

Introducing Short Vowels

LESSON MODEL FOR Sound/Spelling Correspondence

Benchmarks

- ability to recognize vowels and short-vowel sounds
- ability to discriminate short vowels in initial and medial positions in words

Strategy Grade Level

- Kindergarten - Grade 1 and/or Intervention

Prerequisites

- ability to recognize and name all uppercase and lowercase letters
- ability to isolate the initial and medial sounds in a word
- introduced sound/spellings: single consonants /m/ m, /p/ p, /s/ s, /t/ t

Grouping

- whole class
- small group
- individual

Materials

- small index cards (one per student)
- two large index cards
- pocket chart
- picture cards: ax, apple, bag, cat, bat, hat, cap, bath, map

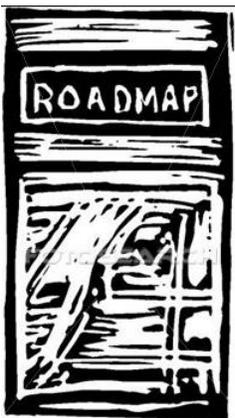
This sample lesson model is primarily based on a method developed by Isabel Beck and described in her book *Making Sense of Phonics* (2006). It targets the sound/spelling correspondence for /a/ a. The same model can be adapted and used to introduce other short vowels and to enhance phonics instruction in any commercial reading program.

Phonemic Awareness

Say: You're going to practice saying the sounds in words. Each time I hold up a finger, you will say a sound. Watch as I do one for you. Hold up a closed fist, fingers facing toward you. Then say: The word is map. watch as I say the sounds in map, /mmm/ /aaa/ /p/. Hold up a finger as you say each sound. Ask: How many sounds in map? (Three) Say: Now it's your turn to say the sounds. Remember, each time I hold up a finger, you say a sound. The word is cat. Ask: What's the word? (Cat) What are the sounds in cat? (/c/ /aaa/ /t/) One at a time, hold up a finger to signal students to say a sound. Ask: How many sounds in cat? (Three). Follow the same procedure with the words at, add, map, sack, hat, and catch.

Teach/Model-Connect Spelling to Sound

Print the letter *a* on the board. Point to the letter *a* and say: *This is the letter a. The letter a stands for the /af sound. Ask: What sound does the letter a stand for? (/a/)* Say: *The letter a stands for the first sound in apple and the middle sound in cat. Each time I point to the letter a, say /a/* Point to the letter *a* two more times as students respond by saying "/a/."



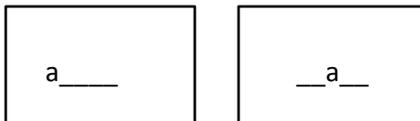
Guided Practice-Isolate Sound

INITIAL SOUND Give students a small index card and tell them to print the letter *a* on it. Say: *The letter a stands for the /a/ sound. The first sound in apple and add is /a/ I'm going to say some words. If the first sound in a word is /a/, hold up your "a" card and say /a/. If the first sound in a word is not /a/, put the card behind your back and don't say anything. The first word is apple.* Then follow the same procedure, having students discriminate the words *at, tree, apple, ask, actor, and bike*. Encourage students to think of other words for which the first sound is /a/.

MEDIAL SOUND Have students use their *a* card again. Say: *The letter a can also stand for the middle sound in a word. The middle sound in cat and back is /a/. I'm going to say some words. If the middle sound in a word is /a/, hold up the "a" card and say /a/. If the middle sound in a word is not /a/ put the card behind your back and don't say anything. The first word is cat.* Then follow the same procedure, having students discriminate the words *hat, bed, map, sack, fox, and pack*. Encourage students to think of other words for which the middle sound is /a/.

Word Work: Picture Sort

Print a_ and _a_ on two large index cards, as shown below:



Explain to students that they are going to do a picture sort. Tell them that you will show them a picture and say its name. They will listen and then decide if /a/ is the first or middle sound in the picture's name. Place the card with a_ in the top left corner of a pocket chart. Point to the card and say: *If /a/ is the first sound in the picture's name, we will put the picture here, below this card.* Place the card with _a_ in the top right corner of the pocket chart. Point to the card and say: *If /a/ is the middle sound in a picture's name, we will put the picture here, below this card.* Let's try one. Show the picture card of the hat. Say: *This is a hat.* Ask: *What's the name of this picture?* (Hat) Ask: *Is /a/ the first or middle sound in hat?* (Middle sound) Say: *Because /a/ is the middle sound in hat, I'll put the picture of the hat here.* Place the picture card of the hat below the card with _a_. Follow the same procedure with the remaining picture cards: *ax, cap, bath, map, bat, apple, cat, bag.*

Sound/Spelling Practice for Automaticity

Print four or five previously introduced sound/spellings on the board or on chart paper as shown below. There should be at least four lines of letters repeated in random order. Say: *Let's practice saying the sounds for letters. When I point to the left of a letter, I want everyone to think about its sound. When I tap under the letter, I want everyone to say the sound aloud. Point to the left of the letter t, pause for two seconds for "thinking time," and then tap under t to signal that students should respond by saying "It /."* Follow the same procedure, pointing to each letter from left to right. Make sure that each student in the group is responding. When the group is consistently answering all items correctly, call on individual students to identify specific sounds.

Corrective Feedback

If a student or students respond incorrectly, model the correct response for the entire group. Point to *a* and say: *The sound is /a/.* Point to the left of *a* and ask: *What's the sound?* Tap under the letter as students respond *"/a/."* To ensure mastery and automaticity, back up two sound/spellings before the error and continue according to the procedure described above.

| Questions or Observation | Benchmarks |
|---|---|
| (Point to the letter a.) What is the sound for this letter? (/a/) | Student can recognize short-vowel sounds. |
| In the word <i>map</i> , is /a/ the first sound or the middle sound? (middle sound) | Student can discriminate short vowels in initial and medial positions in words. |

