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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Program Transforms Reading Skills Designed for Explicit Skills Instruction to Meet NRP Guidelines

AUSTIN, Texas – Harcourt Achieve announced today the release of the first two strands and an on-line assessment of its new *Elements of Reading* series. *Elements of Reading* is a unique, research-based, cohesive system for increasing overall reading achievement. It transforms reading skills by providing in-depth practice in the five key areas for effective reading instruction as outlined by the National Reading Panel (NRP).

Elements of Reading Vocabulary and *Elements of Reading Fluency* – published under the Steck-Vaughn imprint – are the first two of the series’ four program strands, which feature effective, research-based teaching strategies that can be used in any classroom. The *On-Line Assessment* provides teachers with immediate diagnostic data that can be used to differentiate instruction for individual students.

Harcourt Achieve President and CEO Tim McEwen says the program is an ideal solution to meeting today’s standards-driven educational requirements.

“With No Child Left Behind (NCLB) regulations mandating that all children must read on level by grade 3 by 2015, today’s teachers are under more pressure than ever to show adequate yearly progress and to meet accountability standards,” McEwen says.

“This program was specifically designed to address the five areas recommended by the NRP, and it was written by the top experts in the field of reading development,” McEwen says. “You can’t read a piece of research in this field without seeing their names.”

Dr. Timothy Shanahan, author of the *Fluency* program, is director of the Center for Literacy at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and a member of the NRP. Drs. Isabel Beck and Margaret McKeown, authors of the *Vocabulary* program, are leading reading research scientists at the Learning Research and Development Center of the University of Pittsburgh and co-authors of *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*.

Harcourt Achieve also will feature leading researchers in its two remaining *Elements of Reading* strands – *Phonics/Phonemic Awareness* and *Comprehension* – scheduled for release this summer.

Elements of Reading Vocabulary

Elements of Reading Vocabulary is the first program to provide a strong foundation in oral language vocabulary, which is a critical element in the development of proficient readers, McEwen says.

“*Elements of Reading Vocabulary* fills an instructional gap in the marketplace,” McEwen says. “Taking the oral language approach helps students learn words that are above their reading level but at their level of conceptual understanding. Research shows that this approach later will accelerate their reading.

“Teachers recognize that there are deficiencies with their basal and guided-reading programs in vocabulary development – that they don’t provide depth of vocabulary instruction. Administrators and teachers also want better data collection to differentiate instruction, show progress and communicate with parents. This strand provides that.”

Elements of Reading Vocabulary components include a combination of tools, including a read-aloud anthology, photo cards, word watcher charts and student books.

Elements of Reading Fluency

Based on effective practice research, the *Elements of Reading Fluency* strand is aligned to NRP guidelines and offers specifically written books that develop high frequency words necessary to build fluency.

It is divided into five four-week units. Each unit revolves around a theme that uses common high frequency words and common content words. In addition, teaching versions of the student books use a unique format that looks exactly like the student book on the outside, but contains reduced student pages with teaching tips.

“*Elements of Reading Fluency* puts this often-neglected component of reading instruction into the forefront of comprehensive reading instruction,” McEwen says.

On-Line Assessment

Elements of Reading On-Line Assessment’s prescriptive student profiles, individual student scores reports, class score report and parent report unite all five elements of reading, McEwen says.

“This enables teachers to make instructional reading decisions that impact student achievement,” he adds.

About Harcourt Achieve

Harcourt Achieve produces learning solutions and content that fundamentally and positively changes the lives of young and adult learners. Its products are based on a developmental philosophy that assesses learners’ skills and needs, matches them to appropriate content and accelerates them to meet and exceed expectations. The Steck-

Vaughn imprint offers easy-to-use, innovative learning solutions that accelerate content-area knowledge and reading skills, allowing learners to meet and exceed expectations. These targeted resources assess, remediate, strengthen and enhance skills and reading development. For more information, please visit <http://www.HarcourtAchieve.com>.

Harcourt Achieve is part of Harcourt Education, a global education provider serving students and teachers in PreK 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 Canada; Harcourt Religion Publishers, Harcourt Trade Publishers, Greenwood/Heinemann and Heinemann Global Library. For more information, please visit www.harcourt.com.

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