

Example session for teaching the letter **s**

Purpose

To learn to say a discrete phoneme, recognise and write the letter that represents that phoneme

Resources

Fabric snake

Card showing, on one side, a picture of a snake (mnemonic) in the shape of the letter **s** with the letter **s** superimposed in black on the snake; on the other side, the letter **s**

Small whiteboards, pens and wipes or paper and pencils

Procedure

Hear it and say it

Display the picture of a snake.



Make a hissing noise as you produce a snake from behind your back; show the children the **sssssnake** and make the snake into an **s** shape.

Weave your hand like a snake making an **s** shape, encouraging the children to do the same.

If any children in the room have names with the **s** sound in them, say their names, accentuating the **sssss** (e.g. **Ssssarah**, **Chrissssss**, **Sssssandip**).

Do the same with other words (e.g. **ssssand**, **bussss**) accepting suggestions from the children if they offer, but not asking for them.

See it and say it

On the card with the picture of the snake, move your finger down the snake from its mouth, saying **sssss** and saying **sssnake** when you reach its tail.

Repeat a number of times, encouraging the children to join in.

Write **s** next to the snake and say **ssssssssssss**.

Ask the children to repeat **ssssssssss**

Georgie's gym

Resources

Soft toy

Procedure

Use the soft toy to give instructions, 'Georgie says', for example:

Stand **u-p**.

Put your hands on your **kn-ee-s**, on your **f-ee-t**.

Put your finger on your **n-o-se**.

Bend one arm round your **b-a-ck**.

Wiggle your...

What's missing?

Resources

Set of any six CVC objects from the role-play area (e.g. hospital: **soap**, **pen**, chart, book, mug)

List of nine words for the teacher to read out, which includes the six objects and three additional items (e.g. **bed**, **sheet**, **pill**)

Soft toy (optional)

Procedure

Pretext: you (or the soft toy) need to check that you have collected together all the items you need, which are written on your list.

Display the six objects.

Say one of the words on the list using sound-talk, ask the children to repeat it and then tell their partners what it is.

The children look at the items in front of them to see if the object is there.

What's in the box?

Resources

Set of word cards (e.g. words containing sets 1 and 2 letters - see 'Bank of suggested words for practising reading and spelling' on page 69)

Set of objects or pictures corresponding to the word cards, hidden in a box

Soft toy (optional)

Procedure

Display a word card (e.g. **map**).

Go through the letter recognition and blending process appropriate to the

children's development (see 'Teaching blending for reading' on page 58).

Ask the toy or a child to find the object or picture in the box.

Variation 1 (to additionally develop vocabulary)

Attach some pictures to the whiteboard using reusable sticky pads or magnets

or display some objects.

Display a word card.

Go through the letter recognition and blending process appropriate to the children's development. *Variation 2* (when the children are becoming confident blenders)

The children sit in two lines opposite one another.

Give the children in one line an object or picture and the children in the other line

a word card.

The children with the word cards read their words and the children with objects or pictures sound-talk the name of their object or picture to the child sitting next to them.

Ask the children to hold up their words and objects or pictures

Ask a child to place the word card next to the corresponding picture or object.

Buried treasure

Purpose

To motivate children to read the words and so gain valuable reading practice

Resources

About eight cards, shaped like gold coins, with words and nonsense words on them made up from letters the children have been learning (e.g. **mop**, **cat**, **man**, **mip**, **pon**, **mon**), buried in the sand tray

Containers representing a treasure chest and a waste bin, or pictures of a treasure chest and a waste bin on large sheets of paper, placed flat on a table

Procedure

Ask the children to sort the coins into the treasure chest and the waste bin, putting

the coins with proper words on them (e.g. **man**) in the treasure chest and those with

meaningless words (e.g. **mon**) in the waste bin.

When children have blended the sounds to read a word a number of times on

different occasions, either overtly or under their breath, they will begin to read the

word 'automatically' without needing to blend. so the children sitting in the line opposite can see them.

Ask the children with word cards to stand up and go across to the child in the line opposite who has the corresponding object or picture.

All the children check that they have the right match.

Full circle

Resources

List of words (**sat**, **sit**, **sip**, **tip**, **tap**, **sap**, **sat**), magnetic whiteboards and letters

(s, a, t, p, i), one per pair of children

List of words (**pin**, **pit**, **sit**, **sat**, **pat**, **pan**, **pin**), magnetic whiteboards and letters

(s, a, t, p, i, n), one per pair of children

List of words (**pot**, **pod**, **pad**, **sad**, **mad**, **mat**, **pat**, **pot**), magnetic whiteboards

and letters (**p**, **t**, **d**, **m**, **s**, **o**, **a**), one per pair of children

List of words (**cat**, **can**, **man**, **map**, **mop**, **cop**, **cap**, **cat**), magnetic whiteboards

and letters (**c**, **t**, **n**, **m**, **p**, **a**, **o**), one per pair of children

List of words (**leg**, **peg**, **pet**, **pat**, **rat**, **ran**, **rag**, **lag**, **leg**), magnetic whiteboards

and letters (**l**, **g**, **p**, **t**, **r**, **n**, **e**, **a**), one per pair of children

List of words (**run**, **bun**, **but**, **bit**, **hit**, **him**, **dim**, **din**, **sin**, **sun**, **run**), magnetic

whiteboards and letters (**r**, **n**, **b**, **t**, **h**, **m**, **s**, **d**, **i**, **u**), one per pair of children

Procedure

Give pairs of children a magnetic whiteboard and the appropriate letters for one

game of 'Full circle'.

Say the first word (e.g. **sat**) and ask the children to make it with their letters.

Write **sat** on the whiteboard and explain that the children are going to keep

changing letters to make lots of words and that when they make **sat** again, they

may call out *Full circle*.

Leave **sat** written on the whiteboard throughout the activity.

Ask the children to sound-talk **sat** and then **sit** and then to change **sat** into **sit**

on their magnetic whiteboards.

Ask them to sound-talk and blend the word to check that it is correct.

Repeat with each word in the list until the first word comes round again and then

say *Full circle* with the children.

Matching

Resources

Three pictures and a caption for one of the pictures

Procedure

Display the caption.

Sound-talk and read the first word (e.g. p-a-t pat).

Ask the children to repeat after you or join in with you, depending on their

progress.

After sound-talking (if necessary) and reading the second word, say both words

(e.g. a, pat a).

Continue with the next word (e.g. d-o-g dog, pat a dog).

Display the pictures and ask the children which picture the caption belongs to.

Note: As children get more practice with the high-frequency words, it should not be

necessary to continue sound-talking them.

Say it and write it

Move your finger slowly down the snake from its mouth, this time saying the letter formation patter: *Round the snake's head, slide down his back and round his tail.*

Repeat a couple of times.

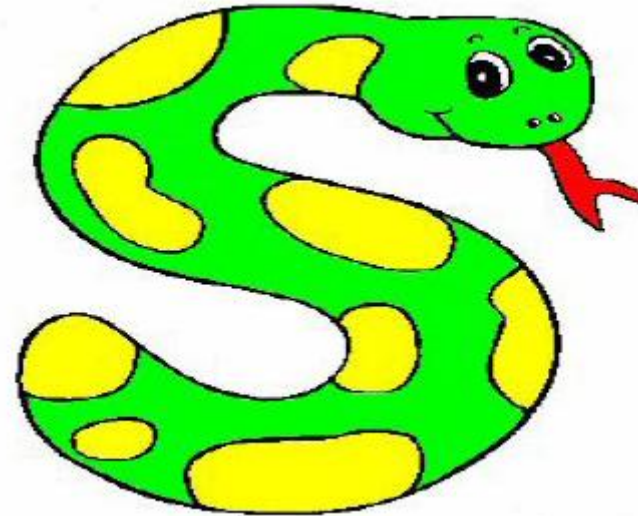
Repeat a couple more times with the children joining in the patter as they watch you.

Ask the children to put their 'writing finger' or 'pencil' in the air and follow you in making an **s** shape, also saying the patter.

Repeat a couple of times.

Ask them to do the same again, either tracing **s** in front of them on the carpet or sitting in a line and tracing **s** on the back of the child in front.

Finally, the children write **s** on whiteboards or paper at tables.



Quickwrite letters

Resources

Small whiteboards, pens and wipes for each child or pair of children

Procedure

Say a letter-sound (with the mnemonic and action if necessary) and ask the children to write it, saying the letter formation pattern as they do so.

If the children are sharing a whiteboard both write, one after the other.

Sound buttons

Resources

Words on cards or on magnetic or an interactive whiteboard with sound buttons as illustrated

Procedure

This sequence of suggestions will require building over a few days.

- 1 Display a VC word (e.g. **it**, **at**) and point to or draw a sound button under each letter.
 - 2 Sound-talk and then tell the children the word.
 - 3 Repeat, but ask the children to tell their partners the word after you have sound-talked it.
 - 4 Repeat 2 and 3 with a CVC word.
 - 5 Repeat 4 with a couple more words.
 - 6 Display another word, ask the children to sound-talk it with you and then say the word to their partners.
 - 7 Repeat 6 with a couple more words.
 - 8 Display another word and ask the children to sound-talk it in chorus, wait for you to repeat the sounds after them and then say the word to their partners.
 - 9 Repeat 8 with more words.
 - 10 Finally, display another word and ask the children to sound-talk the word in chorus and then, without your repeating the sounds, say the word to their partners.
- Repeat 10 with more words.

Matching words and pictures

Procedure

Lay out the word cards and picture cards on a table.

Ask the children to match the word cards to the pictures

Introducing two-syllable words for reading

Resources

Short list of two-syllable words

Procedure

Write a two-syllable word on the whiteboard making a slash between the two syllables (e.g. **sun/set**).

Sound-talk the first syllable and blend it: **s-u-n sun**.

Sound-talk the second syllable and blend it: **s-e-t set**.

Say both syllables: **sunset**.

Repeat and ask the children to join in.

Repeat with another word.

Quickwrite words

Resources

Large three-phoneme frame drawn on a magnetic whiteboard

Display of letters required for words

List of CVC words (visible only to the teacher)

Hand-held phoneme frames on whiteboards, pens and wipes, one per child or pair of children

Procedure

Say a CVC word and, holding up three fingers, sound-talk it, pointing to a finger at a time for each phoneme.

Ask the children to do the same and watch to check that they are correct.

Holding up the three fingers on one hand, write the letters of the word in the phoneme frame, demonstrating how to refer to the letter display to recall a letter.

Ask the children to write the word in their phoneme frames.

Say another word and ask the children to sound-talk it to their partners using their fingers.

Ask them to sound-talk it in chorus for you to write it.

Repeat 5 and 6 but leave the last letter of the word for the children to write on their own.

Ask them to sound-talk (with fingers) and write more words you say.

Teaching reading and writing captions

Matching

Resources

Three pictures and a caption for one of the pictures

Procedure

Display the caption.

Sound-talk and read the first word (e.g. p-a-t pat).

Ask the children to repeat after you or join in with you, depending on their progress.

After sound-talking (if necessary) and reading the second word, say both words (e.g. a, pat a).

Continue with the next word (e.g. d-o-g dog, pat a dog).

Display the pictures and ask the children which picture the caption belongs to.

Note: As children get more practice with the high-frequency words, it should not be necessary to continue sound-talking them.

Shared reading

When reading a shared text to the children for the purpose of familiarising them with print conventions (direction, one-to-one word correspondence, etc.) locate occasional VC and CVC words comprising the letters the children have learned, sound-talk and blend them.

Demonstration writing

Resources

Picture of subjects that have VC and CVC names (e.g. a cat sitting in a hat)

Procedure

Display and discuss the picture.

Ask the children to help you write a caption for the picture (e.g. **a cat in a hat**).

Ask them to say the caption all together a couple of times and then say it again to their partners.

Ask them to say it again all together two or three times.

Ask the children to tell you the first word.

Ask what letters are needed and write it.

Remind the children that a space is needed between words and put a mark where the next word will start.

Ask the children to say the caption again.

Ask for the next word and ask what letters are needed.

Repeat for each word.

Shared writing

When writing in front of the children, take the occasional opportunity to ask them to help you spell words by telling you which letters to write.

Independent writing

When the children are writing, for example in role-play areas, their letter awareness along with their ability to segment will allow them to make a good attempt at writing many of the words they wish to use. Even though some of their spellings may be inaccurate, the experience gives them further practice in segmentation and, even more importantly, gives them experience in composition and helps them see themselves as writers.

Phoneme frame

Resources

Large two-phoneme or three-phoneme frame drawn on a magnetic or interactive whiteboard as illustrated

Selection of magnetic letters (e.g. sets 1 and 2 letters) displayed on a whiteboard

List of words (visible only to the teacher)

Small phoneme frames, each with a selection of magnetic letters, or six-letter fans, one per child or pair of children

Soft toy (optional)

Procedure

This sequence of suggestions will require building over a few days. Children should be able to spell VC words before moving on to spell CVC words.

Say a VC word (e.g. **at**) and then say it in sound-talk.

Say another VC word (e.g. **it**) and ask the children to tell their partners what it would be in sound-talk.

Demonstrate finding the letter **i** from the selection of magnetic letters and put it in the first square on phoneme frame and the letter **t** in the second square, sound-talk **i-t** and then say **it**.

Say another VC word (e.g. **in**) and ask the children to tell their partners what it would be in sound-talk.

Ask the children to tell you what to put in the first square in the phoneme frame and then in the second.

Ask the children to make the word on their own phoneme frames or fans.

If all the children have frames or fans, ask them to check that they have the same answer as their partners. If the children are sharing, they ask their partners