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# Introduction

Purposeful practice is essential for improvement and mastery of literacy skills. When given proper instruction, materials, and opportunities to practice and apply what they learn, all students can experience literacy success.

Over the past two decades, scientific research has revealed how expert readers read and what goes wrong when students fail to read. One of the most important findings is how important early intervention is to avoiding problems for students at risk for reading difficulties (Torgenson, Wagner, and Rashotte 1994).

Children who fall behind in first-grade reading have a one-in-eight chance of ever catching up to grade level (Juel 1994). Seventy-five percent of children whose help is delayed to age nine or later continue to struggle throughout their school careers (Francis et. al. 1996). If help can be given at an earlier age, children may be more successful in their later years.

Allowing children opportunities with independent practice can give children the help needed to be successful. Whole-class lessons are most effective when the materials and activities involved are available to small groups or individuals for further application. Students need to practice what they have learned in order to assimilate the new information into their current knowledge base. Through literacy centers, students gain opportunities to manipulate, repeat, share, and expand upon the presented materials at their own pace. The literacy centers in this book provide the meaningful, independent practice that is a natural follow up to whole-class instruction.

Children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Classrooms that incorporate literacy centers into their daily routine become less teacher directed and more student driven. As students' knowledge grows, they learn to think critically, make decisions, and solve problems. Additionally, they demonstrate the personal characteristics of responsibility, self-esteem, self-management, and integrity needed to function in today's society.

## What Is a Center?

Centers are effective teaching tools developed to support and reinforce whole-class instruction. They offer teachers a way to engage students of various abilities in active learning. Centers are designed to provide purposeful activities that encourage students to work independently, allowing the teacher to focus on differentiated instruction with students who may need extra support. Various learning tasks along with multiple degrees of teacher interaction are involved.

Centers provide a motivating and engaging learning environment. They are process oriented and offer opportunities for students to practice new skills and to problem solve at their own pace.

# Introduction (cont.)

## Why Are Literacy Centers Valuable?

An optimal literacy learning environment is created when whole-group instructional periods are combined with reinforcement and independent practice in literacy centers. Through independent practice with literacy centers, students drive their learning.

With *Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers*, students gain opportunities to manipulate, repeat, share, and expand upon the presented materials at their own pace. Students learn best when they are actively involved in their own learning process. *Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers* allows this process to happen naturally and effectively. The literacy centers in this book focus on the individual needs of each student.

Research shows that literacy centers have several instructional advantages:

- Literacy centers address different learning styles better than paper and pencil tasks; they also motivate students by providing varied stimulating activities (Wait and Stephens 1989).
- Literacy centers result in improved communication between home and school (Optiz 1995).
- Literacy centers play an important role in meeting the needs of each student (Huyett 1994).

## Why Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers?

Research has made great strides in identifying critical skills that consistently relate to reading success. The National Reading Panel (2000) concluded that the need for systematic and explicit instruction in the following five components of reading is critical to reading success: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It is essential to understand each one of these five components in order to provide the best literacy center experiences for students.

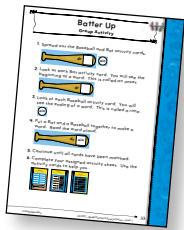
*Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers* are rooted in the five components of reading and are also aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Each center is differentiated, providing students an optimal learning experience at their individual learning levels. Basing the development of the centers on these components ensures that with focused, purposeful instruction and practice, the needs of all students in all areas of literacy development will be met.

On the following pages, you will get an in-depth look at each of the five components of reading. These overviews provide a clear and concise analysis of the components to assist not only in your literacy center-design and implementation but also in planning your overall reading instruction.

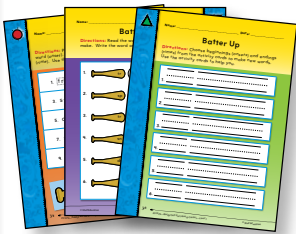


# Batter Up

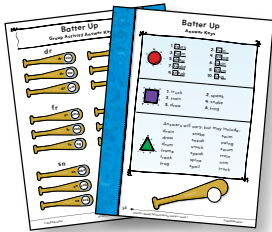
## Onset and Rime



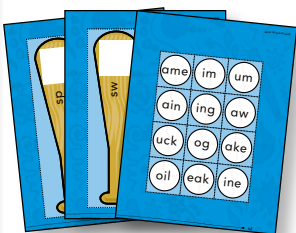
### Group Activity



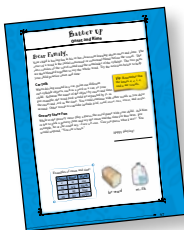
### Differentiated Activity Sheets



### Answer Keys



### Activity Cards



### Family Letter

With *Batter Up: Onset and Rime*, students reinforce and strengthen their ability to manipulate beginning sounds (onsets) and ending sounds (rimes) to create new words with this fun baseball-themed center.

### Center Objectives:

- Students will blend sounds to say single-syllable words.
- Students will isolate and produce onsets and rimes in single-syllable words.

### Center Standards:

- **CCSS:** Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds
- **Content:** Use structural analysis to decode unknown words
- **Language:** Communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting

### Materials:

- Group Activity (page 33)
- Differentiated Activity Sheets (pages 34–36)
- Answer Keys (pages 37–38)
- Activity Cards (pages 39–46)
- Family Letter (page 47)
- scissors

### Recommended Literature:

Burleigh, Robert. *Clang! Clang! Beep! Beep! Listen to the City*. New York: Simon and Schuster and Paula Wiseman Books, 2009.

Cameron, Polly. *I Can't Said the Ant*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 2003.

McCall, Francis and Patricia Keeler. *A Huge Hog Is a Big Pig*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2009.

Rovetch, Lissa. *Ook the Book*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001.

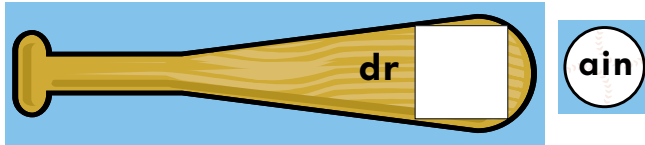
Seuss, Dr. *Hop on Pop*. New York: Random House Books For Young Readers, 1991.

# Batter Up

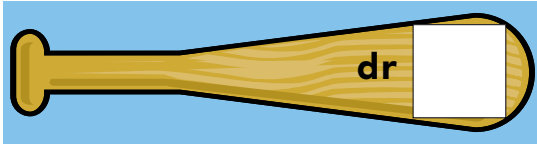
## Group Activity



1. Spread out the Baseball and Bat activity cards.



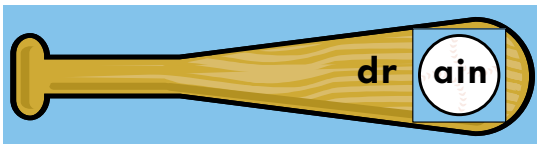
2. Look at each Bat activity card. You will see the beginning of a word. This is called an *onset*.



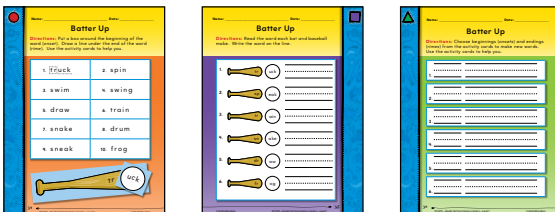
3. Look at each Baseball activity card. You will see the ending of a word. This is called a *rime*.



4. Put a Bat and a Baseball together to make a word. Read the word aloud.



5. Continue until all cards have been matched.
6. Complete your assigned activity sheet. Use the activity cards to help you.

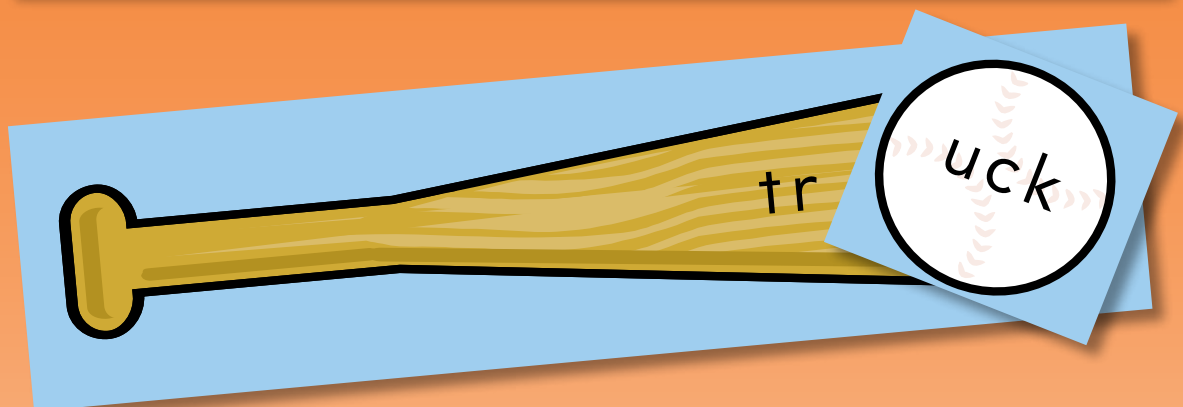


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Batter Up

**Directions:** Put a box around the beginning of the word (*onset*). Draw a line under the end of the word (*rime*). Use the activity cards to help you.

1. truck	2. spin
3. swim	4. swing
5. draw	6. train
7. snake	8. drum
9. sneak	10. frog



# Batter Up

## Onset and Rime

### Dear Family,

Your child is having fun in his or her classroom learning about onset and rime. The *onset* of a word is the initial consonant or consonant blend before the vowel. The *rime* consists of the vowel sound and the remainder of the syllable. The two parts are then blended together to say the whole word. Try the activities below to help your child practice onset and rime.

#### Car Talk

When driving around in a car, point out different one-syllable objects, such as a *park* or a *van*, to your child. Separate the name of the object by onset and rime. For example, the word *park* would be separated by *p-* as the onset and *-ark* as the rime. You could continue with other words as you drive around. Other words to consider include *bird*, *road*, *store*, *tree*, *street*, and *stripe*.

**Tip:** Remember that the letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u* are vowels.

#### Grocery Store Fun

While at the grocery store, play a guess-the-word game with your child. Ask him or her to pick a grocery item and say the onset and the rime for that item. For example, he or she could say, "I see a *b-ean*. Can you guess what I see?" You would respond, "You see a bean."

Happy Playing!

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Examples of onset and rime:

Onset	Rime	Word
c	ar	car
bl	ack	black
tr	ap	trap
str	ipe	stripe



br-ead



m-ilk