

# Fun with Phonics

## Teaching Tips, Activities and Clipart

Grades 1-3

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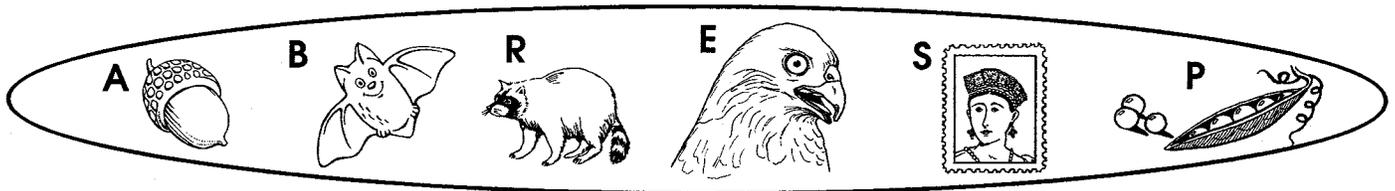
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## Short and Long Vowels: Teaching Tips and Activities

**Introducing the Skill:** Short vowels are generally taught before long vowel sounds, even though they are more difficult to discriminate in oral language. This is because the spelling of the long vowel sounds often involves vowel pairs or digraphs and silent letter patterns, such as in igh. It is important that students are introduced to both early in their language instruction so that misspellings do not become habituated and difficult to remediate. To determine if your students are ready for long vowel patterns and rules, observe their writing. If they are attempting to use letter sequences to record long vowel sounds, they are ready for instruction. For example, bote and boat indicates a readiness for this skill.

Introduce and reinforce the recognition of long vowel patterns with big books, chart poems and rhymes that incorporate them. Ask students to locate and underline the spelling patterns on the chart. Choose a key word from the rhyme and corresponding picture for the word wall, displaying it under that vowel as a reference for shared, guided and independent reading, as well as writing time. Students may refer to them in order to decode and encode new words using analogy. For example, if light is spelled l-i-g-h-t, then might will be spelled m-i-g-h-t.

**Modeling Articulation:** The short vowel sounds are more difficult to articulate than long vowel sounds; as a result, their spelling may be confused. To articulate the short /a/ sound, have students say "aaaa-choooo" and "baaaaa" with the tongue touching the back of the bottom teeth. For /e/, say "egg" or "Ed". The sound for /i/ is articulated with the tip of the tongue behind the bottom teeth, like a mouse. For the sound of /o/ model the shape of your mouth and have students yawn, then say "off, on". Ask students to imitate a baby that wants to be picked up by making the /u/ sound.

**Short Vowels:** There are six single vowel letters. These are a.e.i.o.u and y. A vowel is usually short if it occurs between two consonants; for example: cat, hen, pig, fox and bug.

**Long Vowels:** Long vowels say their name. Have students identify the vowel sound they hear in: cake, cheese, pie, cone, and fruit. In words with a consonant + single vowel, try a long sound; for example: we, go. Most long vowel sounds require two letters. If a one-syllable word has two vowels, the first vowel usually stands for the long sound and the second one is silent in digraphs ai, ea, oa and ui; for example: rain, beach, boat, and fruit.

### Useful Phonics Rules

**Silent e rule:** For words with a consonant + vowel + consonant + e pattern, try a long vowel sound especially when the vowel is a or i; for example: mad-made, pet-Pete, rip-ripe, hop-hope, cut-cute.

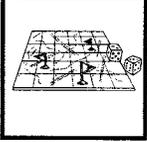
**Y rule:** If y is the only vowel at the end of one-syllable word, it has a long /i/ sound. Example: my. If y is the only vowel at the end of a two-syllable word, it has a long /e/ sound; for example: puppy. Have students clap the syllables in the picture words for "y as i and e" to reinforce this rule.

### Picture Card Activities

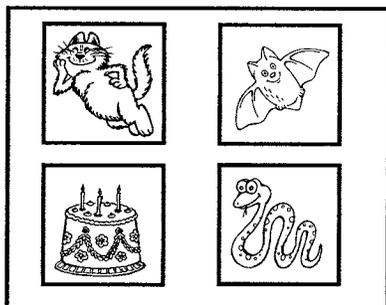
The section on word families and the forms in the last section contain a number of activities that reinforce and extend students' skills in hearing, reading and recording vowel sounds and spelling patterns. The following picture card activities are specifically suited to vowels:

1. **Phonemic Awareness:** Prepare picture cards for two contrasting short or long vowels or the short and long sound of the same vowel; for example: cat and jet, can and cane. Present them in random order. Students are to give the thumbs up signal for the /a/ sound, down for the /e/ sound or up for the long vowel sound, down for the short vowel sound.

2. **Picture Sort – Compare and Contrast:** Follow the procedure for the consonant picture sorts. Provide copies of the page with the picture cards of two contrasting short or long vowels, such as a and e. Students are to cut and paste them in the appropriate categories. When both short and long vowels have been introduced, provide copies of the pages for the short and long sound of the same vowel. Have students cut and sort them according to whether the picture name has the short or long sound.

<b>a</b>	<b>e</b>	<b>short a</b>	<b>long a</b>
			
			

3. **Rhyming Pairs:** The picture cards for both short and long vowel words contain rhyming pairs for students to match. This may be a whole class cut-and-paste activity or the pictures can be made into cards for a language center; for example: cat and bat, hen and ten, ring and king, bun and sun, cake and snake, bee and tree, boat and goat.



4. **Hearing Sounds in Sequence:** This activity is designed to assist students in hearing and recording each sound in a phonetically regular word, such as pet. Begin by introducing a key picture for a short vowel and say its name. For example "cat". Students are to stretch out the word, saying it slowly, count the number of sounds they hear and show this by holding up one finger for each sound, saying "I hear \_\_\_ sounds." Next they are to write the word, saying it sound by sound and recording the letter they would expect to see for each one. When this is completed, display the correct spelling and have students compare the number of sounds they heard to the numbers of letter they recorded, saying "I hear \_\_\_ sounds, I see \_\_\_ letters because \_\_\_\_." Discuss the match or mismatch of sounds to letters and the reasons why this occurred with reference to the spelling pattern. In regular short-vowel words, there is a 1:1 correspondence. Examine the position of the vowel. Is it between two consonants? For many long vowel words, one sound is represented with two letters, so there will be a mismatch of the number of sounds and letters. Discuss this with students.



c - a - t

"I hear 3 sounds"

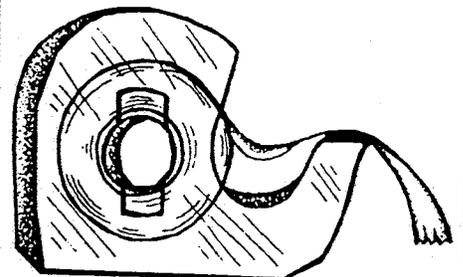
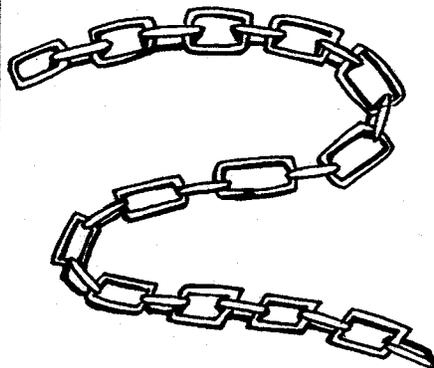
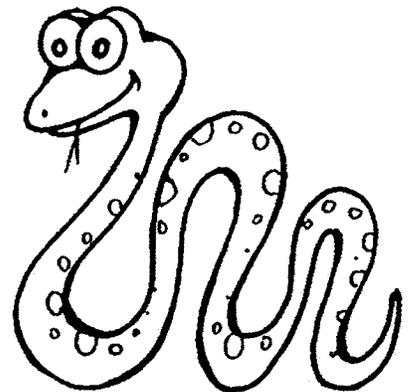
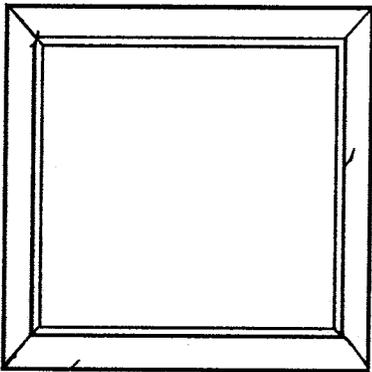
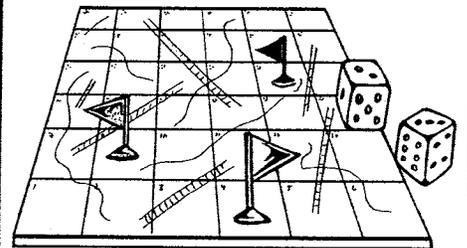
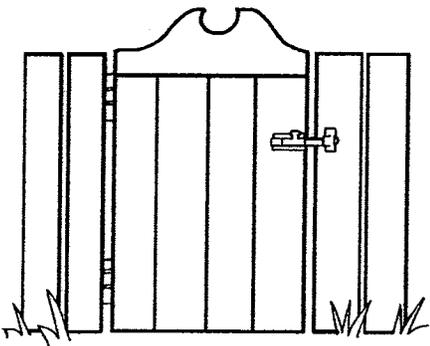
"I see 3 letters"

cat

Many of the activities for initial consonants are also applicable to developing student skills in discriminating between and reinforcing vowel sounds. Refer to the previous section for a description of these activities.

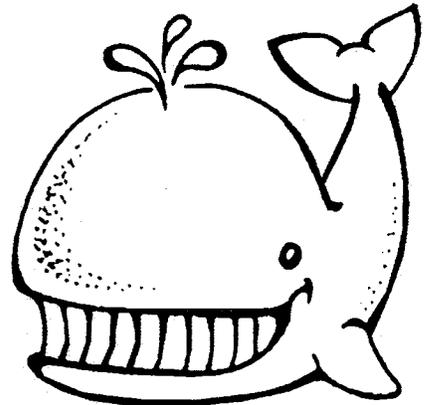
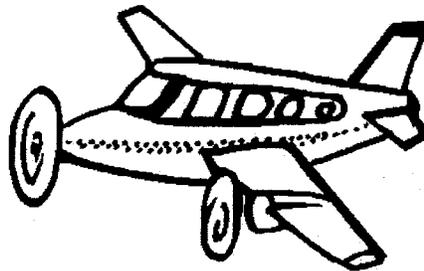
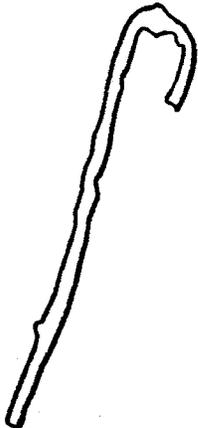
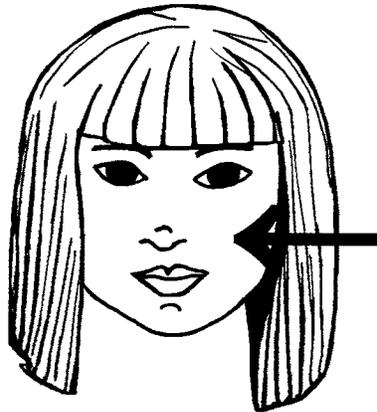
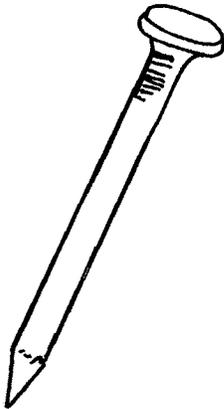
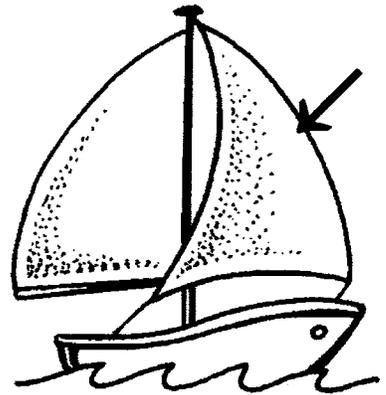
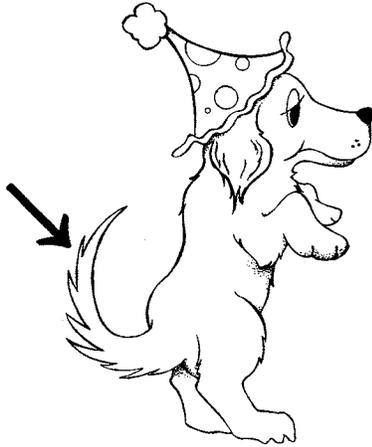
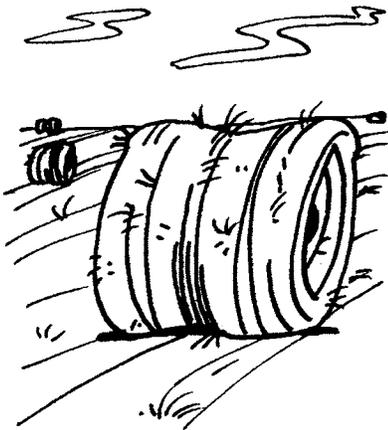
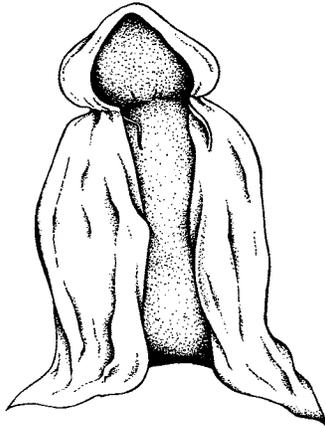
Long

a



Long

a



Short

a

