

KINDERGARTEN
Sample Sessions



UNITS OF STUDY *in* PHONICS

A WORKSHOP CURRICULUM, GRADES K-2

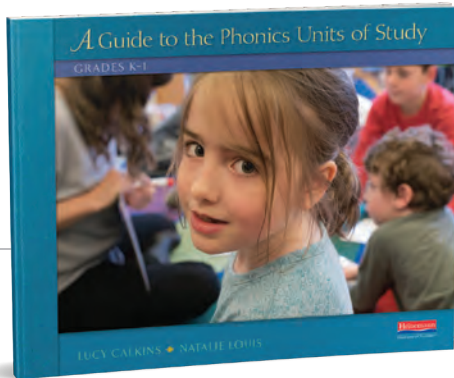
LUCY CALKINS *with* COLLEAGUES *from the* READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Heinemann
DEDICATED TO TEACHERS

KINDERGARTEN Components

FIVE UNITS OF STUDY

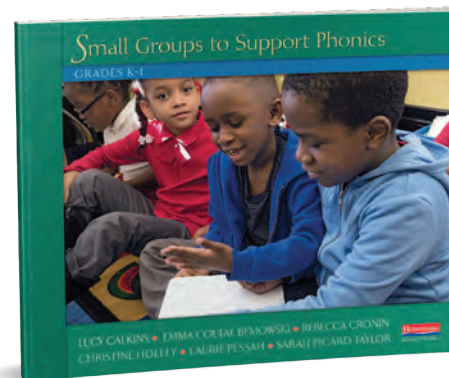
Each unit is designed to be taught roughly at the same time as the corresponding reading and/or writing unit of study and to last five to six weeks, keeping pace with those units. A day's phonics session lasts about twenty minutes.



A GUIDE TO THE PHONICS UNITS OF STUDY

The *Guide* begins with a discussion of the principles that undergird this phonics curriculum along with an overview of phonics development to help you understand the developmental progression that the series supports.

For complete details, please visit
www.UnitsofStudy.com/phonics



SMALL GROUPS TO SUPPORT PHONICS

The *Units of Study in Phonics* offer support in coaching into the work that students do during each session and in leading small groups. These small groups aim to support students in transferring what they are learning in phonics time to their ongoing work in reading and writing.



RESOURCE PACKS (2 BOXES)

The *Units of Study in Phonics* are supported by grade-level *Resource Packs* containing alphabet charts, many other types of other charts, letter cards, word cards, picture cards, printed copies of poems and songs, other cards such as onset rime cards and vowel picture cards, and much more to engage children and support daily instruction.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Online resources include a wide range of materials to support teaching and learning:

- Downloadable PDFs of the word, word-part, and picture cards, posters and charts included in the two Resource Pack boxes for each grade (in both color and black-and-white versions)
- Re-useable materials to download and print to support small groups
- Folding “books,” songs, poems for student use
- Assessment resources



Welcome to the Kindergarten *Units of Study in Phonics* Sampler. This booklet includes sample sessions from each of the five units of study for this grade level, chosen to broadly represent the range of work that students will do and to provide a snapshot view of how instruction develops across the school year.

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KINDERGARTEN ♦ UNIT 1 ♦ OVERVIEW AND CONTENTS

Making Friends with Letters

LUCY CALKINS • NATALIE LOUIS

Over the course of this unit, you'll immerse your children in letters and sounds, rhyme and word play. Your kids will grow in leaps and bounds, and it will be important for you to see and focus on that, and not to worry that their knowledge will be incomplete and full of holes and gaps, misconceptions and half-baked ideas. That is how every learner learns, and your job will be to celebrate the messy and brilliant learning that your youngsters do.

This unit supports a variation of Patricia Cunningham's beloved "Star Names" unit. We send our thanks to Pat for her brilliant work helping a world of teachers tap into the power of children's own names as their first reading material and as their first source of letter-sound knowledge. We've kept the spirit of Patricia Cunningham's name study work, and altered many of the details.

The way that the unit unfolds is that you'll use your children's names, and the letters in those names, to teach phonics concepts. You'll draw names from a 'Star Jar,' doing some quiet machinations so that you control the sequence of names and in that way, channel your class to study letters in a sequence that roughly matches one that we argue for in *A Guide to the Units of Study in Phonics, K-1: MSTNARLDFIVPKXEBZJJOCHUWGQY*.

Over the course of this unit you will build a name wall which will eventually contain all of the names in your class. In future units, this name wall will become a word wall.

Bend I launches the name study with a session revolving around a stuffed elephant, a class mascot named Mabel. We decided to teach the name of a class mascot first rather than highlight a single child in that way, and we also want to start the year by studying the letter *M*.

The second bend continues the work begun in Bend I, only with a new emphasis on kids learning their own names, including the letter formation pathway that will help them to write their own names quickly and properly.

Bend III, the final bend, returns to the work begun at the start of the book, continuing to teach more letters, but with a new emphasis on using what students have learned in order to write.

Recurring throughout this unit—and every unit—will be an attention to high-frequency words. You'll refer to those as "snap words" because these are words that kids will want to read and write "in a snap." The unit highlights snap words that are on the Dolch list of most frequently used words, including *me, a, the, I, like, and my*. Many of those words are abstract for young children. Therefore you'll want to be sure to also teach some concrete words that are specific to your class. If your children seem head over heels for cats—add *cat* to the list of snap words. *Mom* and *dad* definitely belong there. Don't swamp the high-frequency words with too many concrete words, but mixing a few of these words in will make the entire collection of words mean more to your youngsters.

An Orientation to the Unit

BEND I ♦ **Studying Peoples' Names Can Help You Get to Know Each Other—and the Alphabet**

1. To Learn a Name Well, It Helps to Do Things with the Name
2. Names—and Words—Can Teach Us Letters and Sounds
3. Learning to Own Letters
4. By Studying Names, We Can Learn More Letters
5. Syllables Can Help Readers and Writers Tackle Long Words
6. Comparing Two Names that Both Start with the Same Letter
7. Vowels Are Special Letters

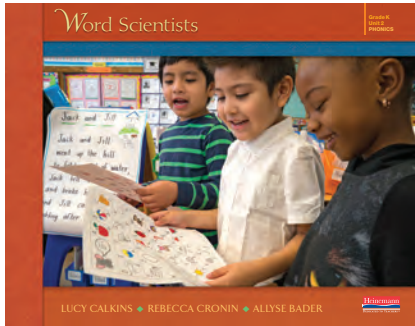
BEND II ♦ **Learning Your Own Name by Heart**

8. Learning Your Own Name by Heart
9. Learning to Write Names by Heart: Your Muscles Can Learn to Write Letters Quickly
10. Owning Letters and Teaching Them to Others
11. Using Names to Build New Words: Exploring Rhyme

BEND III ♦ **Using Star Names to Write**

12. Labeling Things in the Classroom
13. Learning More Words by Heart
14. Writing New Letters with Help from Friends
15. Favorite Characters Can Become Star Names
16. Learning Even More Words by Heart
17. Walking through Life Differently: A Celebration





KINDERGARTEN ♦ UNIT 2 ♦ OVERVIEW AND CONTENTS

Word Scientists

LUCY CALKINS • REBECCA CRONIN • ALLYSE BADER

The first few months of kindergarten are high season for your students' phonics development, and many parts of your day will work in alignment to further this development. Your students will learn phonics during the twenty minutes a day that are allocated explicitly and specifically to phonics study—but they will also learn phonics when they sign in every morning as part of your attendance, and when you read aloud the agenda for the day, pointer tapping neatly across the print as you read left to right, top to bottom, saying one word for each patch of print. They will learn phonics when they sing rhyming songs, chime in on familiar nursery rhymes, and most of all, when they grow to see themselves as people who label and write stories and all-about books. Throughout the whole day, your teaching will support your students' phonological and phonemic awareness and their knowledge of phonics, while also helping them develop early reading and writing skills, understandings, and habits.

In Bend I, you'll rally kids to become word scientists. As such, they'll do what scientists do: they'll look closely, and they'll notice and note, question and invent. The first thing that you invite kids to study will be the alphabet chart, and this whole-class focus on the alphabet chart will rally your students to consolidate what they have already learned about letter-sound correspondence, to learn the letters they may not have secured during your first unit, and above all, to begin using all of this knowledge as they label their pictures in the writing that they do within their writing workshop. As Rollanda O'Connor writes in *Teaching Word Recognition*, "Perhaps the most powerful demonstration of the alphabetic principle is during activities where children segment words into all of their

constituent sounds, represent each sound with a letter of the alphabet, and then read the word back. In other words, the most powerful way to demonstrate the alphabetic principle is by showing children how to spell simple words" (pp. 49–50). That work is at the heart of the writing workshop, and the *Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing* can guide that portion of your instruction. Bend II of this unit reminds youngsters that the only reason that the alphabet chart—actually, the alphabet itself—matters is that children can use it to help them write and read. In this bend, you'll help kids listen for the sounds in words and record them as best they can. The unit begins with a focus on helping kids to stretch words, isolating the initial sound, and then matching that sound to a letter and recording the letter. Throughout this bend, you will be teaching students to stretch segment words to hear phonemes (ffffuuunnn) before moving them to segment each individual phoneme (/f/ /ü/ /n/).

Bend III, the final bend of this unit, focuses on helping students develop their knowledge of high-frequency words (HFW, or "snap words," as we often refer to them with students), and their command of the words you will have already taught. Note that in the prior two bends, students already learned a few high-frequency words, and they spent a bit of time reviewing their list. Students need to learn new high-frequency words continually, and this bend will not be the first time in this unit when you spotlight the importance of students expanding the bank of words that they know in a snap. This bend is unlike the earlier ones in its treatment of this topic, because the entire storyline of this bend will focus on the topic of high-frequency words.

An Orientation to the Unit

BEND I ♦ **Studying the Alphabet and the Alphabet Chart**

1. We Are Word Scientists
2. Understanding How the Alphabet Chart Works—Keywords and Initial Sounds
3. Learning Snap Words to Write about What We Notice
4. Comparing Different Alphabet Charts
5. Reconstruct a New Alphabet Chart
6. Adding Pictures to the Alphabet Chart
7. Using the Alphabet Chart with Increasing Automaticity
8. ABC School

BEND II ♦ **Using the Alphabet to Write**

9. When You Know the Alphabet Chart Really Well, You Can Use It to Write
10. Writers Use What They Know about Letters to Label Their Writing
11. Learning New Snap Words
12. Listening to the Ends of Words Matters
13. Listening for Sounds All across the Word

BEND III ♦ **Studying and Using High-Frequency Words to Write and Read**

14. Keep Your Word Collection Close, So You Can Grow, Study, and Use It
15. Recognize Snap Words When the Font Is Different
16. Interactive Writing: An Invitation to Word School
17. Making Lesson Plans: What Will We Teach Our Stuffed Animals about Snap Words?
18. Word School





KINDERGARTEN ♦ UNIT 3 ♦ OVERVIEW AND CONTENTS

Word-Part Power

NATALIE LOUIS • RACHEL ROTHMAN-PERKINS

This unit fits tongue-and-groove with the beloved *Super Powers: Reading with Print Strategies and Sight Word Power*, which is Unit 2 from the kindergarten *Units of Study for Teaching Reading*. Although you certainly can adapt this unit to teach without its reading counterpart, the first session in this phonics unit is designed to follow the first session in the reading unit—it assumes students have been exposed to their first super power: pointer power.

In the first bend, “Writing Power,” your phonics instruction will be in service of moving your class from writing labels to writing sentences during writing time. We hope that most of your children will have graduated from writing one word labels on their drawings and will be writing sentences that are somewhat readable, but this bend will be especially helpful for students who still need support in order to make that leap.

Across the bend, you’ll see lots of detailed instruction to help kids to write all of the sounds they hear in a word. You’ll teach them to say words slowly, segmenting the words into phonemes. You’ll support the process of alternating between hearing an isolated sound and recording that sound on the page. You’ll end the bend with an emphasis on rereading in a way that supports cumulative blending and reminds children of the all-important step of checking their work.

As the first bend gives way to the second bend, kids learn that the phonics workshop will provide them with yet another super power—word-part power! This is an exciting bend for both teachers and learners, because when kids grasp the power of phonograms, it is as if the whole world of written language opens to them. When they approach a word, even a very long word, they will no longer be without tools to solve it.

At the start of Bend II, you’ll teach kids that the little words they know—such as snap words they learned in Unit 2—can give them great power. Although this portion of the unit focuses on phonograms, such as *at* and *it*, a good deal of the payoff for this work will revolve around consonants. When your students learn that the words *at*, *in*, *it*, and *an* can be made into lots of other words, and they begin to change *rat* to *mat*, and *mat* to *sat*, they’ll build new words with ease as they write. Furthermore, manipulating onsets and rimes in their writing will provide children with added practice paying attention to initial consonants as they read. Also in the second bend, the word wall is introduced, and all the words from your snap word collection will be moved to the word wall.

In the final bend of the unit, you’ll help kids further expand their word-part power by adding in a few more of the most common VC phonograms. By the end of this unit, children will have been exposed to 10 of the most generative vowel-consonant rimes. This bend is especially powerful, because it teaches children all three ways to read words—by sight, by decoding, and by analogy.

This bend also continues the work of growing the kindergarten bank of high-frequency words. *She* is a perfect word to teach at this time of year, because your children are writing personal narratives in writing workshop. You’ll introduce digraphs (*sh*, *th*, *wh*, *ch*), pointing out that the snap word *she* begins not just with one consonant but with two consonants. You’ll show students how they can combine digraphs with word parts to make even more words. The unit ends with a Rime Rodeo! Children get the chance to round up rimes and combine them with onsets—both initial consonant and digraph—to fill the room with newly made words.

An Orientation to the Unit

BEND I ♦ Writing Power

1. Using Pointer Power in Writing Workshop, Too
2. Using Snap Words and Stretch Words to Write
3. Writers Take Risks: Writing All the Sounds in Long Words
4. Hearing and Recording More Sounds in Words
5. Using Our Writing Super Powers to Edit and Celebrate Our Written Work

BEND II ♦ Word-Part Power

6. Using Word-Part Power: Making Words with Vowel-Consonant Rimes *-at* and *-in*
7. Making Words with More Vowel-Consonant Rimes: *-it* and *-an*
8. Learning to Hear Rimes in Words
9. Mix and Make: Making Words with *-at*, *-an*, *-it*, and *-in*
10. Reading Words Letter-by-Part Instead of One Letter at a Time

BEND III ♦ Word Parts, Snap Words, and Digraphs—Yee-haw!

11. Discover New Word Parts: VC Parts *-ap* and *-ot*
12. Using Word Parts (*-ip*, *-op*) to Write New Words
13. Using Word Parts and Dr. Seuss–like Rhymes to Read
14. Finding Word Parts in the Alphabet Chart
15. Studying One Word to Learn about How Letters and Words Work
16. Word-Part Rodeo: Making Words with Digraphs and Word Parts
17. Using All Your Powers: Snap Word Power, Sound Power, and Word-Part Power to Write Sentences





KINDERGARTEN ♦ UNIT 4 ♦ OVERVIEW AND CONTENTS

Vowel Power

ANGELA BÁEZ • KATIE M. WEARS • CASEY MAXWELL

In Unit 4, you enter that special period in kindergarten when many children are teetering on conventionality in both reading and writing. This is landmark territory. What a magical time! You, and others, can read their writing—mostly. That is because many students are progressing from semiphonetic to phonetic writing.

This unit fits tongue-and-groove with *Bigger Books*, *Bigger Reading Muscles*, the third book in the kindergarten *Units of Study for Teaching Reading*. We've built upon the idea of super powers, adding a new one: vowel power! Throughout this phonics unit, you will see even more connections to *How-To Books: Writing to Teach Others*, the third kindergarten unit in *Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing*. Graphophonetic information becomes salient earlier in encoding than it does in decoding. Therefore, the work children do in attending to the medial vowel sound in writing may march ahead of the work they do in reading, where they will attend predominantly to the initial and final sounds of words.

The unit opens with a note from Reader-Man, an old friend from phonics Unit 3, *Word-Part Power*, who notices something important: vowels are missing in their writing! Reader-Man then bestows upon the class a new power, vowel power. After all, says Reader-Man, words need vowels in order to be understood. This launches the class into an investigation leading to the discovery that all words have vowels. By the end of Bend I, you'll return to this idea. You'll share with your kindergartners that it's a writer's responsibility to check that all of their words have vowels, and that they are ready to take on that responsibility.

In the first session, Reader-Man will give your students a new tool—a vowel

shield—that functions as a ready reference throughout the unit. It contains pictures that go with the short-vowel sounds and sets children up to study short-vowel sounds across the unit. In Bend I, children will study short *A* and short *I* closely.

You will also introduce new high-frequency words, *am* and *did*, that further students' study of short *A* and short *I*. You'll add these words to the word wall, alongside two other words, *how* and *you*, that come up very often when writing How-To books.

As the first bend gives way to the second bend, you'll continue the puzzling work of distinguishing short-vowel sounds from one another. You'll begin sorting short *E* and short *O* along with the previously studied short *I*, and you'll expand your focus to short *U*. Children will also engage in interactive writing and "making words" activities that include all five short vowels. By the end of the bend, Reader-Man will send a new note with his blessing to highlight all of the vowels on the kids' shields, making their entire shield "shine."

In the third bend, students will study vowels in words that are longer than CVC words. This is ambitious, but also realistic work, because most of the words that kids use in their own natural conversation and writing are bigger than CVC words, such as *chocolate*, *celebration*, *playground*, and *basketball*. In fact, many of your students' names are multisyllabic, and you'll be able to lean on those during this bend, circling back to name study. You'll teach children how knowledge of CVC words is foundational to writing any words they choose. As a callback to Session 1 of the unit, in the first session of Bend III you'll teach students that not only does every word have at least one vowel, but every syllable of every word does, too.

An Orientation to the Unit

BEND I ♦ Vowels in Every Word

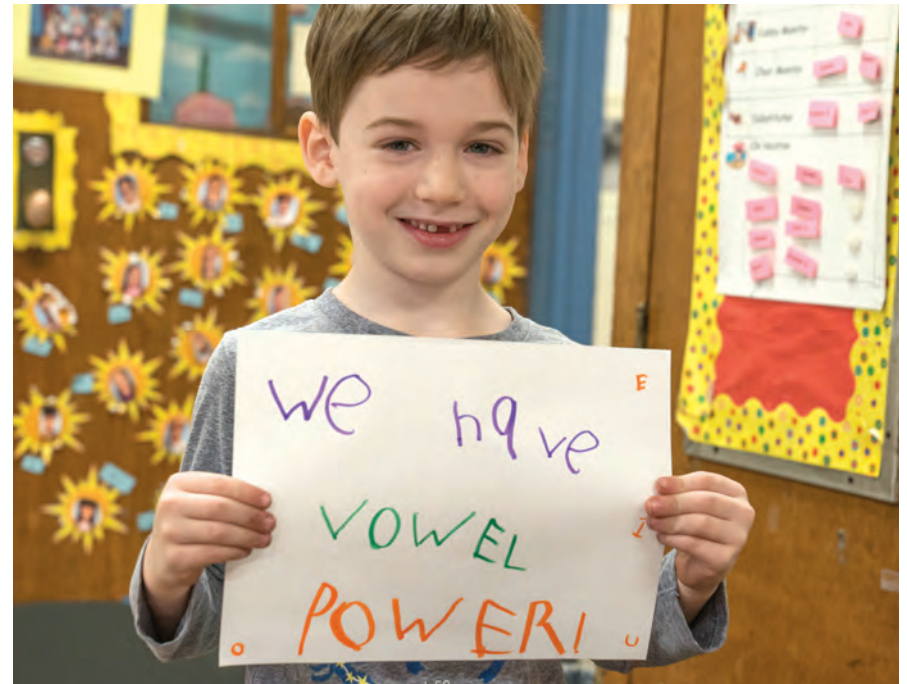
1. Every Word Has at Least One Vowel
2. Checking for Vowels in Writing
3. Isolating the Short-Vowel Sound in the Middle of Words (-VC)
4. Writing Sentences with Short *A* and Short *I* CVC Words
5. Shared Reading with a Focus on Words with Short *A* and Short *I*
6. Editing for Short Vowels *A* and *I*

BEND II ♦ Distinguishing Short-Vowel Sounds

7. Distinguishing Short *E*, *O*, and *I* Sounds
8. Identifying and Editing for Short *E*, *O*, and *U* Sounds
9. Vocalizing Vowel Sounds to Notice Differences
10. Introducing New Snap Words: *On*, *Up*, *Fun*, and *Get*
11. Using Interactive Writing to Build Ownership and Support Transfer
12. Making New Words by Changing Vowels and Other Letters

BEND III ♦ Vowels in Bigger Words

13. Every Syllable Has at Least One Vowel
14. Segmenting Bigger Words by Syllable
15. Distinguishing Short-Vowel Sounds in Bigger Words
16. Vowels Make More Than One Sound
17. Becoming More Automatic with Digraphs
18. Flexibility with Vowel Power, Word-Part Power, and Snap Word Power in Writing
19. Mabel's Graduation and a Celebration of Vowel Power





Playing with Phonics

LUCY CALKINS • AMANDA HARTMAN • VALERIE GESCHWIND

Playing with Phonics is designed to be a whimsical, experimental, joyful—and most of all, fun—conclusion to your kindergartners' first year of phonics instruction. This unit hinges on the big themes of experimentation and celebration. Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to use their knowledge of phonics to experiment and explore the sounds they hear in words and the sounds they want to write.

It is in Bend 1 of this unit that students are first introduced to blends and encouraged to think about not only what sounds letters make, but the instances in which those sounds are changed, muted, or manipulated by neighboring letters. Bend I begins by inviting students to “horse-around” with a wide variety of animal sounds and other invented noises. Not only is this work wildly fun for kindergartners, but it continues the essential phonological awareness work they have engaged in all year. While many kindergartners are reading conventional text by this time in the year, this critical phonological awareness must not fall by the wayside, because it is closely linked with future reading success. As children move from animal and invented sounds to exploring the sounds and sound effects they encounter in books, they continue to hone their phonological awareness while beginning to think about the sounds they hear and write in new, increasingly sophisticated ways. In Session 2, children learn about consonant blends and are introduced to a new, invaluable tool—the “Blends and Digraphs” chart. Quickly, children begin to tackle trickier blends such as *tr* and learn to differentiate this sound from the digraph *ch*. Beginning in Session 3, the class dives into an exploration of poetry that provides students with new and inventive ways to apply their growing phonics knowledge.

In Bend II, students begin to experiment with “magic spells.” Conjuring references to famous “magic spells,” such as Cinderella’s “biddi-bobbidi-boo” and Harry Potter’s “wingardium leviosa,” this part of the bend encourages students to tackle long and winding strings of sounds and to contemplate how to record these sounds. It is during their work with “magic spells” that you will help students progress from spelling words letter-by-letter to encouraging students to look for familiar parts within words and transition to spelling part-by-part.

In the third bend, “Playing with Phonics Poems,” children delve deeper into their work with poetry. The bend launches with a continued emphasis on phonological awareness skills as students leverage their knowledge of word parts and sounds to read and create silly rhymes. Students later transform these silly little rhymes into full-fledged poetry by combining their phonics knowledge with inspiration from mentors. Bend III culminates with a well-deserved celebration when children—with the help of a beret-clad Mabel—transform the classroom into a poetry cafe!

Bend IV, “Phonics Projects,” is a culmination not only of the work of this unit, but of all the phonics work children have engaged in during their kindergarten year. This “accordion-style” bend was written to be flexible and responsive to the needs of your students who may engage in several phonics projects as you close out your year. Over the course of this bend, students learn about and execute projects which allow them to synthesize and orchestrate the vast array of phonics knowledge they have acquired during the course of this fast-paced kindergarten year.

An Orientation to the Unit

BEND I ♦ **Playing with Sounds**

1. Playing with Sounds: Hearing and Recording Letters to Match
2. Listening for the Sounds that Are “Hiding in the Edges” of Blends
3. Reading Poetry with All You Know
4. Playing “Guess the Covered Word” with Poetry
5. Revising Writing to Capture All the Sounds in Words

BEND II ♦ **Writing Longer Words**

6. Magic Spells
7. Activating Word-Part Power to Write Longer Words
8. Learning New Snap Words to Write Even More Words
9. Using Snap Words and Blends to Add Sound Effects to Our Writing

BEND III ♦ **Playing with Phonics Poems**

10. Writing Silly Rhyming Poems
11. Building a Storehouse of Rhymes (*-ick, -ell, -uck, -ow, -og*)
12. Revising Rhymes Using Blends and Digraphs
13. Alliteration: Playing Even More with Blends
14. Writing Real Poetry Using All of Our Phonics Knowledge

BEND IV ♦ **Phonics Projects**

15. Launching Phonics Projects: Investigating the Letter /
16. Comparing and Contrasting Words with the Letter /
17. Being Flexible When You Read / Words
18. Learning Even More: Investigating Other Vowels
19. Sharing All We’ve Learned about Vowels: Student-Led Shared Reading
20. Celebrating Our Learning from Kindergarten








SESSION 4

By Studying Names, We Can Learn More Letters

GETTING READY

- ✓ Prepare to pull a star name from the Star Jar beginning with the letter *S* or another easy initial consonant that children will be able to use to spell lots of other words.
- ✓ Locate cards for the *S*/not-*S* picture sort.  
- ✓ Draw an Elkonin box, a rectangle divided into thirds.
- ✓ Prepare the “Let’s Study a Name!” anchor chart. 

PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Concepts About Print

- Understand the concept of *first* in written language.

Phonological Awareness

- Connect words by sounds.
- Identify the initial phonemes of spoken words.

Letter Knowledge

- Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
- Recognize the name/sound of letters.
- Understand that there is a relationship between sounds and letters.

IN THIS SESSION

TODAY YOU’LL teach students a secret that can help them learn many letters: for a lot of letters, when you know the letter’s name, you know the letter’s sound.

TODAY YOUR STUDENTS will engage in a name study of a child’s name that begins with letter *S* to learn this letter and the sound it makes. During rug time, they will do a card sort to find pictures that begin with an *S* sound. They’ll also search the classroom for items that begin with *S*.

MINILESSON

CONNECTION

Tell children that one reason it is so cool to learn letters is because this lets them write more things.

While singing the “We Are Gathering” song, everyone found their spots. “Writers, you have learned to write letter *M*’s, and yesterday I actually saw some *M*’s cropping up in your stories. I saw an */m/-McDonald’s* in Tony’s writing, and am I right that David, you had a picture of macaroni? And you labeled it with an *M* because you heard the */m/* sound, right?”

“But friends, here’s the thing. Your writing will be pretty wacky if the whole story has to be filled only with words that begin with *M*. Suppose you wanted to write this,” and I pretended to write in the air as I said, “At the movies, I asked Mom for money for a snack.

“If you only had *M*’s, you’d have to say that you asked */m/-Mom* for */m/-money* for a mmmack. That’d be silly! So, writers, I am pretty sure you agree that I have to teach you a lot *more* letters, really soon. *And* you have to start learning letters on your own, without me even teaching you. So, let’s study another star name and see if that star name can teach you another letter.”

Lead children through the now-familiar steps of a star name study, doing this extra quickly to save time for a deeper study of the initial consonant.

I led the class in singing the “Guess the Name” song to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell,” as I pulled another star name from the jar. The name was *Salima*.

Can you guess the name?
Can you guess the name?
Hi-ho, the derry-o
Can you guess the name?
It starts with an S
It starts with an S
Hi-ho, the derry-o
Can you guess the name?

“What do you notice when you study the name *Salima*?” I asked. “Turn and tell your partner”

“Some of you noticed that Salima’s name has a lot of small letters. Nod if you noticed that.” I nodded along with children. Others noticed Salima’s name has an *m* in it, wow! Mabel and Mike’s letter is inside Sali-mmma’s name. Thumbs up if you noticed that!”

Help the class cheer the star name, briskly, and discuss what they notice when they study the letters.

“Are you ready to cheer this word? Everyone, stand up and give me an *S*!” I stretched my arms high in the air, to indicate the tallness of the letter, urging children to follow suit.

“Give me an *a*!” I crouched down low to show the *a* was a small letter. Give me an *!* Stretch back up high!” We did this, and then cheered the rest of the letters together. “What’s that spell?”

“*Salima*!” We all cheered together. “Now that we’ve gotten to know Salima’s name, let’s use her name to help us get a new letter in our back pocket.” I slapped my pocket. I wrote uppercase and lowercase *S*’s on my whiteboard easel.

❁ Name the teaching point.

“Today I want to teach you that when you learn the letter *S*, you learn a secret that will help you learn tons of other letters. This is the secret: for many letters, when you know the letter’s name, you can figure out the letter’s sound.”

Note that the star name part of this session is done in the connection, so that the rest of the minilessons can help kids grasp the new letter—in this case, S. Kids will learn a second star name during an extension to today’s lesson. You need to pick up the pace to get through your whole class!

We chose the name Salima because it begins with a consonant that is particularly accessible, in that the name of the letter helps to say its sound.

POSSIBLE COACHING MOVES

- ▶ “Yes, there are six letters. Can you spot the two that are the same?”
- ▶ “Do you recognize any letters you know inside Salima’s name?”
- ▶ “Are there some tall letters, some small letters? How many are tall?”



TEACHING

Guide children through the steps of making friends with a new letter. Begin by naming it, sounding it.

"So, class, what is the name of this letter?" I pointed to the uppercase and lowercase S. The class chimed in that it is an S. "Yes, and S makes the /s/ sound, let's all make the letter S's sound together, ready?" The students made /s/ sounds. As they did so, I cupped my hand behind my ear, listening. "You are right. The letter name ends with the letter's sound.

"Let's learn this letter so we have it in our back pocket," I said. "Hello class, I'd like you to meet . . . " and I pointed to the letter. The class chimed in "S." I cupped my hand behind my ear, the gesture suggesting that I wanted to know the letter's sound. They said /s/, so I added, "/s/-Salima, /s/-snake, /s/-Stegosaurus, /s/." The letter S makes the /s/ sound, so any time I hear the /s/ sound at the beginning of a word I know it starts with /s/ S."

Move children into writing the capital letter, writing in the air as you voice over the letter formation pathway.

"Before we can own the letter S, let's practice making it the right way." I guided students through writing the letter S in the air as I voiced over the letter formation pathway. "To write the letter, bump around, slide down, bump around the other way and stop.



"And guess what? Lowercase s is written the same way, just a little smaller. Let's try the S again, this time, making it smaller, so it's lowercase." I voiced over the same letter formation pathway as students wrote in the air.

"Let's do it again! This time, take out your magic paper and make-believe pen and get ready to write the S on the rug. What color is your make-believe pen? Green? Red? Glittery? Whisper your color to your friend! Now we're ready to write the first part of Salima's name, the capital S. Bump around, slide down, bump around the other way and stop." I led children through this another two to three times. "Your S's are /s/-spectacular. They're /s/-super /s/-superb!"

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT/LINK

Help children use the letter's sound to think of other words that start with the same sound, then add the name to the name wall.

"Let's use the /s/ sound of the S to think of more /s/ words! S makes the sound /s/ like the hissing of a snake. Let's hiss like snakes using /s/, /s/, /s/, /s/, /s/. What other words begin like this? /s/-Salima?" We soon had a list: /s/-silly, /s/-slide, /s/-spaghetti, /s/-superhero." I encouraged the children to shout out other words that began with the /s/ sound.

Because this is still very early in kindergarten, kids need repeated practice naming the letters in a word and clarifying what a letter is in contrast to a word. Repeated study of the shapes and sizes of letters helps solidify these concepts.



The letter S is the first letter students have learned that is made almost the same way in its capital and lowercase forms, so it makes sense to emphasize this point here. Be sure to point this out for the other seven letters that fall into this category when you teach them (C, O, U, V, W, X, and Z).

I added Salima's name and photo to the name wall under the *Ss* heading and led the class in the "Star Name Celebration Song."

Salima, Salima is a star
Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap
Salima's name starts with *S*
S, S, S, S, S

With a */s/ /s/* here and a */s/ /s/* there
Here a */s/* there a */s/*
Everywhere a */s/ /s/*
Salima, Salima is a star
/s/ /s/ /s/ /s/ /s/

RUG TIME

Show picture cards and have students listen for the words that start with *S*. Then give a stack of picture cards to sort.

"Now that you know the letter *S*, you can find *S* words everywhere. Let's try it!" I have some pictures of things; some of them start with */s/-S* and some do not. As I said this, I pointed to the first box in an Elkonin box I had drawn to help children isolate the first sound.

"When I hold a card up, read the picture and then give me a thumbs up if it starts with */s/-S*, or thumbs down if it does not." I held up picture of a snail. Most of the kids gave a thumbs up. "*Snail* starts with */s/-S*. I'll put *snail* in the *S* pile. I held up a picture of a goat. Many thumbs turned down. "Tell your friend why." After children talked, I said, "*G-g-g-goat* does not start like */s/ Salima*. *Goat* goes in the Not-an-*S* pile.

"Now, get together with the friend next to you, your partner for today. In a minute, I'm going to pass out some pictures, one set for each partnership. With your partner, read the picture and ask yourself, 'Does this word begin with an */s/-S* or Not-an-*S*?' In front of you, you'll make two piles: an */s/-S* pile and a Not-an-*S* pile. Are you ready, partners?"

After a couple of minutes, I called out. "Would you and your partner hold up some of your */s/-Salima* words? What words did you find that start with the */s/* sound like *Salima*?" The kids held them up and said the words they represented. "Whoa, *soup*? *Socks*? *Sun*? These are all terrific */s/* words."

Channel kids to walk around the room finding objects that start with *S*.

"We have two more minutes in our phonics workshop. Can you and your partner for today hold hands and go around this room, seeing if you can find things that start with the */s/* sound? When you get to something, touch it and say its name and listen for the */s/* sound. You might also find some things that start with */m/-M*."

POSSIBLE COACHING MOVES

- ▶ "Can you read that picture? A pumpkin? Is *pumpkin* an */s/-S* word? Let's see: */p/-/p/-/p/-pumpkin . . . /s/-/s/-/s/-Salima*. Do they sound the same? No? Then put that in the Not-an-*S* pile."
- ▶ "Interesting! You found a */m/-Mabel* word? *Mmmmountain*? That's so smart! Let's show everyone. Maybe we can make a new *M* pile for words what begin with */m/*."
- ▶ "Can you think of other words that start with *S*, like *Salima*?"

SHARE • Introducing the “Let’s Study a Name!” Chart

Remind children that charts are helpful for remembering steps in a process. Introduce the “Let’s Study a Name!” chart that will help children remember how to study names.

“Class, I noticed that when you came into the classroom today, you knew how to unpack. I didn’t have to tell you to hang up your coat, put away lunch, or come to the rug for meeting—you did it without asking me for help.

“I was thinking that because we are studying star names every day, maybe we could have a chart that reminds us of how to study star names. Does that sound like a good idea? Then we could just pull a name from the jar and you all could study it without me even telling you what to do.” I put up the “Let’s Study a Name!” chart. I pointed to each bullet and read them aloud, then gestured for kids to read the steps along with me.

EXTENSION 1 • Studying a T Star Name

Guide students to study a new star name, using the “Let’s Study a Name!” chart to remind them of the steps.

“Let’s use our new chart from earlier to help us study another star name.” I led the class in singing the “Guess the Name” song as I reached into the Star Jar and pulled out the name *Tymel*.

“Okay, what do we do first?” I asked the class, pointing to the first bullet on the chart. “Read it!” The students responded. We read Tymel’s name together. “What’s next?” I asked, pointing to the second line. “Count the letters!” We counted the letters together on our fingers. “Okay, time to study the letters! Tell your partner what you notice about the letters in Tymel’s name.

“You noticed a lot about the letters in Tymel’s name! I heard some of you talking about this letter, here,” and I tapped on the *y*. “This letter has a hangy-tail. We’ll talk about that more when we cheer Tymel’s name.

“Let’s think about the letter and sound that */t/-Tymel* starts with. *Tymel* starts with the letter *T*. *T* makes the */t/* sound. I hear */t/* at the beginning of */t/-Tymel*. Let’s make *T*’s sound together, ready?”

“/t/ /t/ /t/,” the class said together.

“Yes, the letter *T* has the */t/* sound, just like in */t/-toast* and */t/-turtle*.



Because T is a stop-consonant, model the “shortness” of the /t/ sound. This is not “tuh” but /t/. Correct the kids if they make a “tuh” sound as some are sure to do.

"A time to cheer Tymel's name! Give me a *T*! Give me a . . . a . . . hey! Wait a second. The letter *y* isn't just small. It has a hangy-tail." I pointed to lowercase *y* in Tymel's name. "See that tail?" I bent down and let one arm hang low to indicate a tail, nodding for children to repeat my movement as they "gave me the *y*."

"Give me an *m* . . ." we cheered the remaining letters together. "What's that spell?"

"*Tymel!*" We all cheered his name together. "Now that we've gotten to know Tymel's name, let's use his name to help us get a new letter in our back pocket." I slapped my pocket. I wrote an uppercase and lowercase *Tt* on my whiteboard easel.

Move children into writing the capital letter, by writing in the air.

"Now we're ready to write. Stand up tall like me and raise your arm up high because this letter is a tall letter. It's the start of Tymel's name, so the *T* is a capital *T*." Standing with my back toward the children to model, I walked through the letter formation pathway, leading the children to practice by writing a *T* in the sky while chanting the pathway with me. "Let's start high. Line down! Line across the top. Let's do it again. Say it, all together: Line down. Line across the top. One more time: Line . . .

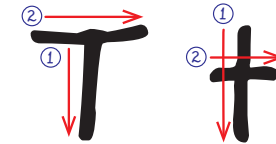
"Kindergartners, wait a minute." I pointed to the lowercase *t* on the card I had posted at the start of the lesson. "Does this lowercase *t* match the *T* at the start of Tymel's name? No! They look different. How?" Children said the capital letter has a line that goes across the *top*, whereas the lowercase *t* has a line that goes across the *middle*.

"Get ready to make the lowercase *t*. The lowercase *t* is just as /t/ tall as the capital *T*, so stand up tall again." I modeled, raising my arm high, standing with my back to the children. "Watch this. Straight line down. *Little* line across *the middle*." I emphasized the words to model the difference in the letter formation pathways for the lowercase and capital versions of the letter. The children practiced as we repeated the letter formation pathway. "Uppercase *T* and lowercase *t* look different but they both make the /t/ sound."

I added Tymel's name and photo to the name wall under the *Tt* heading and led the class in the "Star Name Celebration Song."


Tymel, Tymel is a star
Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap
Tymel's name starts with a *T*
T, T, T, T, T
With a /t/ /t/ here and a /t/ /t/ there

Here a /t/ there a /t/
Everywhere a /t/ /t/
Tymel, Tymel is a star
/t/ /t/ /t/ /t/ /t/



EXTENSION 2 • Gathering More Pictures for M and S Books

GETTING READY

- Have a labeled bin for your class letter book ready.
- Prepare more pictures to sort into *M* and *S* letter books. 

Introduce a bin to keep in the classroom library to hold the letter books the class makes together. Show pictures of items and ask partners to decide if they belong in the *M* book or the *S* book.

I pulled out a bin labeled “Letter Books” and placed it next to me as I held up the class *M* book we had made. “We are going to learn so many letters and make so many letter books, I thought we should make a bin for them that we can keep in our class library. Should we have Mabel put the first book in the bin?” I turned to Mabel and asked, “Mabel, would you do the honors?” I picked Mabel up and pretended to have her put the *M* book in the bin.

“Earlier, you sorted pictures and made a pile of pictures of things that started with *S*. I thought we could make a book for letter *S*, just like we did for letter *M*. Can you all help get more pictures for both of these books?” The students nodded, and I continued, “I’ll hold up pictures, some of which we looked at earlier. Will you and your partner say the name of the item and say whether it starts with /s/-*S* or /m/-*M*? Then we’ll add it to the right book.”

I added the pictures to the books, with the students’ help. When we were finished, I added them both to the bin and placed the bin in the classroom library. “We’ll keep these books in the library, so you can read them during reading workshop.”



EXTENSION 3 • Revising Writing with the Help of a New Letter

During writing workshop, demonstrate how you might revise the story from this session’s connection, this time using the new letter children have learned.

“Class, I’m so glad we now have a new letter to use in our writing, the letter *S*. We can use our new letter to fix up our story about asking Mom for a treat at the movies. Do you remember our story? We started by saying, ‘At the movies, I asked Mom for money for a snack.’” On my whiteboard, I quickly sketched two stick figures and said, “This is Mom, and this is me, going to the movies. What letter can I write next to Mom? What letter does *Mom* start with?” I paused a beat, allowing kids to suggest I label Mom with an *M*. I recited the letter formation pathway as I wrote the *M*, “Start high on the page. Line down, back up, slanted line down, slanted line up, line down.” I repeated the process for the *M* in *money*.

If you notice most of your writers are not using the letters M and S to label their writing, this would make a nice mid-workshop teaching point during writing workshop. If you notice only a handful of writers who have yet to include these letters, you could teach this extension as a small group during writing time.

"But friends, here is my snack. What letter should I use here, to label the /s/ snack? Say the word with me. What sound do you hear at the start? Let's say it again and listen to the letter at the start of *snack*." The kids chimed, "S!" I recited the letter formation pathway as I drew the s to label the snack. "Bump around, slide down, bump around the other way and stop."

Channel students to study their writing, looking for things in their sketches they could label with an *M* or an *S*.

"Right now, take a look at your writing. "Do any of you think you might need an *M* on your page? If you have a drawing of yourself on the page, you might write *M* for *me*. Or, you might need to label /*M*/ for *Mom*, or /*m*/ for *monkey bars*. Put up your thumb if you see something you could label with *M*." I saw a few thumbs go up.

"Now check your writing again. Is there something you could label with *S*? Maybe you have a /*s*/ swing in your piece of writing, or a /*s*/ sidewalk. Thumbs up." Again, a few children signaled, and I said, "Fabulous! I can't wait to see."











SESSION 6

Adding Pictures to the Alphabet Chart

GETTING READY

- ✓ Each student will need an alphabet chart.  
- ✓ Display the animal-themed alphabet chart.  
- ✓ Have Post-its and a marker to draw new pictures for the alphabet chart.
- ✓ Display the class alphabet chart.  
- ✓ Provide students with about six small Post-its each and a pencil.

PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Phonological Awareness

- Identify the initial phonemes of spoken words.
- Identify and produce words that begin with the same sound.
- Match words with the same beginning sounds.

Letter Knowledge

- Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
- Identify the order of the alphabet.

Phonics

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary sound for each consonant.

High-Frequency Words

- Recognize and use high-frequency words.
- Write high-frequency words in continuous text.

IN THIS SESSION

TODAY YOU’LL teach students that word scientists notice when something can be improved, and they invent solutions to make things better.

TODAY YOUR STUDENTS will make new pictures for their alphabet charts to inspire them to use their charts more often when reading and writing. Students will generate words that have the same first sound.

MINILESSON

CONNECTION

Encourage kids to think about common inventions that have made their lives easier. Tell them that each invention was created by a scientist who saw a problem and invented a better way to solve it.

“Do any of you have one of those little vacuum cleaners—the handheld ones you can use to suck up little spills? I think they call them Dustbusters®?” A few kids nodded.

“And maybe some of you have seen those suitcases that come with wheels on them. You have? Some of you even have backpacks with wheels.”

“What not everyone realizes is that those kinds of things, like tiny vacuum cleaners, and bags with wheels on them, are inventions. The way that the world got those things is that a scientist saw a regular vacuum cleaner, a regular suitcase or backpack, and said, ‘Wait a minute—there has *got* to be a way to make this thing work even better.’ Then the scientist invented a solution to improve these things, to make them better.”

❁ **Name the teaching point.**

"Today, I want to teach you that scientists study things in the world—like rotting logs and stars and even alphabet charts, too. Sometimes when scientists study something, they say, 'I have a better idea,' and then the scientist becomes an inventor."

TEACHING

Explain that as word scientists, students can decide to improve their alphabet charts. Suggest that they might substitute pictures they prefer for selected letters.

"I'm telling you this because the other day, you realized that sometimes, when kids get an alphabet chart and they look at the pictures that are supposed to help them know the sounds that the letters make, they think, 'Huh? That is a crazy picture.' I know the other day when we looked at the picture of a cake that was supposed to work for the *U*, we thought, 'What?!' And earlier, when we were studying the animal alphabet chart, I don't know if you saw the picture for *R*, but I did. Look at it now: a mouse! I thought, 'Huh? *Mouse* starts with /m/ /m/ *M*. Why is there a mouse on my *R*?'"

"I realized the person who made that alphabet chart probably meant that picture to be something bigger and fiercer than a mouse—something that starts with /r/ . . ."

A few kids, following me, called out, "A rat!"

Nodding, I said, "A rat does make sense for the letter *R*. But you might think, 'I don't want a rat on *my* alphabet chart.' You might think, 'I don't even like rats.' And you might wish that your alphabet chart had a cute little rabbit, not a rat, for the *R* picture."

"So, word scientists, if you have found a picture you don't like on your alphabet chart and you are a scientist who invents ways to make things better, what can you do?"

The kids called out that they could fix it. I nodded. "You can invent a solution. You can decide to draw a rabbit instead of the rat on your alphabet." I did just that on a Post-it. Showing it to the class, I said, "Now we need to find where that *R* is," I said. "Help me look for it."

"I think *R* is in the middle of the alphabet chart." I pointed to a row in the middle of the chart and ran my finger along the line of letters until we reached the *R*, and I stuck the new rabbit Post-it right smack on top of the rat. "Bye, bye, rat!" I said.

"Let's check to be sure this is where the rabbit goes. Say *rat*. Say *rabbit*. *Rat*, *rabbit*—they both start with the same sound. I can put my rabbit on the *R*."



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT/LINK

Channel partners to practice inventing a new picture for the letter B. Share some of the students' responses.

"I bet you guys have been looking at the alphabet chart and thinking about other pictures that aren't the best. I mean, this one is sort of *bo-ring*, isn't it?" I pointed to the picture of a ball in the B box. "Remember, scientists look at things as they are and think, 'I have a better idea!'"

"Let's invent something more interesting to illustrate the B. Tell your partner a more interesting picture that could go with the /b/ sound. Turn and talk!"

"I've been thinking about your great ideas. I was talking to one partnership about the word *banana*, and at first we were thinking that would go nicely with the apple on our A. But then we realized—bananas are great when they are fresh. But if we were to keep that banana on our chart for weeks and weeks, the smell of rotten bananas is pretty awful!" I paused a moment for kids to laugh at my silly comment, then continued on. "So, let's think of other ideas. A couple of you suggested *butterfly*. José said *Batman*. Do they both make the right sound? Let's check: /b/ *butterfly*, /b/ *Batman*. Yes, they both make the /b/ sound. Let's vote on which picture you think would make our alphabet chart super cool." The class voted, and we added Batman to our class chart.

"I have a feeling that you are just bursting to put some of your own pictures on the alphabet charts."



RUG TIME

Set kids up to read their own alphabet charts and invent ways to make the pictures better. Coach them to make sure they match the first sound of the word with the letter.

"Kindergartners, it's time to make your own alphabet charts even better! For each letter, think, 'Is this picture okay, or could I choose a better one?' If you decide to invent a better picture, make sure the sound of the thing you pick really works for that letter. Draw it as carefully as you can, so that people know what you drew."

"Word scientists, take out your alphabet charts, and I'll come around with some Post-its for each of you. Then get to work!" As students worked, I coached them to listen closely to the sounds and make sure the picture word sound matched the letter sound.

SHARE • Sharing New and Improved Alphabet Charts

Encourage partners to read their alphabet charts aloud to each other, highlighting the new changes they have made to the pictures and words.

“Will you share with your partner what you have so far on your new and improved alphabet chart? Read your whole alphabet chart to each other. Remember, we read like this: A apple /ă/. But you may not have an apple in your box anymore—be sure to read it with the pictures you added. Ready, turn and share!”

After a few minutes of partner sharing, I dismissed the students, a row at a time, to place their improved, personalized alphabet charts inside their writing folders.

EXTENSION 1 • Dancing to the Alphabet Song

Invite kids to join you in singing the ABC song a new way—with a dance.

“Let’s end by singing the alphabet song,” I said, and I led the class in a raucous rendition of the ABC song. I pointed to the alphabet chart while we sang.

“Did you know that people dance to that song? Stand up and I’ll teach you how the alphabet dance goes. You take two steps to the left as you sing *a, b, c, d*, and then clap on the last letter. So it’s step left, *a, b*, step left, *c, d*, and clap on the *d*. Then two steps to the right, *e, f, g*, then clap. Then back to the left, *h, i, j, k*, clap on the *k*. Back to the left, *l, m, n, o, p*, clap. You got it? Ready to do the Alphabet Hustle? Let’s go!”

a, b, c, d (clap on the *d*)

e, f, g (clap)

h, i, j, k (clap on the *k*)

l, m, n, o, p (clap)

q, r, s (clap)

t, u, v (clap)

w, x (clap)

y and z (clap)

Now I know my (clap on *my*)

ABCs (clap)

Next time won’t you (clap on *you*)

Sing with me! (clap, clap, clap)

If a child places a picture on the incorrect spot on the alphabet chart, this is a valuable opportunity for teaching. Help the child isolate the beginning sound, and work together to find its correct spot on the chart.

You can encourage students to add more pictures to their alphabet charts as you reinforce more letters and sounds during writing workshop small groups and conferences.



EXTENSION 2 • Use Snap Words to Add Sentences into the Class Letter Books

 Continue the work from an earlier session by helping students to write words and sentences for the *H* letter book they made several days ago.

“Word scientists, a few days ago we made some more letter books. Now we have a whole bunch of them. They have pictures on each page, but . . . but . . . no words! I love books that have pictures *and* words, don’t you? Let’s add some words. We can tell readers what to look at, right?”

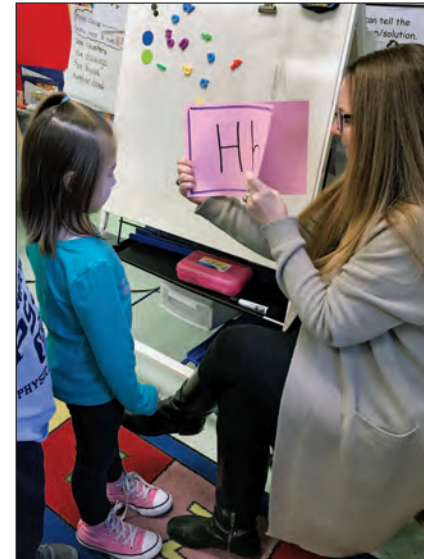
We quickly warmed up by reading the snap word chart.

I held up the *H* book we had made a few days ago. “Let’s work together to add words to this book.

“Okay. Let’s look at this *H* book.” I opened to a page with a picture of a house and showed that page to the kids. “Will you tell each other what we could perhaps write on this page?” I tapped the pocket chart of high-frequency words, including *I, like, my, me, see, look, at, the, and a.*




Looking at the collection of words in the pocket chart, I mulled to myself, “Hmm, . . . maybe it could go, ‘I see a house’.”

Soon, with the kids’ help, I’d written, “Look at the house.” I pointed out that the first word in the sentence starts with a capital letter. We continued sharing the pen, with individuals coming to the front to write the words they knew on the page, while other children wrote the words with magic (imaginary) pencils on the carpet in front of them.



EXTENSION 3 • One of These Words Is Not Like the Others

GETTING READY

- Before this extension, familiarize yourself with the song “One of These Things Is Not Like the Others” from *Sesame Street*. A link to this song is available in the online resources. 
- Gather some picture cards. You will need groups of four words, three that start with the same sound and a fourth that starts with a different sound.  

Set up a game in which students choose a word that is different from the others in the set. Begin by teaching a song that introduces the game.

“Let’s play a little game today that will help you listen to sounds in words. It has a little song that goes with it. I learned this song on *Sesame Street*. It goes like this.” I began singing.

One of these words is not like the others,
One of these words just doesn’t belong.

Can you tell which word is not like the others
By the time I finish my song?

"It's a song *and* a game! Let's play! Tell me which word is different from the other words. Ready?" I placed four pictures on the easel. "Here are the words: *cat, cop, can, doll*. When you think you've figured out which word doesn't belong, put a thumb up." I paused a moment to give kids time to think about all four words. Then, I prompted partners to turn and share their answer with each other.

"Let's come back together and share. Ready?" I recited the verse once more, as some kids began to chime in:

One of these words is not like the others,
One of these words just doesn't belong.
Can you tell which word is not like the others
By the time I finish my song?

Then, I signaled for the class to shout out their guess. "*Doll!*" many of the kids called out.

I nudged them a bit further. "But why? Why doesn't *doll* belong?"

"Because it starts with *D* and the other words start with *C*," one student explained.

"Precisely! Three of the words start with the letter *C*. I need your help to tell me another word that could join the group. Say into your hand another word that would belong. Pop your thumb up once you say it." I gave kids a moment to respond. I nodded, "Yes, words like *candy, carpet, and candle* could all go in this group. *Kangaroo* also starts with the /k/ sound, but that one starts with a *K*. Sometimes the /k/ sound is a *C* and sometimes it's a *K*."

"Let's play another round. Ready?" I sang the verse again, this time calling out four new words. "*Fish, food, dog, four*." Then, I prompted the class to turn and share their answers with a partner before sharing aloud.

"Now explain why *dog* doesn't belong." Kids answered, and I gave them a thumbs up. "Yes, the word *dog* starts with /d/ *D*, not /f/ *F*. Now, tell your partner another word that would fit with these *F* words."

We played the game with a few more sets of words.





SESSION 7

Making Words with More Vowel-Consonant Rimes

-it and -an

GETTING READY

- ✓ You'll need magnetic letters and a whiteboard to spell words ending in *it* and *an*.
- ✓ Provide each rug club, and then each partnership, with magnetic letter boards and the letters to spell words ending in *at*, *an*, *it*, and *in*.
- ✓ Prepare to add word cards for *an*, *man*, *ran*, *pan*, *fan*, *ban*, *it*, *sit*, *bit*, *fit*, *hit*, and *kit* to the snap word pocket chart. 🎉📖
- ✓ Make enough *at*, *an*, *it*, and *in* cards for each partnership. 📖
- ✓ Prepare a sign that says *word* to replace *name* on the name wall to change it to a word wall. 🎉

PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Phonological Awareness

- Recognize and produce rhyming words.
- Blend and segment the onset and rime of single-syllable spoken words.
- Add or substitute individual sounds in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.

Phonics

- Use common word phonograms to generate new words (VC).

Word Knowledge/Solving

- Use familiar word parts including phonograms (*-at*, *-in*, *-it*, *-an*) to spell unfamiliar words.

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IN THIS SESSION

TODAY YOU'LL teach students that they can use snap words they already know—*it* and *an*—to spell many more words while writing.

TODAY YOUR STUDENTS will use letter boards and word-part power to add new consonants to the front of four snap words they already know to make new words.

MINILESSON

CONNECTION

Remind students about the magic words—the rimes—they have learned to make words with, in preparation for teaching them that they can make words with snap words they already know.

“Super Readers and Super Writers, is your word-part power still fully activated? It is? Yes? That’s good because word-part power can give you the power to read and write *lots* of words. It’s kind of like magic.

“You did that already with *at*. Let’s try that magic right now. Take *at*.” I pretended to be holding the word card for *at* in my right hand. With my left hand, I pretended to add a letter to the front of *at*, saying, “Add /r/ to /at/ and you get *rat*!”

“Let’s take that /r/ away. We’ve got *at* again. Now. . . what should we add?” The kids called out letters and we added various initial sounds to the rime *-at*, doing all of this orally but with lots of gestures.

After a flash round of word making, I said, “These teeny-tiny magic words are making us into word-making machines. We can crank out so many words because we know just these two word parts.”

WORD-PART POWER

❁ **Name the teaching point.**

"Today I want to teach you that there aren't just one or two magic words. There are actually a bunch of snap words that give writers word-part power. You can take those snap words and use them to make more and more words."

TEACHING AND ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT/LINK

Demonstrate making words with the rime *-it* and practice manipulating phonemes orally, then with magnetic letters, and finally by having students do this work themselves in rug clubs.

"During our last session we found that *at* and *in* are power words. With your word-part power, you can make them into a lot of other words. But there are some other words on our snap word pocket chart that are power words too. Try this one: *it*. Are you ready to do some word magic with *it*? We'll do this by talking, not writing. To start, say the word: *it*."

"It!"

"Add /s/ to *it* and you get. . ."

"Sit!" the kids called.

"Take away the /s/ in *sit* and you are back to. . . *it*. Now add /b/ and you have. . ."

"Bit!" the kids answered. After doing these examples orally, I introduced magnetic letters to this practice, placing the letters for *bit* on my whiteboard.

I nodded, "Take away the /b/ from *bit* and add an *f*. What do you get?" I demonstrated this with my magnetic letters.

"Fit."

"Now let's make the word *hit*. We'll take away the *f*," I said as I took away the letter, "but what letter do we need to add to make *hit*? Say *hit*. Which sound do you hear?"

"/h/!"

"Yes, let's put the letter that makes the /h/ sound in front of *it*. Now let's read it to check to see if it's *hit*."



FIG. 7-1 The teacher demonstrates how to make words with familiar snap words.

Today's teaching method is making words. The teacher starts off with quick phonemic manipulation practice—changing the /s/ to /b/ to make bit. This is done without looking at print and gets kids warmed up for the manipulation that they'll be doing with their magnetic letters later. Sound work helps kids develop the problem-solving skills they will need to effectively manipulate letters for reading and writing unfamiliar words.

I repeated this process one more time to ask kids to figure out how to make the word *kit*. “Now it’s your turn to use magnetic letters. I’m going to give each rug club a magnetic board with some letters on it. In your club, give each member a number: 1, 2, 3, and 4.

“Rug Club Member #1, find the magnetic letters you need to make *it*.

“Rug Club Member #2, add an *s*. What do you have?

“Rug Club Member #3, take away the *s* and add a *b*, and you have. . . ?

“Now, Rug Club Member #4, take away the *b* and add an *f*. What do you have?” We continued in that way through the same list of *-it* words that we’d worked with orally (*it, sit, bit, fit, hit, kit*), with each club member in turn taking away and adding new letters to make new words.

Ask kids to make another word—*an*—on their magnetic boards and do similar work with it, adding new consonants to the front of the word to make new words.

“Now you are going to use another snap word you already know to help you make more words. Look at the snap word pocket chart and find the word *an*. Rug Club Member #1, make the word *an* on your board. The letters need to be in the right order: *a* first, *n* last.

“We can use the word *an* to help us make more words. I bet we can use the word *an* to make the word *man*. Read the word *an*. Now say the word *man*. What part is the same? What part do you hear at the end of both words?”

“An!”

“Yes, now listen for the beginning sound in *man*. Rug Club Member #2, say that first sound, and then find the letter that makes that sound to make the word *man*. Get help from your club members.” As children worked, I voiced over, “Remember, you are going to have three letters now!”

Meanwhile, I put together the letters to make the word *man* myself. “Check your word to see if it matches.”

I coached the children to make *ran, pan, fan, and ban*.

“Wow! So much word-part power!”

I placed word cards in a pocket chart with the words that were made. “Let’s read all of our words again, from the top. Eyes up here!” We read all the words again as I pointed under each one: *an, man, ran, pan, fan, ban*. “What part is the same in all of these words?” I repeated the same process with *-it*, placing the words that kids made into the snap word pocket chart: *sit, bit, fit, hit, and kit*.



It is very important that children are saying the words as they work. Children need to do both the phonemic work (saying the words, isolating the sounds and parts) and the phonics work (matching sound to letter) to be able to write. There should be a buzz in the room during word study (during writing workshop too) as children say words and sounds out loud to help them write.

Early in this work, you’ll say the sound and the letter. That is strong scaffolding. In later examples, lighten the prompting to give children more of the work to do.

Restate the teaching point and link the work with words to students' work as writers.

"Wow! You are doing what all writers do when they want to write tricky words. You are using the words you know to help you write so many other words! Your word-part power is getting stronger!"

RUG TIME

Invite kids to use magnetic letters and word cards with the four snap words *at*, *an*, *it*, and *in* to attempt making new words on their own.

"Super Readers, you have been sharing magnetic boards with all the kids in your club. Thanks for such good sharing. Right now, I'm going to hand every partnership your own magnetic board—and to do that, I'm going to ask you to all go to your reading workshop seats, sitting with your partner. I'll pass out magnetic boards and some letters for each of you.

"Here is the challenge: will you see if you can take the letters and make some words of your own? I'll put some word cards on your table that can help you. Start with *at*."

I distributed word cards for *at*, *an*, *it*, and *in* to each partnership and coached children to start by using the first of those small words to make other words on their magnetic boards. As children worked, I voiced over.

"I wonder if you will use your word-part power to make another word out of *at*. Hmm, . . . what letter could you put in front of *at* to make another word?"

One child called out a letter, and I suggested others try it. "Is that a word, or is it just a crazy sound?" I asked. "Try another."

After a few minutes, I voiced over saying, "You might decide to stop working with *at* words and to try *in* or *it* words. You decide. You can use your word-part power!"

While students worked, I voiced over, "You're making so many words. Can I give you one tip? After you make a word, read it, and ask yourself, 'Is this a real word or a fake word?' For example, if I made this word," I put *zin* on my magnetic board, "I can read it using what I know. This word says *zin*. But I want to ask myself, 'Is this a real word or a fake word?' *Zin*, real word or fake word? Have I heard that word before? No! It's probably a fake word. Give your words this same check."

SESSION 7: MAKING WORDS WITH MORE VOWEL-CONSONANT RIMES

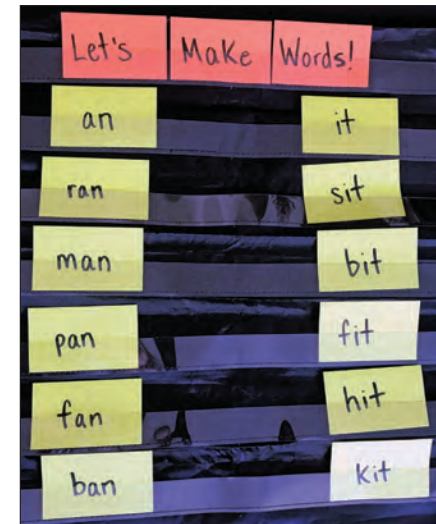
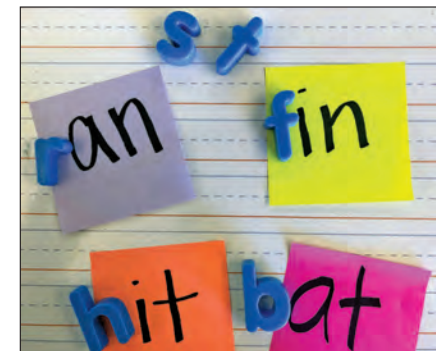


FIG. 7-2 The teacher displays the words made in a large pocket chart.

We encourage you to let kids have a go at this work. Remember that approximation is part of how we all learn.

Kids work will vary. Some will remake the words. Others will play around with the alphabet. Some will create their own words. Expect this variety and be ready to coach.



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SHARE • Adding Snap Words to a Brand-New Word Wall

Exclaim your delight at how full the snap word pocket chart has become and propose a new solution: merge the name wall and the snap word pocket chart into a word wall.

“Super Writers, Super Readers, these four special snap words are really helping you. Read them with me: *at, it, an,* and *in*. You know, pretty soon, you’ll have a *ton* of words you can read in a snap. The snap word pocket chart won’t be able to hold them all. Before we know it, the chart will be stuffed full!

“I think we should do something about this before it becomes a problem, don’t you? Good! We already have a space to hold all of our names. So far this year, our names have helped us learn so much about letters and sounds. We have also had our snap word collections.” I walked over to the name wall and I carried our snap word pocket chart over too.

“We have been using this wall to hold our names, and now that our collection of snap words is starting to get so big, I think we could just put them all together and change this name wall into a word wall.” I showed the class a sign that read *word*. “What do you all think?”

As kids smiled and said it was a great idea, I said, “I think this will be great too, because just like you use the name wall to help you so much during writing time, I know that you can learn to use the word wall to help you use snap words during writing and reading workshop.

“It’s just missing one thing: your snap words. All the words from our snap word pocket chart need to go in the right places on the word wall. Will you help me? I’ll hold up a word, and will you shout out which letter it goes under on the word wall?” I started with the four special snap words we’d used that day—*at, it, an,* and *in*—and then we added the others. Soon, all our snap words were on the word wall.

“This word wall will really help you read and write!”



At this point, you will no longer need a snap word pocket chart. There are so many high-frequency words that it’s time for children to begin using the word wall as a tool for using and learning new words. All the words will be put on the word wall from the current snap word collection, and as new words are introduced, they, too, will be added to the word wall.

EXTENSION 1 • Children Learn Word Parts with Songs and Repetition

GETTING READY

- Familiarize yourself with “The Little Word Song.” ✨

Sing a song to remind students about all the words they can make with familiar word parts.

“Super Readers, there is a song that has a lot of do with word-part power. You sing it to the tune of ‘The Wheels on the Bus Go ‘Round and Round.’ Listen to me sing a little, and then join in.”

The Little Word Song
(To the tune of The Wheels on the Bus)

The little word *in* makes lots of words,
Lots of words, lots of words,
The little word *in* makes lots of words:
pin and *win* and *bin*.

The little word *at* makes lots of words,
Lots of words, lots of words,
The little word *at* makes lots of words:
rat and *fat* and *bat*.


The little word *an* makes lots of words,
Lots of words, lots of words,
The little word *an* makes lots of words:
_____ and _____ and _____.

The little word *if* makes lots of words,
Lots of words, lots of words,
The little word *if* makes lots of words:
_____ and _____ and _____.

We sang with all four of our teeny-tiny words as rhimes, repeating each verse several times as more kids sang the last lines of a stanza, and as the class thought of yet new words for those last lines.

EXTENSION 2 • Focus on Rhyming Words by Singing “Down by the Bay”

GETTING READY

- Familiarize yourself with the song, “Down by the Bay.” 

Give children extra practice with rhymes by singing a familiar rhyming song.

“Have any of you heard the song ‘Down by the Bay’? If you haven’t, you’re in for a real treat! If you know it, sing along with me.”

I continued singing the song, substituting in new rhymes using words with word parts we would use throughout the unit. When the kids got the hang of it, I let my voice drop off at the end, so they could fill in the rhyme for me.

This text is one that could be used for a warm-up to shared reading on other days and eventually put in readers’ book bags for independent reading.

Down by the Bay

Down by the bay

Where the watermelons grow

Back to my home


I dare not go

For if I do

My mother will say

Did you ever see a cat wearing a hat?

Down by the bay!




Other rhymes to use:

- Did you ever see a bat get really really fat?
- Did you ever see a man wearing a pan?
- Did you ever see a pin with a really big chin?

EXTENSION 3 • Using the Vowel Chart to Help You Write

GETTING READY

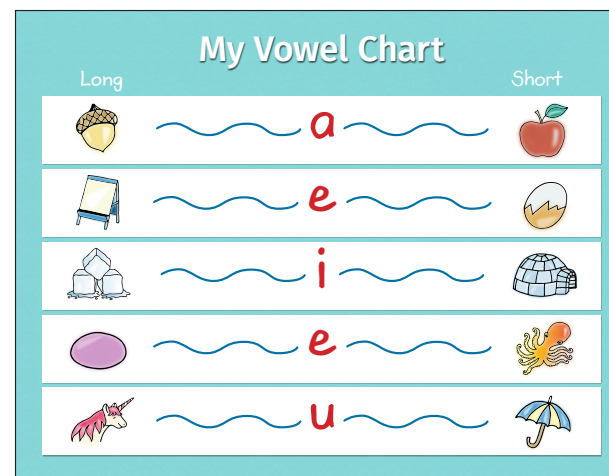
- Students will need their vowel charts. 

Remind students that the vowel chart can help them, not only during phonics time, but also during writing workshop.

“Writers, during writing workshop, you all got a chart to help you write words that are easier to read.” I held up the vowel chart. “This chart can really help you to remember that every word needs at least one vowel. Now, you have two ways to get more vowels in your words: word parts and the vowel chart. Sometimes you are writing a word and you can’t hear a word part that you know.

“Like the other day, Quinn was writing the word *wrestle* because she was talking about what she likes to do with her brother. She tried using her word-part power to hear a word part she knew, but she couldn’t. But, she knew that her word needed a vowel, so then she went to the vowel chart and stretched out the key picture on the chart. Like this, /aaaaaa/ple, wr/eeeeee/stle. She wasn’t sure, so then she did the letter *e*: /eeeeee/egg/, wr/eeeeee/stle. She decided that the *e* in *egg* sounded right and she wrote it in her word.

“Remember that you have two ways now to get vowels in your words: the vowel chart and the word parts that you have been learning.”



SESSION 3

Isolating the Short-Vowel Sound in the Middle of Words (-VC)

IN THIS SESSION

TODAY YOU'LL teach students that they can strengthen their vowel power by segmenting the phonemes in words and noticing the differences in the sounds of the vowels.

TODAY YOUR STUDENTS will sort short A words and short I words that have the same ending sound.

MINILESSON

CONNECTION

Begin with a phonological game to support students with segmenting the individual phonemes in CVC words with short A and short I sounds.

"Let's play the robot game!" I said. Then, I looked around at the class as if astonished. "Wait, what? You don't know the robot game?! Well, let me teach it to you. I'm going to say a word and then you have to translate it into robot language. Let me show you what I mean. Let's try it with the word *mad*. *Mad*. If I translate the word *mad* into robot language, it'll sound like this." I started making robotic movements with my arms and torso, shifting them as I segmented the sounds, "/M/-ă/-d/." The class giggled. "Can you be robots with me? Let's all make the sounds in the word *mad*, one sound at a time. /M/-ă/-d/. Yes, that's robot talk!

"Let's try another word: *hip*!" The students acted like robots as they made the sounds. I listened carefully for each phoneme. From some kids, I heard only a distinct beginning and ending sound. "Careful. Make sure to say all the sounds separately: the first sound, the middle sound, and the last sound," I voiced over. "/H/-î/-p/," I coached as kids echoed.

"Now let's try another word. Let's do *map*!" Again, I listened and coached as kids acted out robot arms and robot voices while segmenting the sounds.

SESSION 3: ISOLATING THE SHORT-VOWEL SOUND IN THE MIDDLE OF WORDS (-VC)



GETTING READY

- ✓ Prepare picture cards for today's medial sound sort: *rag, bag, wag, tag, flag, wig, dig, twig, big, pig*. Decide how you'll display the pictures as you sort them. You could tape them to a piece of chart paper, or you could use a pocket chart. You could make the sort more authentic by transferring the sorted pictures to real jars during the share. 🌟 📖
- ✓ Provide students with their own sets of sorting pictures and sorting mats. 🌟 📖
- ✓ Make sure students' vowel shields are handy. 🌟

PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Phonological Awareness

- Segment and blend individual phonemes in words.
- Isolate and pronounce initial sounds, medial vowel, and final sounds in spoken words.

Letter Knowledge

- Use proper letter formation.

Phonics

- Hear and identify short vowel sounds in words and the letters that represent them.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary sounds for each consonant.

High-Frequency Words

- Learn new words (*am, did*).

"Kindergartners, when we were saying /m/-/ă/-/d/, I called that a robot game and made it sound silly, but that work is actually super-important. To be able to write with vowels, you have to do a little robot talk in your own mind. If you want to write *map*, you can say /m/-/ă/-/p/ like a robot. And sometimes you have to work hard to hear the vowel in the middle."

✿ **Name the teaching point.**

"Today I want to teach you that your vowel power grows stronger when you listen very closely. You can study the sounds that vowels make and notice how one vowel sounds different from another. Some vowels make a short sound, like /ă/ in *apple* or /i/ in *igloo*."

TEACHING

Celebrate the work students are doing segmenting words. Explain that sorting can help them to distinguish between vowel sounds in the middle of words, and recruit students to help you sort.

"You were really saying your words slowly, segmenting them like robots. That is the first step to fully activating your vowel power. The next thing you need to be able to do is figure out which vowel goes in a given word. And here's the thing—kids everywhere get their vowels confused. They write *K-A-D*, *kad*, when they mean to write *K-I-D*, *kid*—honest!

"Sorting can help you hear the different sounds in words well enough that you can listen to a word like *hip* and know which vowel to write down. You have sorted before.

"The sorting you are going to be doing today will really help to activate your vowel power. More and more, you'll be writing with vowels.

"Quick! Get those vowel shields ready. Let's work to power them up, listening for the sounds short *A* and short *I* make in the middle of words. Help me sort these words. We can say the words like robots to hear the vowel sound in the middle. We'll put the words with /ă/ like *rag* into one jar, and words with /i/ like *wig* into the other jar. These vowels are in the middle of words, so it will take some powerful listening. You ready?" I slipped *rag* and *wig*, the two anchor cards into the pocket chart, starting two columns.

"I'll do the first one, if you help me." I held up a picture of a bag. "This is a bag. Let's use robot talk to hear the vowel and to think about which vowel matches the sound. /b/-/aaaaa/-/g/. Hmm, . . . does the middle of *bag* sound like the middle of *rag* or *wig*? Baaaaag, raaaaag. I think those two middle sounds match!" I placed the bag picture underneath the rag.

"Here comes another word. Get your vowel shields ready! Activate your vowel power!" I held up the picture of *big*. "Does *big* go with *rag* or *wig*?" As I said the anchor words slowly, I pointed to each anchor picture. Students pointed to the wig to show that the middle sound of *big* matched the middle sound in *wig*.

You'll notice a shift in prompting language in this session. When supporting children with onsets and rimes, as you did frequently in Unit 3, your prompts will often refer to using word parts. In these cases, you might say, "Say the word. Say the first sound. Say the end part." When working on segmenting words into phonemes, as in this session, your prompts should refer to the individual sounds in the word. In these cases, you might say, "Say each sound in the word." Remember that the ultimate goal is flexibility, so you will find yourself coaching in both ways in a class of diverse learners at different moments in every unit.

It is important to remember that students need to be very comfortable with hearing beginning and ending sounds before you ask them to listen for middle sounds. The earlier units supported students with hearing beginning and ending sounds; now that you are moving more explicitly to middle sounds in this unit and beyond, make plans to support students who still need additional help hearing beginning and ending sounds.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT/LINK

Recruit students to join you in sorting the rest of the picture cards by determining the medial sound in each word.

"You're listening so carefully to the vowel sounds in the middle of words, and the jars will soon be organized again! Let's keep going with this! I'll show you a card, and you figure out where that word goes."

I held up a picture of kids playing tag. "This is a game of tag. Say *tag*. Turn and talk. Double the strength of your vowel power and work together to figure out where it goes." The students turned to each other and used robot talk to isolate the middle sound.

"I heard so many people saying the word slowly: /t/-/aaaaa/-/g/. And Zoe and Chanel just said, 'Oh! It must go with the rag!' I agree. It goes in the short A jar!" I added the *tag* card to the /ă/ column on the pocket chart and quickly held up the next card, featuring a twig. We again repeated the entire process: "Get your vowel shields ready! Turn and talk with a partner. Which jar will the word *twig* go in? /T/-/w/-/iiiii/-/g/."

We continued through the rest of the pictures. Students turned and talked and found the medial sound for each picture, and we then added it to the pocket chart in its appropriate category.

When we finished, our pocket chart was organized.

"Wow, your vowel power is getting so much stronger! You've been working so hard to say every sound and figure out which vowel sound is inside of each word. Let's do our vowel power cheer to celebrate!" I gestured to the vowel shield and invited the kids to chant the vowels with me in their loudest, proudest voices. "A! E! I! O! U!" we chanted together. Then we chanted again, this time including the short-vowel sounds and keywords. "A, apple, /ă/. E, egg, /ĕ/. I, igloo, /ĭ/. O, octopus, /ŏ/. U, umbrella, /ŭ/."



You'll notice that all of the words in this sort have either an -ag or an -ig ending. Today's work focuses on the middle sound, and we've chosen these words to deliberately draw students' attention to the middle sound.

We encourage you to think about opportunities for movement across your day. The cheers and chants in this unit offer a perfect opportunity for this. Consider having your class help you create movements for the vowel power cheer. This might include a strong vowel power pose at the conclusion of the cheer.

RUG TIME CLUBS

Set clubs up to sort pictures again. Nudge children to distinguish between short A and short I.

"Now I'm going to give your club the same cards. Will you spread out and sort them again, this time on the rug in front of your club? And, if you don't know what a picture is, work together to try to figure it out." I distributed a baggie of pictures to each club. As students worked, I listened in and coached, sometimes saying my tips loudly enough that the whole class could hear.

After a few minutes, I saw that many students were finishing, and I moved them along. "Once you think you've got all your words in the right place, make sure to check them! Say each one slowly, and check to be sure that the middle sound matches!"

SHARE • Hearing Medial Sounds in Words

Guide students as they first read through the list of picture cards in one category, and then read through the list in the other category.

"Oh, you worked so hard today, *and* you helped me organize my mixed-up jars. Let's read all the picture cards we said belong in the short A jar and use vowel power to check them. Get your shields ready. Hold your shields high." We chanted /ă/ /ă/ /ă/ /ă/, then read through the list of picture cards in the short A column on the pocket chart. I ceremoniously placed those cards in the short A jar. Then we held our shields high again. We chanted /ĭ/ /ĭ/ /ĭ/ /ĭ/, then read through the list of short I words. I placed those cards in the I jar.

After reading through the picture cards in each category, I said, "Wow! You noticed the short-vowel sound in the middle of each word! That helps your vowel power to grow. I also noticed that *-ag* and *-ig* are both new word parts, so that means your word-part power is growing too!"

EXTENSION 1 • Introducing New Snap Words: Am and Did



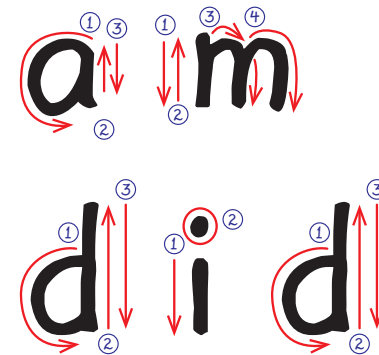
Introduce two new snap words, and guide students through the familiar process of making a word a snap word.

"Kindergartners, when you know the short A and I, it can help you read and write so many words. And you'll see these vowels everywhere, even in our snap words. Right now, will you look at the word wall and tell your partner if you see any snap words that have the short vowel A /ă/ or I /ĭ/? You'll need your vowel shields. Say the word aloud and really listen for the vowel. Do you hear /ă/ or /ĭ/?"

POSSIBLE COACHING MOVES

- ▶ "Check that."
- ▶ "Listen for the letter sound at the beginning, in the middle, at the end."
- ▶ "Say it slowly. What do you hear in the middle?"
- ▶ "Does it sound like ____ or ____?"

Notice that these prompts for word solving support sound analysis and are listed from the lowest level of teacher support to the highest. It's important to remember that prompting is a way to support and scaffold learning. To move learners toward independence, it's best to use lean, generalizable prompts.



"Wow—*an, at, is, it*—you're finding so many! And today, I want to teach you two more snap words that have the vowel sounds we have been studying." I held up cards with our new word wall words—*am* and *did*—written on them, then taped the cards to the easel.

"Let's turn the words on these cards into snap words!" I displayed the "How to Learn a Word" anchor chart and invited kids to read it with me.

I held up the first word, *am*. "Okay, let's make this a snap word. First, *read* it!" I pointed under the printed card as the students chorally read the word.

"Now, *study* it. I slid my finger under the word from left to right. "How many letters? Yes, two! What letters do you see? Name them to your partner. And you noticed that this word has one vowel! Yes! Every word has at least one vowel. This word has the short vowel *A*. Hold up your shields. Chant the sound with me. /ă/ /ă/ /ă/ /ă/. *Am*.

"Now, *spell* it. Spell it softly, like a whisper into your hand. *A-M*. Now, let's spell it and cheer it.

"Now, *write* it!" I pointed to that step on the chart as I said this. "Let's first write it in the air, writing it the right way. Everyone, stand up so you have lots of air around you." I wrote in the air and recited the letter formation pathways for lowercase *A* and *M*. "Great, now write it a few more times, so you really get it into your muscles." As the children wrote the word in the air, I wrote it on chart paper and voiced over the letter formation pathways.

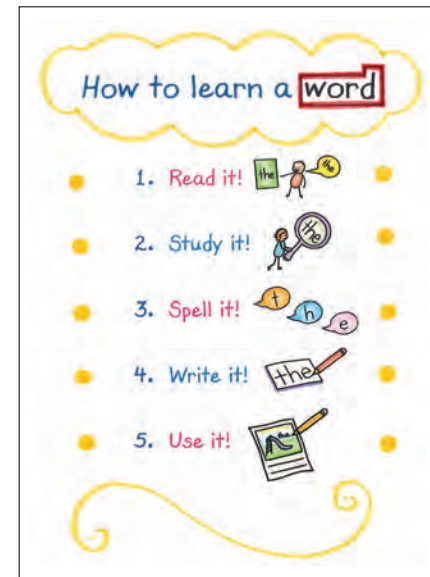
"Last step—*use* it! Think of a sentence with the word *am* in it. Tell your partner." I gave them a moment to brainstorm, listened in, and then said, "Wow, I hear sentences like these: I am in school! I am six! I am hungry! I am hungry, too!

"Now, I want to give you a chance to learn another word by heart. Here's another word that has one of the vowel sounds we've been studying. *Did*. Shields up. Chant short *I* with me. /i/ /i/ /i/ /i/. This is the word: *did*. Let's make *did* a snap word. Look at the chart. What do we do first?"

We repeated the same steps to learn *did*.

"Kindergartners, let's cheer as I add these two new words to our word wall."

Once we had added the two new words to the word wall, I passed out small copies of the word cards, and students quickly added them to their snap word pouches.



EXTENSION 2 • Singing to Support Vowel Power

Remind children of their vowel power and introduce a game to support phoneme segmentation.

“Writers, let’s celebrate our growing vowel power with a new twist on a familiar game!”

As I pointed under the words, I began singing the song “What Are All the Sounds You Hear?” to the tune of “London Bridge,” and the children chimed in readily.

I coached the children to listen to the letter sounds at the beginning, middle, and end of the word. We continued singing the song together with additional short *A* and short *I* words, such as *sag*, *rid*, *ham*, and *sick*, and I made a mental note to tuck the song into transitions across the day, perhaps even as a warm-up for writing workshop.

EXTENSION 3 • Building on Segmentation Work with Elkonin Boxes

Segment words again, this time writing the letters as students hear them.

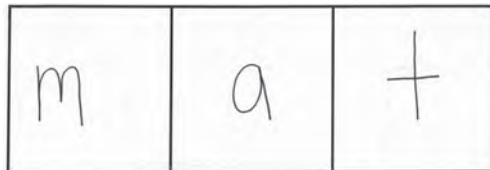
I placed the three-part Elkonin boxes from earlier in the bend under the document camera and said, “Do you remember how we used this tool to help strengthen our ear muscles *and* our vowel power?”

The class nodded their heads in unison as I said, “Today we are going to use this tool again. Are you ready? This time we are going to place a letter in a box for each sound you say and hear.”

I modeled for the class by saying the word *mmmmmaaaaaattttt* and writing the letter *M* in the first box as I was saying /m/, the letter *A* when I got to the /ă/, and the letter *T* in the final box as I said /t/.

As a reminder, I gestured to the class alphabet chart and said, “Now will you help me? As we say the sounds in a word, you can write the letters for the word in the rug with your fingers, and I will write them up here. Show me your magic writing fingers!”

We repeated this routine with the words *mad*, *had*, *pin*, *zip*, *lap*, and *sit*. To support students who would benefit from additional practice hearing sounds in words and building their letter identification skills, I made a mental note to repeat this extension as a small group in reading or writing workshop.



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Activities that involve blending parts of words or sounds together are especially helpful in supporting students’ reading development. Activities that place an emphasis on segmenting are particularly helpful in supporting children as they encode words in their writing.

Previously in this bend, this learning focused primarily on hearing the sounds in words, but this time it includes noting sound-letter correspondences. According to research, phonemic awareness instruction is especially effective when it is coupled with letter work (Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals, Second Edition, Marie Clay, 2016). This helps children use what their eyes can see to help make letter-sound connections, a fundamental step in learning to read.

VOWEL POWER

SESSION 11

Building a Storehouse of Rhymes (-ick, -ell, -uck, -ow, -og)



IN THIS SESSION

TODAY YOU’LL teach students that writers can write rhyming poems by changing the onset of a word, creating a number of rhyming words.

TODAY YOUR STUDENTS will generate a list of words using the rimes *-ick*, *-ell*, *-uck*, *-ow*, and *-og*, noting that the ends of rhyming words sound and sometimes look the same. They will use those words to write short rhyming poems.

MINILESSON

CONNECTION

Reveal a poem written by Mabel, featuring new rimes. Highlight the rhyming words as you read, pointing out that words that rhyme sometimes have the same endings.

“Writers, come quickly. Mabel is excited to share a poem she wrote!” I turned to the class mascot, who was propped up near me with a poem in her trunk.

“As I read Mabel’s poem, can you snap your fingers for the words that rhyme, just like yesterday? I’ll highlight the rhyming words in the poem.” I placed the poem under the document camera, highlighting the rimes each time kids snapped their fingers.

“Writers, I’m noticing something. These rhyming words you heard—*pick*, *lick*, *sick*—don’t just sound the same. They also look the same. Turn and tell your partner what part looks the same in the words *pick* and *lick* and *sick*.” As children talked, I called out, “What other words could they have used?”

“Yes, all of those rhyming words end with the same word part: *-ick*. The first letter is changing, but the rest of the word is the same. And look, Mabel found two other words that rhyme—*tell* and *well*—because they both end with the same word part, *-ell*.”

SESSION 11: BUILDING A STOREHOUSE OF RHYMES (-ICK, -ELL, -UCK, -OW, -OG)

GETTING READY

- ✓ Print the poem “At the Ice Cream Shop” and roll it up, nestled in Mabel’s trunk. 🎒
- ✓ Be ready to highlight the rimes in “At the Ice Cream Shop” when you display the poem to the class.
- ✓ Prepare to record words that rhyme with *cow* on chart paper.
- ✓ Distribute whiteboards and dry erase markers to each partnership.

PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Phonological Awareness

- Hear and generate rhyming words.
- Segment onsets and rimes.

Phonics

- Recognize and use common phonograms (-ick, -ell, -uck, -ow, -og).

Word Knowledge/Solving

- Use phonograms to help spell a word.
- Change the beginning blends in words to make new words.

High-Frequency Words

- Study high-frequency words by finding rhymes for them.

I turned back to the stuffed elephant. “Mabel, you did some very important wordplay to write this poem. You didn’t just play around with hearing rhymes, you also worked hard to spell those words well.”

❁ **Name the teaching point.**

“Today I want to remind you that writers use lots of rhyming words to write fun poems. Remember, one way to make rhyming words is to change the first part of a word but keep the last part. Oftentimes, words rhyme if the last part in both words is the same.”

TEACHING

Produce words that rhyme with *cow*, acknowledging that some words are spelled like *cow*, but do not sound the same at the end.

“Let’s do what Mabel did when she wrote her poem about the ice cream shop with the words *pick*, *lick*, and *sick*, words that all have the same ending. I’ve been thinking that you could write poems about animals—like a chick, a duck, a cow, or a dog—and do the same work Mabel did to invent some brand-new rhymes.

“Let’s take one of those animals—say, a cow—and find some new rhyming words you can use later to write another poem.” I wrote *cow* on chart paper, then continued. “Remember, if you can’t think of a new rhyming word, you can try taking just the word part *-ow* and walk along the alphabet, trying out different letters, to see if you can make a new word, like this: *cow—dow? fow? gow? how?* Yes, *how* is a word!

“Now that we have a whole list of words that rhyme with *cow*, we can say a quick little poem—I could even write it down later! Listen and watch how I try to use as many of our rhyming words as I can. Each time I use one, put your thumb up in the air.”

The *cow*

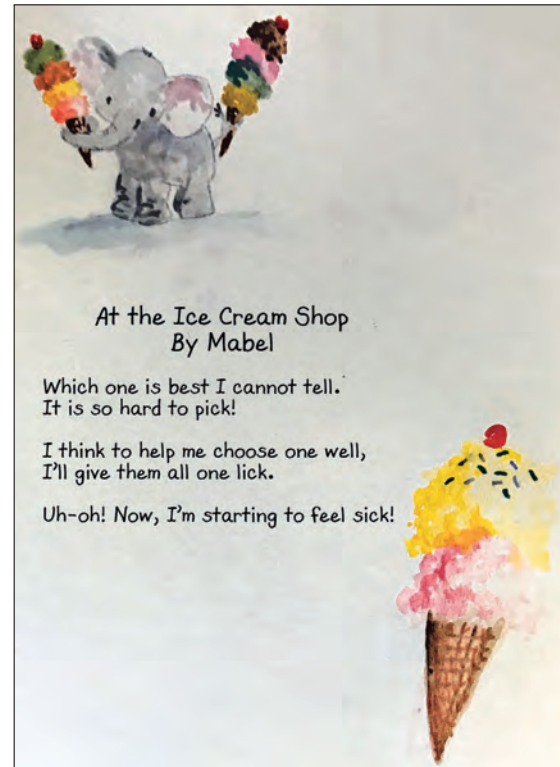
Doesn’t know *how*

To *bow*.

Oh, *wow!*

“I used a lot, right? Now, I could write that poem down as well. That might be fun to read later!”

Of course, you won’t bother distinguishing between a rhyme and a rime with your children. Instead, we’ll have a little phonics fun of our own. The message here is that new words can be spelled using familiar parts, in this case, phonograms.



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT/LINK

Set up partners to think of words that rhyme with *duck*. Remind students that they can walk through the alphabet if they have difficulty thinking of rhyming words.

"Now it's your turn. Will you and your partner take the duck, and see if you can think of words that rhyme with *duck*, just like we did for *cow*? You can work with your partner to make a list of rhyming words and then come up with a quick little poem about a duck!

"Remember, you can walk *duck* through the alphabet to come up with rhyming words and write them down on your whiteboard. Then, in just a few minutes, we'll be able to say a poem about a duck, using the words that you came up with." I moved around the rug, coaching as needed, and I listed the *-uck* words that students were coming up with on my clipboard. Soon I called the group back together.

"Can I share the list of words you came up with? If you see a word that's on your whiteboard, give it a check mark and put your thumb up! I saw *muck, luck, tuck, and yuck*. You came up with so many!"

Encourage partners to create a short rhyming poem with the words that rhyme with *duck*, trying to use as many rhyming words as possible.

"Now with your partner, come up with a quick little poem, trying to use as many of these as possible. You don't have to write it, just say it!

"Listen to one that I heard,

The duck
Needs some luck
Because she's in the muck.
Oh yuck!

"So good! You heard all those rhyming words!"

RUG TIME

Invite partnerships to use the collection of rhyming words to write their own rhymes on a whiteboard.

"We've generated so many words to help us! You've practiced making rhyming words and saying little poems and rhymes with them. Now it's time to roll up your sleeves and write some new little rhymes about these animal friends. Pick one of these animals, or choose another if you want, and make a quick list of words that rhyme. Then say your

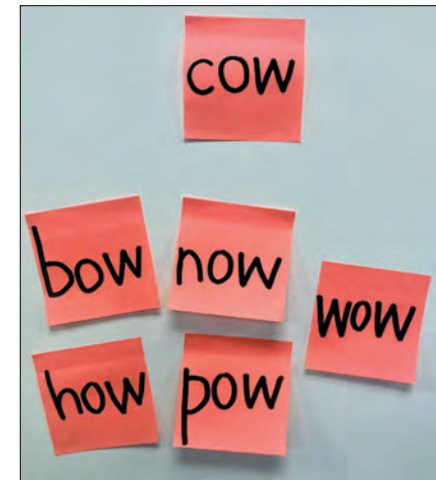


FIG. 11-1 Words that rhyme with *cow* collected on the easel

*Brace yourself—you can certainly anticipate at least one child using the phonogram *-uck* to write a less savory word on their boards. Plan to say something like, "That does rhyme but isn't the best for our class chart," and then simply move on very quickly. Don't take offense that the kids enjoy this—it's a pretty universal thing to do.*

rhyme out loud and finally write it down.” After kids had generated a few words that rhymed, I revealed a few ways they could start their rhymes.

- I know a duck . . .
- I know a chick . . .
- My pal, the cow . . .
- I love my dog . . .

POSSIBLE COACHING MOVES

- ▶ “Try starting with one of those first lines. Now what three words could you say next that end with one of the rhyming words? Like ‘She has a . . .’ or ‘She loves . . .’”
- ▶ “Try it one way, then another.”
- ▶ “Read what you’ve written so far. Then say some following sentences that end with another rhyme.”
- ▶ “Read your poem and listen. Do any of the words sound the same at the end?”
- ▶ “Try to get the beats right so each line is the same.”

“And then think, ‘What does my duck or chick or cow do, or say, or have, or say, that uses one of the animals’ rhyming words?’ Talk with each other and try to think up a poem. If you think of one, tell it to your friends and write it on your whiteboard, super-fast before you forget it. Then keep the poem going!”

We soon had a poem factory going in the classroom, with lots of less-than-perfect poems.

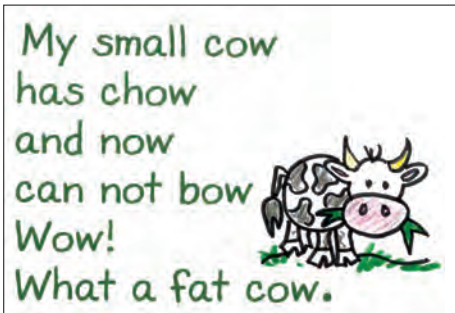


FIG. 11–2 A student walks his fingers along the alphabet chart to find words that rhyme with *duck*.



FIG. 11–3 A student helps her rug club by recording the club’s rhyme.

SHARE • Reading and Acting Out Our Rhymes **CLUBS**

Encourage a member of each club to read their club's rhymes out loud, while the rest of the students listen and act out what they hear.

"Young rhymers, chanters, and rappers, let's read some of your rhymes out loud and then act them out. Karim, you're up first. Come on up and read your club's rhyme about the little cow. All of us will listen, and we will imagine what's happening and then use our bodies to act it out."

Karim started to read his poem:

My small cow
has chow
and now
can not bow
Wow
What a fat cow.

The kids and I started to put actions to his words. We made faces and gestures to show how we wanted something to eat, and then we pretended to eat a *lot* and made our faces and body look large!

"Let's read and act one more. Harriet, come on up."

The little duck
stepped into muck.
Yuck!
What bad luck!

Soon we were all pretending to be little ducks stuck in the mud.

EXTENSION 1 • Play the Rhyming "Name Game"

When the class was lined up to walk down the hall, I reminded them of a familiar rhyming game—"The Name Game"! "Friends, you remember 'The Name Game' song, right? The end of your name stays the same, and you change the beginning—but this time, we'll use some blends we know to change the beginning. Let's practice with Mabel. I'll say a blend and we can sing 'The Name Game' song with her *new* name. Ready? /Sp/."

"Spabel!"

SESSION 11: BUILDING A STOREHOUSE OF RHYMES (-ICK, -ELL, -UCK, -OW, -OG)



It's possible that some of your students might point out that some words end the same as cow, but don't rhyme with cow, such as tow and low. Acknowledge their noticing!



Make sure to hold onto a copy of one of these poems to use in tomorrow's minilesson. You may also want to collect all of your students' whiteboards to type up their poems for tomorrow's rug time, when students will be revising these rhyming poems. If you do not want to save your students' rhymes, we have provided some of these rhymes in the online resources to use as an alternative.

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“Spabel, Spabel bo-Babel, Banana Fanna Fo Fabel, Me Mi Mo Mabel. Spabel!

“Let’s try it with /br/ . . .”

“Brabel!”

“Brabel, Brabel bo-Babel, Banana Fanna Fo Fabel, Me Mi Mo Mabel. Brabel!

“Mabel, Spabel, Brabel. They all rhyme! Ready to try with your own name?”

When the class agreed they were, I progressed through some blends: *st-*, *gr-*, *fl-*, *sk-*, *sw-*, *bl-*. Each time, the class called back with the rhyme of their own name.

EXTENSION 2 • Snap Word Rhyming Race

“Friends, who’s in the mood for a race? I’ll bet you are—but instead of running a race, we’re going to have a rhyming word race. Are you game? Get with your club and get out your snap word pouches. I’ll distribute whiteboards and markers.”

I quickly got kids set up, then continued. “The race will be to see which club can make the most words that rhyme with our snap words. When I say go, you’ll look at your snap words, think of as many rhyming words as you can, and write them down on your whiteboards. Keep going until I say ‘stop,’ then we’ll see which club made the most words. But here’s the deal—they have to be *real* words, not made-up words.

“Are you ready? Get set? Go!”



FIG. 11-4 Kindergartners race to list words that rhyme with *like* on their whiteboards.



The number of rhyming words that kids can generate are almost endless, so the winner will be the rug club that gets all four kids working like the wind to jot rhyming words for several different snap words. Think what you might do with the list the class generates; it can be an important resource for later reading and writing.

SMALL GROUP 47

Building Sentences with Snap Words



RALLY THEM AND ACTIVATE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS: Channel kids to read their snap word collections, noticing which words they read fluently and which they are still unsure of.

“You all are starting to really know your snap words! That means you can read and write them in a snap.”

Distribute a set of high-frequency cards to each partnership. “I have a set of snap words for you two, and another set for you two. Would you read them together now?”

LAUNCH THEM AND WORK SIDE BY SIDE: Channel students to build sentences using the snap word cards and some small toys.

“Now that you know so many snap words, we can use them to make sentences! Spread all your words out in front of you. We’re going to make some sentences that go together, that are all about one thing, so they can go into a book. How about a book about toys?”

Set a small toy (or picture card) within each partnership’s array of high-frequency words. Use one partnership’s set of words and toy to model a quick example.

“Watch me so you can see how this might go. I could start with the word *I*. I . . . what? How about *see*? Now, this toy train could come next. *I see train*. No wait, we need one more word. I’ll add the word *a* before the train, and I have a sentence: *I see a train*.”



FIG. 47-1 Tommy points and reads the sentence he built.

SMALL GROUP 47: BUILDING SENTENCES WITH SNAP WORDS

BEST TAUGHT TO

- Children who are still working on one-to-one correspondence
- Children who are not yet recognizing or using previously taught high-frequency words
- Children who could benefit from more practice with pattern recognition and syntax clues

BEST TAUGHT DURING

- Reading workshop
- Writing workshop

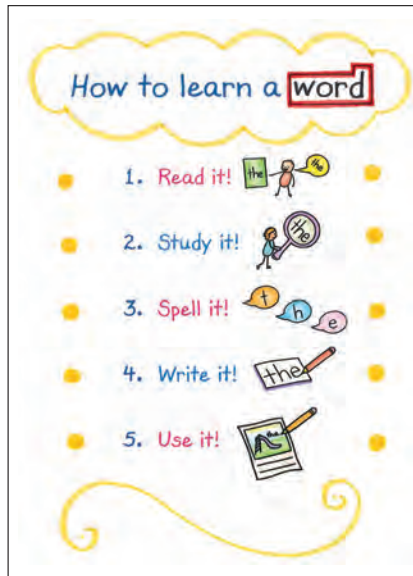
GETTING READY

- ✓ Prepare a set of familiar high-frequency word cards, one for each partnership. If the students are in early stages of reading development, we suggest words such as *I, me, like, the, a, look, at, see, this, is, here.* ✨
- ✓ Have ready the “How to Learn Word” chart. ✨
- ✓ Gather some small toys or picture cards. ✨ 📖
- ✓ Bring some blank word cards and pens.

“Now it’s your turn! Think about how you could use your snap words and the toy I’ve given you to make a sentence.”

Some possible sentence starters:

- I like . . .
- Look at the . . .
- I like the . . .
- I see the/an/a . . .
- This is the/an/a . . .
- Here is the/an/a . . .
- It is the/an/a . . .
- Is it the/an/a . . .
- It is in the . . .
- Is it in the . . .
- I see a ___ in the . . .



Take this time to note which words students are reading fluently and which words they are still unsure of. If the whole group needs more practice with a specific word or two, quickly take them through the steps on the “How to Learn a Word” chart. If only one child needs help with a word, keep that child working with this group and then plan to meet with that child individually to learn the word at a later time.

“Let’s read our sentences together. Remember to point under the words as you read.”

POSSIBLE COACHING MOVES

- ▶ “I see you’re not sure where to start. What if you started with the word *look* or *here*?”
- ▶ “Read your sentence so far. What could come next?”
- ▶ “Point under each card as you read your sentence.”
- ▶ “There are some words that seem to go together. If you use the word *it*, you might need the word *is* next for your sentence to make sense.”
- ▶ “Read your sentence together. Does it make sense? What might you need to add (or take away)?”

Be sure to find some way to record the sentences that students build, so that you can turn them into a book. You might, for example, snap a picture of each sentence and then print these images, turning them into a book for students’ book baggies.

CHALLENGE THEM: Invite students to make more sentences, this time with more independence. Encourage them to use invented spelling to add words to their sentences.

"Mix up your words again and let's try some more sentences. This time, you don't need to use the toy. You can make up sentences about anything. Choose a word to start with, then choose the words to follow. If you want to use a word in your sentence that isn't in your word cards, you can write the word you need. I have some blank cards for you to use.

"I'll leave you here to keep making sentences. Think about what you want to say and build your sentences. Don't forget to reread each one to your partner."

OTHER SUPPORTS

Replicate: You can replicate this group as you teach new high-frequency words. Add new words to children's word pouches and invite them to try this exercise so that they get practice reading and using the new words in the context of a sentence.

- ▼ **Small Group 46:** "Learning Words in a Snap"
- ▼ **Gr K, Unit 1, Sess. 16, Ext. 1:** Building Sentences
- ▼ **Gr K, Unit 1, Sess. 16, Ext. 2:** Making a New Book for the Classroom Library
- ▲ **Gr K, Unit 2, Sess. 6, Ext. 2:** Making a Class *R* Book

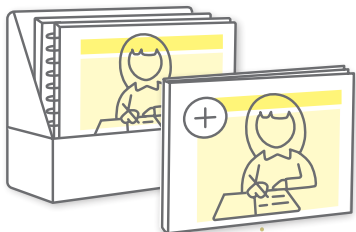
If time allows, you may choose to challenge students with this additional task. You may also decide to do this work as a quick follow-up on another day.

State-of-the-Art Units, Tools, and Methods for Teaching Reading and Writing Workshop

Writing Units

Built on best practices and a proven framework developed over decades of work, the *Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing*:

- support explicit instruction in opinion/argument, information, and narrative writing and provide rich opportunities for practice
- help teachers use learning progressions to observe and assess students' writing, to develop students' use of self-monitoring strategies, and to set students on trajectories of growth
- give teachers crystal-clear advice and on-the-job support for teaching efficient and effective writing workshops

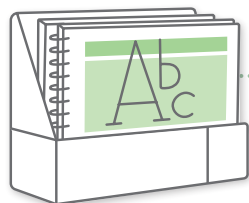


Up the Ladder Units

The *Up the Ladder* units give less experienced writers opportunities to engage in repeated successful practice and to move rapidly along a gradually increasing progression of challenges. Although designed to ramp kids up to the work they will do in the grades 3–6 writing *Units of Study*, these units can be helpful in any setting where students need a boost in foundational elements of writing workshop.

Units of Study in Phonics

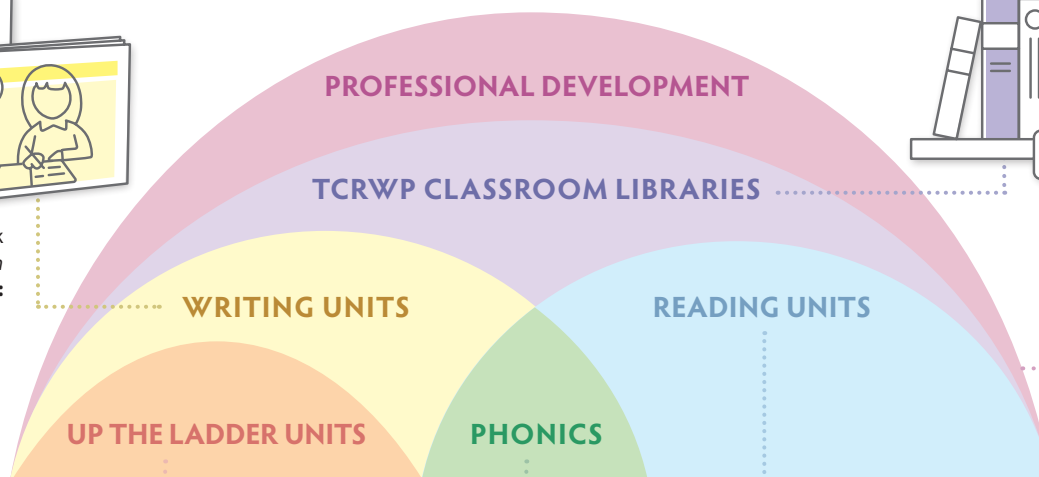
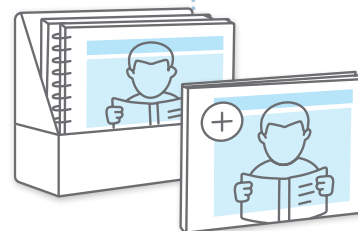
These lean, engaging phonics units are deeply grounded in best-practice research—and are also kid-friendly and fun. Lessons synchronize instruction across the reading and writing units of study, allowing opportunities to revisit high-leverage phonics skills across the day in ways that help students become stronger readers and writers.



Reading Units

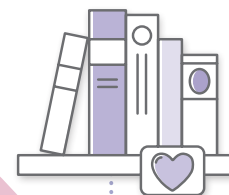
The *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* offer a framework for teaching that:

- provides a comprehensive, cross-grade curriculum in which skills are introduced, developed, and deepened
- supports explicit instruction in reading skills and strategies and offers extended time for reading
- provides strategic performance assessments to help teachers monitor progress, provide feedback, and help students set clear goals for their reading work
- gives teachers on-the-job guidance in powerful reading workshop teaching



TCRWP Classroom Libraries

Each of the TCRWP Classroom Libraries is a miniature version of a great bookstore—if you can imagine a bookstore run by the country's greatest readers and the country's greatest teachers—and where every collection has been carefully and thoughtfully designed to lure kids into reading, and to move them up levels of complexity.



Professional Development & Professional Books

The Project provides a wide range of professional development services to keep teachers, literacy coaches, and building leaders current on best practices to support literacy instruction. Options include in-school staff development devoted to implementation of reading and writing workshops and content-area literacy instruction, day-long workshops, week-long institutes, and year-long study groups.

In addition, Lucy and her TCRWP colleagues have written many professional books to support study groups and individual learning. For a complete list of titles, visit UnitsofStudy.com.

UNITS OF STUDY IN READING AND WRITING

“ Good teaching pays off. When you provide students with constant opportunities to read and to write, and when you actively and assertively teach into their best efforts, their literacy development will astonish you, their parents, the school administrators—and best of all, the students themselves.

But it is not only students’ work that is transformed when teachers are supported in the teaching of reading and writing; teachers’ work is also transformed.

Over the years, teachers have repeatedly told me that this kind of teaching has given them new energy, clarity, and compassion, reminding them why they went into teaching in the first place. I understand what these teachers mean, for it has done all this—and more—for me as well.”

—LUCY CALKINS

Fast becoming essential parts of classroom life in tens of thousands of schools around the world, the **Units of Study for Teaching Reading, K–5** series and the **Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing, K–8** series serve as both curricular support and professional development. These two groundbreaking series will:

- provide all the teaching points, minilessons, conferences, and small-group work needed for a comprehensive workshop curriculum
- help teachers assess students’ reading and writing work, develop their use of self-monitoring strategies, and set them on trajectories of growth
- give teachers opportunities to teach and to learn teaching through strong scaffolding and on-the-job guidance from Lucy Calkins and her colleagues from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.



**Units of Study
for Teaching Reading, K–5**



**Units of Study
in Opinion/Argument, Information,
and Narrative Writing, K–8**



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Lucy Calkins is the Founding Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. In that role, Lucy's greatest accomplishment has been to develop a learning community of teacher educators whose brilliance and dedication shines through in the Units of Study books, which have become an essential part of classroom life in tens of thousands of schools around the world. Lucy is the Robinson Professor of Children's Literature at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she co-directs the Literacy Specialist Program. She is the author, coauthor, or series editor of the *Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grades K–8*; *Up the Ladder: Accessing Grades 3–6 Writing Units of Study*; and *Units of Study for Teaching Reading, Grades K–8* series; as well the lead curator of the *TCRWP Classroom Libraries, Grades K–8* (all published by Heinemann); and has authored scores of other professional books and articles.



Allyse Bader is a staff developer at TCRWP, leading full-day conferences, teaching advanced sections at summer institutes, and facilitating lead-teacher study groups. Allyse began her career in early childhood education as a first grade teacher in the South Bronx while attending and later graduating from the Literacy Specialist Program at Teachers College. She continued teaching for several more years at PS 59 in Manhattan and fell in love with Kindergarten while teaching in Larchmont, NY.



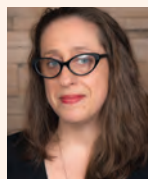
Angela Báez is a staff developer at TCRWP. A primary classroom teacher for more than a decade, she now works alongside teachers and administrators in classrooms across the nation. She leads workshops and summer institutes at TCRWP on early literacy instruction. Angela is coauthor of the Kindergarten *Bigger Books*, *Bigger Reading Muscles* in the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* series. Angela infuses her teaching with her deep love of books, and most especially, of children themselves.



Rebecca Cronin is a Lead Staff Developer at TCRWP, teaching specialty courses, leading full-day conferences, teaching at the Conferring and Small Group Institute and the Units of Study in Phonics Institute, and joining with her colleagues to staff both the reading and the writing summer institutes. She is coauthor of two books in the *Units of Study in Phonics* series, as well as the Kindergarten book, *Bigger Books*, *Bigger Reading Muscles* in the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* series.



Valerie Geschwind taught primary and upper grades prior to joining TCRWP as a staff developer. She is coauthor of a grade 2 book in the Writing Units of Study series. Valerie has presented on the role of talk in the classroom and wrote an article on this topic for Heinemann's Digital Campus. She was also a member of the Heinemann Fellows inaugural class, where she studied the role action-research plays in student growth and teacher happiness.



Amanda Hartman, Deputy Director for Primary Literacy at TCRWP, heads up the Project's K–2 reading, writing, and coaching institutes, and presents at conferences around the world. Amanda is the author or coauthor of four books in the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* series, as well as two books in the *Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing* series. She has also authored the video, *Up Close: Teaching English Language Learners in Writing Workshops*, and is the coauthor of *One-to-One: The Art of Conferring with Young Writers*.



Natalie Louis is a Senior Lead Staff Developer at TCRWP. She is a lead editor and coauthor of five books in this phonics series, and is author or coauthor of two Kindergarten books in the Units of Study for Writing and Reading series. Natalie leads advanced sections at TCRWP's summer institutes and does data-obsessed staff development locally, nationally, and internationally. She earned her MA in Teaching and Curriculum from Teachers College and her Reading Specialist license from Fordham University through the Ennis William Cosby Scholarship Program.



Casey Maxwell is a primary grades staff developer at TCRWP. In this role, Casey supports schools throughout New York City and the U.S. in developing reading and writing workshops that are rigorous, responsive, student-centered, and joyful. She also leads summer institutes and workshops on children's literature and early literacy instruction



Rachel Rothman-Perkins teaches and coaches in elementary classrooms nationally and internationally as part of her work with TCRWP, where she is known for her leadership in phonics, spelling, and assessment-based instruction in the primary grades. Rachel is coauthor of the Grade 1 *Small Moments: Writing with Focus, Detail, and Dialogue* in the Writing Units of Study series. She was a classroom teacher at Glider Elementary School in San Jose, CA, and earned her MA in Literacy Education at San Jose State University.



Katie M. Wears brings the experience of years teaching in primary classrooms and as a staff developer at TCRWP to her current role as a literacy coach in Westchester, NY. She is coauthor of a Kindergarten unit in the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* series and of the *Guide to the TCRWP Classroom Libraries, Grades K–2*, and was a curator of the K–2 Libraries. At TCRWP, Katie taught advanced sections at summer institutes, facilitated study groups, and worked closely with students from the Literacy Specialist Program.