

Phonemic Awareness Course

A Step-by Step Guide for Parents & Tutors



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What is Phonemic Awareness?

If you have learnt this skill, you can hear the individual sounds in words. If you don't have this skill, you can't hear the individual sounds in words, BUT if you can speak, you used to have this skill – you just need to re-activate it!

Why is it important to hear the individual sounds?

It's important for everyone to be able to hear the individual sounds in words during at least one stage in their lives. And for some people, it's important to be able to hear the individual sounds during a later part of their lives, as well.

It's essential for babies to be able to hear the individual sounds in their mother tongue, so they can mimic the sounds and learn to speak correctly. Babies can hear the individual sounds in all languages - that's why they can learn any language. Children can regain this ability, if they hear the sounds of another language early enough.

Adults can regain phonemic awareness skills in relation to their own language, but can find it very difficult to learn them in another language because they might not be able to hear all the sounds in that other language. For example, adults who learn English as a second language often cannot hear the first sound in *thin*.

English is an alphabetic language

People wanting to become literate in a language that is written with an alphabet, such as English, need to re-learn the skill of hearing individual sounds - because alphabetic languages are based on the idea that each sound you make can be represented by a written sign, a letter (or letter team).

Phonemic Awareness equips you to become literate

If you can isolate each sound, then you can separate each sound in a spoken word, then you can write the sign for each sound, and end up with the written word. And if you see a written word, and you know which sound is represented by each letter, then you can sound the word out - and end up with the spoken word.

Can we learn to read without phonemic awareness?

In English, the only alternative to learning phonemic awareness and the sounds and the letters used to represent them, is to learn whole words off by heart, by rote - thereby defeating the very purpose for using an alphabet.

The purpose of an alphabet is to have one sign for each sound, so that learners only have to become aware of the sounds they already speak, and then learn that number of symbols (and a few punctuation signs) in order to be ready to learn to read.

Alphabets are not the only way to read and write, though. Chinese, for example, uses signs, with each sign representing a syllable or a whole word. This means that Chinese children have to learn thousands of signs in order to become literate. Since the human brain doesn't find lots of memorisation easy, it takes Chinese children years before they become literate.

And teaching English literacy by using the Whole Word or Balanced Literacy (or any other method that relies on Sight Words) makes learning English literacy similar to learning Chinese literacy.

Learning English literacy that way means that learning to read takes children years of study, because they have to memorise thousands of words. Many people who are taught to read with the Whole Word method never manage to become fluent readers and accurate spellers.

How does being phonemically aware help us learn?

Here are the steps in learning basic literacy skills the full phonics way:

1. Students become aware of the sounds in English;
2. They learn how to represent those sounds in writing, including the single letters and the common letter teams (e.g. sh);
3. They learn to blend the sounds together into words;
4. They learn how to represent the sounds that can be shown by several different signs (e.g. sound /k/* in **keys** can be represented by letters: c, ch, ck, & k) (**clamp**, **monarch**, **duck**, & **keys**);
5. They learn how to write the signs for the sounds in words we have copied from other languages e.g. sound /k/ in **monarch**;
6. They learn “The Rules”, because they often tell us when to use the different signs; and
7. They learn the different sounds that a letter can represent. (English is notorious for this because it has copied so many words from other languages!) For example: letter i can be used to represent sounds: /i/ in **it’s itchy**, /ie/ in **Ivan**, /ee/in **ski**, & /y/ in **brilliantly**).

* The slanted lines /k/ around a letter show that I am talking about the **sound**, rather than the letter itself.

In my Course I teach those words in a sentence - **It’s Ivan who skis brilliantly!** - so that when students see a letter, they can recite all the sounds that letter represents, to hear which word makes sense;

As you can see, phonemic awareness is the foundation for each of those steps.

Without phonemic awareness, taught either as a separate skill before teaching the letters, or taught at the same time the letters are taught - the only alternative is to teach each word separately, as a whole word.

Blending can take a lot of effort

Early in my Courses, I teach blending, because students already blend sounds together when they speak. It's more a matter of bringing their attention to the fact that they do have this skill already.

Then, when they sound out letters they've just read, and you tell them to blend the sounds together, they know they can do it - they just need to use that skill in a new way so they can blend 'spoken sounds they have read' rather than just 'blend sounds they have heard'. [Many students find it easier to do this if they repeat the word before blending it.]

When students read words, they have to:

1. Remember which letter represents which sound;
2. Sound each letter out clearly **and** in order;
3. Hold the sounds in memory until they get to the end of the word;
4. Blend the sounds together into a word; and
5. Recall the meaning of the word.

And they might find doing all this overwhelming. But there is a way to help students 'get over the learning hump' once they've said the correct individual sounds.

Instead of giving the answer, be the working memory

The way to help students 'get over the learning hump' once they've said the correct individual sounds is to provide some extra working memory, by “loaning” the student your working memory!

Here's how to do it:

For example, if the student has sounded out the word *in*:

/i/* /n/, then you can say,

"That's right! Now blend/i/ /n/." (Remember to say the sounds separately.)

By helping students in this way, you're not giving them the answer; you're just providing some support, so their own working memory can concentrate on sounding out correctly and then blending correctly!

There's a fine line between "over helping", and giving a bit of support. With this type of help, it doesn't take long for students to be able to apply their blending skills from “blending sounds they’ve heard” to “blending sounds they’ve sounded out”.

It's OK if students sound out, then blend for months, before they can sound words out as quickly as their eyes recognise the letters.

The only things that will really help shorten the time needed for automating sounding out and blending are:

- making sure the students have a firm grasp of the Phonemic Awareness skills. (Some students learn Phonemic Awareness perfectly well while they learn the sounds and letters. Other students need to learn Phonemic Awareness as a separate skill – if this describes your student, take him or her through the activities in this *Phonemic Awareness Course* before continuing with the Learn to Read Course; and
- seeing that they build a very firm link between the letter and its sound, so that they can say the sound as soon as they see the letter. (Everyone has trouble with a few sound/letter combinations.)

The flashcards are the quickest and easiest way to form that link, for most students. Some students will need extra help to reinforce the sound/letter link. Pictures can be useful, so can hand signs or making letters from clay.

It's important not to rush through the foundational phonemic awareness skills. Teach them thoroughly. Your students will need them for the rest of their lives.

The Phonemic Awareness Course

Introduction

This course teaches the skills that are often called Phonemic Awareness Skills.

You, the parent or tutor, don't need any training to take your child through this course, but you do need to be willing to follow the instructions carefully. Remember the saying: 'If you want something done properly, you have to do it yourself!' With this course you are equipped to do exactly that.

Parents (and Grandparents)

I've found that non-teacher often achieve better results than teachers - because:

- they know to stop before their child has "had enough";
- they only want to teach the absolute bare essentials;
- they aim for short, effective lessons rather than spending endless time on drill;
- they know when their child hasn't understood, and are willing to repeat the lesson;
- they know when their child has understood, and move on to the next step - rather than wasting time on unnecessary repetition just to keep the child occupied; and
- they have a better grasp than most teachers about the importance of sounding out!

Tutors

Tutors, you will need to switch activity at times, so that your longer lesson session is not wearing out your students - due to its sheer intensity. The best way to have student-friendly longer lessons is to switch activities each 10-20 minutes.

For example, you could spend 10-20 minutes on the Phonemic Awareness Course, then spend time on the full-phonics-based reading course of your choice. (It's OK to run these two courses alongside each other.)

Then you could move on to pictures for just a few minutes, and ask if the student can tell you the first sound or the last sound of the name of the thing in the picture.

Once the student has learnt some letter/sound combinations in the reading course, you could place some magnetic letters (or something similar) well spaced out on the desk and the student could say the sound for each letter.

As students can sound out more confidently and quickly, move the letters closer together, and get student to sound them out more quickly - until they can blend the word together. Nonsense words are particularly good for this - because the student can't work from memory, so guessing won't get them anywhere at all!

Parents & Tutors

A huge amount of time can be wasted on useless (but often entertaining) activities. I have found that students make the most progress when they have brief, productive lessons that teach a specific skill until the student has mastered it.

More is not necessarily better.

NOTE: I use the terms children and students interchangeably. I often refer to *students* to avoid having to say *he and she*.

FURTHER NOTE: While doing the Phonemic Awareness Course is useful for all students, some people find learning solely through oral instruction overwhelming - because they need to SEE or DO something in order be able to process oral information. If you're teaching one of these students, proceed through the Phonemic Awareness Course as usual, but use the Supplementary Work at the end of the booklet to help your student learn this work.

It's likely that doing things this way will suit this type of student much better, because you'll be able to apply the phonemic awareness information to the word that is causing your child problems, without having to use a lot of verbal instructions.

How to Use this Phonemic Awareness Course

To get the most out of this course, it is a good idea to:

- learn the sounds yourself (not just the sample word), so you feel more confident;
- do not assume your children know this work. You are likely to be horrified at what they don't know. Once you know this information, you will be able to teach your child or student in little scraps of time, if that's all they can take in at a time;
- before you teach a page, read it aloud, and make any necessary alterations to the page e.g. deleting a word you pronounce differently. I will give you an example, but first I need to explain a bit more about how I do things:
In this course, letters **ae** show the sound at the end of *sundae*,
letters **oe** show the sound at the end of *toe*,
and letters **ar** show the sound at the end of *car*.
Here's an example: I pronounce the word *tomato* as /tom ar toe/.
If you say:
/tom ae toe/, and it's in the list of words teaching sound /ar/, put a line through the word so you don't confuse your student;
- work across the line (not down the column) so your students get used to moving their eyes in the direction of reading (left to right);
- don't go on to the next page until students can do the current page to at least 80% accuracy (ie. 4 correct answers out of 5). For each error, get them to try a second time. If they're still wrong, give them the answer, and ask that same question the next day for revision;
- aim for understanding, not just correct answers and learning off by heart;
- break the work into one 10 minute session a day for small children, one to three short sessions a day for teenagers, and up to half an hour at a time for adults;

- celebrate small achievements. Doing a few words from a previous page of work each day, will show students that they can now do that work more easily than they could at first. Then you can praise and encourage; and
- be patient. What seems obvious to you, may not be obvious to someone who has only a fraction of your reading experience; what seems simple to you might appear overwhelmingly difficult to those who have felt like failures for years and truly believe they are too stupid to learn to read. (And don't forget all the misunderstandings they may have been taught about how to read – such as sounding out isn't the right way to read!)

SEE PAGE 36 FOR THE SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHING AIDS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOW TO USE THEM IF YOUR STUDENT HAS HAD TROUBLE LEARNING TO READ, OR HAS DIFFICULTY WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

There are instructions in the Supplementary section that you can use to help your students succeed at the activities taught in the earlier part of this course.

Separating the First Word from a Sentence

Tell the students you will read sentences to them, and that when you have finished a sentence, they must tell you the first word in that sentence. (Some students find this easier to do, if they repeat the sentence.)

If the students have trouble with this work, do additional work on isolating the **first** word in a sentence until they can do this work well, before going on.

Sit still.

Hold this.

Jump this.

Pick it up.

Look at that!

Grab it!

Eat up.

Just try.

Catch this.

Don't run.

Try it.

Hurry up.

Run quickly.

Be gentle.

Stand still.

Put it on.

Kittens are cute.

Throw it here!

The dog barked.

I ate it.

Did you get it?

May she come too?

We saw them.

Just do it

Please find it.

I had a drink.

We had pizza.

Can you find it?

I have pet fish.

He lost them.

She likes mice.

Kim has hermit crabs.

My shoe is dirty.

Mum hates spiders.

Do it now.

Feed the cat, please.

What a mess!

That's terrible!

How did you do that?

I haven't met them.

NOTE: Don't expect small children, or those in difficulty to do the difficult sentences. If your children have trouble remembering sentences, repeat them together several times e.g. touching a block for each word, so the student's attention is drawn to the word in question.

Separating the Last Word from a Sentence

Tell the students that you will now read those sentences again, and this time when you have finished the sentence, you want them to tell you what the **last** word was. (Some students find this easier to do, if they repeat the sentence.)

If the students have trouble with this work, do additional work on isolating the last word in a sentence until they can do this well, before going on.

Isolating Words in a Sentence

Tell the students you will read more sentences, and this time, when you have finished the sentence, you want them to say how many words were in that sentence. (Some students find this easier to do, if they repeat the sentence. And don't hesitate to use blocks or counters in this activity, or holding up your hands, with your fingers spread out, and letting the student touch a finger for each word as they repeat the sentence. (The number after each sentence indicates how many words are in that sentence.)

If students have trouble with this work, do additional work on isolating words in sentences until they can do this well, before going on.

Sing loudly!	(2)	Sit down.	(2)
Eat up.	(2)	Her bike is pink.	(4)
Tie your laces.	(3)	I like stories.	(3)
My toe is sore.	(4)	Is this for me?	(4)
How rude!	(2)	I broke it.	(3)
Sorry.	(1)	I hate spinach.	(3)
I like these.	(3)	Mum dropped an egg.	(4)
It made a mess.	(4)	Look!	(1)
Sally is here!	(3)	May I have juice?	(4)
John did it.	(3)	I feel sick.	(3)
Try this.	(2)	Catch that rabbit!	(3)
The rabbit got out.	(4)	He hid it.	(3)

The Sounds in the English Language

Tell the students that each word we say is made up of one or more sounds, and that now we are going to go through all the different sounds in English, to make sure they can hear them and say them. Make a note of any sound they can't hear or can't say.

NOTE: I didn't say: Panic if they can't hear and say every sound! Just list the problem areas. See the Supplementary Section for help with sounds.

Often, once you're aware that a particular sound is a problem, you'll put a little more effort into saying it clearly and making sure your student says it as clearly as possible. Often, that is enough to solve the problem – over time. Be patient. If you panic, you just increase the stress level, which doesn't help the situation at all.

Be careful to concentrate on only **one** problem sound at a time. Almost any problem can be solved if you break it up into small enough bites. Remember how to eat an elephant - one bite at a time!

Isolating English Sounds

Get the students to repeat each of the sounds and words in the following block of work. Remember that some sounds (such as /p/ and /t/) are very quiet sounds. Try to just say the quiet sound, without adding a sort of /uh/ grunt on the end. The real /p/ sound, for example, is really just the lips popping open, followed by a puff of air! And /t/ is just the tongue being released from the palate, so that air can get past.

It would be worth your while to become familiar with the sounds (and how they are written e.g. /th/ to show the sound at the beginning of *the*).

NB It's **really** important to remember that you are teaching the sounds, not how to spell, so ignore the different letter combinations that are showing the same sound. (I will **bold** the letters that are representing the sound you have to teach.) For example: the words *came*, *aim*, and *pay* show the same sound – /ae/.

In the following work:

- you will say a sound. (It might be a good idea to exaggerate it, if possible.)
Then say the following list of words. The underlined word is the memory word. It is not essential to learn it, but if your students have had trouble learning to read, it might be a good idea because the memory words are the same for all the Teaching Aids;
- then say the sound again, and get the students to repeat it;
- then you say the first word from the list, and get the students to repeat it.
Say the second word, and get the students to repeat it, etc.

Circle lightly in pencil any sounds and words the students cannot say correctly. Later on, when they can say those words correctly, you could delete the pencil marks.

/a/ apple, add, **a**nt, arrow, **a**tom,
adult, avocado, **a**lligator

/ae/ icecream sundae plate, **a**im,
able, **a**pron, Naomi, **s**ame,
plane, **b**rain

/air/ airplane, **a**ircraft, **f**lair,
aerial, **a**irport, **c**are, **m**are,
pear

/ar/ star, **a**rt, **A**rnold, **a**rk, **a**rch,
argue, **a**rm, **p**ark

/b/ **b**at and **b**all, **b**aby, **b**ag, **b**allet,
bed, back**b**one, **b**alloon

/ch/ **c**hickens peck, **c**heese, **c**himp
cheerful, **c**hain, **c**hild, **c**hair,
chip

/d/ deer, **d**id, **d**og, **d**rain, had,
dad, **d**rip, mad, head, **d**isk,
dab

/e/ egg, end, **e**ver, send, tell, fell,
bend, dent, bread, Ed

/ee/ seeds, **e**vil, **e**ager, **e**at, he,
see, clean, **f**ree, beam,
Sweden

/er/ letter, **e**arn, **e**arl, **b**ird, **f**ur,
circus, **g**irl, **t**urtle, **p**urple

/f/ fly, food, **f**luff, **i**f, **f**lap, **o**ff,
fresh, **p**hoto, **b**ee**f**, **J**ose**p**h

/g/ grab, **g**et, **g**ull, **g**ot, **e**gg, **g**rin,
fig, **g**host, **b**ig, **b**ug, **f**atigue

/h/ here , hid , he , him , help , hand , hip , hello , helmet , hopping	/i/ it's itchy , in , bit , itself , slit , tip , symbol , crystal , Olympic
/ie/ bow tie , ice , sigh , fly , pie , fry , my , pilot , try , bite , prize , tie , hi	/j/ just hold it right there , jet , gem , jelly , Jim , just , adjust , agent , badge
/k/ clamp keys , kept , Kim , milk , desk , kiss , kid , cat , hulk , disk	/l/ ladder , lot , left , Lily , leap , milk , sill , list , help , salt , scalp
/m/ mountains , my , most , mumps , mat , me , mum , ram , slim , him	/n/ necklace , nip , nap , in , on , under , find , knee , knife , gnome
/ng/ cling and sing , bang , hang , lung , singlet , ping pong , wedding , long	/o/ orange , on , off , slot , Todd , wasp , swap , wallaby , Lauren
/oe/ toe , own , blow , so , crow , Joe , boat , robot , no	/oo/ look , oops , book , took , crook , could , would , put
/oo/ moon , soothe , soon , oodles , noon , doona , kangaroo , through	/or/ ordinary dots , four , torn , storm , Victoria , Paul , dinosaur
/ow/ Ow! Ouch! , owl , clown , now , down , bounce , cloud	/oy/ boil oysters , oil , coin , point , boy , toy , joy , employ , foyer , choice
/p/ pinch , pat , pop , pinch , gulp , tip , plop , map , drop	/kw/ quarrel , quick , quest , quibble , quote , quiet , quoll , quit
/r/ roar , rip , rat , Ron , run , wrap , rotten , ripple , wrist	/s/ snake , sit , sad , sand , Sally , slit , celery , city , pencil , Lucy
/sh/ shhh , she , shop , chef , ash , shine , dish , shrub , Cheryl	/t/ touch , tip , Tim , it , its , tell , Tom , table , top , tumble , tub

/th/ **th**irsty, **th**in, **Theo**, **th**ree,
Per**th**, **fif**th, **ther**mometer

/th/ **th**ere, **th**is, **th**at, **th**ose, **th**ese,
sl**ith**er, **teeth**e, **seeth**e

/u/ **u**p, **u**nder, **tut**, **sun**, **lull**, **oth**er,
done, **broth**er, **glov**e

/ue/ **rescu**e, **u**se, **u**te, **cute**, **due**,
cue, **emu**, **Samuel**, **modul**e

/v/ **v**alley, **van**, **vet**, **vest**, **have**,
give, **oliv**e, **siev**e, **activ**e,
sleeve

/w/ **w**orms **wigg**le, **wig**, **wag**,
want, **will**, **wilt**, **wallet**, **win**,
swill, **swim**

*/hw/ **wh**ale, **wh**at, **wh**y, **wh**en,
wheel, **wh**ite, **whiff**,
whisper

/ks/ **ax**e/**ax**, **fix**, **mix**, **tax**, **pox**,
Max, **box**, **vex**, **track**s, **truck**s

/y/ **y**awn, **y**es, **y**et, **yam**, **yuk**, **yell**,
yelp, **yum**, **yapp**ing, **yell**ow,
year, **y**esterday

/z/ **z**oom, **z**ip, **zap**, **Zac**, **fizz**, **buzz**,
jazz, **as**, **xylophone**, **zest**

/zh/ **explosions**, **Asia**, **vision**,
illusion, **Indones**ia, **pleasur**e,
mirage

Teaching Notes:

*This is an optional sound.

/hw/ (wh)

Only teach this sound if you use it in your speech. Although we write it as wh, the actual sounds are /h + w/ said very close together. In English, these sounds used to be written as hw. But after 1066, when the Normans (the French) invaded England – and so were in charge – they decided that hw was ugly, so it should be written as wh. They also decided that it should be regarded as one sound.

If your students have reached school age AND are unable to repeat a **significant number** of sounds after finishing this course, I strongly recommend that you contact a speech pathologist/therapist. Because of the work you have done, you will be able to tell the speech pathologist which sound and words your student has trouble with, and will be able to check the student's progress for yourself.

Discriminating Between Similar Sounding Words – First Sounds

Ask the students to tell you whether the words in each of the following pairs sound the same, or sound different. (They shouldn't say how the words are different, only whether they are the same or different.)

If the students have trouble with this work, do additional work on words that only differ in their first sound.

Tim, dim

hip, hip

in, on

pat, sat

end, and

add, aid

mill, mill

an, in

pip, sip

hill, till

hip, nip

jump, lump

bat, hat

pat, pat

jump, sump

few, new

pig, fig

clap, slap

fan, ban

bend, send

mouse, house

sank, hank

slip, flip

van, van

plop, slop

tip, lip

bin, fin

nut, but

name, maim

ring, sing

cot, lot

pot, tot

bump, pump

lank, tank

dot, tot

lent, lent

past, last

dial, tile

Discriminating Between Similar Sounding Words – Last Sounds

Ask the students to tell you whether the words in each of the following pairs sound the same, or sound different. (They shouldn't say how the words are different, only whether they are the same or different.)

If students have trouble with this work, do additional work on words that differ in their last sound, until they can do this well, before going on.

on, off	if, in
nod, not	hat, ham
am, an	hot, hop
thin, thick	pal, pal
but, bud	miss, mitt
of, off	hiss, his
bib, bid	mat, map
lend, lend	mug, mud
tap, tab	seat, seat
clap, clam	corn, caught
from, from	hut, hub
tram, trap	seen, seam
send, sent	slop, slob
slit, slip	late, late

trip, trim

slip, slid

bend, bent

span, spam

flog, flop

nat, nap

list, lisp

an, am

slap, slab

pap, pat

Discriminating Between Similar Sounding Words – Middle Sounds

Ask the students to tell you whether the words in each of the following pairs sound the same, or sound different. (They shouldn't say how the words are different, only whether they are the same or different.)

Ben, bin

Tim, time

slip, slop

lamb, limb

fend, fond

let, let

bend, bend

pop, Pope

yep, yip

net, not

cut, cute

watt, wart

met, mitt

meat, moat

hang, hung

rent, tent

clip, clop

run, Rod

house, hiss

tap, tip

slum, slam

tram, trim

pin, pan

rip, rep

west, west

bit, but

man, men

Bert, boat

calm, comb

lock, lick

stain, stone

met, mitt

Supplying the First Sound in a Word

Ask the students to tell you the first **sound** (not the first letter) in each of the following words. Say the word more slowly and clearly than usual. The answers are between slash marks.

on	/o/	high	/h/
yam	/y/	day	/d/
off	/o/	pup	/p/
it	/i/	goo	/g/
rat	/r/	be	/b/
ill	/i/	cue	/k/
add	/a/	set	/s/
up	/u/	egg	/e/
if	/i/	low	/l/
vim	/v/	oops	/oo/
map	/m/	too	/t/
no	/n/	jam	/j/
zoo	/z/	pie	/p/
tea	/t/	row	/r/
eyes	/ie/	shoo	/sh/
own	/oe/	use	/ue/
Joe	/j/	chew	/ch/

Supplying the Last Sound in a Word

Ask the students to tell you the last **sound** (not the last letter) in each of the following words. Say the word more slowly and clearly than usual. The answers are between slash marks.

see	/ee/	ebb	/b/
ache	/k/	due	/ue/
off	/f/	etch	/ch/
tie	/ie/	add	/d/
edge	/j/	her	/er/
hiss	/s/	egg	/g/
in	/n/	at	/t/
so	/o/	boo	/oo/
myth	/th/	bang	/ng/
am	/m/	ill	/l/
cue	/ue/	up	/p/
bore	/or/	pile	/l/
ash	/sh/	pass	/s/
of	/v/	soothe	/th/
Anna	/u/	is	/z/
my	/ie/	pop	/p/
nib	/b/	fan	/n/

Supplying the Middle Sound in a Word

Ask the students to tell you the middle **sound** (not the middle letter) in each of the following words. Say the word more slowly and clearly than usual, if necessary. The answers are between slash marks.

mat	/a/	bed	/e/
abbey	/b/	apple	/p/
itchy	/ch/	ask	/s/
iffy	/f/	its	/t/
chook	/oo/	Evie	/v/
apt	/p/	rug	/u/
hoop	/oo/	Eddie	/d/
act	/k/	fell	/e/
tree	/r/	hot	/o/
pug	/u/	achy	/k/
lock	/o/	Amy	/m/
eggy	/g/	hook	/oo/
sit	/i/	germ	/er/
Annie	/n/	pile	/ie/
phone	/oe/	tray	/r/
stow	/t/	edgy	/j/

Finding a Particular Sound in a Word

Ask the students to tell you which word in the following pairs has a particular sound. The sound you are looking for is listed first. The answers are underlined. Say the sound, then the two words. The student should repeat the word which contains the sound. Say the words more slowly and clearly than usual, if necessary.

/er/	<u>Bert</u>	bought	/p/	bill	<u>pill</u>
/g/	<u>fig</u>	fib	/ae/	<u>cane</u>	Ken
/i/	<u>kin</u>	ken	/e/	will	<u>well</u>
/a/	<u>ram</u>	rem	/v/	<u>van</u>	fan
/j/	bug	<u>budge</u>	/z/	<u>zip</u>	sip
/b/	<u>nab</u>	nap	/sh/	chip	<u>ship</u>
/or/	<u>call</u>	cow	/th/	<u>thin</u>	this
/ng/	ban	<u>bang</u>	/air/	far	<u>fair</u>
/s/	lash	<u>lass</u>	/u/	<u>hut</u>	hot
/ch/	<u>catch</u>	cash	/h/	fall	<u>hall</u>
/oo/	oops	<u>ooze</u>	/o/	<u>not</u>	nut
/d/	Ben	<u>den</u>	/n/	<u>nit</u>	mitt
/f/	pin	<u>fin</u>	/ie/	law	<u>lie</u>
/m/	<u>smack</u>	snack	/oo/	<u>chooks</u>	choose
/oe/	<u>bone</u>	born	/e/	<u>bend</u>	binned
/k/	hurt	<u>curt</u>	/f/	loan	<u>phone</u>

Adding a First Sound to a Word so the Words Sound the Same

Ask the students to tell you which **sound** they would add to the beginning of the first word, to make it the same as the second word. Say the words more slowly and clearly than usual, if necessary. The sound you will be wanting will be listed in brackets.

am	ham	/h/	lop	clop	/k/
in	din	/d/	lip	blip	/b/
ram	cram	/k/	all	shawl	/sh/
rim	brim	/b/	rod	prod	/p/
at	sat	/s/	rim	grim	/g/
off	doff	/d/	rick	brick	/b/
ate	mate	/m/	rip	trip	/t/
lop	plop	/p/	tone	stone	/s/
all	tall	/t/	rent	Brent	/b/
lag	flag	/f/	rag	drag	/d/
cuff	scuff	/s/	ram	gram	/g/
rim	prim	/p/	mock	smock	/s/
rid	grid	/g/	wig	twig	/t/
mug	smug	/s/	lane	plane	/p/
rap	trap	/t/	land	gland	/g/
lamp	clamp	/k/	led	sled	/s/

Adding a Last Sound to a Word so the Words Sound the Same

Ask the students to tell you which **sound** they would add to the end of the first word, to make it the same as the second word. Say the words more slowly and clearly than usual, if necessary. The sound you want will be listed between slash marks.

fig	figs	/z/	yell	yelp	/p/
budge	budgie	/ee/	bell	belt	/t/
will	wilt	/t/	fill	film	/m/
for	form	/m/	gull	gulp	/p/
pie	pile	/l/	till	tilt	/t/
bore	born	/n/	sell	self	/f/
pine	pint	/t/	mill	milk	/k/
for	ford	/d/	gull	gulf	/f/
still	stilt	/t/	hell	helm	/m/
tune	tuned	/d/	act	acts	/s/
hunt	hunter	/er/	nod	nods	/z/
sill	silt	/t/	star	start	/t/
top	tops	/s/	Kay	came	/m/
Sal	salve	/v/	her	herd	/d/
print	printer	/er/	cam	camp	/p/
pen	pent	/t/	hell	held	/d/

Adding a Sound to the Start of a Word to see what Word it Makes

Ask the students what word will be made when you add a certain sound to a word. You will say the sound and the word, and they have to add the sound to the beginning of the word and tell you what the new word is.

/r/	at	(rat)	/sh/	rub	(shrub)
/p/	ark	(park)	/ch/	air	(chair)
/s/	end	(send)	/j/	any	(Jenny)
/ae/	gent	(agent)	/r/	on	(Ron)
/m/	ill	(mill)	/p/	up	(pup)
/f/	air	(fair)	/b/	Abe	(babe)
/h/	add	(had)	/n/	Ed	(Ned)
/d/	rain	(drain)	/f/	lap	(flap)
/sh/	ark	(shark)	/k/	at	(cat)
/p/	inch	(pinch)	/h/	and	(hand)
/m/	ilk	(milk)	/r/	am	(ram)
/n/	ow	(now)	/t/	odd	(Todd)
/k/	lamp	(clamp)	/p/	lop	(plop)
/f/	lop	(flop)	/s/	top	(stop)
/p/	earth	(Perth)	/f/	or	(for)
/k/	rook	(crook)	/l/	owe	(low)

Adding a Sound to the End of a Word to see what Word it Makes

Ask the students what word will be made when you add a certain sound to a word. You will say the word and the sound, and they have to add the sound to the end of the word and tell you what the new word is. If necessary, help them blend the sound onto the end of the word. Say the words more slowly and clearly than usual, if necessary. The word you want will be listed in brackets. (Some students find it easier to say the word and the sound first.)

If the students have trouble with this work, do additional work on blending a sound onto the end of a word, until they can do this well, before going on.

see	/k/	(seek)	zoo	/m/	(zoom)
ten	/t/	(tent)	bore	/n/	(born)
day	/t/	(date)	shoo	/z/	(shoes)
tie	/p/	(type)	due	/n/	(dune)
eye	/s/	(ice)	sigh	/t/	(sight)
pry	/z/	(prize)	ow	/l/	(owl)
play	/n/	(plain)	see	/th/	(seethe)
so	/p/	(soap)	Ben	/d/	(bend)
err	/n/	(earn)	oh	/n/	(own)
store	/m/	(storm)	pore	/l/	(Paul)
coy	/n/	(coin)	sit	/ee/	(city)
tee	/th/	(teethe)	you	/t/	ute

Isolating Sounds in a Word

Say the word in the left-hand column, and get students to repeat it. Now, get them to say the word again sound by sound. (If this is too difficult for them, you say each sound, getting students to hold up a finger for each sound – so they can tell you how many sounds are in the word. If the students don't know their numbers yet, they can hold up a finger as they say each sound.)

The letters between the slash marks list the sounds in the word, and the number in the brackets show the number of sounds in the word. This is difficult work for literate adults, so you can imagine how difficult it might be for someone struggling to learn to read. Be patient. Don't rush.

If students have trouble with this work, do additional work on hearing the separate sounds in short words, until they can do this well, before going on.

I	/ie/	(1)	bin	/b i n/	(3)
me	/m ee/	(2)	hoop	/h <u>oo</u> p/	(3)
she	/sh ee/	(2)	day	/d ae/	(2)
see	/s ee/	(2)	nose	/n oe z/	(3)
hay	/h ae/	(2)	fray	/f r ae/	(3)
go	/g oe/	(2)	hoe	/h oe/	(2)
toes	/t oe z/	(3)	boo	/b <u>oo</u> /	(2)
may	/m ae/	(2)	Joe	/J oe/	(2)
cue	/k ue/	(2)	way	/w ae/	(2)

Separating a Word into its Individual Sounds

Ask the students to break the following words into sounds. The sounds are listed between the slash marks.

he	/h ee/	no	/n oe/
show	/sh oe/	is	/i z/
it	/i t/	if	/i f/
on	/o n/	pay	/p ae/
ebb	/e b/	tie	/t ie/
me	/m ee/	fee	/f ee/
her	/h er/	say	/s ae/
in	/i n/	lame	/l ae m/
dog	/d o g/	mute	/m ue t/
fry	/f r ie/	perch	/p er ch/
tune	/t ue n/	fig	/f i g/
pick	/p i k/	soon	/s <u>oo</u> n/
hit	/h i t/	try	/t r ie/
hook	/h oo k/	tab	/t a b/
home	/h oe m/	late	/l ae t/
beef	/b ee f/	phone	/f oe n/
its	/i t s/	ream	/r ee m/
top	/t o p/	cool	/k <u>oo</u> l/

Blending Individual Sounds into Words

Ask the students to blend the following sounds into words. Say each sound separately, so they hear each sound clearly. The answer is in brackets.

/ee t/	(eat)	/a m/	(am)
/i t/	(it)	/o n/	(on)
/a n/	(an)	/a t/	(at)
/h ie/	(high)	/n oe/	(no)
/m u m/	(mum)	/n ow/	(now)
/d o t/	(dot)	/k o t/	(cot)
/m e n/	(men)	/d a d/	(dad)
/f ar/	(far)	/m ee/	(me)
/s oe/	(so)	/l o s/	(loss)
/r a t/	(rat)	/b e l/	(bell)
/s i t/	(sit)	/b u t/	(but)
/r a n/	(ran)	/p i l/	(pill)
/f i z/	(fizz)	/k u f/	(cuff)
/d e n/	(den)	/b o l t/	(bolt)
/r o t/	(rot)	/k u m/	(come)
/b a n/	(ban)	/t e n/	(ten)
/l a m/	(lamb)	/l o t/	(lot)
/l a p/	(lap)	/z i p/	(zip)

Supplementary Work

This supplementary work consists of a picture for each sound in English. These pictures are used in The Learn to Read at Home Course, to teach students the sounds in English.

These materials are used for all students, but are of particular use for students who need to SEE, or DO something (usually with their hands), in order to process oral instruction well.

Other students who find these pictures especially useful are students who have hearing problems, and those who are learning English.

Permission is given for you to make a set of these pictures for your own use, and a set of pictures for each of your students. (A set of middle-sized, and a set of A4-sized pictures is also included in this Phonemic Awareness Course package.)

I've made the writing that tells you the sound and name for each picture very small, so it isn't drawn to the student's attention. It's important that students don't attempt to read this writing – because they're concentrating on learning the sounds at the moment.

There is no need to print these pictures out in colour; they work just as effectively in black and white.

NOTE: Please don't be mislead into thinking this is little kid type work. You'd be surprised how many reading teachers can't do these activities easily.

The reason I do pre-reading work using pictures is that this is how we read now! The only difference is that we use different pictures, and call our pictures **letters**. The first alphabet letters were real drawings of a camel and a tent doorway, etc., and each picture represented a sound. As most people don't regularly use tents and camels, these days, I've transferred that idea to pictures we're more familiar with.

How to Use these Pictures

Only use the pictures when you need them. I'll briefly mention below, how to use the pictures for each section of the course.

If your student is someone for whom it's **essential** to SEE something, or DO something, or move, in order to learn, you'll need to use the pictures for a number of the Phonemic Awareness Course activities. (These pictures are used in the Reading Course, so if you're going to use that Course, you'll make up any time you've lost doing this extra work – because your student will already know that work, AND will be able to sound out and blend.)

If your student just needs help in a few areas, just use the pictures when your student needs them. The instructions below are for students who need to learn all the pictures; modify these instructions according to your student's situation.

NB You'll need 2 copies of the pictures, to complete these activities. Printing them in black and white is fine.

Separating the First Word from a Sentence

Many students will be able to do this work without effort. Just read them the sentence, and they'll be able to tell you which word is first.

Other students don't realise that each word in a sentence has a separate meaning, but once you've told them that a sentence is made up of separate words, they usually complete the work quite rapidly. Just read the sentence out to them, and see if they can tell you which word is first. Make sure you speak very clearly and a bit more slowly than usual.

If your student can't **hear** that the words are separate, get her hearing checked immediately – before going on. If your student still thinks words are all blended together, and doesn't understand that each word has a separate meaning, you'll have to do a bit of remedial work, until she understands. I'll explain what to do in a minute.

Not understanding that each word has its own meaning can result from having a hearing problem (even an intermittent one, such as ear blockages from ear infections). It can also happen if students regularly hear speech that is spoken too rapidly, or speech that is not pronounced clearly.

Poor pronunciation is a particular problem in English, because English pronunciation requires much more precise mouth movements and positioning than many other languages – we seem to flap and stretch our lips and tongue a lot! This takes more effort than that required in many other languages.

Remedial work for students who don't understand sentences are made up of separate words, and each word has its own meaning

When you read a sentence such as: Sit still.

to one of these students, explain that the word sit can be used, by itself, and in lots of different sentences, such as: telling the dog to sit

Sit!

Telling a visitor which seat they can use: Please take this seat.

Warning someone: Sit on that chair properly, or your chair will tip over.

Action words are very good for helping students understand that each word has its own meaning: Sit, stand run, jump, riding, eating, etc.

Nouns are also very good:

Mum, Mr. Jones, Joshua, Sarah, etc.

Using a name, and an action word will get the message across more easily e.g. Rover ran. Guinea pigs squeak. Baby cried.

By spending a little time on this, your student will rapidly improve, and be able to move on with the course.

If you find that your student has a serious hearing problem, you might like to look into Cued Speech as it helps students become aware of speech sounds, even if they can't pronounce them correctly.

Students who use Cued Speech usually reach an excellent literacy standard, because they are taught to be aware of the sounds in English. So when they are taught to read, they already understand that English is made up of sounds – so it's not a huge mental leap for them to understand how those sounds are represented in written form.

Once your student understands that the words in a sentence are separate, you can move on to the next activity.

Separating the Last Word from a Sentence

Work carefully through the page of work for this section.

Isolating Words in a Sentence

Work carefully through the page of work for this section.

The Sounds in the English Language

Many students have difficulty processing oral instructions. On the other hand, they tend to learn very easily if they see a picture. In the section beginning on page ***, there is a picture for each sound in English. These pictures can be used as flashcards.

To teach your student the sounds using these pictures, say:

This is the picture for /a/ in apple. When you see this picture, say /a/.
Point to the picture, and get your student to say: /a/.

Don't get your student to learn the picture's name; you really want your student to automatically say the **sound**.

Discriminating Between Similar Sounding Words – First, Last, and Middle Sounds

If your students are in a lot of difficulty, you might need to set out only the relevant pictures (and a few others) for them to choose from.

Line the pictures up along the top of the desk (or on a separate, nearby table – for students who are easily overwhelmed by too much visual input), and get your students to place the picture for the relevant sound of each word on the desk.

Then ask students to tell you if the sounds are the same. They might only need to do a few of these before they understand how to do this, and can do the rest of the work orally.

When they can do the work orally, don't make them use the pictures – unless they prefer to. If they do the work orally and get the answer wrong, make them use the pictures for as long as they need to.

Supplying the First, Last, and Middle Sounds in a Word

Follow the instructions for the previous activity.

Finding a Particular Sound in a Word

In this activity, students have to tell you in which word, a sound is found.

When you first say the sound, students might like to put that picture in front of them, to help them remember which sound they're listening for.

Adding a First Sound to a Word, so the Words Sound the Same

It would be a good idea for you to set out the pictures for the word, like this:
[Doing this would be much faster than having your student do it. Just have a few options above the work area to your students to choose from, so they don't have to waste lots of time riffling through a pile of pictures.]



Then your student can sound out the first word.
If he can blend it, let him; if he can't, blend it for him – and let him echo what you said.

Then you say: What sound would we add to *am* to say *ham*?
Then he could find the picture for /h/ and add it on the front, and sound out the new word.



If he can, he may blend this new word together, if he can't, you can do it for him, and he can echo you.

Then, you set out the next word:



Then your student can sound it out.
If he can blend it, let him; if he can't, blend it for him – and let him echo what you said.

Then you say: What sound would we add to *lop* to say *clop*?

Then he could find the picture for /c/ in clamp and add it on the front, and sound out the new word. [Make sure only the /c/ in clamp is available, not the /k/ in keys.]



And so on.

Adding a Last Sound to a Word, so the Words Sound the Same

Follow the same procedure as in the previous part.

Adding a Sound to the Start of a Word to See What Word it Makes

This is a similar activity to the previous two, but this time the students haven't been told what word they are going to end up with. Follow the procedure for the previous part.

Adding a Sound to the End of a Word to See What Word it Makes

Again, the student doesn't know what he's going to end up with. Follow the procedure for the previous part.

Isolating Sounds in a Word

This activity is similar to earlier ones, but instead of concentrating on a part of a word, this activity requires students to split the entire word apart all by themselves. This skill is called segmenting; it's what we do when we sound out a written word.

Students might like to place a picture separately on the desk for each sound as they say it

Separating a Word into its Individual Sounds

Students repeat the word after you, then say the sounds in the word separately. They might like to build the word in pictures, sound by sound. If they do, make sure they place the pictures for the sounds in order from left to right, because that's the order in which we read and write.

Blending Individual Sounds into Words

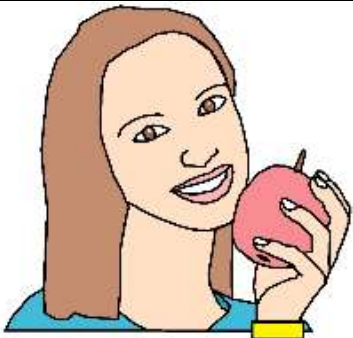

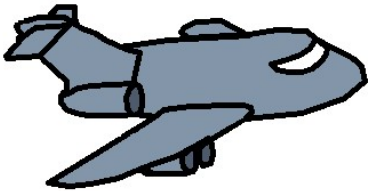

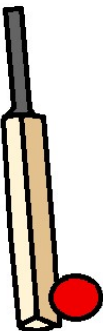
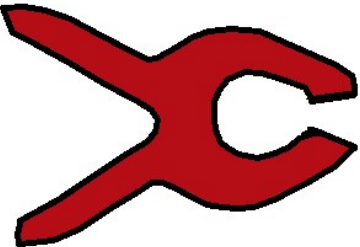
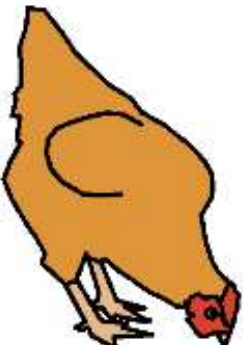

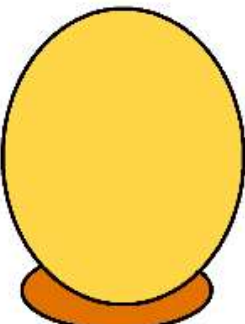

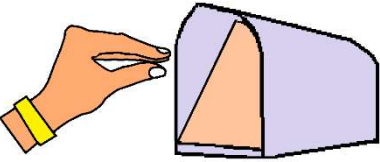
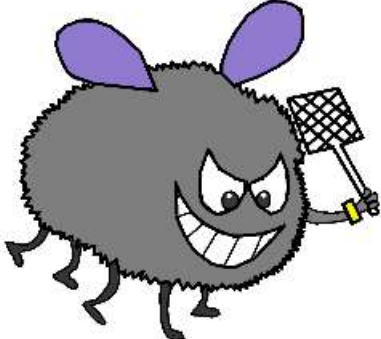
Now, you're going to say separate sounds, and your student will "write" the word in pictures. Then he has to sound it out, and blend it.

The best way to practice blending is to:

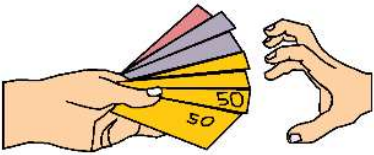




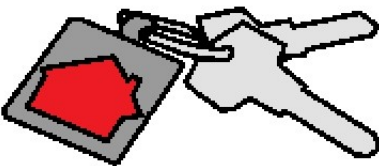

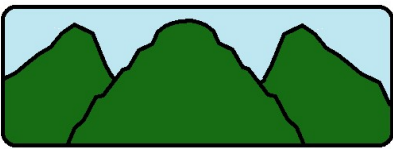
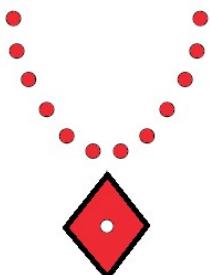


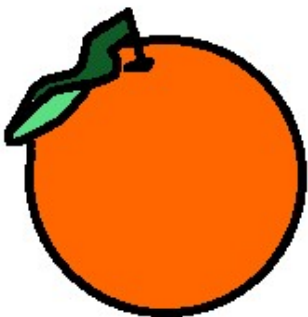
- sound out the individual sounds;
- sound out a bit faster;
- say the sounds fast enough that they blend into a word; and
- say the word.

If your student wants to do more practice on blending, go back to the: Isolating Sounds in a Word, and the Separating a Word into its Individual Sounds pages, and read the separate sounds to him and let him use those words.

The Supplementary Work Pictures begin on page 44

		
/a/ in apple	/ae/ in icecream sundae plate	/air/ in air plane
		
/ar/ in star	/b/ in bat and ball	/c/ in cl amp
		
/ch/ in ch icken	/d/ in d og	/e/ in e gg
		
/ee/ seeds for Eve	/er/ in letter	/f/ in fly swat *

* This fly is going to swat back at you, if you swat it.

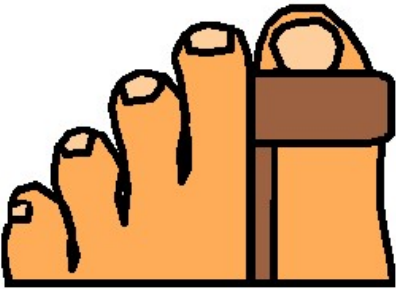


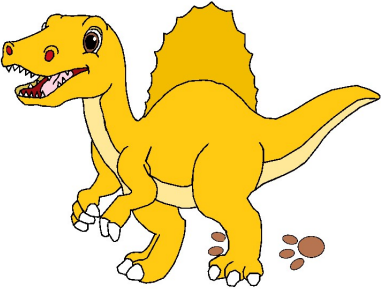


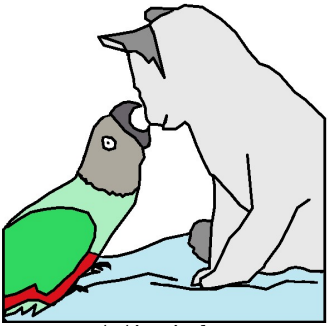

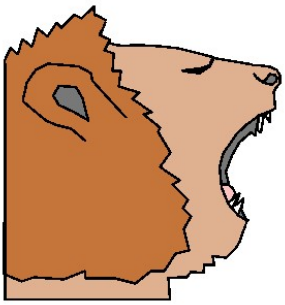
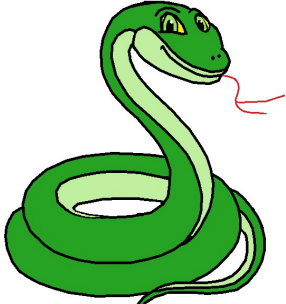
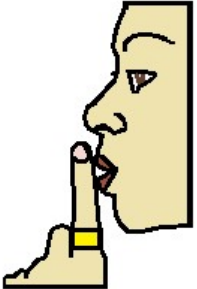
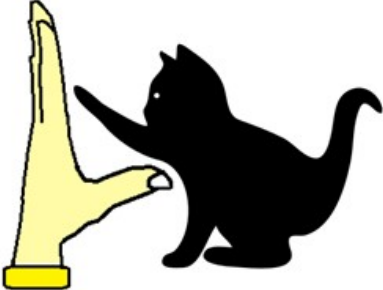
 <p>/g/ in grab</p>	 <p>/h/ in here ¹</p>	 <p>/i/ it's itchy</p>
 <p>/ie/ in bow tie inside</p>	 <p>/j/ in just stop right now</p>	 <p>/k/ in keys ²</p>
 <p>/l/ in ladder</p>	 <p>/m/ in mountains</p>	 <p>/n/ in necklace</p>
 <p>/ng & ng g/ cling to my fingers³</p>	 <p>/ngk/ Pink Zinc® ⁴</p>	 <p>/o/ in orange</p>

¹This is a student putting up her hand, to show the teacher she is present in class.

² Explain that sometimes, there are 2 ways to show a sound, and you'll tell them when that happens.

³ This is 2 sounds, /ng/ in cling and /ng g/ in fingers. Baby will sing and cling to my fingers. If students don't notice, don't mention it.

⁴ This is really 2 sounds, /ng/ and /k/. I mention them one because many students can't hear the /k/ on the end.

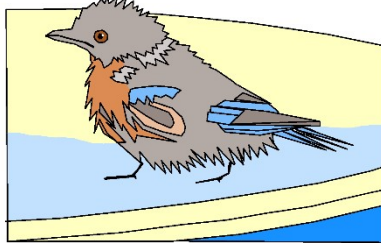
 <p>/oe/ in toe bone</p>	 <p>/oo/ in look</p>	 <p>/oo/ in moon</p>
 <p>/or/ in ordinary dots ¹</p>	 <p>/ow/ in Ouch! Ow!</p>	 <p>/oy in Boil oysters</p>
 <p>/p/ in pinch</p>	 <p>/qu/ in quarrel ²</p>	 <p>/r/ in roar</p>
 <p>/s/ in snake</p>	 <p>/sh/ in shh</p>	 <p>/t/ in touch</p>

¹ The full name for this picture is Ordinary dots are made by dinosaur paws.

² This is really two sounds, /k/ and /w/. If your student doesn't notice, don't mention it.



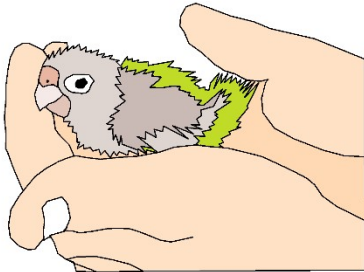
/th/ in **th**irsty



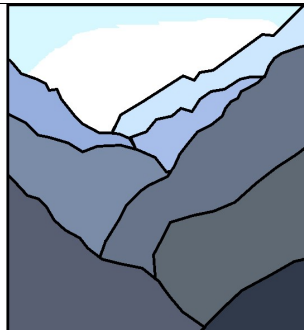
/th/ in **there's** **th**at bird¹



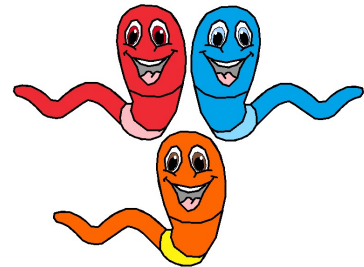
/u/ in **u**p



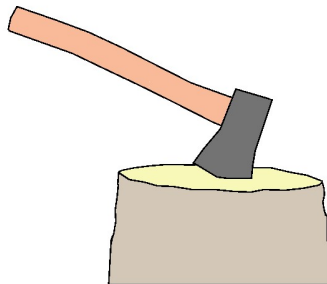
/ue/ in **rescue** that **cute** bird



/v/ in **v**alley



/w/ in **w**orms **w**iggle



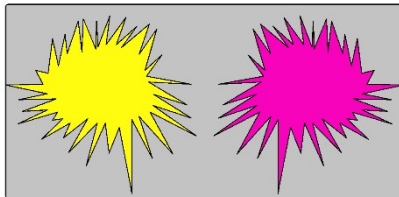
/x/ in **axe**/**ax**²



/y/ in **y**awn



/z/ in **z**oom



/zh/³ in **explosions**

¹ This bird is in a bird bath.

² This is really 2 sounds, /k/ and /s/. If your student doesn't notice, don't mention it.

³ I know we don't write this sound like this, but it's the nearest way I can come up with to write it as a sound.

Congratulations!

If you've taken your students right through *The Phonemic Awareness Course*, and they have done the work successfully, then they are ready to learn to read. And you are an excellent tutor. You should be very proud of yourself because you've done a brilliant job!

And your children or students should be very proud of themselves, because they've shown a lot of stickability to get through this work. And it is work. It's a no-frills course, packed full of work. And many people won't stick at something that isn't entertaining.

The advantage of getting this work out of the way before starting to learn to read is that you've already learnt to teach the sounds, and your students have learnt how to hear the sounds, separate the sounds in a word, and blend sounds into a word. Because he or she already knows how to do that, learning to read will be much, much easier!

So celebrate!

And, if you go on to do my Course, The Learn to Read at Home Course, you and your student both know the sounds for all the pictures, as well. So it will be just a matter of learning the letters and some punctuation, and reading sentences.

It's important that your student now learns to read using what I call a full-phonics reading course. By full-phonics, I mean a course that teaches all the 40+ sounds in English, the silent e or letter teams (ae, ee, ie, oe, and ue), and the other letter teams (such as ch, th, th), and the rules or patterns that explain when we use letters in certain positions in a word (such as we don't use x to show sound /ks/ at the beginning of a word).

If you already have a full-phonics course, use it; if you don't already have a full-phonics course consider using my course: The Learn to Read at Home Course.

Best wishes,

Mary

To learn more about how to teach reading at home, have a look at other free ebooks, at:

www.teachreadingathome.com