



EDITABLE VISUAL LESSON PACK

BUILD • CHANGE • READ

Short a /ă/

LEARNER GOAL

I can read and spell short-a CVC words by attending to every grapheme.

Year 1 • Unit 1: I Belong application
Pathway B model • 40-45 minutes

EXPLICIT • SYSTEMATIC • CUMULATIVE • DIAGNOSTIC

Program year, Journey Route and literacy pathway are separate decisions.



Educator lesson at a glance

A Pathway B model for previously taught consonants and the short-a grapheme-phoneme correspondence.

PURPOSE

Map, blend, segment, build, read and spell short-a CVC words.

ASSUMED PRIOR CODE

m, s, t, p, n, c, f and short a have been explicitly taught.

WORD CHAIN

map → mat → sat → sap → cap → can → fan

MATERIALS

Letter tiles • phoneme frames • word cards • decodable text • response board

SUCCESS

Attend to every grapheme; blend or build the word; check meaning after decoding.

REVIEW
5

HEAR
5

MAP
8

BUILD
10

READ
8

CHECK
4

Adjust the pathway from current diagnostic evidence - never from age, grade label or program year alone.



Instructional fidelity

Keep the decoding routine explicit. Meaning supports comprehension after - not instead of - word reading.

DO

1 Look at every grapheme.

2 Say or select each sound.

3 Blend through the whole word.

4 Check the decoded word's meaning.

DO NOT PROMPT

Look at the picture and guess.

What word would make sense?

Use only the first letter.

Memorize the word shape.

MEANING STILL MATTERS

After the learner decodes the word, confirm meaning with an object, action, definition, picture or sentence. Meaning is the check - not the guessing strategy.



Visual lesson schedule

Preview the routine and mark each finished step. Offer a movement or regulation pause between high-demand sections.

1

REVIEW

Read known sounds

2

HEAR

Find /ă/ in spoken words

3

MAP

Connect /ă/ to a

4

BUILD

Change one grapheme

5

READ

Read the decodable text

6

CHECK

Fresh word + reflection

MOVEMENT / REGULATION BREAK AVAILABLE



Target grapheme: a

Say the sound cleanly: /ă/ - without adding 'uh'. Use the pronunciation appropriate to the learner's language variety.

a

/ă/

TEACHER MODEL

“This grapheme is a. It represents /ă/ in these words. Watch: a, /ă/. Your turn in your response form.”

I can respond by...

SPEAK

SIGN

AAC

POINT / LOOK

ACT / DRAW

PRIVATE / PASS



Accessible response choices

Assess the literacy target without making speech, handwriting, eye contact or fine-motor speed an extra barrier.

I can respond by...

SPEAK

SIGN

AAC

POINT / LOOK

ACT / DRAW

PRIVATE / PASS

READING RESPONSE

• speak • sign • AAC sound/word • point • eye gaze • select • type

SPELLING RESPONSE

• letter tiles • magnetic letters • keyboard • eye-gaze frame • adapted pencil

REGULATION

• movement • quiet pause • reduced display • one item at a time • headphones

PARTNER ACTION

• wait • confirm selection • keep array stable • do not complete the answer



Cumulative sound review cards

Print, cut and show one card at a time. Only include correspondences that have already been explicitly taught.

m /m/

s /s/

t /t/

p /p/

n /n/

c /k/

f /f/

a /ă/



Hear it: find /ă/

This is an oral phonemic-awareness task. No print is needed until after the sound is secure.

MODEL: “map - /m/ /ă/ /p/. I hear /ă/ in the middle.”

Does the word contain /ă/?

map

YES / NO

sun

YES / NO

cat

YES / NO

fish

YES / NO

fan

YES / NO

top

YES / NO

Accept: yes/no cards • switch • eye gaze • thumbs/gesture • AAC • spoken response

I can respond by...

SPEAK

SIGN

AAC

POINT / LOOK

ACT / DRAW

PRIVATE / PASS



Map it: connect sound to grapheme

Move from phoneme to grapheme explicitly. Keep the sound positions visible.

WORD: map

/m/

/ă/

/p/



m

a

p

“Three phonemes: /m/ /ă/ /p/. Three graphemes: m a p. Read through the word: map.”

ONE SOUND POSITION • ONE GRAPHEME TILE



Printable phoneme-grapheme frame

Say the word. Segment the sounds. Move or write one grapheme into each box. Then blend and read.

Name: _____ Date: _____

WORD: _____

1. SEGMENT THE PHONEMES

2. BLEND AND READ THE WORD

I checked every grapheme. ☐



Build the first word: map

Model once. Then the learner builds in an accessible response mode.

1

SAY

map

2

SEGMENT

/m/ /ă/ /p/

3

BUILD

m a p

4

BLEND

map

5

CHECK

A map shows where places are.

Prompt: "Look at every grapheme. Select each sound. Blend."



Word-chain instructions

Change one grapheme at a time. Ask the learner to name the position and reread the whole word.

1

READ

Read the current word through every grapheme.

2

SAY

Say the new word and segment its phonemes.

3

CHANGE

Replace only the grapheme that changes.

4

REREAD

Blend the new word and check its meaning.

ASK: “Which grapheme changed - first, middle or last?”



Word-chain teaching board

Use tiles on the left. Record what changed on the right. Stop before accuracy or regulation decreases.

map**START****mat**

Changed: _____

sat

Changed: _____

sap

Changed: _____

cap

Changed: _____

can

Changed: _____

fan**FRESH READ****READ THE WHOLE WORD AFTER EVERY CHANGE**



Printable word cards 1 of 2

Cut on the outside lines. Use the blank card for a learner-created word or a fresh-check word.

map

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

mat

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

sat

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

sap

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

Use a plain card during the fresh check so memorized card position cannot cue the answer.



Printable word cards 2 of 2

Cut on the outside lines. Use the blank card for a learner-created word or a fresh-check word.

cap

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

can

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

fan

LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

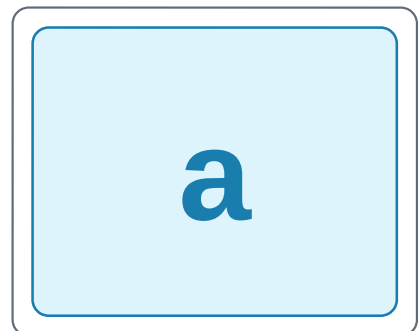
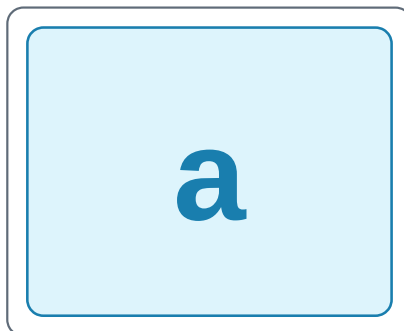
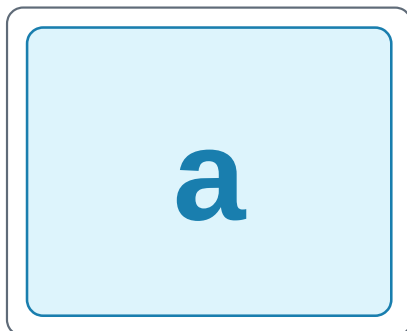
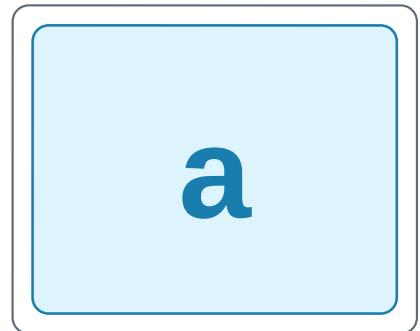
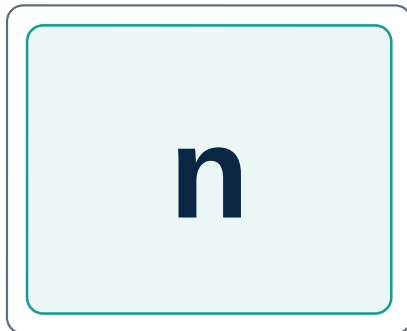
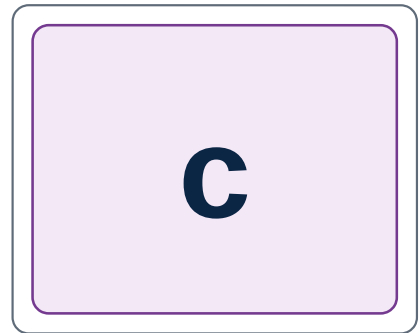
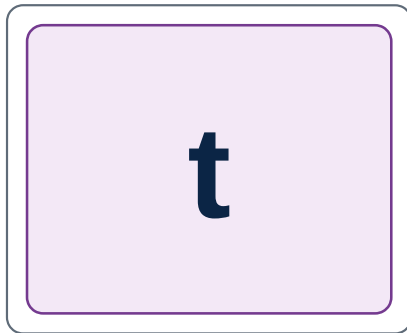
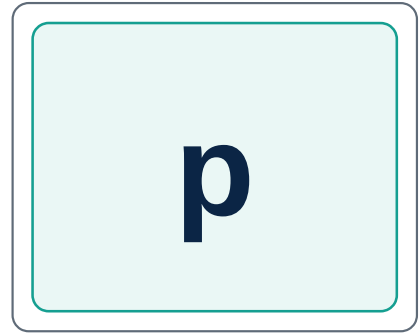
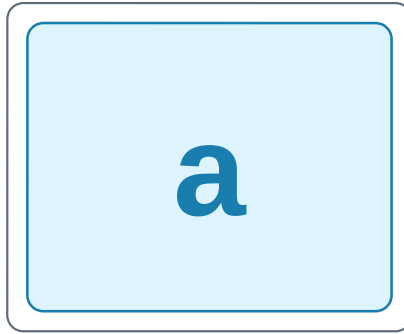
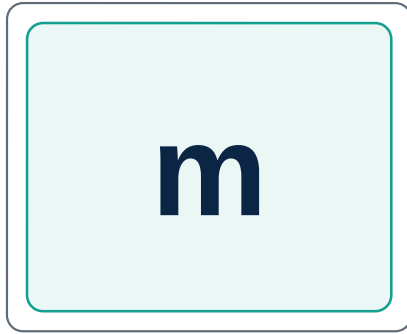
LOOK • SOUND • BLEND • CHECK

Use a plain card during the fresh check so memorized card position cannot cue the answer.



Printable letter tiles

Print, cut and laminate if useful. Duplicate tiles before printing when a word needs the same grapheme twice.



ACCESS: enlarge tiles • add tactile markers • mount on Velcro • use eye-gaze spacing • recreate digitally



Encoding sheet

Say the word. Segment. Represent each phoneme with a grapheme. Read back what you wrote or built.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. mat

Read back: _____

2. cap

Read back: _____

3. fan

Read back: _____

FRESH WORD: adult chooses one untaught-in-this-lesson item from the taught code.



Decodable mini-text

All regular code in this text uses the assumed taught set. a, has and the must be previously mapped high-frequency words before use.

SAM'S MAP

Sam has a map.

Sam can tap the map.

Sam sat by the map.

BEFORE READING

Confirm that a, has and the are already mapped. If not, teach them explicitly or revise the text. Do not ask the learner to guess them from context.

READ ONCE FOR ACCURACY • AGAIN FOR MEANING



Meaning and comprehension check

Ask after decoding. The learner may answer in any established response form.

WHO HAS A MAP?

Sam • the partner • not sure

WHAT CAN SAM TAP?

the map • a fan • not sure

WHERE DID SAM SIT?

by the map • on the map • not sure

SHOW WHAT 'MAP' MEANS.

choose an object, definition, drawing or AAC response

If decoding was effortful, reread the sentence before asking the meaning question. Do not use the question to cue the word.



Authentic application: map clue

Use after the learner reads map accurately. This connects decoding to a real purpose without turning context into a guessing strategy.

READ THE CLUE

**Tap the map.
Find the star.**



APPLICATION

Place a simple classroom map beside the card. The learner reads the clue, taps the map and locates the marked place.

**If the learner cannot decode map, return to grapheme-by-grapheme support.
Do not say, “Look at the map picture - what word is it?”**



Journey Route 1: access the code

Keep the literacy target while reducing display, motor and expressive-language demands.

1

ONE ITEM AT A TIME

Present one grapheme or one word, with predictable placement.

2

MATCH BEFORE RECALL

Match identical graphemes, then choose the target from two.

3

BUILD WITH ACCESSIBLE SELECTION

Use eye gaze, switches, pointing, partner-assisted scanning or AAC.

4

READ THROUGH A RELIABLE RESPONSE

Select the sound, select the word, or confirm the partner's blend.

SUCCESS = ACCURATE CODE RESPONSE WITH ACCESS



Journey Route 2: build, change and read

Use the full word chain with visual supports. Fade support from current diagnostic evidence.

1

Build map from segmented phonemes.

2

Change one grapheme to make mat.

3

Name first, middle or last position.

4

Continue through the word chain.

5

Read each new word in a short phrase.

6

Complete one fresh read or spelling check.

Use: natural cue → wait → visual → gesture/model → direct support. Record the least support needed.



Journey Route 3: explain and extend

Increase reasoning and transfer while preserving explicit attention to the code.

1

EXPLAIN

Which grapheme changed? Which phoneme changed?

2

COMPARE

Sort words by first, middle or last phoneme.

3

CREATE

Build a new real or playful pseudo-word from taught code and read it.

4

TRANSFER

Find short-a words in a new cumulative decodable passage.

DEEPER THINKING DOES NOT MEAN GUESSING FROM CONTEXT



Fresh check

Use a new item from the already taught code. Remove lesson-position cues and record the response and support level.

READ

am

Optional alternative: use another cumulative word appropriate to the learner's taught sequence.

SPELL / BUILD

Say: "mat"

Response: _____ Support code: _____

Do not call a check 'independent' if the adult points to the correct grapheme, mouths the sound, narrows the array after the response, or repeats until the learner changes the answer.



Literacy evidence form

Record accuracy, response mode and support separately. One brief diagnostic note is more useful than a long worksheet score.

Learner: _____ Pathway: _____ Date: _____

TARGET

Grapheme-phoneme correspondence • blending • segmenting • reading • spelling

ITEM + RESPONSE

Record exactly what was shown/said and what the learner did.

RESPONSE MODE

speech • sign • AAC • point • eye gaze • tile • type • write

SUPPORT CODE

independent • wait • visual • gesture/model • direct support

DIAGNOSTIC NOTE

What pattern should shape the next lesson?

A-K-I-C-G: Access ☐ Knowledge ☐ Independence ☐ Communication ☐ Generalization ☐



Family practice and educator fidelity

Keep home practice short and successful. Use the educator check before planning the next lesson.

OPTIONAL HOME PRACTICE: 3 MINUTES

1. Show a, m and t.
2. Ask for /ă/.
3. Build mat together.
4. Read mat through every grapheme.
5. Stop while it is successful.

EDUCATOR CHECK

- ☐ Target code was previously taught or explicitly introduced.
- ☐ Learner attended to every grapheme.
- ☐ Prompts did not invite picture/context guessing.
- ☐ Meaning was checked after decoding.
- ☐ Response mode did not add an avoidable barrier.
- ☐ Support level and diagnostic pattern were recorded.
- ☐ Next lesson follows current evidence, not program year.

NEXT TEACHING MOVE: _____