

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **SIX STATES APPROVE HARCOURT ACHIEVE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR READING FIRST SCHOOLS**

*Arkansas, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Maryland and Mississippi Choose Alternatives and Supplements to Basal Reading Programs*

**AUSTIN, TX—July 15, 2005**—Harcourt Achieve today announced that six states recently approved Harcourt Achieve, Inc. reading materials for use in Reading First (RF) and Early Reading First (ERF) programs. They are Arkansas, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Maryland and Mississippi.

“Adoption of these materials is a big step forward in getting our nation’s children up to speed in reading,” said Tim McEwen, president of Harcourt Achieve. “In creating programs that motivate students, we listened to educators who wanted research-based alternatives and supplements to the basal reading approach.”

Harcourt Achieve produces learning solutions and content for young readers under the Rigby, Saxon and Steck-Vaughn imprints. The focus is on research-driven, skill-building programs that encourage students to develop a lifelong love of reading.

Reading First is the primary national initiative for improving reading in kindergarten through grade three classrooms. The initiative, which is part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), funds scientifically research-based reading programs. The NCLB Early Reading First (ERF) program, geared toward low-income, preschool-age children, provides federal grants for local districts to support programs that enhance early language and prereading skills.

Instructional programs undergo a rigorous review process to qualify for state approval. To implement Reading First and Early Reading First programs, states award sub grants to eligible local school districts. Local schools can use Reading First dollars to purchase learning materials from their state-approved list.

#### **Statewide Choices**

The Arkansas State Early Childhood Curriculum Review Committee recently approved four Harcourt Achieve products that support ERF guidelines for use in Arkansas early childhood programs: *Pebble Soup Explorations* as a comprehensive program; and *Activate Early Learning*,

*Pair-It*® (Foundation Stage) and *Shutterbug* (Early Emergent Stage) as supplemental programs. *Pebble Soup Explorations* and *Activate Early Learning!* are Rigby imprints, while *Pair-It* and *Shutterbug* are from Steck-Vaughn.

The **California** State Department of Education approved the addition of *Elements of Reading*®: *Vocabulary*, a Steck-Vaughn imprint, to its California Reading First Intervention List of supplemental materials for improving reading in kindergarten through grade three classrooms.

The **Idaho** State Department of Education approved *Rigby Literacy*, the Rigby imprint *On Our Way to English*® (*OWE*), and Steck-Vaughn *Elements of Reading* for the state research-based recommended materials list.

The **Louisiana** State Department of Education recently added *Elements of Reading: Comprehension* to its approved K-3 supplemental reading materials list, which also includes *Elements of Reading: Fluency and Vocabulary*, and *Shutterbug*. All are Steck-Vaughn imprints.

The **Maryland** State Department of Education has just approved Steck-Vaughn's *Elements of Reading: Vocabulary* as a supplemental and intervention program for Reading First.

The **Mississippi** State Department of Education has most recently adopted *Elements of Reading: Comprehension, Fluency and Vocabulary* as Reading First supplemental reading programs. In addition, *Rigby Literacy* has been approved for use as a comprehensive reading program. *Rigby's PM Resources* and *Rigby Sails*, as well as Steck-Vaughn's *Pair-It* books and *Think-Alongs*® are also approved for use as supplemental reading programs.

### **Approved Harcourt Achieve Products**

*Activate Early Learning* provides systematic, focused instruction for kindergartners with potential weaknesses in oral language, phonological and alphabetical awareness, along with early reading concepts. The readiness program, which supports National Reading Panel (NRP) and ERF guidelines, is specifically designed for the diverse needs of PreK-K students.  
<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@e48pJXTxq15zw/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@S20722>

*Elements of Reading* is a modular program developed to meet the challenge of NCLB and NRP guidelines. Authored by leading experts and researchers in the reading field, *Elements of Reading* delivers explicit, systematic and deliberate instruction that accommodates individual student needs within whole-class or small-group settings. *Elements of Reading: Vocabulary* is based on the research of Dr. Isabel Beck and Dr. Margaret McKeown and their years of classroom practice. *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*, the widely read book by Beck, McKeown and Linda Kucan, inspired the creation of the module. According to reviewers at the Florida Center for Reading Research, "The program embodies excellent literature that spans a variety of genres and is used to introduce the new vocabulary."  
<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@kww8Sy7h5XnKE/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@8903>

*On Our Way to English (OWE)* bridges the gap from language, literacy and content to mainstream success beyond the ESL classroom. The materials include flexible content for English language learners (ELLs), assessment tools and professional development materials for ELL teachers.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@0uHgi4jH1tf4c/Pages/product.html?nocache@10+record@S2100>

*Pair-It* books pair fiction and nonfiction titles that share the same high-interest topic. Emerging readers learn to compare and contrast fiction and nonfiction and develop reading strategies for a wide range of genres. *Pair-It* is based on thorough research and aligned with national standards, including those of the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@e48pJXTxq15zw/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@6470>

*Pebble Soup Explorations*, a comprehensive literacy program for Pre-Kindergarten children, is based on the International Reading Association (IRA)/National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Joint Policy. The program fosters phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabet knowledge and oral language development.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@e48pJXTxq15zw/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@S1692>

*Rigby Literacy* can be used as a core or supplemental program within any K-5 classroom. The program utilizes fiction and nonfiction to develop children's reading and writing strategies and skills. An independent study, conducted by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), indicated that second and fourth-grade students using *Rigby Literacy* for the first time showed strong gains in reading performance.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@kww8Sy7h5XnKE/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@S1002>

*Rigby PM Resources* are systematically leveled to support and challenge readers with engaging stories and exciting informational text to ensure literacy growth and reading success. This series of 800 titles across 30 levels provides a stand-alone benchmark assessment that accurately matches students to the right books at the right time.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@uiu4ZA0TtnEqM/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@S20002>

*Rigby Sails Literacy Series*, a collection of more than 600 leveled books, ties together reading, writing and visual literacy. Organized into four levels—beginning, emergent, early and fluency--each title focuses on a specific reading skill and critical-thinking strategy.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@0uHgi4jH1tf4c/Pages/product.html?nocache@2+record@S1363>

*Shutterbug Books*, recipient of the 2003 Golden Lamp Award, is a K-2 standards-driven reading program that builds fluency through the integration of explicit skills instruction in the context of

science, social studies and math. Students gain content area knowledge while they build their writing skills with a writing connection in each lesson.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@e48pJXTxq15zw/Pages/product.html?nocache@7+record@8838>

*Think-Alongs*, a reading comprehension series, shows students in grades 1-3 how to think about what they're reading, while they're reading. The *Think-Alongs* program teaches students the strategies that good readers use to comprehend the variety of texts they encounter in the classroom, in testing situations, and in everyday life. The program provides scaffolding for practicing and applying reading strategies, demonstrating mastery through guided writing activities, and answering questions in standardized test formats.

<http://www.harcourtachieve.com/c/@0uHgi4jH1tf4c/Pages/product.html?nocache@7+record@8036>

### **About Harcourt Achieve**

Harcourt Achieve produces learning solutions and content that fundamentally and positively change the lives of young and adult learners. Published under the Rigby, Saxon and Steck-Vaughn imprints, its products are based on a developmental philosophy that assesses learners' skills, matches them to appropriate content and accelerates them to meet and exceed expectations. The Rigby imprint offers progressive learning solutions for core reading and English language learner instruction that provide differentiated instruction to match each student's instructional level. The Saxon imprint offers the nation's best selling and most thoroughly researched skills-based mathematics program for grades K-12, as well as popular phonics, K-3 spelling, and early learning programs. The Steck-Vaughn imprint offers easy-to-use, innovative learning solutions that accelerate content-area knowledge, reading skills, and preparation for standards-based tests, allowing learners to meet and exceed expectations. For more information, please visit [www.HarcourtAchieve.com](http://www.HarcourtAchieve.com).

Harcourt Achieve is part of Harcourt Education, a global education provider serving students and teachers in Pre-K through grade 12, adult learners and readers of all ages. The Harcourt Education companies are Harcourt School Publishers; Holt, Rinehart and Winston; Harcourt Achieve; Harcourt Assessment; Classroom Connect; Harcourt Religion Publishers; Harcourt Trade Publishers; Greenwood/Heinemann and Heinemann Global Library. For more information, please visit [www.harcourt.com](http://www.harcourt.com).

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