the user settings you've indicated for each student. You can set it and forget it.



This button represents the option to add activities to your playlist. This functionality is helpful when you are not teaching from a dedicated or personal device or when you want to store or play an activity remotely. Additionally, the playlist can also serve as an way to store activities that will be used within a lesson for easy access during instruction.



This allows you to assign a bundle of activities to your student. Depending on the day, you might see three separate bundles, labeled minimal support, moderate support, or maximal support. The content in these bundles is the same. The difference is the kind of support your student requires to write.

Step 5: Send Home the Letter: Each word unit begins with a parent letter that can be sent through the Student Management Center of Boardmaker Online or can be printed and sent home in a backpack. This letter provides parents with an overview of each week's new word, as well as ways to extend and support this learning at home.

Why it Works:

Instructional Differentiation:

Each Boardmaker Instructional Solution, including Core First Learning, is deeply based in evidence of best practice. You can find the white paper for this title in the Program Documentation Folder. Because Boardmaker Online is so thoroughly accessible for students, most activities do not require differentiation. We provide differentiated activities when we ask students to write because it is the most challenging activity in this program. As such, we've created differentiated writing activities, which are labeled: min support, mod support, max support. These are three versions of the same activity, with varying levels of supports. The goal is to help students participate and fulfill the writing assignment while also acknowledging the various impediments they may face as writers. Once a student is particularly fluent at one level of support, you may introduce less support. In this way, you adjust to the evolving level of support that your student requires while also maintaining the larger goal of writing: to grow in expression and independence. The table below provides details on how to make an initial match between each student the appropriate level of writing support.

Level/Tier	Description	User
L1: Maximal Support	Typically, students have 3-5 opportunities to create sentences or complete phrases. The student moves linearly through these options until the composition is complete. The activity provides correct models for spelling, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and even composition.	For students who: Have limited exposure to writing Have limited or no experience with writing instruction Have little or no previous understanding of self as a writer Have little or no experience generating print independently Have the most significant barriers to mainstream curricular materials
L2: Moderate Support	Students select a sentence starter and finish it by selecting one word or phrase from the handful that provided (1-4 options). There are 3-5 starters per activity. There is an implied but not a fixed order in which to create sentences. The activity provides correct models for spelling, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and even composition.	For students who: Have a very beginning identify of self as a writer Have some beginning phonemic awareness Have some beginning phonological awareness Have some experience understanding functions of print Have demonstrated some interest or initiative in generating print Have some barriers to mainstream curriculum
L3: Minimal Support	Students generate thoughts independently, using the keyboard, word prediction, or a built-in scaffold that consists of a collection of 9 starter phrases and a 16-word, topic specific word bank. Supportive features include word morphing, read-back text, and punctuation buttons. This level provides correct models for spelling.	For students who: Have some experience/success as a writer Have some knowledge of beginning writing genres Have some experience with beginning conventional writing instruction Have some independence and initiative as a writer Have some beginning conventional phonological knowledge Have some barriers to mainstream curriculum

Keep Going/Keep Growing:

Implicit in Core First Learning are many opportunities to help students keep going and growing. These include but are not limited to:

- Expand your students' learning by searching for core words in everyday contexts, including books, menus, recipes, and newspapers.
- Search for core word supplemental activities through our Boardmaker sharing community.
- Create buddy reading programs so that your student can read with peers.
- Maintain fidelity of instruction even when you are out of the classroom by providing instructional aides or substitute teachers with Complete Lesson Plans or Quick Lesson Guides.
- Establish professional learning communities around the opportunities and challenges of delivering accessible, evidence-based instruction (such as Core First Learning) to all students.
- Search the Boardmaker Help and Training section for quick tips and more in-depth webinars regarding this and other Boardmaker Instructional Solutions. (<http://helpandtraining.boardmakeronline.com/>)
- Leverage the power of the Student Management Center by tracking student performance at the activity level, integrating assignments with IEP's or SLO's. You can also track the usage of the students or staff in your community.
- If you like Core First Learning and your students are successful, look to other Boardmaker Instructional Solutions. You'll find both read to learn and learn to read programs under this umbrella that are similar in structure, approach, and appeal.