PrimerPro Primer Making Tutorial

PrimerPro is a computer application designed to assist literacy personnel in the creation of scientifically designed primers, by capitalizing on the grammatical and phonological properties of these languages. The program and accompanying instructions help primer developers determine the teaching order of consonants, find buildable words for stories, check stories for untaught letters, and perform other key tasks in producing reading primers.

This tutorial is a step by step procedure on how to use PrimerPro to assist you in producing a primer. The tutorial will walk through one scenario for using PrimerPro for producing a primer. Please note that there are other scenarios for using PrimerPro that are just as valid. Once you use this tutorial for learning PrimerPro, you should feel comfortable on how to use PrimerPro in your situation. This tutorial assumes that PrimerPro has already been setup on your computer. See PrimerPro Setup Tutorial for details.

You will also need a 4,000+ word list, in a Standard Format File or LIFT file, in UTF-8 format. This can be created using either Toolbox, FieldWorks or WeSay. You will also need a 4000+ words of edited text (so the spelling is correct!) in plain text files in UTF-8 format.

A primer usually consists of two kinds of lessons. The first kind is a teaching lesson where you are teaching one or more graphemes in the lesson. The second kind is called a review lesson where you are not teaching any new grapheme, but instead you are focus on reviewing what has been taught already. These lessons are also used to teach some grammar aspect of the language.

Starting PrimerPro

You can start the program by double-clicking on the **PrimerPro** icon on the desktop.

Select Project

The first thing you want to do is select your project that you created in the PrimerPro Setup Tutorial. Below are the steps.

1. On the **File** menu, click **Select Project**.

    The **Select Project** dialog box appears.

2. In the list box, select your project and click **OK**.

    Your project is loaded into the application.

3. Click **OK.**.

    Your project is now the current, or *active,* project.

Importing Data

On the status bar, the current word list filename is displayed. If it is not the correct word list file or it is not specified, then you will need to import the correct word list file. To import the correct word list, do the following.

1. To import the word list file, do one of the following.

- On the **Tools** menu, point to **Word List**, and point to **Import** and click **Standard Format Lexicon**. This will open a Standard Format Marker (SFM) file.

- On the **Tools** menu, point to **Word List**, and point to **Import** and click **LIFT Lexicon**. This will open a Lexicon Interchange Format (LIFT) file.

The **Open** dialog box appears.

2. Navigate to and select the desired file, and then click **Open**.

The word list is imported into the application.

3. Click **OK** after word list has been imported.

On the status bar, the current text data filename is displayed. If it is not the correct text data file or it is not specified, then you will need to import the correct text data. To import the correct text data, do the following.

1. On the **Tools** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Import**.

The **Open** dialog box appears.

2. Navigate to and select the desired file, and then click **Open**.

The text data is loaded.

3. Click **OK** after text data has been imported.

Sight Words

You will need to add all the sight words that were taught in the pre-primer. To update the list of current sight words, do the following:

1. On the **Tools** menu, point to **Sight Words**, and then click **Update Sight Words**.

The **Update Sight Words** dialog box appears. The list of sight words is displayed. It should be empty at this point.

2. In the **Edit the list** box, add the list of sight words, verifying that the box has one sight word per line.

3. When done, click **OK**.

First Lesson

Now you are ready to start making your first lesson. Below are the steps you will do to accomplish this.

1. Add the first lesson's grapheme(s) to the graphemes taught list by updating the graphemes taught list. To update the list of current graphemes taught, do the following.

- On the **Tools** menu, point to **Graphemes Taught**, and then click **Update Graphemes Taught**.

The **Update Graphemes Taught** dialog box appears. Note that the graphemes taught list should be empty.

- In the **Edit the list** box, add the grapheme(s) for the first lesson, verifying that the box has one grapheme per line.

- When done, click **OK**.

2. Now you want to find words to use in a story for the first lesson. You can find these words using the Buildable Word Search for Word List using only the graphemes in grapheme taught list. To run the Buildable Word Search, do the following:

   - On **Search** menu, point to **Word List**, and then click **Buildable Words Search**.

     The **Buildable Words Search** dialog box appears.

     In the **Graphemes** box, note that the initial graphemes displayed are those from the graphemes taught list.

   - Click **OK**.

     The results are displayed at the insertion point in the current active document. A list of buildable words from the current word list are displayed, Then print or save to a file the displayed word list, noting the useful words for first lesson story.

     To print the displayed word list, do the following. On the **File** menu, click **Print**. The **Print** dialog box appears. Select the printer and click **OK**.

     To save to a file the displayed word list, do the following. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**. The **Save As** dialog box appears. Navigate to the desired folder and enter the desired file name, and then click **Save**.

3. If you do not find enough words through the Buildable Word Search for Word List, you can use the Buildable Word Search for text Data to find more potential words. To run the Buildable Word Search, do the following

   - On the **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Buildable Word Search**.

     The **Buildable Word Search** dialog box appears.

     In the **Graphemes** box, note that the initial graphemes displayed are those from the graphemes taught list.

   - Select **No Duplicates**.

   - Click **OK**.

   The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. A list of buildable words from the current text data is displayed. Then print or save to a file the displayed list of words, noting the useful words for first lesson's story.

4. If you have no nice, pictureable word in your list, and you need one for a keyword, you can also use the Grapheme Search on the current word list restricting the search to nouns. Do the following.

   - On **Search** menu, point to **Word List**, and then click **Grapheme Search**.

     The **Grapheme Search** dialog box appears.

- In the **Grapheme to find** box, type the desired grapheme, the grapheme that is being taught.

- Click **Search Options**.

  The **Search Options Filter** dialog box appears.

- In the **Part of speech** box, select **Noun**, and then click **OK**.

  The **Grapheme Search** dialog box reappears.

- Click **OK**.

  The results appear at the insertion point in the current active document. A list of potential keywords from the current word list is displayed.

5. Write a story using buildable words and enter it into a text editor. See Story Checklist[1] document for guidelines. Save the story as a UTF-8 plain text.

6. Make words drills for the primer, after the story has been written. Then you know which words should be practiced in advance of the story.

   Make syllable drills for the primer, being sure to give people practice with the syllables used in the built words.

7. Then run a Untaught Residue Search on the story, displaying in paragraph format and ignoring sight words. The story should be displayed without any highlighting. Highlighting indicates untaught residue. To run the Untaught Residue Search, do the following.

   - On **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Untaught Residue Search**.

     The **Untaught Residue Search** dialog box appears.

   - Select **Browse**. The **Open** dialog box appears. Navigate to and select the desired story file. Then click **OK**.

     The **Untaught Residue Search** dialog box reappears.

   - Select **Display in Paragraph Format**. The results will be displayed in paragraph format.

   - Select **Ignore Sight Words**. This means any sight word in the current text data will not be flagged as a untaught word.

   - Click **OK**.

     The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. The story file is displayed with the graphemes that have not been taught yet highlighted. After the text data is displayed, the count of the untaught words is displayed.

     If there are any untaught words, you will need to redo the story, and then check it again.

8. Create an "All Stories" text file using a text editor in a location of your choosing. Add the story for the first lesson to this file.

9. Take all data you have collected for the lesson and use it to make the primer's first lesson using a publishing tool (e.g. MS Publisher).

Subsequent Lessons

Now you are ready to start making your next lesson. Below are the steps you will do to accomplish this.

1. Add the lesson's grapheme(s) to the graphemes taught list by updating the graphemes taught list. To update the list of current graphemes taught, do the following.

   - On the **Tools** menu, point to **Graphemes Taught**, and then click **Update Graphemes Taught**.

     The **Update Graphemes Taught** dialog box appears.

     In the **Edit the list** box, add the grapheme(s) for the lesson to the end of the list, verifying that the box has one grapheme per line.

   - When done, click **OK**.

2. Check to verify the grapheme taught list contains only valid graphemes.

   - On the **Tools** menu, point to Graphemes **Taught**, and then click **Check against Grapheme Inventory**.

     The results should indicate **none.**

3. Now you want to find words to use in a story for the lesson. You can find these words using the Buildable Word Search for Word List using only the graphemes in grapheme taught list. To run the Buildable Word Search, do the following:

   - On **Search** menu, point to **Word List**, and then click **Buildable Words Search**.

     The **Buildable Words Search** dialog box appears.

     In the **Graphemes** box, note that the initial graphemes displayed are those from the graphemes taught list.

   - Click **OK**.

     The results are displayed at the insertion point in the current active document. A list of buildable words from the current word list are displayed, Then print or save to a file the displayed word list, noting the useful words for the lesson's story.

4. As the graphemes taught list increases, the buildable word list will also increase. When the buildable word list gets too long to manage, you may want to get a list of only the new buildable words generated by the graphemes taught in the lesson using the Grapheme Search for the word list. To run the Grapheme Search, do the following.

   - On **Search** menu, point to **Word List**, and then click **Grapheme Search**.

     The **Grapheme Search** dialog box appears.

   - In the **Grapheme to find** box, type the grapheme being taught by this lesson.

   - Select **Restrict to Graphemes Taught**. This will display those words that contain only the graphemes in the grapheme taught list.

   - Click **OK**.

The results appear at the insertion point in the current active document. It displays a subset of the word list that contains the desired grapheme.

Note that if a word contains any grapheme that is not yet in the grapheme taught list, the word will not be displayed, even if it contains the grapheme being taught.

5. If you do not find enough words through the Buildable Word Search for word list, you can use the Buildable Word Search for text data on the current text data to find more potential words. To run the Buildable Word Search, do the following

- On the **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Buildable Word Search**.

  The **Buildable Word Search** dialog box appears.

  In the **Graphemes** box, note that the initial graphemes displayed are those from the graphemes taught list.

- Select **No Duplicates**.

- Click **OK**.

The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. A list of buildable words from the current text data are displayed.   Then print or save to a file the displayed list of words, noting the useful words for the lesson's story.

6. As the graphemes taught list increases, the buildable word list will also increase. When the buidable word list gets too long to manage, you may want to get a list of only the new buildable words generated by the graphemes taught in the lesson using the Grapheme Search for the text data. To run the Grapheme Search, do the following.

- On **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Grapheme Search**.

  The **Grapheme Search** dialog box appears.

- In the **Grapheme to find** box, type the grapheme being taught by this lesson.

- Select **Restrict to Graphemes Taught**. This will display only those words in the text data that contain only the graphemes in the grapheme taught list.

- Select **No Duplicates**.

- Click **OK**.

  The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. It displays a list of words from the current text data that contains the desired grapheme.

  Note that if a word contains any grapheme that is not yet in the grapheme taught list, the word will not be displayed, even if it contains the grapheme being taught.

7. If you find interesting pictureable words, take note of them for use as keywords. . If there are no built words which are pictureable, you'll need to use Grapheme Search for the word list looking only for nouns containing the lesson's grapheme.

8. Find usable phrases for the story by using the Usable Phrase Search containing only the graphemes in the grapheme taught list. Initially you probably will want to use a value of two for the minimal number of words in a phrase. Print the list, noting useful phrases for this lesson's story. To run the Usable Phrase Search, do the following.

- On **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Usable Phrases Search**.

  The **Usable Phrases Search** dialog box appears.

- In the **Minimal number of words in a phrase** box, enter the appropriate number This restricts a phrase to a minimal number of words.

- In the **Highlight phrases with this grapheme** box, enter the grapheme being taught. When the list of phrases is displayed, if the grapheme being taught is contained in the phrase, then the phrase is highlighted.

- Click **OK**.

  The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. A list of potential phrases from the current text data for the story is displayed. Print or save to a file the phrase list.

  If the phrase list becomes too long to manage, increase the number in the **Minimal number of words in a phrase** box. As you work through the graphemes taught list, you probably will want to increase the minimal number of words in a phrase, to keep the list to a manageable size.

9. Write a story using buildable words and any usable phrases which will help your story be natural sounding and give readers practice. For the first two weeks, restrict story size to 12 words. Later lessons should gradually increase in size, up to 25 or 30 words by the end of the primer.

10. Make words drills for the primer, after the story has been written. Then you know which words should be practiced in advance of the story.

    Make syllable drills for the primer, being sure to give people practice with the syllables used in the built words.

11. Enter the story in a word processor. See Story Checklist document for guidelines. Save the story as a UTF-8 plain text. Then run a Untaught Residue Search on the story, displaying in paragraph format and ignoring sight words. The story should be displayed without any highlighting. Highlighting indicates untaught residue. To run the Untaught Residue Search, do the following.

- On **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Untaught Residue Search**.

  The **Untaught Residue Search** dialog box appears.

- Select **Browse**. The **Open** dialog box appears. Navigate to and select the desired story file. Then click **OK**.

  The **Untaught Residue Search** dialog box reappears.

- Select **Display in Paragraph Format**. The results will be displayed in paragraph format.

- Select **Ignore Sight Words**. This means any sight word in the current text data will not be flagged as a untaught word.

- Click **OK**.

The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. The story file is displayed with the graphemes that have not been taught yet highlighted. After the text data is displayed, the count of the untaught words is displayed.

If there are any untaught words, you will need to redo the story, and then check it again.

12. If you want to verify which sight words you are using in the story, run the Sight Word Search. To run the Sight Word Search, do the following.

- On the **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **Sight Word Search**.

   The **Sight Word Search** dialog box appears.

- Click the **Browse** button. In the **Open** dialog box, navigate to and select the story file, and then click **OK**.

- Click **Check All** to select all the sight words.

- Select **Display in Paragraph Format** to be displayed in paragraph format.

- Click **OK**.

The results appear at the insertion point in the active document. The text data is displayed with all the sight words highlighted.

13. To be sure you're using *enough* new words, or *not too many*, you can check the story to see how many new words are in it.

- On the **Search** menu, point to **Text Data**, and then click **New Word Search**.

   The **New Word Search** dialog box appears.

- Select **Browse** for the Base file. The Open dialog box appears. Navigate to the "All Stories" file. Then click OK.

- Select **Browse** for the Story file. The Open dialog box appears. Navigate to the story file. Then click OK.

- Select **Display in** Paragraph **Format**. The results will be displayed in paragraph format.

- Click **OK**.

The story is displayed with the new words (words that have not been used in a previous story) highlighted. If there are too many new words, you may need to rewrite the story.

Add the story for the lesson to the "All Stories" file.

14. Take all data you have collected for the lesson and use it to make the primer's lesson using a publishing tool (e.g. MS Publisher).

You continue to repeat the Subsequent Lesson section for each teaching lesson of the primer.

Review Lessons

Every fifth lesson should be a review lesson. To create a review lesson, consider the following:

1. See Writing a Review Lesson[2] document for details on review lesson design.

2. Refer to Primer Progression Chart, looking to identify built words and sight words which should be practiced. List them and design an exercise which gives the reader practice using those words. The exercise should differ somehow from the stories used previously in the week. If it is a story, the plot and characters should be different from the usual ones. See Writing a Review Lesson document for other ideas.

3. Choose a simple illustration to accompany the review activity.

4. Design a short functor lesson. It should consists of two activities. Put your functor activities into the template provided.

5. Mark the times the built and sight words are used, including times they are used in the functor exercise, on the Primer Progression Chart.

6. Record any functor taught in the blank spot for the review lesson in the Primer Progression Chart. For example, you would write "assoc. markers ya, wa" in the blank.

7. Design the "creative writing" syllable boxes. The first review lesson should only contain 12 syllable boxes. Later review lessons can contain an additional row. List built words used frequently in the previous lessons. From this list, choose syllables which occur often in the word list. Fill them into boxes, and see how many words (either from the stories or new ones) can be made from different syllable boxes. Change as needed. See Writing a Review Lesson document for an example.

Setup Conclusion

Now you have completed the primer making tutorial. To exit PrimerPro, do the following.

- On the **File** menu, click **Exit**.

  PrimerPro will remember the last current project and all its option settings. The next time you start PrimerPro, the project will be selected with all its options setting. The associated word list file and text date file will be automatically imported.

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[1] The Story Checklist document can be found in the Primer Documentation Package at the following url: http://www.sil.org/resources/software_fonts/primerpro.

[2] The Writing a Review Lesson document can be found in the Primer Documentation Package at the following url: http://www.sil.org/resources/software_fonts/primerpro.