



The Roots of Phonics: A Historical Introduction, Revised Edition

Miriam Balmuth Ph.D.

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To teach phonics effectively to children learning to read, education professionals need a deep understanding of the nuances and complexities of the English language. That's why this highly influential classic is more important than ever. A book that shaped the work of the most respected and prominent literacy experts, *The Roots of Phonics* is finally back in print to enlighten a new generation of professionals—many of whom have not had phonics instruction themselves.

Through this clear and concise history of how modern English phonics developed, readers will trace the evolution of familiar language concepts: the alphabet, syllables, vowels and consonants, spelling, pronunciation, punctuation marks, and more. As readers uncover the "big picture" of phonics and the forces that shaped it, they'll learn fascinating facts such as

- why our alphabet has 26 letters
- what sparked the phonics vs. whole language debate
- how Spanish, French, Dutch, Native American, and other languages influenced the development of American English
- what phonemes, graphemes, and morphemes are, and how they relate to each other
- how the invention of movable type affected writing and spelling
- why British spellings faded from American English
- how different pronunciations take hold in different regions of the country

More than a history lesson, this landmark book strengthens readers' understanding of the English language and illuminates the longtime importance of phonics in education—critical insights they'll use as they help children learn to read.

A must for the library of every education professional, SLP, and researcher who works to promote children's literacy.

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