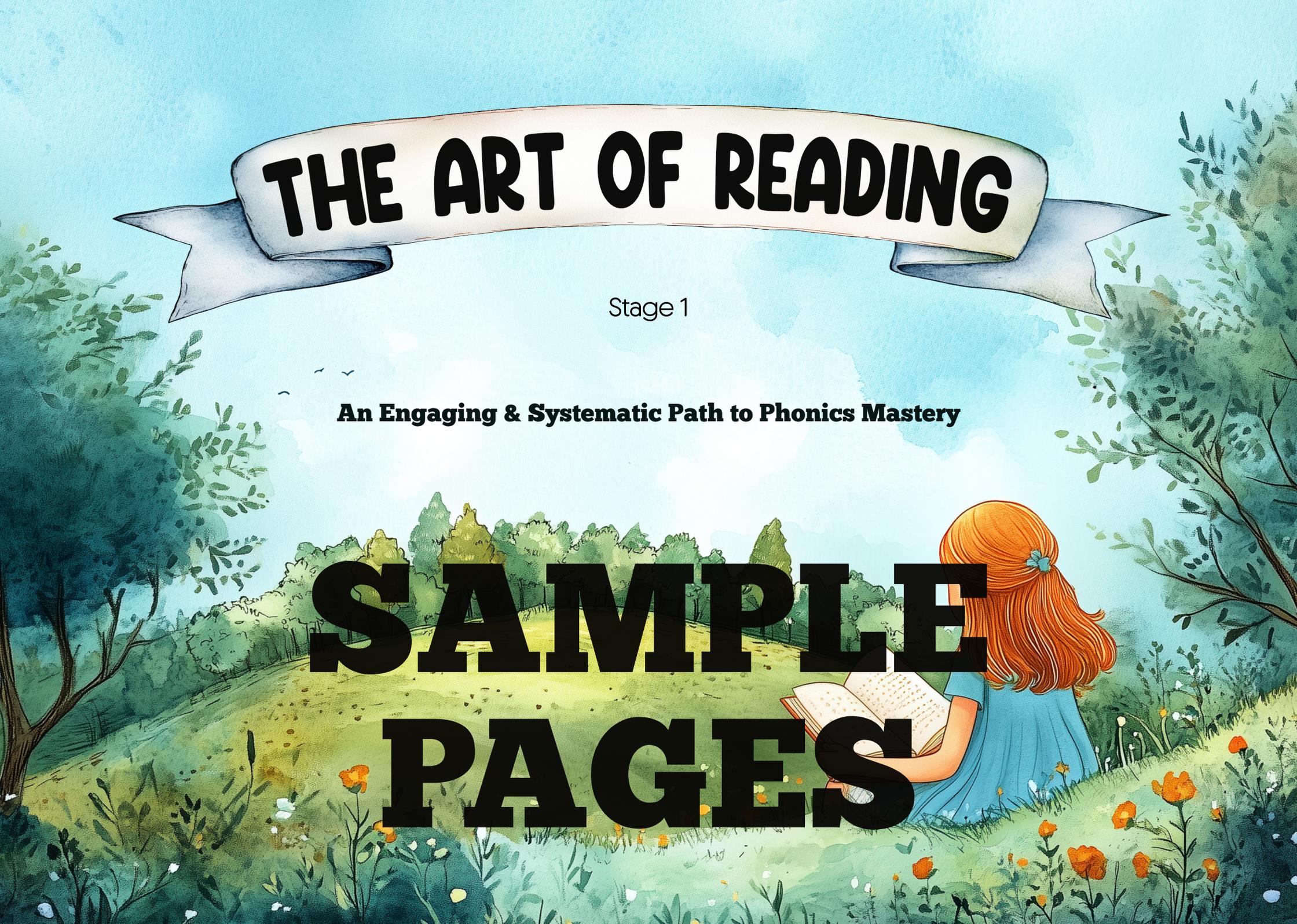


THE ART OF READING



Stage 1

An Engaging & Systematic Path to Phonics Mastery

SAMPLE PAGES

THE ART OF READING

Stage 1

An Engaging & Systematic Path to Phonics Mastery

FIRST EDITION

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ABOUT THE ART OF READING

The Art of Reading is a comprehensive and systematic phonics program designed to build a solid foundation for reading. It uses a carefully sequenced, stepping-stone approach, introducing each concept one at a time to ensure your child masters the skills required for proficient reading.

The program follows a simple, open-and-go structure. Lessons are intentionally short and focused, with engaging, hands-on activities and readers that reinforce and review previously taught material.

The Art of Reading is a mastery-based phonics program with spiral review to support retention and long-term mastery.

Each lesson is paired with a tightly controlled reader (included in this book), ensuring your child gets plenty of practice in context while developing decoding skills and reading fluency at the same time.

This book is consumable. It is designed to be cut, written in, and used directly by your child. The Art of Reading Stages 1-3 form a complete phonics program. No additional materials are required to teach your child to read.

IS YOUR CHILD READY TO READ?

BEFORE STARTING, YOUR CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Recognize all lowercase and capital letters.
- Understand that letters can make more than one sound (e.g., long and short vowel sounds).
- Name vowels (a, e, i, o, u) and their short sounds.

If your child has not yet learned the alphabet, take the time to teach the letters and their sounds. Use the games on page ix. This will help build the groundwork for learning to blend sounds.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

METHODOLOGY

English is structured on an open and closed syllable system, with the majority of syllables being closed. We introduce reading by first teaching the child to close the syllable, where a vowel is followed by a consonant (**-VC**). This approach helps early readers easily and comfortably blend sounds, such as **-am (-VC)**. We teach two-letter blends and then progress to blending consonant-vowel-consonant (**CVC**) words.

Note: Some consonants cannot be blended in -VC patterns as they form digraphs, or there are no words containing those letter combinations (e.g., uw). In those lessons, your child will be taught to read that consonant with a previously taught VC blend.

While we don't strictly follow a traditional phonics sequence, we introduce each new concept one at a time. The most frequently used digraphs are introduced early to reduce the number of sight words a child must memorize. Teaching a child to decode words is far more effective than relying on rote memorization of words. When a child understands the sound(s) each letter or digraph makes, they can apply this knowledge to read new words independently.

The **included readers are 100% decodable** (called Stories) and are carefully aligned with the concepts taught in each lesson. The program starts gently, introducing one concept at a time. Early lessons begin with a single sentence, gradually increasing in length and complexity. By the end of the book, your child will confidently read 10–12 sentences. It is important not to skip the early, simpler lessons, as they are essential for building a solid reading foundation.

LESSON LENGTH AND STRUCTURE

The recommended pace is **one lesson per day, five days a week**. There are a total of 100 lessons in Stage 1. At the set pace, your child will complete Stage 1 in approximately six months. Each lesson, including activities and the reader, will take **10-15 minutes** to complete.

DAILY STRUCTURE:

1. **Teach (or review)** the concept in Lesson X.
2. Complete **one page** of activities.
3. **Read** the assigned **story**. A note at the bottom of each activity page will direct you to the correct story.

CONSISTENCY

Consistency is key when it comes to learning to read. Setting aside a regular daily time slot ensures that your child has dedicated time to focus on learning to read without distractions. It's best to choose a time when your child is well-rested and alert, as this allows them to fully engage with the new material.

If your child is struggling to master a concept, it's perfectly fine to go back and review previously learned lessons to solidify their understanding. It is important **not** to take a break just because a concept feels challenging - working through it helps strengthen their skills and build perseverance over time.

READING PRACTICE

Each new concept is reinforced through the built-in tightly **controlled readers** (labeled "**Stories**"), which allow children to practice decoding and gradually build fluency.

WHY ARE STORIES IMPORTANT?

- They help children see how words **connect** to form sentences.
- They build **reading comprehension**.
- They develop reading stamina.

NO ILLUSTRATIONS IN READERS

Illustrations have been **intentionally** omitted to **prevent** children from guessing words based on pictures rather than focusing on the text itself. Many children learning to read rely on images to predict words instead of developing **strong decoding skills**. By removing this visual aid, children are encouraged to **sound out each word**, recognize patterns, and build reading accuracy.

This approach ensures that reading comprehension comes from understanding the words on the page rather than making assumptions based on illustrations. Over time, this strengthens a child's ability to read independently and with confidence.

SIGHT WORDS

Sight words are an important part of learning to read, as English contains some irregularly spelled words that don't follow standard decoding rules. Words like "one" and "says" are introduced throughout the stories, one at a time. These words will be **highlighted in red** when first introduced, making them easier to spot, and will be reinforced through the activities in the book.

GRAMMAR

As your child begins reading sentences and Stories, they will be gradually introduced to basic grammar concepts. These include capitalization, punctuation, commas, nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Each concept will be introduced in context, helping your child understand how grammar shapes meaning in sentences.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Each story includes comprehension questions. These do not need to be repeated during the second reading of the Story.

WHAT TO EXPECT

At first, your child will **sound out each letter** in a word before moving on to blending the sounds together. Blending **takes time** and does not happen automatically. With **patience and practice**, it will eventually all come together.

BEGINNER-FRIENDLY FONT

Reading can be tiring for beginners. The fonts in this book were carefully selected to make reading less strenuous for young children.

This program uses fonts that help beginners by:

- Giving each letter a distinct shape to reduce confusion.
- Increasing word spacing for better visibility.
- Increasing line spacing to improve tracking.

DIGRAPHS

In the stories, digraphs are underlined when first introduced to help your child spot and easily distinguish them from other letters.

FOUNDATIONS OF SPELLING

Recognizing and separating individual sounds is a critical step in learning to spell. We equip you to teach your child with the ability to listen for individual sounds in a word, isolate those sounds, and then build the word using **any alphabet flashcards**.

By the end of this book your child will be able to competently spell CVC words, CCVC words, and CVCC words.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS:

LEARNING FASTER THAN EXPECTED:

You know your child best - adjust the pace of this book as needed. It is okay to skip activity pages if your child has already mastered the concept, but be sure to read every story, as they provide essential daily reading practice.

STRUGGLING:

If your child is struggling to remember letter sounds, use the card games in this section daily for a fun, multi-sensory phonics review. These games will help reinforce learning in an engaging way. If your child forgets a sound, revisit the instructions at the start of the lesson as needed, to ensure they have a solid foundation before moving onto the next concept.

REVIEW GAMES

Review games are designed to reinforce the differences between lowercase and capital letters, as well as their sounds - without relying on tedious flashcard drills. These games can be skipped if your child already recognizes letters and remembers sounds easily. However, they add a fun element to the lesson, so you may wish to include them regardless.

When laying out the letter cards, ensure all letters are facing the correct direction. Some children may confuse similar-looking letters, such as d and p, u and n, or q and b. To help with orientation, underline letters *b*, *d*, *p*, *q*, *n*, and *u*.

Do not skip the b and d card games. These letters are commonly confused, and the games provide valuable reinforcement to help your child distinguish the **difference** between them.

GAMES

GAME 1: Focusing on one particular letter/sound, eg. letter S.

Set Up: Lay out half the alphabet cards (one of each - lowercase and capital letter) on the floor in mixed order. Make sure to include the letter your child is practicing remembering eg. S.

Gameplay: Ask your child what sound does letter “S” make?

Have your child find the lowercase and capital letters among the letters laid out on the floor.

Have your child close their eyes while you quickly move the letter S cards to a different spot.

Ask the child to find the capital and lowercase “S” again.

Repeat a few more times.

GAME 2: SPOT THE LETTER

Set Up: Lay out half of the alphabet cards on the floor in mixed order (one of each - lowercase and capital letters). Set aside 3–8 cards (either lowercase **OR** capital letters).

Gameplay: Show your child one of the **set aside** cards.

Ask your child to find its matching lowercase **OR** capital card on the floor.

Have your child tell you which of the two cards is the lowercase letter and what sound the letter makes.

Repeat with the remaining withheld cards.

GAME 3: GO FISH

Setup: You will need 20 cards.

Use one of each lowercase and its matching capital letter cards.

Each player gets 5 cards.

The rest go in a pile in the middle.

Take turns asking

Gameplay: On your turn, look at your cards.

Pick a letter in your hand and ask the other player:

“Do you have a capital B? /b/ /b/ /b/.”

OR

“Do you have a lowercase b? /b/ /b/ /b/.”

If they have it, they must give you the card.

If they don’t, they say “Go fish!”

Go Fish!

If they say “Go fish!”, take one card from the pile.

Make Pairs

If you have a capital and a lowercase letter, put them down as a pair!

Keep playing until all pairs are found.

The player with the most pairs wins!

GAME 4: HIDE AND SEEK LETTERS

Set Up: Hide up to six letters (both lowercase and uppercase, total of up to 12 cards) around your living area.

Gameplay: Ask your child to find the cards, as your child finds them, have the child identify what letter it is, whether it is a vowel or a consonant, uppercase or lowercase and what sound(s) the letter makes and if the child can think of any words starting with that sound.

GAME 5: SWAT THE LETTER

Use a fly swatter for this game.

Set Up: Lay out one of each lowercase and uppercase letter cards (A-Z) in mixed order on the floor.

Gameplay: Ask your child to find and swat (for example) a capital letter M, then say the sound letter M makes.

Next, have them find and swat the matching lowercase letter.

Repeat this with 5-8 other letters.

GAME 6: RUN AND FIND

Set Up: Lay out all of the alphabet cards on the floor in mixed order.

Gameplay: Have the child stand at the other end of the room. Call out the name of the letter and ask the child to run and find the card on the floor then bring it back to you. Ask the child what sound that letter makes then to run back and find its upper or lowercase counterpart.

Repeat this with 5-8 other letters.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Scissors
- Glue
- Pencil or colored markers
- Highlighter
- Coin and a game piece
- Fly swatter
- **A SET OF ANY ALPHABET FLASHCARDS** (lowercase and capital letters) that you already own
- b & d cards (found at the back of this book) Laminating the b & d cards is recommended for durability.

A NOTE ON DIALECTS AND PRONUNCIATION:

English is spoken with many regional accents and variations. The Art of Reading is based on standard phoneme-grapheme correspondences, but slight differences in pronunciation are expected. Where applicable, adjust the pronunciation to reflect your own regional dialect.

VOWEL VARIATIONS:

English vowel sounds can be inconsistent and may vary slightly depending on regional accent. For example, words like frog and ox use the short /ɔ/ sound, but you might hear subtle differences in how they're pronounced, even by the same speaker.

Use the guide word at the top of the instruction page to indicate the intended pronunciation, as your anchor, when introducing the sound. This word reflects the target pronunciation in that lesson.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Learning to read is a journey that unfolds with **time**, **patience**, and **consistent practice**. Celebrate each step forward and enjoy the process of building a lifelong love of reading.

READY TO BEGIN?

LESSON 1
SHORT A
/ă/ LIKE IN AS

- Ask the child to point to the pictures and name them.

TEACH YOUR CHILD:

- Capital and lowercase letters.
- Name of the letter.

READ TO CHILD:

Apple, ant, and astronaut all start with the letter A.

Letter A is a vowel. The short sound for A is /ă/.

/ă/ /ă/ /ă/ apple
/ă/ /ă/ /ă/ ant
/ă/ /ă/ /ă/ astronaut

Practice making the short sound for letter A.

WHICH WORDS BEGIN WITH THE SOUND /ă/ ?

pen, and, rat, avocado, boy, alpaca, animal

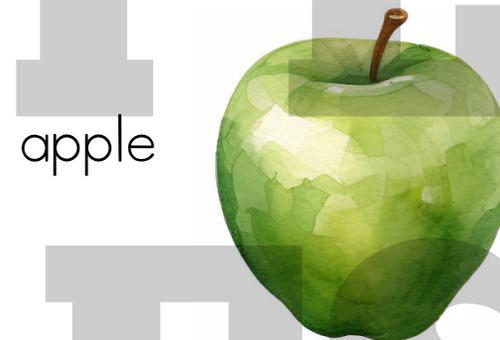
**CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND /ă/ IN THESE WORDS?
IF YOU CAN, IS IT IN THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, OR END?**

cat, ant, sat, ask, apple, hat, lack, sleep

What is the short sound for letter A?

Letter A also has a long sound. It is the same as its name.
/ā/ Like in the word "acorn".

A a



apple

astronaut



ant

1 NAME EACH PICTURE

If it starts with the same sound as the letter in the middle, draw a line connecting them.



A a



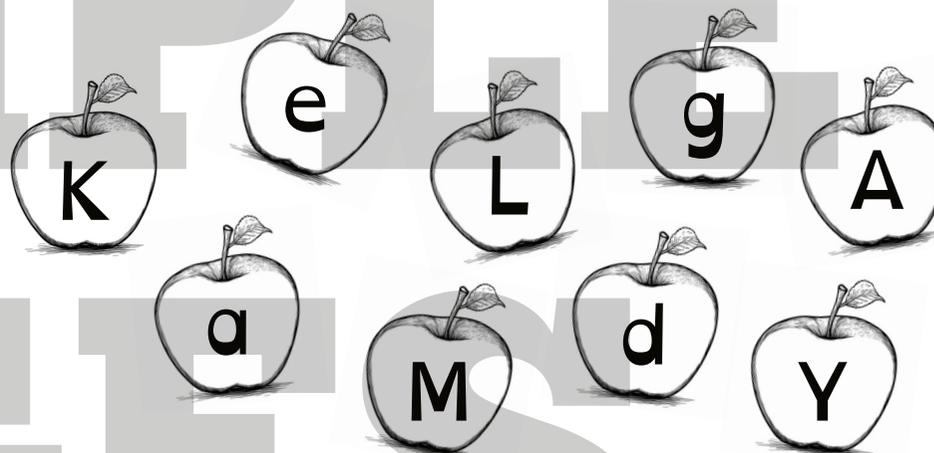
2 LETTER MATCH

Circle the lowercase letter that matches the uppercase letter.

A c a a c
g a p d g

3 COLOR

Color in all the uppercase As.



4 USE ALPHABET CARDS

CARD GAME SET UP:

Lay out approximately half of the lowercase and uppercase alphabet cards in mixed order on the floor. Make sure to include lowercase and capital A cards.

GAMEPLAY:

Ask your child to tell you the long and short sounds for letter "A". Find the lowercase and capital letter A among the letters laid out on the floor. Have your child close their eyes while you quickly move the letter A cards to a different spot.

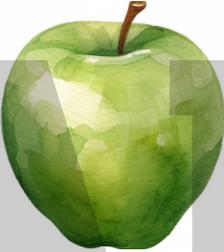
Repeat a few more times.



① FIND LOWERCASE A

Find all the lowercase As. Draw a line from the apple to each A.

d a p o

a q  g c

b e o a p

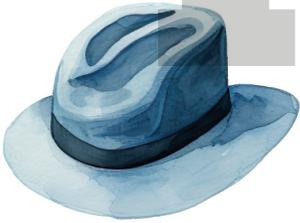
② FIND UPPERCASE A

Cross out all the uppercase As.

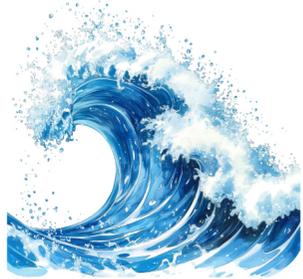
C	A	E	O
N	R	V	A
A	W	K	M

③ VOWEL SOUND

Name each picture. listen to the vowel sound. Is it long or short? Circle the pictures with the short A sound.





Y

LESSON 2

SHORT E

/ĕ/ LIKE IN ECHO

- Ask the child to point to the pictures and name them.

TEACH YOUR CHILD:

- Capital and lowercase letters.
- Name of the letter.

READ TO CHILD:

Elephant, egg, and emerald all start with the letter E.

Letter E is a vowel. The short sound for E is /ĕ/.

/ĕ/ /ĕ/ /ĕ/ elephant
/ĕ/ /ĕ/ /ĕ/ egg
/ĕ/ /ĕ/ /ĕ/ emerald

Practice making the short sound for letter E.

WHICH WORDS BEGIN WITH THE SOUND /ĕ/?

run, enter, win, cat, end, pillow, elbow

CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND /ĕ/ IN THESE WORDS?
IF YOU CAN, IS IT IN THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, OR END?

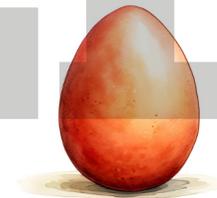
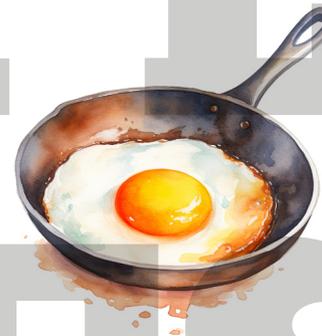
get, elf, spend, wet, end, gem

What is the short sound for letter E?

Letter E also has a long sound. It is the same as its name.
/ē/ Like in the word “evening”.

E e

egg



elephant



emerald



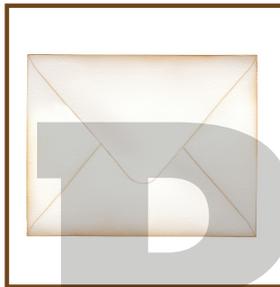
① WHAT IS THE VOWEL SOUND IN THE PICTURE?

Name each picture. Circle the correct vowel sound in each picture.

 a e	 a e	 a e	 a e	 a e	 a e
--	--	---	--	--	--

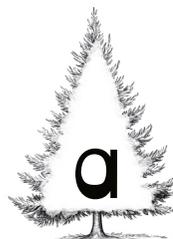
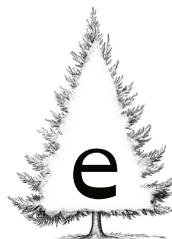
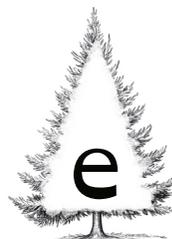
② BEGINNING SOUND

Name each picture and whether they start with the short or long E. Cross out the pictures that start with the long E.

				
--	--	--	--	--

③ LOWERCASE OR CAPITAL LETTER?

Color all the trees with uppercase letter E using green.

								
---	---	---	--	---	---	---	---	---



1 SORT THE PICTURES



2 FIND AND CIRCLE LOWERCASE LETTER



3 WHAT IS THE SOUND?

Name the picture. Color the sound in the middle.



q	t	c	g	
a	r	e	j	p
v	b	i	a	e
	e	l	u	c



LESSON 3

SHORT I

/ɪ/ LIKE IN IS

- Ask the child to point to the pictures and name them.

TEACH YOUR CHILD:

- Capital and lowercase letters.
- Name of the letter.

READ TO CHILD:

Iguana, insects, and igloo all start with the letter I.

Letter I is a vowel. The short sound for I is /ɪ/.

/ɪ//ɪ//ɪ/ iguana
/ɪ//ɪ//ɪ/ insect
/ɪ//ɪ//ɪ/ igloo

Practice making the short sound for letter I.

WHICH WORDS BEGIN WITH THE SOUND /ɪ/?

bag, itch, inside, man, late, it, echo, imagine

CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND /ɪ/ IN THESE WORDS?
IF YOU CAN, IS IT IN THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, OR END?

chick, in, big, ill, dig, begin, kiss, if

What is the short sound for letter I?

Letter I also has a long sound. It is the same as its name.
/i/ Like in the word "island".

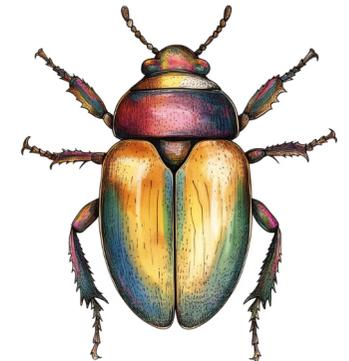
I i



iguana



igloo



insect

1 WHAT IS THE SOUND?

Say the name of the picture and listen for the vowel sound. What vowel sound do you hear in each word?

Circle the picture if it has the short I sound.



pig



cat



egg



sip



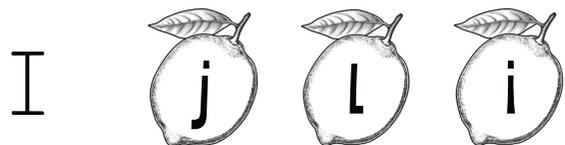
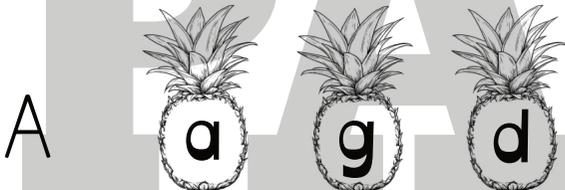
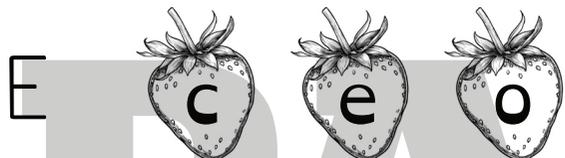
leg



dig

2 LETTER MATCH

Color the lowercase letter that matches the uppercase letter.



3 USE ALPHABET CARDS

CARD GAME SET UP:

Place all of the alphabet cards on the floor in mixed order.

GAMEPLAY: USE A FLYSWAT

Ask the child to find and swat the lowercase letters "a", "e", and "i".

Repeat with capital letters.

Ask your child to close their eyes and shuffle the cards around.

Repeat a few more times.

Finally, have the child say the long and short sounds for all three letters.

LESSON 9

LETTER S

IMPORTANT NOTE: Ssssssss, not Sssssuh.

- Ask the child to point to the pictures and name them.

TEACH YOUR CHILD:

- Capital and lowercase letters.
- Name of the letter.

READ TO CHILD:

Strawberries, socks, and sunflower all start with the sound /s/.

Letter S makes the sound /s/. Can you hiss like a snake and say "Ssssssssss".

/s/ /s/ /s/ strawberries
/s/ /s/ /s/ socks
/s/ /s/ /s/ sunflower

Practice making the sound for letter S.

**CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND /s/ IN THESE WORDS?
IF YOU CAN, IS IT IN THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, OR END?**

fuss, sat, time, stop, pot, sun, floss, soap, cat

Now, you will practice blending a vowel with the letter S.

S S

socks



sunflower



strawberries



1 READ THE SOUND BLENDS

Read each letter separately, then blend them together.
Do **NOT** correct blends /as/ and /is/ to words "as" and "is".

a s

as

e s

es

i s

is

o s

os

u s

us

2 READ THE SENTENCES

When a word ends with double letter (two of the same letter), they make one sound.

I t^{oss} a .



I m^{iss} it.



3 USE LETTER CARDS

CARD GAME SET UP: MEMORY MATCH

Lay out one of each lowercase and one of each uppercase letter (E, I, U, M, D, T, S) face down in rows, mixed in order.

GAMEPLAY:

1. Ask your child to flip over a card.
2. Have them name the letter, its sound, and whether it is uppercase or lowercase.
3. Flip another card.
 - If the letters match, the child keeps both cards.
 - If they do not match, turn the cards back over, and the child takes another turn with different cards.

4 READ STORY 4 ON PAGE 33

1 COLOR THE SOUND

What sound is in the beginning?



s d



m t



2 USE ALPHABET CARDS

You will build sound blends using the letter cards.

I will say a sound blend, and you will break it into sounds and build the blend.

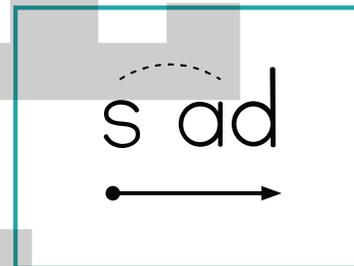
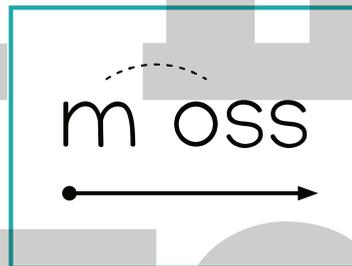
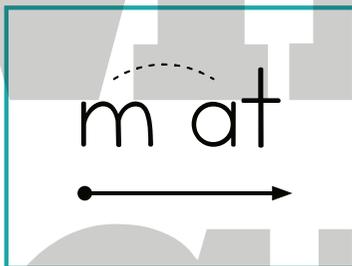
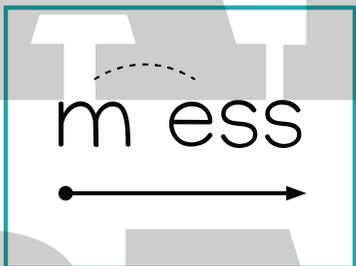
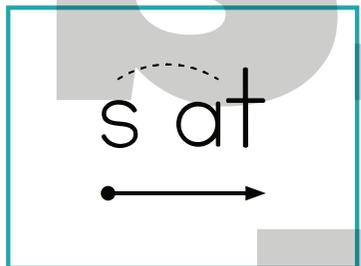
at, id, us, ot, im, ud, em, os, ad

Now try building some words:

sit, mad, dim, sum, set

3 CUT & PASTE

Cut out the pictures at the bottom of the page and read the words. Paste the pictures on top of the matching word.



4 FIND THE LETTER

B or D? Find and circle all the lowercase letters d.

b d d b b b d b d b d b d b d b d

DAY 19

5 READ STORY 4 ON PAGE 33



STORY 4 - DAY 18 & 19

- Does a name start with a lowercase or capital letter? (Capital.)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

LINE 1

- What is the name in this sentence?

LINE 2

- Who did you meet?

LINE 3

- What is Ted doing?

LINE 4

- A **period** tells you that a sentence is **finished**.
- There are other punctuation marks that tell you that a sentence is finished.
- Can you see the **red hook with a dot** at the end of this sentence? It is called a **question mark**. It tells you the sentence is a question.
- *Demonstrate how a sentence with a question mark should be read.*

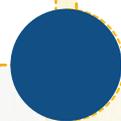


1. I am Sam.

2. I met Ted.

3. Ted sat.

4. Did Ted sit?



LESSON 35

LETTER V

/v/ LIKE IN VENT

IMPORTANT NOTE: Vvvvvv, not Vvvuh.

- Ask the child to point to the pictures and name them.

TEACH YOUR CHILD:

- Capital and lowercase letters.
- Name of the letter.

READ TO CHILD:

Volcano, violin, and vacuum all start with the sound /v/.

Letter V makes the sound /v/.

/v/ /v/ /v/ volcano
/v/ /v/ /v/ violin
/v/ /v/ /v/ vacuum

Practice making the sound for letter V.

**CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND /v/ IN THESE WORDS?
IF YOU CAN, IS IT IN THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, OR END?**

west, sieve, slow, van, voice, water, lake

Now, you will practice blending a vowel with the letter V.

V v



volcano



violin



vacuum

1 READ THE SOUND BLENDS

Read each letter separately, then blend them together.

a v

av

e v

ev

i v

iv

o v

ov

u v

uv

2 SILENT E

Look at the words below. See how they end with a pink letter E?

Most of the time, when a word ends with E, the **E is silent** - you don't pronounce it.

For now, all silent letters will be **colored pink** to show that they are **silent**.

h ave e give e Live e

3 HIGHLIGHT THE WORD IF IT MATCHES THE PICTURE



vet
drop
trip



truck
plum
van



green
vest
pull

4 READ STORY 46 ON PAGE 171

1 WHAT IS THIS SOUND?

What sound does the letter combination make? Circle the word that matches the picture.

oo

spook
bloom



ee

greet
creek



2 CUT OUT THE WORDS AND GLUE THEM UNDER THE MATCHING PICTURE



3 READ THE SENTENCE

Circle the correct word so that the sentence makes sense.

I **live** **have** a pet cat.



4 BUILD A WORD

I'm going to say a word.

Listen carefully and separate the sounds in the word.

Then, use the letter cards to build the word.
from, snap, slip, spend, prod, brush



vent

drum

give

grill

trash

push

STORY 46 - DAY 97 & 98

- Can you point the quotation marks in sentence 5? What do quotation marks mean? **(They show that someone is speaking. The words inside the quotation marks are what the person is saying.)**

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- Who are the main characters in this story?
- How does the story start?
- What happens in the middle?
- How does the story end?



1. Vic is a vet.
2. He helps sick pets.
3. Max is there to help.
4. Vic looks for his vest.
5. "Is it at the back?" asks Max.
6. "No! The vest is not there," says Vic.
7. "Is it on the hook?" calls Max from the back.
8. "I may have put it on the stool!"
Vic calls to Max.
9. "It is not there," says Max.
10. "May be it went in the wash?" asks Vic.
11. "Look! The vest is there!" says Max.
12. The vest was put in the wash.

Welcome to Stage 1:

The Art of Reading is a complete, three-stage program that takes your child from sounding out their first words to independent reading of real books.

Stage 1 lays the foundation by introducing short vowel words (CVC), blends (CVCC and CCVC), digraphs, and early sentence reading, teaching each new concept one at a time.

Upon completing all three stages, your child will be equipped to move from controlled readers to real books.

