



COUNTDOWN

Essential Foundational Literacy Skill
Instruction for Kindergarten

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

 **RGR**
REALLY GREAT READING

To help you explore this
Countdown sample document,
visit ExploreCountdown.online.



Countdown is a set of supplemental literacy lessons, structured in units, for students in kindergarten. The lessons provide playful, targeted instruction in alphabet knowledge, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, concepts of print, and handwriting.

Overview

Countdown's phonological and phonemic awareness instruction helps students learn to play with the sounds in words in ways that prepare them to master the alphabetic principle; that is, the idea that words are made out of sounds and that symbols (letters) are used to represent sounds. Students then focus on mastering letter-sound correspondences and applying this knowledge to encoding and decoding simple one-syllable words. Along the way, students play rhyming games and master a set of high-frequency words. By the middle of the year, typically developing students are ready to transition into more complex phonics concepts, and they begin reading phrases and sentences independently.

28
UNITS



ONLY
28 weeks
of instruction

5
LESSONS



JUST
15–20 min.
a day*

*Plus additional time for whole group, small group, and independent practice.

The program is designed for young students in kindergarten who are beginning to learn the alphabetic principle. *Countdown* instruction can begin as early as the first week of kindergarten. There is no prerequisite knowledge for students entering *Countdown*.

More importantly, the program is designed by teachers for teachers. *Countdown*'s unique design allows for fast-paced, sequential delivery of vital instruction and practice. *Countdown* offers the essentials. A team of teachers and literacy professionals has worked hard to remove all the non-essential information. Teacher talk is well-organized, concise, and precise. No prerequisite knowledge is required to teach the program. It's great for classrooms that need a simpler structure, a clearer path, and better instruction to ensure that their students learn how to read.

Countdown can also be used in an intervention setting for children who are slower at acquiring skills, missing some key foundational knowledge, or have memory issues and need more repetitions to become proficient.

A Key Program in Really Great Reading's Phonics Suite

Countdown is a full year foundational reading skills solution designed to be started at the beginning of kindergarten. It provides instruction that precedes the second book of Really Great Reading's *Blast Foundations* program.

Where Does It Fit in My Day?

Countdown is an essential supplement to any core kindergarten reading program. It's designed to be taught in **15–20 minutes a day of direct, explicit alphabetic knowledge, phonemic awareness, and phonics instruction, 5 days a week*, with additional direct instruction in handwriting and concepts of print woven throughout each unit.** This powerful, sequential, and efficient exposure to key literacy concepts ensures that your students establish a firm foundation in the subskills that lead to strong decoding and fluent reading.

In This Document

This document contains all the information you'll need to explore *Countdown*. It has information about the strands of instruction, a scope and sequence, the unit planners, and excerpts from the *Countdown* teacher guides. The bulk of this document is examples of many of the standard activities from Units 1–16. In order to explore each activity, you will also need to access the correlated online component (*Countdown Online*) at **ExploreCountdown Online**. This powerful online tool is organized into a sequence of units, lessons, and parts, each aligned to an activity in this sample document.

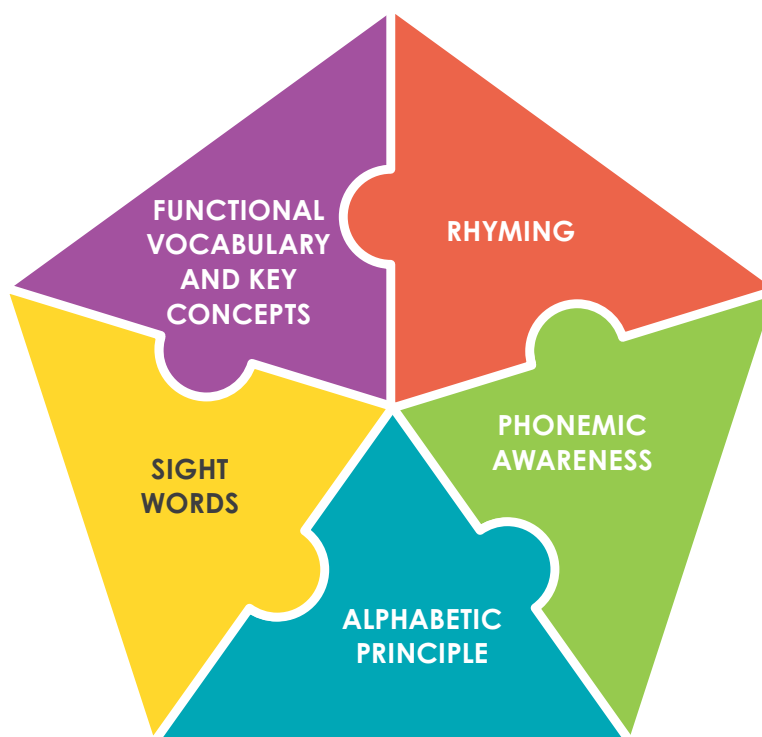
*Plus additional time for whole group, small group, and independent practice.

Designed for Kindergarten Teachers and Students

For the typically developing kindergarten student, one who arrives knowing very few letter names or sounds and recognizing only a few sight words, each of the 28 units should take approximately one week to complete; thus, it will take approximately 28 weeks to complete the *Countdown* program. For the complete Scope and Sequence, see pages 96–98 of this document.

Countdown Is Organized in Strands

Developing strong decoding skills is somewhat like assembling a puzzle. There are many interlocking pieces, each essential to the whole picture. *Countdown* is organized into skill strands, each “puzzle piece” contributing to the bigger picture of reading mastery. As each new piece is put into place, it becomes clearer how the additional pieces fit in. Pages 4 and 5 describe *Countdown*’s individual strands, and the activities contained in this document illustrate how each skill is taught, practiced, and mastered.



Functional Vocabulary and Key Concepts

For students to participate in and benefit from direct phonemic awareness and phonics instruction, they first need to understand specific vocabulary and key concepts. Initially, *Countdown* lessons introduce concepts and vocabulary (such as *one-to-one correspondence*, *first-next-last*, *same and different*, and *whole-part*) through playful instruction, using words and images that are familiar to most young students. Once this foundational knowledge is well established, instructors may confidently use specific terminology and apply key concepts to teaching students about the sound structure of our language. This strand drops out in Book 3 (Units 17–28).



Rhyming

Recognizing and producing rhymes is an early sign that a child is developing *phonological awareness* (a general understanding of the sound structure of language). These skills often emerge spontaneously as young children engage in language play. Rhyming ability may indicate that a child has begun to notice global similarities in patterns of sound within words. While rhyming can be fun and engaging, and all students may benefit from some exposure to it, it is just a first step toward building strong phonological awareness. This strand also drops out in Book 3 (Units 17–28).



Phonemic Awareness

- Beginning Sound Isolation (BSI)
- Blending
- Segmenting
- Manipulation

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that spoken words are made of individual speech sounds, or phonemes, that can be combined in different sequences to create new words. The ability to manipulate phonemes (to isolate, segment, and blend individual sounds) supports students as they master the alphabetic code and apply this sound-letter knowledge to reading and spelling. Research shows that phonemic awareness has a powerful influence on early word decoding skills.



Alphabetic Principle

- Letter-Sound Relationships
- Encoding
- Decoding

The alphabetic principle is the understanding that spoken words are composed of individual sounds, and that printed letters represent those sounds. Recognizing that there are predictable relationships between letters and sounds, and that students can learn these relationships, is critical to their decoding success.



Sight Words

Some words should eventually be known “by sight,” without analysis, either because they occur so frequently (high-frequency words), or because of their *phoneme-grapheme* (sound-letter) irregularities (we call these “tricky parts”). In *Countdown*, we call these “Heart Words” because students should know the tricky parts of these words “by heart.” It is essential to gain some phonemic (sound) information from the letters in these words when they are first encountered (we can easily spell the /s/ and /d/ sounds in the word **said**). Once read multiple times, the ultimate goal is to read such irregular words automatically, without conscious effort.

Countdown aligns to the fundamental teaching philosophies that have guided Really Great Reading’s instruction from the beginning.

Good readers decode effortlessly.

When students can decode easily and well (accurately and without much conscious effort), it leads to fluent reading and stronger comprehension.

A balance of instruction and practice develops effortless decoding.

Direct, explicit instruction is the best way to build mastery and understanding. Frequent, distributed practice solidifies these skills and builds automaticity. This practice starts with physical manipulatives and continues with controlled reading of black ink on white paper.

Strong decoding begins with phonemic awareness.

Phonemic awareness is the gateway and underpinning to a comprehensive understanding of the alphabetic principle. Phonemic awareness gives students a framework for understanding phonics.

Teach to children's understanding rather than to their memory.

Many phonics programs require children to memorize rules and patterns, which can be cumbersome and boring. Really Great Reading’s multisensory, explicit instruction teaches to a deeper place—children’s understanding. When children *understand* concepts, they retain them better and can move faster through a rigorous scope and sequence.

Explicit, systematic instruction is the best way to teach foundational reading skills.

Reading success starts with the understanding and use of the alphabetic principle; that is, the idea that words are made out of sounds and that we use letters to represent sounds. Through direct, explicit, and systematic phonemic awareness and manipulative-driven phonics instruction, children can authentically learn about the substructures that drive the English code.

Countdown has a variety of activities designed to firmly establish pre-decoding and early decoding skills in young students. This document contains a sampling of some key exercises from Units 1-16, plus some sample lessons from Units 17-28. It also contains information about *Countdown's* Unit Planners, *Countdown to Really Great Handwriting* lessons, and the *Countdown* Reading and Vocabulary Playgrounds.

This sample set does not contain all of the activities embedded in *Countdown*; instead, it is meant to be a representational sample of some of the key ideas and teaching techniques.

To explore
these activities, visit
ExploreCountdown.online.

Table of Contents

Unit Planners Overview and Sample 10

Functional Vocabulary and Skills:

Describing and Comparing: Similarities;

Unit 1, Lesson 1, Part 2 12

Students are introduced to the terms *same*, *different*, and *compare*. They learn how to describe objects using multiple senses, and they compare by making observations about the similarities between two dogs.

Whole Body Listening: Appendix & Alternative Scope and Sequence 15

In this optional activity found in the Appendix of the *Teacher Guide*, students learn what it means to be a good listener by watching a short video of two rabbits listening.

Beginning Sound Isolation:

Sound Stories; Unit 3, Lesson 4, Part 2 17

Students listen to an alliterative story and then identify a series of words that start with a targeted sound.

Peel That Sound; Unit 2, Lesson 1, Part 1 21

Students isolate the beginning sounds of words. This activity helps students understand that words are made out of sequences of sounds and that we can isolate individual sounds in words.

Peel and Say; Unit 2, Lesson 5, Part 1 23

Students listen to the names of three displayed images with the same beginning sound and then peel that beginning sound off to say it aloud.

Peel and Sort; Unit 2, Lesson 2, Part 1 25

Students isolate the beginning sound of each image in order to sort them into two columns based on their beginning sounds.

Phoneme Blending, Segmentation, and Manipulation:

Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds; Unit 4, Lesson 1, Part 3 27

Students blend two or three phonemes, or sounds, together to produce whole words that are hidden inside the mystery bag.

Stretch Those Sounds; Unit 6, Lesson 2, Part 3 29

Students watch a model of and repeat the segmenting of sounds in a spoken word using finger-stretching. Eventually, students segment the words on their own.

Count the Sounds; Unit 9, Lesson 4, Part 1 31

Students count the number of sounds in spoken words before sorting them according to that number.

Add That Sound; Unit 13, Lesson 2, Part 1 33

Students stretch the sounds in a word and then add a sound to the beginning or the end of that word.

Letter-Sound Correspondence:

Name That Sound; Unit 10, Lesson 1, Part 2 35

Beginning in Unit 6, students are introduced to small clusters of letter symbols. All the practice students have had with isolating beginning sounds, blending individual sounds in words, and listening to sound

stories offers them a solid foundation for connecting letter symbols to their most common sounds rather than just asking them to memorize the connection.

Find That Letter; Unit 11, Lesson 4, Part 1 38

Students practice isolating beginning sounds while associating them with their letter symbols. Three images with the same beginning sound appear, and students are asked to find the corresponding letter tile. This activity promotes letter-sound correspondence with lowercase letters.

Phonics (Encoding):

Which Letter?; Unit 8, Lesson 3, Part 3 39

Students see an image and the vowel and final consonant in the spelling of that word. They are asked to isolate the beginning sound of that word and match that sound to its letter symbol out of a group of three.

Guess My Word; Unit 11, Lesson 2, Part 1 41

Students hear the teacher segment the individual phonemes in whole words while seeing the corresponding scrambled letters move into the correct position. Students then blend the phonemes together. An image then appears to confirm the students' answer.

Unscramble This; Unit 12, Lesson 2, Part 3 42

In this activity, students help the teacher segment the phonemes in words while the teacher models the encoding of each sound. The image is present from the beginning to ensure that students hear the correct word to unscramble.

Build a Word; Unit 13, Lesson 4, Part 3 44

Teacher and students segment the phonemes in a three-phoneme word using finger-stretching. They then lay down color tiles to represent the number of sounds in the word. Next, they match each sound they heard with the corresponding letter tile, spelling the word in order. Lastly, teacher and students check their spelling using the process of Touch & Say.

Heart Word Fluency:

Look, Think, Say; Pop-Up; 3-Up; Unit 11, Lesson 1, Part 3 46

In Look, Think, Say, students are taught three Heart Words, or sight words, and then practice reading. In Pop-Up, students read individual Heart Words as they pop up on the screen. Students also read sets of three Heart Words as they appear on the screen in 3-Up.

Countdown's Heart Words 49

Phrase Reading; Unit 15, Lesson 3, Part 3 50

Three-word phrases, which include both Heart Words and decodable words, appear on the board, one word at a time. Students read each word as it appears and then read the whole phrase several times to gain fluency. Heart Words are displayed in red with a heart above them.

Unit 20 and Unit 27 Planners:

Unit 20 and Unit 27 Unit Planners 57

Book 3 (Units 17–28) Lessons:

Vowels vs. Consonants & Letter Sounds

vs. Names; Unit 17, Lesson 1 51

In the typical Lesson 1 in Units 17-28, students review selected letter sounds and learn three new Heart Words. In this transitional Lesson 1, which bridges instruction from Book 2 to Book 3, students review vowels, consonants, letter names, and letter sounds.

Phonics Concept; Unit 20, Lesson 3 59

In each Lesson 3 in Units 17-28, students learn and practice a new phonics concept. Instruction is scaffolded with an I Do, We Do, You Do model. Students practice with their own manipulatives. In this Lesson 3, students learn about *digraph sh*.

Student Practice; Unit 20, Lesson 4 64

In each Lesson 4 in Units 17-28, students complete the Detective Work and Word Sort activities in their Student Workbooks. These activities target the phonics concept learned in Lesson 3; in this lesson, *digraph sh*.

Student Workbook; Unit 20, Lesson 4 69

Student workbook pages that correspond with the activities in Unit 20, Lesson 4.

Wrap Up & Show What You Know;

Unit 20, Lesson 5 71

In each Lesson 5 in Units 17-28, students read decodable phrases and/or sentences from their Student Workbooks featuring the target phonics concept from the unit; in this lesson, *digraph sh*. Students also participate in the *Spell It!* activity where they map phonemes and graphemes.

Student Workbook; Unit 20, Lesson 5 75

Student workbook pages that correspond with the activities in Unit 20, Lesson 5.

Book 3 Instruction

Phonics Concept; Unit 27, Lesson 3 77

In this Lesson 3, students learn to read two-syllable words containing two Closed Syllables.

Student Practice; Unit 27, Lesson 4 85

Students complete the Detective Work and Word Sort activities in their Student Workbooks, targeting two-syllable words with two Closed Syllables.

Student Workbook; Unit 27, Lesson 4 89

Student workbook pages that correspond with the activities in Unit 27, Lesson 4.

Wrap Up & Show What You Know; Unit 27, Lesson 5 91

Students read decodable phrases and/or sentences from their Student Workbooks, featuring two-syllable words with two Closed Syllables. Students also participate in the Reading Two-Syllable Words activity where they break words into syllables.

Student Workbook; Unit 27, Lesson 5 94

Student workbook pages that correspond with the activities in Unit 27, Lesson 5.

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What You Need to Know to Explore These Sample Activities

Only some activities are included

This document is intended to give prospective users a feel for what *Countdown* is and how it teaches and practices concepts. This document does not contain examples of all of the various activities; rather, it is meant to be a representational sample of some of the key ideas and teaching techniques.

Knowledge and use of the alphabetic principle

The alphabetic principle requires the child to understand that words are made up of individual sounds (phonemes) and that symbols (letters) are used to represent these sounds. The ability to isolate the beginning sound of a word is the most efficient method for teaching students that words are made up of sequences of sounds.

Beginning Sound Isolation

Children must be able to listen to a spoken word and isolate and pronounce the first sound of that word. There are many techniques for establishing this skill; however, the one used in *Countdown* is **uniquely efficient and effective**. Beginning Sound Isolation (BSI) is a technique where we pronounce the first phoneme in a word, then say the whole word (e.g., “/b/, bear”; “/k/, key”; “/ā/, apple”).

The Teacher’s Guide and the online component are used together

In order to deliver *Countdown*, you’ll need both the Teacher’s Guide and *Countdown Online*. We’ve made portions of *Countdown Online* available without a password using ExploreCountdown.online. This intuitive content delivery tool is easy to use and learn.

Structure shift from Units 1-16 to Units 17-28

In *Countdown Books 1* and *2* (Units 1-16), each weekly unit has five daily lessons, and each lesson consists of three parts. A “part” is one activity that is meant to be taught in about 3-5 minutes, and each activity is conducted independently of the other activities in that lesson. The unit and lesson structure of *Countdown’s Book 3* is different from that of *Books 1* and *2*. Each unit is still comprised of five daily lessons. However, each of these lessons is a series of connected instructional routines rather than three individually focused activities. Each daily lesson has a specific phonemic awareness and/or phonics focus and is designed to be completed in 15–20 minutes, with the related handwriting instruction following the phonemic awareness/phonics lesson.

While these sample activities stand for themselves, there is some information to know as you explore them.

To explore these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.

Learn about our helpful Unit Planners on the next page.

Complimentary Screening Assessment

Really Great Reading offers a complimentary *Kindergarten Screening Assessment* that is quick and easy to administer. This individually administered assessment takes about 5 to 7 minutes per student and will give you a glimpse of a student’s basic literacy knowledge. The screener measures six areas of literacy: Functional Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, Letter Knowledge, Word Reading, Print Concepts, and Writing.

The complimentary *Kindergarten Screening Assessment* packet can be downloaded from www.ReallyGreatReading.com. The packet contains everything you need to administer the screener and interpret the results.

Unit Planners Overview & Design

Really Great Reading strives to make our materials as user-friendly and effective as possible. To that end, we have added Unit Planner charts corresponding to each *Countdown* unit. Each Unit Planner demonstrates how all components of *Countdown* instruction fit together. The Planners provide information on the essential whole-group, small group, and independent practice required in each unit, along with resources for Spanish-speaking students and the wider EL population. Notes throughout *Countdown Online* direct the teacher to the corresponding resources as they teach each lesson. The Unit Planners are available as downloads on the first screen of each unit in *Countdown Online*, as well as in the Supply Room in Teacher Resources.

Each component referenced in the Unit Planners is available in the Teacher Guides, *Countdown Online*, and/or in the Reading/Vocabulary Playgrounds. Printable versions of the Instructional Resources that are noted in the Unit Planners (including Heart Words, Handwriting printables, Concepts of Print lessons, Spelling Lists, Challenge Words, Dictation Sentences, Decodable Passages/eBooks and accompanying Comprehension Questions, list of Spanish Videos and EL Resources, and spelling templates) are accessible from the first screen of each Lesson 1 in *Countdown Online*. Additionally, individual versions of each resource are also given at the end of each lesson in *Countdown Online* on the Practice to Mastery (P>M) & Small Group Instruction screen.

The Unit Planners have the following components:

1. Direct Instruction: Direct instruction delivered whole group from the Teacher Guides with the use of *Countdown Online*; includes information on how and when the Concepts of Print lessons and *Countdown* to Really Great Handwriting lessons should be integrated into the teacher-led instruction.

2. Handwriting: Whole-group handwriting instruction is provided with the *Countdown* to Really Great Handwriting lessons. The printable Teacher Guide and Student Workbook should be downloaded from the Supply Room > Handwriting > Teacher Resources. Handwriting instruction is built into *Countdown Online* at the end of each lesson.

3. Resources for ELs: Accompanying resources to support EL students, specific to each lesson. These include cards, videos, visual supports in the lessons, and visual supports in the Reading Playground. Many of these resources are built into the program and are accessible for all students, but others have been specifically designed for EL students.

4. Practice to Mastery: Whole-group additional practice of taught concepts using Heart Word activities, dictation, spelling words, and decodable passages. These activities should also be utilized as formative assessment to gauge student progress and next steps. At the end of the Practice to Mastery portion of the instructional block, a Quick Check for understanding gives teachers a quick and easy touch point for student mastery.

5. Small Group Instruction: Small group instruction for more targeted groups of students, including decodable passage, Heart Words, phonemic awareness, spelling, challenge words, and dictation practice.



COUNTDOWN PLANNER UNIT 2					
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
1	Lesson 1: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 33-41 COP Lesson 1: Print is What We Read	Lesson 2: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 42-49 Guest Teacher video	Lesson 3: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 50-56 Concepts of Print	Student Practice pp. 57-63	Lesson 5: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 64-70
2	Direct Instruction 20-30 minutes daily (15-20 + 5-10 min)	Review 3-Pt. Pencil Practice Capitol # Capitol #	Handwriting Review 3-Pt. Pencil Practice Capitol # Capitol #	Review 3-Pt. Pencil Practice Capitol # Capitol #	Review 3-Pt. Pencil Practice Capitol # Capitol #
3	Resources for ELs • All Articulation videos • All English Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards	All Articulation videos	All Articulation videos	All Articulation videos	All Articulation videos
4	POM Practice to Mastery 5-10 minutes daily	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix or P&M to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix or P&M to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix or P&M to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix or P&M to incorporate throughout your day.
5	Small Group Instruction 20-30 minutes daily	Use the Quick Check of the end of each lesson.	Use the Quick Check of the end of each lesson.	Use the Quick Check of the end of each lesson.	Use the Quick Check of the end of each lesson.
	Spanish Resources • All Articulation in Spanish videos • All English Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards	All Articulation in Spanish videos • All English Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards	All Articulation in Spanish videos • All English Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards	All Articulation in Spanish videos • All English Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards	All Articulation in Spanish videos • All English Language Learner (ELL) cards • All Spanish Language Learner (ELL) cards

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Direct Instruction 20–30 minutes daily (15–20 + 5–10 min)	Teacher-led Lesson				
	Lesson 1: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 33-41	Lesson 2: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 42-49 <i>Guest Teacher videos</i>	Lesson 3: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 50-56	Student Practice pp. 57-63	Lesson 5: Parts 1, 2, & 3 pp. 64-70
	Concepts of Print				
	Handwriting				
	Resources for ELs				
Practice to Mastery 5–10 minutes daily	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix of TG1 to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix of TG1 to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix of TG1 to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix of TG1 to incorporate throughout your day.	Choose three environmental activities from the list in the Appendix of TG1 to incorporate throughout your day.
	Use the Quick Check at the end of each lesson.				
Small Group Instruction* 20–30 minutes daily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Alternative Scope & Sequence in small groups as necessary (or pre-teach Alternative S&S before beginning UI). Use additional examples from the Teacher Guide and/or Countdown Additional Activities packet as needed (in the Supply Room). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Alternative Scope & Sequence in small groups as necessary. Use additional examples from the Teacher Guide and/or Countdown Additional Activities packet as needed (in the Supply Room). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Alternative Scope & Sequence in small groups as necessary. Use additional examples from the Teacher Guide and/or Countdown Additional Activities packet as needed (in the Supply Room). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Alternative Scope & Sequence in small groups as necessary. Use additional examples from the Teacher Guide and/or Countdown Additional Activities packet as needed (in the Supply Room). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Alternative Scope & Sequence in small groups as necessary. Use additional examples from the Teacher Guide and/or Countdown Additional Activities packet as needed (in the Supply Room).
Independent Practice** 30–40 minutes weekly	Review/practice with Unit 1 games*** 10 minutes	Review/practice with Unit 1 games*** 10 minutes			Begin Unit 2 games after teaching the full unit*** 10 minutes
		Learn and practice new words with Unit 2 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 2 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 2 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 2 games 10 minutes
Spanish Resources See Countdown con Español S&S for more details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> /m/ Articulation in Español video Marcos el Mono Sound Story in Español video m Crosslinguistic Alphabet Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> /s/ Articulation in Español video Susana el Sapo Sound Story in Español s Crosslinguistic Alphabet Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> /l/ Articulation in Español video Lorenzo el Loro Sound Story in Español l Crosslinguistic Alphabet Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> /n/ Articulation in Español video n Crosslinguistic Alphabet Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> /f/ Articulation in Español video f Crosslinguistic Alphabet Card

*Choose small group activities based on data and student needs. Additional games and reteaching options are indicated in the Reading Playground Formative Assessment guide.

**Students should spend 20-30 minutes a week (10 minutes a day, two or three days) playing RP games and another 20-30 minutes a week (10 minutes a day, two or three days) playing VP games as your schedule permits.

***Choose two or three days after the full unit has been taught for review, practice, and assessment in the Reading Playground. Students often complete RP games from the previous unit on Monday and Tuesday of the following week.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION	PRACTICE TO MASTERY	SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION	CONCEPTS OF PRINT	HEART WORDS	DECODABLE PASSAGES	SPELLING WORDS	SPANISH RESOURCES
DICTATION SENTENCES	CHALLENGE WORDS	UNLOCK CURRENT UNIT	READING PLAYGROUND	VOCABULARY PLAYGROUND	EL RESOURCES	HANDWRITING	

Unit 1 | Lesson 1 | Part 2

To access the accompanying Countdown Online components for these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.

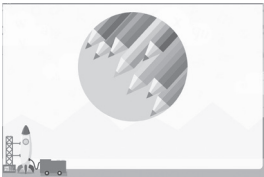
Activity 2: Describing and Comparing: Similarities

Functional Vocabulary

Objective

Students use descriptive vocabulary to tell about their visual observations and identify similarities between two items.

What Students See



Description

Students are introduced to the terms *same*, *different*, and *compare*. They will learn how to describe objects using multiple senses. They will then describe their observations of a dog while playing See It, Say It. After “saying” what they observe about the dog, an image of a different dog is presented, and students are asked to compare by making observations about the similarities between the two dogs.

3, 2, 1...

Open Countdown Online to Unit 1, Lesson 1, Part 2 (1.1.2).

Launch!

Say:

- “Now, we are going to learn about using good describing words. When you describe something, you tell all about the way something looks, sounds, tastes, smells, or feels.
- Let’s start by thinking about *seeing*. Other words that we might use instead of seeing are looking, watching, or spying. Sometimes you might hear words like your sense of sight or vision when we talk about *seeing*.
- Our brain takes information about things we *see*, and it thinks of specific words to *describe*, or tell all about, those things.
- We are going to play a game called See It, Say It.
- First, let’s think about the kinds of things you might ‘see and say’ about some pictures.”

Click to display the colored pencils and say “We can *describe* an item’s **color**. This is a blue pencil. This is a red pencil.” (*Continue descriptions.*)

Click to display the shapes and say “We can *describe* an item’s **shape**. This is a

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

circle. This is a square.” (*Continue descriptions.*)

Click to display the three cupcakes and say “We can *describe* **how many** items there are. There are three cupcakes.”

Click to display the big and small leaves and say “We can *describe* an item’s **size**. This is a big leaf. This is a small leaf. We can even compare items. This leaf is *bigger than* that leaf.”

Click to display the puzzle pieces and say “We can *describe* if we see a **whole** item or just **part** of an item. This (*point to one puzzle piece*) is just one part of a puzzle. It is not the whole puzzle.”

Say “Now, get ready to be a good detective.”

Click to display the first **dog**.

Say:

- “Tell me what you *see*.” **A:** dog
- “That’s right, you said the name ‘dog.’ Now think of words that *describe* the dog. Say what you notice while you look at the dog.”

(Possible student responses include: two eyes, two ears, a nose, a tail, four legs, fur/hair, etc.)

Prompt for more specific descriptions:

- “What color is the fur?” **A:** black
- “Is the fur long or short?” **A:** short
- “Does the dog look big or little?” **A:** big
- “Are the ears sticking up or flopping down?” **A:** flopping down
- “Can you see what the dog is doing? Is it sitting or standing?” **A:** sitting
- “What do I see on its neck?” **A:** collar

Say:

- “Great seeing and saying! We found many words to describe this picture. I see a big dog with black fur and floppy ears sitting down. It is wearing a collar.
- Let’s play again. Here is another picture.”

Click to display the second **dog**.

Say:

- “What is it?” **A:** dog
- “Is that the same dog we just described? Do they look just like each other? No? Some parts look *the same*, or *just like*, the first dog, but other

In the next activity (Unit 1, Lesson 1, Part 3), students view the same two images of dogs and point out what is not the same between the two images as they discuss the concept of “differences” in contrast to the concept of “similarities.” To the right, you will see an abbreviated portion of that lesson.

parts are *different*. When things do not look like each other, we say they are *different*.

- Let’s add a new part to our game. This time, when we talk about the second dog, we will see and say how it’s the same as the first dog; then we’ll see and say how it’s different. We call that *comparing*. Let’s call our new game Compare and Share.”

Ask “What do we see that makes these two dogs *the same*?”

Say “I’ll start. This is a dog (*point to first dog*) and that is a dog (*point to second dog*). They are both dogs—that’s the *same*. *Both* is a great word to use when you compare two things and find two parts that are the same. Now it’s your turn to compare and share. The dogs *both* have ...” (*Possible student responses include: two eyes, two ears, a nose, a tail, four legs, fur/hair, etc.*)

Prompt for more responses with the starter phrases: “The dogs both ...” or “Both dogs have ...” Continue until all similar visible features have been named.

Say “Nice job on your first round of Compare and Share. Next time, we will compare the two dogs and share how they are different.”

From Unit 1, Lesson 1, Part 3

Say:

- “Now, we will look at the same two dogs and see how they are *different*. We will describe things that are not the same for both dogs.
- Now that we have two dogs, we’ll need to say which one we are talking about. If you just say ‘the dog,’ or ‘one dog,’ I don’t know which one you mean! Let’s make sure we say ‘the first dog’ when we talk about the one on the left side (*point to left dog*), the one we saw first. Then we can say ‘the second dog’ when we talk about the one on the right (*point to right dog*). We saw the second dog after the first dog.
- I’ll start. I see that the first dog (*point*) is black, but the second dog (*point*) is gray and brown. Those two colors are not the same. That makes the dogs different. Now it’s your turn. What else do you see about the dogs that makes them look different?”

Prompt for more responses with the starter phrases:

- “The first dog (*is/has*), but the second dog (*is/has*).”
- “The first dog (*is/has*), but the second dog (*is not/does not have*).”
(*Continue until all differing visible features have been named. Possible student responses include: collar/no collar, short hair/long hair, big/little, floppy ears/perky ears, sitting/standing.*)

Alternative Unit 1 | Lesson 1 | Part 3

Activity Alt 1.1.3 – Whole Body Listening, Part 2 Functional Vocabulary

Objective

Students will observe and describe the behaviors that interfere with good listening, as well as those associated with good “whole body listening.” Students will demonstrate the traits of a good listener.

What Students See



Description

The teacher shows an animation where two rabbit characters help students understand that listening is more than just hearing. Students discuss the key features of being a good listener, as observed in the animation, and they learn a special chant to help them remember how to be good “whole body listeners.”

This lesson is a continuation of the previous lesson (Whole Body Listening, Part 1) where students are introduced to two rabbits, Floppy and Perky. Teacher and students discuss how the two rabbits are similar and how they are different and they attempt to decide which rabbit is a better listener.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Alternative Unit 1, Lesson 1, Part 3 (Alt 1.1.3).*

Launch!

Say:

- “Welcome back to *Countdown*. I’ve been thinking about our new rabbit friends, Floppy and Perky, and I *still* can’t decide who might be a better listener.
- I have an idea! Let’s *watch* while the rabbits listen to their teacher read a story to the class.
- We are going to **observe**, which means to look at something carefully, and then think about the things we see and hear. This is what good detectives and scientists do. A **detective** is someone who looks for clues to try to solve a problem or a puzzle. A detective must look very carefully to find the clues. A **scientist** is someone who also has to look very carefully for clues to try to figure out why something happens or how something works.
- Are you ready to observe our new friends, the rabbits, at school? Let’s observe them, just like a detective or a scientist would do, and see if we can discover what helps someone to be a good listener.”

Click to play the *Who Is a Better Listener?* animation.

Ask:

- “Now who do you think is a better listener, Floppy or Perky?”
- How could you tell?” (*Acknowledge and discuss ideas shared by students, and then provide a summary of key points, including: Perky had a still body [hands, feet, bottom], was looking at materials, had zipped lips, was paying attention to the teacher, etc.*)

Say:

- “You made some great observations! You told me what you noticed about our two friends, and together we thought about what that could mean. Let’s check our observations again.
- You are a **good listener** if:
 - o You look at the person who is talking (or at the things the person is showing you)
 - o You keep your hands and feet to yourself
 - o Your voice is turned off (no talking or making noise)
 - o Your body is still.”

Say:

- “Knowing how to be a good listener is the first step of learning in *Countdown*.
- We just learned that you can *hear* with your ears, but you need to use your *whole body* to help you *listen*! I like the way Perky the rabbit used its *whole body* to help it listen by keeping its body still and quiet.
- Let’s learn a chant to help us all remember. I will say each line first, then you will be my ‘echo’ and say the same words:
- **Whole Body Listeners have ...**

Still hands and feet	<i>(Students repeat, ‘Still hands and feet.’)</i>
Bottom in your seat	<i>(Students repeat.)</i>
Zipped up lips	<i>(Students repeat.)</i>
And perked up ears	<i>(Students repeat.)</i>
Eyes on the speaker	<i>(Students repeat.)</i>
So you can hear!”	<i>(Students repeat.)</i>

Say “Great, you all *said* it! Now show me how you *do* it. **Whole Body Listener Check** in 5-4-3-2-1.” (*Look around the room, and give feedback, e.g., “I love the way you all have your eyes on me,” or “I see hands touching the books; we need still hands and feet!”*)

Unit 3 | Lesson 4 | Part 2

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

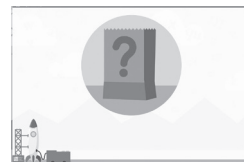
Activity 16: Sound Stories

Sound Stories

Objective

Students will listen to an alliterative story and participate in identifying words beginning with the target sound /p/.

See p. 35 in Teacher Guide Book 1 for a full description of Sound Stories.

What Students See

3, 2, 1...

Open Countdown Online to Unit 3, Lesson 4, Part 2 (3.4.2).

To access the accompanying Countdown Online components for these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.

Launch!**Say:**

- “We have another new sound to learn today. First, listen while I make the sound: /p/, /p/, /p/, /p/.
- Now I want all of you to make the same sound. While you do, think about what your mouth is doing and what you feel. Ready? Launch!”
(Students say, “/p/, /p/, /p/, /p/.”)
- “I felt my lips doing something when I made that sound. What did you notice?” (Students respond; then summarize the key points.)
 - o “I could feel my lips come together, then they **popped** open!
 - o I closed my lips again, let air build up, and let them **pop** open again and again because I couldn’t stretch out the sound. /p/, /p/, /p/, /p/.”

Click to display the **Mystery Bag**.

Say “We have a new friend who is hiding in our Mystery Bag today. If we can guess what kind of animal she is, she’ll come out! I’ll give you a clue: the name of this animal starts with the sound /p/.”

Students guess what the animal could be.

Continue to give clues as needed, emphasizing /p/ when it occurs. If no correct guess is made by the end of three clues, reveal the animal.

CLUES:

- o She is a bird, but she can’t fly.
- o She likes to **paddle** around and **play** in the ocean.



You can read the Sound Story aloud yourself; however, you have the option to play a recorded version of the Sound Story in Countdown Online.

o She is black and white and waddles across the ice.

Say “Let’s check to see if we figured out what kind of animal our friend is.”

Click to reveal the **penguin**.

Say:

- “She’s a **penguin**! Do you hear and feel /p/, /p/, /p/, /p/ when you start to say /p/, **penguin**?”
- Now, let’s watch a short video about our new friend and see if we can guess what her favorite sound might be.”

Click to play the animation for /p/, Penny the Penguin.

Say:

- “Now I’m going to read you a story about our new friend so we can learn more about her. While I’m reading, make sure that you listen carefully for her favorite sound ... /p/, /p/, /p/, /p/.” *(Wait for students to say the sound, or prompt them to say it.)*
- “Pay attention because later I will ask you some questions about our friend. I’ll tell you when it’s your turn.”

Read the sound story aloud, emphasizing the sound /p/ each time you say it:

“Penny is a **penguin** from **Pittsburgh**, **Pennsylvania**. While her **parents** **pass** the days **playing** **piano** and **painting** **pictures**, **Penny** **prefers** to **play** with her **pals** at the **park**. She **puts** **puzzle** **pieces** together with **Pig** or she **paddles** in the **pond** with the **pollywogs**. Sometimes she **parades** around the **park** with her **pretty** **purple** **purse**. **Penny** has a very **pleasant** life.”

Say “Did you notice that a lot of the words in **Penny the Penguin’s** story started with her favorite sound, /p/? Let’s try to remember some of the things we heard about our new friend **Penny the Penguin**. All of the answers will start with **Penny’s** favorite sound, /p/.”

Ask the following questions, reminding students as necessary that the answers should start with **Penny’s** favorite sound, /p/.

1. “Is **Penny** a duck or a **penguin**?” **A:** penguin
2. “Do **Penny’s** **parents** **paint** or draw **pictures**?” **A:** paint
3. “Where does **Penny** **play** with her **pals**, a **park** or a zoo?” **A:** park
4. “What does **Penny** **put** together, blocks or **puzzles**?” **A:** puzzles
5. “Is **Penny’s** **purse** **purple** or red?” **A:** purple



Whenever the letter **p** is highlighted in boldface text, try to emphasize the sound /p/ in the word, as in /p/**opped** for **popped** and /p/**op** for **pop**.



If a child makes a guess that does not start with /p/, say: “I hear [/sound/] when I say [animal name]. Let’s think of an animal that starts with our new sound, /p/.”



Be careful not to add a vowel sound after the consonant; e.g., /puh/. If students call out the letter **p**, say, “That could be a letter we see that shows this sound. Right now, let’s talk about the sound we hear and feel.”

Say:

- “Nice job! Now, Penny **p**icked out some of her favorite things to tell you about.
- Let’s **p**lay a game called **P**ick and Choose. I will tell you two things that Penny might **p**ick as her favorite. Let’s see if you can *choose* the right one. Here’s a clue: all of her favorite things start with her favorite sound, /p/. Let’s all say Penny’s sound again: /p/, /p/, /p/, /p/.”

Ask questions about Penny the Penguin’s favorite things, and elicit student responses according to the script below:

1. “Penny **p**icks a **p**aint color for her **p**arlor.
 - o Do you think she **p**refers blue or **p**ink?” **A:** pink
 - o “Can you guess her other favorite color?” **A:** purple
2. “Penny **p**ays for her **p**eanuts with small coins. Are they nickels or **p**ennies?” **A:** pennies
3. “Penny **p**icks out a vegetable to **p**ut on her **p**late. Does she **p**ick beans or **p**eas?” **A:** peas
4. “Penny’s **p**al **P**ig is having a birthday **p**arty. What **p**resent did Penny **p**ick out, a doll or a **p**uzzle?” **A:** puzzle
5. “Penny **p**retends to **p**lay music in a **p**erformance. What instrument does she **p**retend to **p**lay, a **p**iano or a guitar?” **A:** piano
6. “Penny **p**ushes the cart at the grocery store. Can you think of which foods Penny will **p**ick?
 - o Which fruit, apple or **p**each?” **A:** peach
 - o “Which vegetable, corn or **p**eas?” **A:** peas
 - o “Which meat, **p**ork or beef?” **A:** pork
 - o “Which snack, chips or **p**opcorn?” **A:** popcorn
 - o “Which seasoning, **p**epper or salt?” **A:** pepper
7. “Penny **p**lays with other **p**enguins, but she also likes to **p**lay with other animals that start with the sound /p/. How many can we think of?”
A: panda, pig, polar bear, puppy, pelican, parrot, peacock, pigeon, porcupine, possum, panther, puffin, etc.
8. “Penny has busy **p**lay dates with her **p**als. Let’s see if we can **p**ick out which actions Penny likes best.
 - o Does she like to **p**lay or work?” **A:** play



If a child makes a guess that does not start with /p/, say: “I hear [/sound/] when I say [child’s guess]. Let’s think of the word that starts with our new sound, /p/.”


- o “Row or **p**addle a boat?” **A:** paddle
- o “Draw or **p**aint a **p**icture?” **A:** paint
- o “**P**itch or catch a ball?” **A:** pitch
- o “Jump or **p**ounce on her **p**al?” **A:** pounce
- o “**P**ush or **p**ull a wagon?” **A:** both push and pull

Say “Great job thinking about our new sound, /p/, and our friend, Penny the Penguin!”


OPTIONAL *Advanced Sound Story*

Below is an optional, more complex version of the sound story for /p/. It includes more difficult vocabulary and sentence structure. You may choose to read this story if you wish to challenge your students or expose them to higher level vocabulary.

“Penny is a **p**enguin from **P**ittsburgh, **P**ennsylvania. **P**lenty of **p**enguins live at the South **P**ole, but **P**enny **p**refers the **p**ond at **P**oint State **P**ark. **P**enny’s **p**arents **p**ass the days **p**laying **p**iano, **p**lanting **p**ansies and **p**etunias, or **p**asting **p**ictures in a scrap**p**ook. **P**enny, for her **p**art, **p**lays with her **p**als at the **p**ark. She **p**addles in the **p**ond with the **p**ollywogs or **p**uts together **p**uzzle **p**ieces with **P**ig. Sometimes she simply **p**arades around the **p**ark with her **p**urple **p**urse and **p**retty **p**ink **p**arasol. **P**enny’s life, it appears, is quite **p**leasant.”



You can read the Sound Story aloud yourself; however, you have the option to play a recorded version of the Sound Story in *Countdown Online*.



Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.

Unit 2 | Lesson 1 | Part 1

Activity 15: Peel That Sound

PA: BSI

Objective

Students will practice isolating the beginning sounds of words.

What Students See**Description**

This activity consists of three rounds. During the first round, the teacher pronounces the imaged word, starting with the isolated beginning sound, and the students repeat. During the second round, the teacher pronounces just the isolated beginning sound of each word, and the students give the name of the image. During the third round, the teacher names the image, and students say the isolated beginning sound. This activity helps students understand that words are made of individual sounds and that we can isolate those sounds. The main goal is to model and give students practice with beginning sound isolation.

Environmental Activities

Select at least three environmental activities from the list on page 195 to complete today. Remember, the environmental activities can be incorporated at any time during your day.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Unit 2, Lesson 1, Part 1 (2.1.1).*

Launch!

Say:

- “Words are made out of sounds. When we say words, we are really saying a bunch of sounds in a certain order. Today, we are going learn that we can peel the beginning sound off words.
- When we peel a piece of fruit, like an orange or a banana, we take a layer off. We are going to be doing the same thing with words, peeling off the first sound.”

ROUND 1:

Click to display the **goat**.

Point to the goat and say “/g/, goat. Your turn.”

A: (students repeat) /g/, goat

Click to display the **violin**.

Point to the violin and say “/v/, violin. Your turn.” **A:** /v/, violin

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.



Once students understand the process, feel free to cut down on language. Rather than saying, “Your turn,” simply pointing to the students when it’s their turn should be sufficient.

Continue with the remaining examples:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. /b/, bear | 7. /s/, soap | 13. /w/, wave |
| 2. /k/, cat | 8. /r/, rabbit | 14. /sh/, sheep |
| 3. /d/, duck | 9. /kw/, queen | 15. /ī/, ice |
| 4. /l/, lion | 10. /f/, fish | 16. /m/, monkey |
| 5. /ō/, octopus | 11. /ē/, eagle | |
| 6. /p/, popcorn | 12. /t/, toothbrush | |

ROUND 2:

Say “Let’s practice again. This time, I will peel the sounds, and you will say the words.”

Click to display the goat.

Point to the goat and say “/g/.... What is it?” **A:** goat

Click to display the violin.

Point to the violin and say “/v/.... What is it?” **A:** violin

Continue with the remaining examples:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. /b/, bear | 7. /s/, soap | 13. /w/, wave |
| 2. /k/, cat | 8. /r/, rabbit | 14. /sh/, sheep |
| 3. /d/, duck | 9. /kw/, queen | 15. /ī/, ice |
| 4. /l/, lion | 10. /f/, fish | 16. /m/, monkey |
| 5. /ō/, octopus | 11. /ē/, eagle | |
| 6. /p/, popcorn | 12. /t/, toothbrush | |

ROUND 3:

Say “Let’s practice one more time. This time, I will say the words, and you will peel the sounds.”

Click to display the goat.

Point to the goat and say “Goat. What’s the first sound?” **A:** /g/

Click to display the violin.

Point to the violin and say “Violin. What’s the first sound?” **A:** /v/



You do not have to prompt students with “What is it?” for every example. You may choose to just say “/v/...” and then point to the students for their turn.

Continue with the remaining examples:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. /b/, bear | 7. /s/, soap | 13. /w/, wave |
| 2. /k/, cat | 8. /r/, rabbit | 14. /sh/, sheep |
| 3. /d/, duck | 9. /kw/, queen | 15. /ī/, ice |
| 4. /l/, lion | 10. /f/, fish | 16. /m/, monkey |
| 5. /ō/, octopus | 11. /ē/, eagle | |
| 6. /p/, popcorn | 12. /t/, toothbrush | |



You do not have to prompt students with “What’s the first sound?” for every example. You may choose to just say “violin...” and then point to the students for their turn.

Unit 2 | Lesson 5 | Part 1

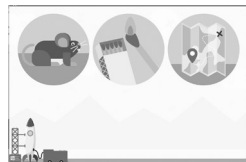
Activity 18: Peel and Say

PA: BSI

Objective

Students will isolate, identify, and produce the shared beginning sound of three words.

What Students See



Description

Three images are added to the screen. The teacher names each image. The students are then asked to give the teacher the shared beginning sound of the three words.

Environmental Activities

Select at least three environmental activities from the list on page 195 to complete today. Remember, the environmental activities can be incorporated at any time during your day.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Unit 2, Lesson 5, Part 1 (2.5.1).*

Launch!

Say “Today, we are going to peel the first sound off of some words. Listen and repeat after me.”

Click to display the **mouse**, **match**, and **map** and name them as you point to each one. *(Students repeat the three words.)*

Ask “What’s the first sound in **mouse**, **match**, **map**?” **A:** /m/

Say “Let’s try another one.”

Click to display the **bear**, **bone**, and **bat** and name them as you point to each one. (*Students repeat.*)

Ask “What’s the first sound in **bear**, **bone**, **bat**?” **A:** /b/

Continue with the remaining examples:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. six, seal, soap - /s/ | 10. thorn, thermometer, thumb - /th/ |
| 2. tongue, tape, toothbrush - /t/ | 11. zucchini, zipper, zero - /z/ |
| 3. itch, igloo, iguana - /ɪ/ | 12. question, queen, quilt - /kw/ |
| 4. lion, lick, ladybug - /l/ | 13. yes, yawn, yoyo - /y/ |
| 5. ring, rabbit, rainbow - /r/ | 14. ant, apple, alligator - /ă/ |
| 6. popcorn, pie, pig - /p/ | 15. octopus, omelet, olives - /ō/ |
| 7. edge, elf, elephant - /ě/ | 16. headphones, hug, hamburger - /h/ |
| 8. chimney, cheese, chocolate - /ch/ | 17. up, umbrella, upside down - /ŭ/ |
| 9. unicorn, unicycle, uniform - /yōō/ | 18. shirt, shadow, shark - /sh/ |



DIFFERENTIATION OPTIONS

Ways to simplify:

- Isolate the beginning sounds of each word as you name them (/m/, **mouse**; /m/, **match**; /m/, **map**), and then ask an easier question: “What’s the first sound in /m/, **mouse**; /m/, **match**; /m/, **map**?”

Experience the Reading Playgrounds!

Visit my.rgr.fun and enter password **cd.cd.cd** to experience some of the Reading Playground games *Countdown* students might play after participating in BSI activities such as Peel That Sound and Peel and Say in their *Countdown* lessons. Have fun exploring the playgrounds with these sample games. Unit 4, Games 1, 3, 7, and 8, and Unit 13, Games 7 and 8 help students practice isolating and matching the beginning sounds in spoken words in a fun and playful way.



Unit 2 | Lesson 2 | Part 1

Activity 17: Peel and Sort

PA: BSI

Objective

Students will identify matching beginning sounds.

What Students See**Description**

The screen is split into two columns with a guideword image at the top of each. A new (non-guideword) image appears at the bottom of the screen. With the teacher's assistance, students determine which guideword image has the same beginning sound as the new image below. The new image is then sorted into the correct column. This activity reinforces the idea that words are made from individual sounds and that we can isolate individual sounds in words.

Environmental Activities

Select at least three environmental activities from the list on page 195 to complete today. Remember, the environmental activities can be incorporated at any time during your day.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Unit 2, Lesson 2, Part 1 (2.2.1).*

Launch!**SORT 1:**

Say "Today, we are going to sort words by their beginning sounds."

Click to display the **monkey** and the **hammer** as the column headings.

Point to the monkey and the hammer and say "Our words will begin like /m/, **monkey** or /h/, **hammer**."

Click to display and point to the **house**.

Say:

- "/h/, **house**. Does /h/, **house** begin like **monkey** or **hammer**?" **A:** hammer
- "Right! /h/, **house**, /h/, **hammer**. I'll move the **house** to the /h/, **hammer** side."

Click to place the **house** in the **hammer** column.

Click to display and point to the **mittens**.

Say:

- "/m/, **mittens**. Does /m/, **mittens** begin like **monkey** or **hammer**?"
A: monkey
- "Point to the side where the **mittens** should go." (*left side*)

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.



Once students understand how to sort the images, feel free to cut down on language. Example: “/m/, **monster**, which side?” **A:** “/m/, **monkey**,” with left arms held out to the side. (Be sure that students say “/m/, **monkey**” aloud to serve as a model for students who may still be struggling to isolate the beginning sounds. You may also wish to reinforce the match in beginning sounds by repeating, “/m/, **monster**, /m/, **monkey**” after students give the correct answer.)

- “Good job! /m/, **mittens**, /m/, **monkey**. I’ll move the **mittens** to the /m/, **monkey** side.”

Click to place the **mittens** in the **monkey** column.

Continue with the remaining examples: /m/, **monster**; /h/, **horse**; /m/, **milk**; /h/, **hair**; /h/, **hamburger**; /m/, **mug**; /h/, **hospital**; /h/, **hat**; /m/, **mountain**; /m/, **mask**.

Say:

- “Let’s go over our work (*point to each image as you label it with students*):
 - /m/, **monkey**; /m/, **mittens**; /m/, **monster**; /m/, **milk**; /m/, **mug**; /m/, **mountain**; /m/, **mask**.
 - /h/, **hammer**; /h/, **house**; /h/, **horse**; /h/, **hair**; /h/, **hamburger**; /h/, **hospital**; /h/, **hat**.
- Let’s try that with two new sounds.”

SORT 2:

Click to display the **chin** and the **rabbit** as the column headings.

Point to the chin and the rabbit and say “Our words will begin like /ch/, **chin** or /r/, **rabbit**.”

Click to display and point to the **rattle**.

Say:

- “/r/, **rattle**. Does /r/, **rattle** begin like **chin** or **rabbit**?” **A:** rabbit (*right side*)
- “/r/, **rattle**, /r/, **rabbit**. I’ll move the **rattle** to the /r/, **rabbit** side.”

Click to place the **rattle** in the **rabbit** column.

Say “Let’s try another one.”

Continue with the remaining examples: /ch/, **chimney**; /r/, **raccoon**; /ch/, **chocolate**; /r/, **rollercoaster**; /r/, **rooster**; /ch/, **chair**; /ch/, **cheese**; /r/, **robe**; /ch/, **check**; /r/, **rose**; /ch/, **chalk**.

Say:

- “Let’s go over our work (*point to each image as you label it with students*):
 - /ch/, **chin**; /ch/, **chimney**; /ch/, **chocolate**; /ch/, **chair**; /ch/, **cheese**; /ch/, **check**; /ch/, **chalk**.
 - /r/, **rabbit**; /r/, **rattle**; /r/, **raccoon**; /r/, **rollercoaster**; /r/, **rooster**; /r/, **robe**; /r/, **rose**.”




DIFFERENTIATION OPTIONS

Ways to simplify:

- Add more information to the question: “/h/, **house**. Does /h/, **house** begin with the same sound as /m/, **monkey** or /h/, **hammer**?” **A:** /h/, hammer

Ways to challenge:

- Do not isolate the beginning sound for students at all; just name the objects on the screen, and then ask a harder question: “**House**. Does **house** begin like **monkey** or **hammer**?”



To access the accompanying *Countdown Online* components for these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.

Unit 4 | Lesson 1 | Part 3

Activity 24: Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds

PA: Blending

Objective

Students will blend two or three phonemes to produce a word.

What Students See**Description**

A mystery bag will appear on the screen. The teacher says each phoneme in a two- or three-phoneme word and then asks the students to blend the phonemes and say the blended word. An image representing the word appears.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 4, Lesson 1, Part 3 (4.1.3).

Launch!

Click to display the **Mystery Bag**.

Say:

- “Let’s see what words are in our Mystery Bag! Listen to my sounds.
- /l/ /ě/ /g/.”

Ask “What word does it make when we put these sounds together,



The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

/l/ /ě/ /g/?” A: leg

Say “Let’s check in the bag!”

Click to display the **leg** to confirm students’ answer.

Say “Right! /l/ /ě/ /g/, **leg**. Let’s try another one. Repeat after me.”

Click to display the **Mystery Bag**.

Say “/k/ /ou/.”

Ask “What’s my word?” A: cow

Say “Let’s check!”

Click to display the **cow** to confirm students’ answer.

Say “Let’s keep going.”

Click to display the **Mystery Bag**.

Continue with the remaining examples:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. /g/ /ā/ /t/, gate | 11. /k/ /ē/, key | 21. /ů/ /p/, up |
| 2. /n/ /ē/, knee | 12. /j/ /ǎ/ /m/, jam | 22. /b/ /ě/ /d/, bed |
| 3. /b/ /oi/, boy | 13. /t/ /ī/, tie | 23. /ě/ /j/, edge |
| 4. /h/ /ů/ /g/, hug | 14. /t/ /oi/, toy | 24. /ĩ/ /n/ /ch/, inch |
| 5. /f/ /ē/ /t/, feet | 15. /z/ /ōō/, zoo | 25. /ǒ/ /ks/, ox |
| 6. /sh/ /ōō/, shoe | 16. /r/ /ů/ /g/, rug | 26. /n/ /ů/ /t/, nut |
| 7. /t/ /ōō/, two | 17. /ĩ/ /ch/, itch | 27. /k/ /ar/, car |
| 8. /f/ /ǒ/ /ks/, fox | 18. /p/ /ē/ /z/, peas | 28. /ā/ /p/, ape |
| 9. /ī/ /s/, ice | 19. /ǎ/ /n/ /t/, ant | |
| 10. /ǎ/ /ks/, ax | 20. /d/ /ǒ/ /g/, dog | |



DIFFERENTIATION OPTIONS

Ways to simplify:

- Give the phonemes twice before asking for a response, or even three times if necessary.
- Decrease the length of the pauses between the phonemes. When closer together, it will be easier to blend the phonemes into a word:
/b/ - (PAUSE) - /ō/ - (PAUSE) - /t/, **boat** rather than
/b/ - (PAUSE) - /ō/ - (PAUSE) - /t/, **boat**.

Unit 6 | Lesson 2 | Part 3

Activity 25: Stretch Those Sounds

PA: Segmenting

Objective

Students will segment the phonemes (sounds) in two-sound words using finger-stretching.

What Students See



Description

The teacher says a word aloud and models how to segment the sounds using finger-stretching, having students repeat. Eventually, the teacher will withdraw some support and students will segment the words on their own.

3, 2, 1...

Open Countdown Online to Unit 6, Lesson 2, Part 3 (6.2.3).

Launch!

Click to display the ice.

Say:

- “Today, we are going to separate all of the sounds in some words.
- Listen while I say the sounds in **ice**.”
- “**ice**” (*hold closed fist against chest, crossing the midline*)
- “/i/” (*extend thumb*), “/s/” (*extend pointer finger*)
- “**ice**” (*pull fingers back to a closed fist while saying the word*)

Say:

- “Watch what I did with my fingers while I said the sounds in **ice**.”
- I stretched the word out into sounds, said each sound, and at the same time, I stretched a finger. We will call this finger-stretching.
- Let’s stretch the word **ice** again together.” (*Students and teacher repeat sounds while finger-stretching.*)
- “Let’s try another one.”

Click to display the zoo.

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

Say:

- “Watch what I do with my fingers while I say the sounds in **zoo**.”
- “**zoo**” (hold closed fist against chest, crossing the midline)
- “/z/” (extend thumb), “/oo/” (extend pointer finger)
- “**zoo**” (pull fingers back to a closed fist while saying the word)

Say:

- “Let’s stretch the word **zoo** again together.” (Students and teacher repeat sounds while finger-stretching.)
- “Let’s keep going.”

Continue with remaining images:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. up (/ʊ/ /p/) | 7. egg (/ɛ/ /g/) | 13. shoe (/sh/ /oo/) |
| 2. car (/k/ /ar/) | 8. bee (/b/ /ē/) | 14. door (/d/ /or/) |
| 3. itch (/ɪ/ /ch/) | 9. toy (/t/ /oi/) | 15. tie (/t/ /ī/) |
| 4. key (/k/ /ē/) | 10. add (/ă/ /d/) | 16. ape (/ā/ /p/) |
| 5. pie (/p/ /ī/) | 11. jar (/j/ /ar/) | 17. ace (/ā/ /s/) |
| 6. cow (/k/ /ou/) | 12. knee (/n/ /ē/) | 18. ox (/ō/ /ks/) |



DIFFERENTIATION OPTIONS

Ways to simplify:

- If finger-stretching is too physically challenging for the students, they can use their fingers to tap on the back of their hands while stretching and then clap and hold when blending the word together.
- Another option is to have students tap a whole fist on the table as they say the whole word, then touch each finger to the table as they say each sound, and then tap the whole fist on the table again with the blended word.
- Another option is to have students individually tap a finger on the table for each sound and then “fist bump” the teacher or another student when blending the word together

Ways to challenge:

- Have the students finger-stretch with the teacher the first time rather than the teacher modeling every example first.

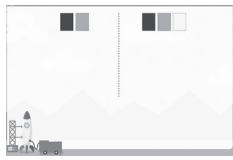
Unit 9 | Lesson 4 | Part 1

Activity 26: Count the Sounds

PA: Segmenting

Objective

Students will segment and count the number of phonemes (sounds) in spoken words.

What Students See**Description**

Two columns appear on the screen with two and three color tiles (representing two and three phonemes) as headings. An image appears at the bottom of the screen. Teacher and students stretch the phonemes (sounds) in the word. Students must determine how many phonemes are in each word. Each image is then sorted into the correct column.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Unit 9, Lesson 4, Part 1 (9.4.1).*

Launch!

Click to display two columns with two and three color tiles as headings.

Say “Today, we are going to listen for how many sounds we hear in words. This side (*point to the left column*) is for words that have two sounds. This side (*point to the right column*) is for words that have three sounds.”

Click to display the **bee** at the bottom of the screen.

Say “**Bee**. Stretch that word with me, **bee**, /b/ /ē/, **bee**.” (*Students and teacher finger-stretch.*)

Ask “How many sounds did you hear in /b/ /ē/, **bee**?” **A:** two

Say “Let’s check it: /b/ (*point to the first color tile*), /ē/ (*point to the second color tile*), **bee**. You’re right!”

Click to place the **bee** in the column with two color tiles.

Continue with the remaining words:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. goat , /g/ /ō/ /t/ (3) | 5. gate , /g/ /ā/ /t/ (3) |
| 2. egg , /ĕ/ /g/ (2) | 6. key , /k/ /ē/ (2) |
| 3. up , /ŭ/ /p/ (2) | 7. ax , /ă/ /ks/ (2) |
| 4. bat , /b/ /ă/ /t/ (3) | 8. bug , /b/ /ŭ/ /g/ (3) |

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.



You should touch the tiles at the top of the left column as you check to see if there are, in fact, two sounds in the word.



Although the letter **x** is comprised of two phonemes, students are taught to handle them as one sound represented by one letter, as in the word **ax**.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 9. rat, /r/ /ă/ /t/ (3) | 17. edge, /ě/ /j/ (2) |
| 10. tie, /t/ /ī/ (2) | 18. wave, /w/ /ā/ /v/ (3) |
| 11. log, /l/ /ŏ/ /g/ (3) | 19. ape, /ā/ /p/ (2) |
| 12. mouse, /m/ /ou/ /s/ (3) | 20. car, /k/ /ar/ (2) |
| 13. ox, /ŏ/ /ks/ (2) | 21. tape, /t/ /ā/ /p/ (3) |
| 14. can, /k/ /ă/ /n/ (3) | 22. boy, /b/ /oi/ (2) |
| 15. nose, /n/ /ō/ /z/ (3) | 23. yes, /y/ /ě/ /s/ (3) |
| 16. zoo, /z/ /ōō/ (2) | |

DIFFERENTIATION OPTIONS

Ways to simplify:

- Lengthen the pause between each phoneme: “/m/ /ă/ /p/, **map**.” This makes it easier for students to distinguish between and count the phonemes.

Ways to challenge:

- Shorten the pause between each phoneme: “/m/ /ă/ /p/, **map**.” This makes it more challenging for students to distinguish between and count the phonemes.

Experience the Reading Playgrounds!

Visit my.rgr.fun and enter password *cd.cd.cd* to experience some of the Reading Playground games *Countdown* students might play after participating in phoneme blending and segmenting activities such as Mystery Bag, Stretch Those Sounds, and Count the Sounds in their *Countdown* lessons. Have fun exploring the playgrounds with these sample games. Unit 4, Games 2, 5, and 7, and Unit 13, Game 6 help students practice blending sounds. Unit 13, Game 1 allows students to practice segmenting and counting the sounds in spoken words.



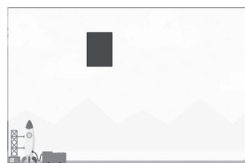
Unit 13 | Lesson 2 | Part 1

Activity 27: Add That Sound

PA: Manipulation

Objective

Students will add a sound to the end of a word to form a new word.

What Students See**Description**

The teacher says a word aloud. Teacher and students finger-stretch the phonemes. The teacher then models how to add a phoneme to the end of the word, stretching the sounds of the new word. Students then repeat the stretching process for the new word.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Unit 13, Lesson 2, Part 1 (13.2.1).*

Launch!**Say:**

- “Today, we are going to add a sound to the end of some words.
- Listen to my word, **she**.
- Let’s finger-stretch that word together. **She**, /sh/ /ē/, **she**.”

Click to display a color tile for each sound while saying the sounds again: /sh/ (*first color tile appears*), /ē/ (*second color tile appears*).

Say “I am going to add a new sound, /p/, to the end of **she**. I’ll add a new color tile since we are adding a sound.”

Click to display a third color tile.

Say:

- “Let’s see what the new word is: /shē/ (*sweep finger under the first two tiles*), /p/ (*touch the third tile*), **sheep** (*sweep finger under all three tiles*). The new word is **sheep**. Did you hear the new sound /p/ at the end?
- Let’s stretch all the sounds in **sheep** together (*say the sounds while finger-stretching*): /sh/ (*extend thumb*), /ē/ (*extend pointer finger*), /p/ (*extend middle finger*), **sheep** (*pull closed fist to chest*).
- Let’s try another one.
- Listen to my word, **lay**.

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

- Let's finger-stretch that word together. **Lay**, /l/ /ā/, **lay**."

Click to display a color tile for each sound while saying the sounds again:
/l/ (first color tile appears), /ā/ (second color tile appears).

Say "I am going to add a new sound, /k/, to the end of **lay**. I'll add a new color tile since we are adding a sound."

Click to display a third color tile.

Say:

- "Let's see what the new word is: /lā/ (sweep finger under the first two tiles), /k/ (touch the third tile). Did you hear the new sound, /k/, at the end?
- Say those sounds with me so we can blend them together, /lā/ /k/."

Ask "What is our new word?" **A:** lake

Say:

- "Let's stretch all the sounds in **lake** together (say the sounds while finger-stretching): /l/ (extend thumb), /ā/ (extend pointer finger), /k/ (extend middle finger), **lake** (pull closed fist to chest).
- Let's try another one."

Continue with remaining additions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. bee (/b/ /ē/ + /n/) → bean | 10. we (/w/ /ē/ + /t/) → wheat |
| 2. tie (/t/ /ī/ + /m/) → time | 11. no (/n/ /ō/ + /z/) → nose |
| 3. boy (/b/ /oi/ + /l/) → boil | 12. say (/s/ /ā/ + /m/) → same |
| 4. key (/k/ /ē/ + /p/) → keep | 13. may (/m/ /ā/ + /d/) → made |
| 5. knee (/n/ /ē/ + /d/) → need | 14. shy (/sh/ /ī/ + /n/) → shine |
| 6. pie (/p/ /ī/ + /l/) → pile | 15. my (/m/ /ī/ + /l/) → mile |
| 7. zoo (/z/ /ō/ + /m/) → zoom | 16. go (/g/ /ō/ + /t/) → goat |
| 8. he (/h/ /ē/ + /t/) → heat | 17. she (/sh/ /ē/ + /t/) → sheet |
| 9. see (/s/ /ē/ + /d/) → seed | 18. why (/w/ /ī/ + /n/) → whine |

DIFFERENTIATION OPTIONS

Ways to simplify:

- If students struggle to say the new word independently, teacher can continue to say the new word first (as in the **sheep** example above) and have students repeat.

- Students can use their color tiles for the activity to make it more concrete (put out two, then add a third, touching tiles as they say the sounds).

Ways to challenge:

- Have students combine the initial word with the new sound independently.
- Instead of saying, “Did you hear the new sound (*say sound*) at the end?” after adding the new sound, have students recall what the new sound was independently; ask, “What is the new sound we added to the end of the word?”
- Have the students try to come up with an additional sound that, when added to the initial word, could make a different word. (Example: **lay** → **lake**; students may then come up with **lay** → **late**, or **lay** → **laid**, or **lay** → **lane**.)

Unit 10 | Lesson 1 | Part 2

Activity 30: Name That Sound

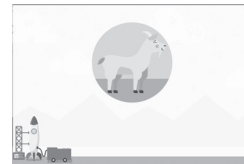
AP: Letter ID

Objective

Students will identify the uppercase and lowercase letters associated with the sounds /g/, /l/, /n/, and /ŭ/.

See p. 2 in *Teacher Guide Book 2* for a full description of *Name That Sound*.

What Students See



The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 10, Lesson 1, Part 2 (10.1.2).

Launch!

Say “Now, we are going to see what some new sounds look like when they are written down.”

Click to display the goat.

Ask:

- “What is this a picture of?” **A:** goat
- “What is the first sound in /g/, **goat**?” **A:** /g/

Click to display the corresponding uppercase and lowercase letter tiles.

Say:

To access the accompanying *Countdown Online* components for these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.



Optional motions for consonant sounds are available in the Appendix of *Teacher Guide Book 1* for students who may require more of a kinesthetic approach.

- “Right, **goat** begins with /g/, and these letters say the sound, or spell, /g/.
- Do you remember **Gary** the **Gorilla**? He **goes** to **g**rammar school with **goats** and **g**uinea pigs! His favorite sound is /g/.
- The name of these letters is **G**. **G** says /g/, like the beginning of /g/, **goat**.
- This one (*point to uppercase G*) is called ‘capital **G**,’ and this one (*point to lowercase g*) is called ‘lowercase **g**.’ This is the one we will see most of the time, so we’ll just call it **g**.
- Let’s learn another new letter.”

Click to display the **lion**.

Ask:

- “What is this a picture of?” **A:** a lion
- “What is the first sound in /l/, **lion**?” **A:** /l/

Click to display the corresponding uppercase and lowercase letter tiles.

Say:

- “Right, **lion** begins with /l/, and these letters say /l/.
- Do you remember **Lola** the **Lizard**? She **licked** a **l**emon lollipop, and then she accidentally **licked** a **lion**! Her favorite sound is /l/.
- This one (*point to uppercase L*) is called ‘capital **L**,’ and this one (*point to lowercase l*) is called ‘lowercase **l**.’ This is the one we will see most of the time, so we’ll just call it **l**.
- Let’s learn another new letter.”

Click to display the **nest**.

Ask:

- “What is this a picture of?” **A:** a nest
- “What is the first sound in /n/, **nest**?” **A:** /n/

Say “Do you remember **Nina** the **Nuthatch**? Her **nest** was **next** door to a **noisy** **n**ightingale’s! Her favorite sound is /n/.”

Click to display the corresponding uppercase and lowercase letter tiles.

Ask “So, what do you think these letters say?” **A:** /n/

Say:

- “Yes! The name of these letters is **N**. **N** says /n/, like the beginning of /n/, **nest**.
- This one (*point to uppercase N*) is called ‘capital **N**,’ and this one (*point to lowercase n*) is called ‘lowercase **n**.’ This is the one we will see most

of the time, so we'll just call it **n**.

- Let's learn one more new letter."

Click to display the image for **up**.

Ask:

- "What is this a picture of?" **A:** an arrow pointing up
- "What is the first sound in /ŭ/, **up**?" **A:** /ŭ/

Click to display the corresponding uppercase and lowercase letter tiles.

Ask "So, what do you think these letters say?" **A:** /ŭ/

Say:

- "Yes! The name of these letters is **U**. **U** says /ŭ/, like the beginning of /ŭ/, **up**."
- This one (*point to uppercase U*) is called 'capital **U**,' and this one (*point to lowercase u*) is called 'lowercase **u**.' This is the one we will see most of the time, so we'll just call it **u**."

Demonstrate /ŭ/, **up** motion (you should use this motion, and all the short vowel motions, for all students):

Say:

- "Let's do a motion to help us remember that sound."
- Make your pointer finger go up from your waist to over your head."

Demonstrate the short u, **up**, motion while elongating the sound /ŭŭŭŭ/, and have students repeat (*with pointer finger pointing up, move your hand up from your waist to over your head*).

Click to display letter tiles **g**, **l**, **n**, and **u**.

Say "Let's name our letters one more time and say the sound that each letter spells."

Point to each letter, one at a time, and say:

- "This is **g**. **G** says /g/."
- This is **l**. **L** says /l/."
- This is **n**. **N** says /n/."
- This is **u**. **U** says /ŭ/."

Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.

Clusters of Letters Taught in Countdown

Unit	Cluster	Letter Symbols Taught
6	1	m, t, p, a
7	2	s, h, c, i
8	3	d, f, r, o
9	Review	Review of Clusters 1-3
10	4	g, l, n, u
11	5	b, k, v, e
12	Review	Review of Clusters 1-5
13	6	j, w, z
14	7	qu, x, y
15	Review	Review of Clusters 1-7
16	Review	Review of Clusters 1-7

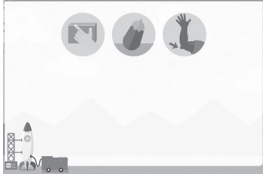
The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

Unit 11 | Lesson 4 | Part 1

Activity 32: Find That Letter

AP: Letter ID

Objective
Students will identify the letter symbol that spells the shared first sound in a set of three imaged words.

What Students See


See p. 20 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for a full description of Find That Letter.

Note that, although students should add the **o** tile to their boards at this time, they won't use that tile in this activity. However, since they will use it in other activities in this unit, it will be helpful to place it on the board now. They will also need the **a** and **i** tiles later in this unit, which they have used in previous units.

3, 2, 1...

OPTIONAL (only if you choose to use manipulatives)

Students take out letter tiles **a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u,** and **v** and working board.

Open Countdown Online to Unit 11, Lesson 4, Part 1 (11.4.1).

Launch!

Say “Today, we are going to match our letter tiles to the beginning sounds of some words.”

Click to display, point to, and name three images: **edge, eggplant, elbow.**

Ask “What is the beginning sound in all of these words?” **A:** /ě/

Click to display three letter tiles: **e, o,** and **u.**

Say “Point to the letter that spells /ě/, and say its name.” **A:** e (*pointing to the left*)

Click to show the correct answer.

Continue with remaining groups of images:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. vegetables, violin, van (v) | 8. grapes, girl, guitar (g) |
| 2. umbrella, under, upside down (u) | 9. volcano, vase, vehicle (v) |
| 3. butterfly, bear, bird (b) | 10. elbow, elephant, elf (e) |
| 4. neck, newspaper, nurse (n) | 11. sidewalk, sun, stars (s) |
| 5. keyboard, kiwi, king (k) | 12. kangaroo, kite, key (k) |
| 6. inch, iguana, ill (i) | 13. ostrich, otter, octopus (o) |
| 7. banana, bread, bone (b) | 14. dolphin, deer, door (d) |



You may want to have students point all the way to the left for **h**, to the center for **c**, and all the way to the right for **r**. If students are using manipulatives, have them hold up the correct tile and name it rather than point.

See p. 22 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for differentiation options for Find That Letter.

Unit 8 | Lesson 3 | Part 3

Activity 34: Which Letter?

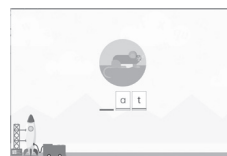
AP: Letter ID

Objective

Students will isolate the beginning sound of a word and match that sound to its letter symbol.

See p. 33 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for a full description of Which Letter?

What Students See



The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

3, 2, 1...

OPTIONAL (*only if you choose to use manipulatives*)

Prepare materials:

- Letter tiles **a, c, d, f, h, i, m, o, p, r, s,** and **t** and working board from *Countdown Student Kit* for each student (*italicized letter tiles listed here are new to this unit; have students add these tiles to their boards*)

To access the accompanying **Countdown Online** components for these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 8, Lesson 3, Part 3 (8.3.3).

Launch!

OPTIONAL (only if you choose to use manipulatives)

Students take out letter tiles c, d, f, h, m, p, r, s, and t and working board.

Say “Now, we are going to spell the first letter of some words.”

Click to display the **rat** with the letters a t spelled out below.

Say “Rat.”

Ask “What is the first sound in **rat**?” A: /r/

Click to display three letter tiles: h, c, r.

Ask “Which of these letters spells /r/ like /r/, **rat**? Point to the letter tile that spells /r/, and say its name.” A: r

Click to show the correct answer.

Click to display the image for **sad** with the letters a d spelled out below.

Say “Sad.”

Ask “What is the first sound in **sad**?” A: /s/

Click to display three letter tiles: d, m, s.

Ask “Which of these letters spells /s/ like /s/, **sad**? Point to the letter tile that spells /s/, and say its name.” A: s

Click to show the correct answer.

Continue with remaining images:

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. map (m) | 5. mop (m) | 9. dip (d) |
| 2. hip (h) | 6. pot (p) | 10. ram (r) |
| 3. cat (c) | 7. hop (h) | 11. rip (r) |
| 4. cop (c) | 8. fit (f) | 12. tap (t) |

Experience the Reading Playgrounds!

Visit my.rgr.fun and enter password [cd.cd.cd](https://my.rgr.fun) to experience some of the Reading Playground games *Countdown* students might play after participating in letter-sound identification and letter-sound fluency activities such as Name That Sound, Find That Letter, and Which Letter? in their *Countdown* lessons. Have fun exploring the playgrounds with these sample games. Unit 13, Games 3, 4, and 9 allow students to practice letter-sound identification.



13. tap (t)

16. sip (s)

19. rot (r)

14. fat (f)

17. mad (m)

15. cot (c)

18. him (h)

See p. 34 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for differentiation options for Which Letter?

Unit 11 | Lesson 2 | Part 1

Activity 36: Guess My Word

AP: Encoding

Objective

Students will observe the encoding of a word and then blend together the word's phonemes.

See p. 39 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for a full description of Guess My Word.

What Students See



3, 2, 1...

Open Countdown Online to Unit 11, Lesson 2, Part 1 (11.2.1).

Launch!

Say "Today, you're going to guess my mystery words that got all mixed up."

Click to display the letter tiles **n**, **v**, **a**.

Say "Guess the mystery word, /v/ /ă/ /n/." (Click to move the letter tiles into the correct position as you say each sound.)

Ask "What's my word?" **A:** van (Students blend the sounds together to say the word.)

Say "/v/ /ă/ /n/, **van**." (Point to each letter tile as you say its sound, and then sweep your finger under the word from left to right while saying the whole word.)

Click to display the **van**.

Continue with remaining images:

1. /b/ /ĕ/ /d/, **bed**3. /b/ /ă/ /t/, **bat**5. /b/ /ŭ/ /g/, **bug**2. /l/ /ĕ/ /g/, **leg**4. /p/ /ĕ/ /n/, **pen**6. /n/ /ĕ/ /t/, **net**

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

7. /k/ /i/ /d/, **kid**10. /v/ /ě/ /t/, **vet**13. /b/ /ě/ /g/, **beg**8. /l/ /ö/ /g/, **log**11. /t/ /ě/ /n/, **ten**14. /s/ /ö/ /b/, **sob**9. /b/ /ă/ /g/, **bag**12. /k/ /i/ /t/, **kit**

See p. 40 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for differentiation options for Guess My Word.

Unit 12 | Lesson 2 | Part 3

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

Activity 37: Unscramble This

AP: Encoding

Objective

Students help the teacher segment the phonemes in words while the teacher models the encoding (spelling) of each sound.

See p. 54 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for a full description of *Unscramble This*.

What Students See



3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 12, Lesson 2, Part 3 (12.2.3).

Launch!

Say “Now, we’re going to unscramble some letters that got mixed up. When we unscramble them and put them in the right order, they will make real words we can read.”

Click to display the **bag** and the letter tiles **g**, **b**, **a**.

Say:

- “**Bag**.”
- Let’s stretch the sounds in **bag** together.”

Click to move each letter tile to the correct position **AS** you and students say the sounds /b/ /ă/ /g/.

Say “Now, let’s make sure those sounds really blend to make the word **bag**.”

Point to each letter tile as you and the students say its sound, /b/ /ă/ /g/, and then sweep your finger under the word from left to right while saying the whole word, **bag**.


Say:

- “Let’s try to unscramble another mixed up word.
- This time, it’s your turn to stretch out the words on your own.”

Continue with remaining images:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. cup (/k/ /ŭ/ /p/) | 8. leg (/l/ /ě/ /g/) |
| 2. net (/n/ /ě/ /t/) | 9. sad (/s/ /ă/ /d/) |
| 3. sun (/s/ /ŭ/ /n/) | 10. hot (/h/ /ŏ/ /t/) |
| 4. dog (/d/ /ŏ/ /g/) | 11. rat (/r/ /ă/ /t/) |
| 5. pen (/p/ /ě/ /n/) | 12. sit (/s/ /ĩ/ /t/) |
| 6. bat (/b/ /ă/ /t/) | 13. bug (/b/ /ŭ/ /g/) |
| 7. hug (/h/ /ŭ/ /g/) | 14. van (/v/ /ă/ /n/) |

See p. 55 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for differentiation options for Unscramble This.



Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.

Unit 13 | Lesson 4 | Part 3

Activity 38: Build a Word

AP: Encoding

Objective

Students encode (spell) words by first segmenting sounds and then matching sounds to letters.

See p. 103 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for a full description of Build a Word.

What Students See



3, 2, 1...

OPTIONAL (only if you choose to use manipulatives)

Students take out letter tiles a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, w, and z and working board.

Open Countdown Online to Unit 13, Lesson 4, Part 3 (13.4.3).

Launch!

Say:

- “Now, we are going to build words with our letter tiles by listening to the sounds in each word and putting our letter tiles in order. That is how we spell words.
- Let’s build our first word!”

Click to display the image for **win**.

Say:

- “Listen carefully. **Win**, /w/ /ɪ/ /n/, **win** (while finger-stretching).
- I heard three sounds in **win**, /w/ /ɪ/ /n/.”

Click to display one color tile at a time while again saying “/w/ /ɪ/ /n/.”

Say:

- “Now let’s build the word with letter tiles.
- The first sound I heard was /w/.”

Ask “What letter spells /w/?” A: w

Click to display the letter tile w under the first color tile.

Say “The next sound I heard was /ɪ/. What letter spells /ɪ/?” A: i

Click to display the letter tile i under the second color tile.

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

The Countdown Online Supply Room provides video explanations for the finger-stretching routine for English learners.



To finger-stretch, begin by saying the whole word with closed fist at chest. Then, extend one finger for each sound in the word, beginning with the thumb. Finally, bring hand back into a fist while saying the whole word again.

Say “The last sound I heard was /n/. What letter spells /n/?” **A:** n

Click to display the letter tile **n** under the last color tile.

Say:

- “Let’s check our work. /w/ /ɪ/ /n/ (touching each letter as you say the sound), **win** (sweeping pointer finger under the whole word from left to right).
• Awesome job, you just spelled **win**. Let’s try another word.”

Continue with remaining words:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. jet , /j/ /ě/ /t/ | 6. wet , /w/ /ě/ /t/ |
| 2. sad , /s/ /ă/ /d/ | 7. hug , /h/ /ũ/ /g/ |
| 3. rug , /r/ /ũ/ /g/ | 8. jam , /j/ /ă/ /m/ |
| 4. sit , /s/ /ĩ/ /t/ | 9. kid , /k/ /ĩ/ /d/ |
| 5. pod , /p/ /ö/ /d/ | |

See p. 105 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for differentiation options for Build a Word.




If students are using manipulatives, have them use color and letter tiles to build the word along with you.


Experience the Reading Playgrounds!


Visit my.rgr.fun and enter password **cd.cd.cd** to experience some of the Reading Playground games *Countdown* students might play after participating in decoding and encoding activities such as *Guess My Word*, *Unscramble This*, and *Build a Word* in their *Countdown* lessons. Have fun exploring the playgrounds with these sample games. Unit 13, Game 2 allows students to unscramble words and then to hear the words decoded correctly.



Unit 11 | Lesson 1 | Part 3


The Unit Planner
explains how to
tie Handwriting
and Concepts
of Print into
each lesson.


See p. 46 for more
information on Heart
Words in *Countdown*.

Activity 42: Look, Think, Say; Pop-Up; 3-Up		Sight Words
Objective	Description	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will read three Heart WordsStudents will read individual Heart Words as they pop up on the screen.Students will read sets of three Heart Words as they appear on the screen.	<p>In Look, Think, Say, a Heart Word will appear on the board with three dots below it. As the teacher clicks, the dots will fill with red, yellow, and green, and the teacher will instruct students to look at, think about, and say the word aloud. During the “look” time, the teacher will say the word. During the “think” time, the students will think about the word and try to remember it, or the teacher will stretch the sounds in the word for students if the word is decodable (although the goal will be to remember it as a whole word). During the “say” time, students will repeat the word.</p> <p>In Pop-Up, individual Heart Words will appear on the screen at random, one at a time, and students will be instructed to read each word as it pops up onto the screen.</p> <p>In 3-Up, sets of three Heart Words will appear, with three dots below each set. As the teacher clicks three times, the dots will fill with red, yellow, and green and the teacher will instruct students to look, think, and say the three words in succession.</p> <p>The Heart Words will include words learned during this current unit and, in subsequent units, words from previous units.</p>	
What Students See		

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 11, Lesson 1, Part 3 (11.1.3).

Launch!


Say “Now, we are going to learn to read some more words called Heart Words. They are called Heart Words because pretty soon, we will know them by heart. We will be able to look at them and know what they say right away.”

LOOK, THINK, SAY:

Play the Heart Word Magic video. **Then click to display** the Heart Word **and** with one red and two empty dots below the word.

Say:

- “This red dot (*point to the red dot*) tells us to **stop** what we are doing so we can listen to the word.


Prior to the Look,
Think, Say activity,
Countdown Online
includes Heart
Word Magic videos
delivering animated
instruction on the
three target Heart
Words. These videos
should always be
shown first.

- This word is **and**, as in, ‘I like apples **and** bananas.’”

Click to display the yellow dot.

Say:

- “Think about this word. We know the sounds in this word, /ă/ /n/ /d/ (*point to each letter as you say the sound*), **and**.
- We can think about the sounds in this word because we know them already, but eventually we will be able to look and remember.”

Click to display the green dot.

Say:

- “This green dot (*point to the green dot*) tells us to **say** the word out loud.
- Say the word with me, **and**.
- Let’s try another word.
- Remember to **look, think**, and then **say**. Only **say** the word out loud when the green dot shows up.”

Click twice to display the Heart Word **at** with one red dot and two empty dots below the word.

Say “Look at the word **at**, as in, ‘We eat lunch **at** noon.’”

Click to display the yellow dot.

Say:

- “Think about this word. We know the sounds in this word, /ă/ /t/ (*point to each letter as you say the sound*), **at**.
- We can think about the sounds in this word, but it might be easier to just try to remember it.”

Click to display the green dot.

Say:

- “Say the word!
- Let’s try one more word.”


Click twice to display the Heart Word **go** with one red dot and two empty dots below the word.

Say “Look at the word **go**, as in, ‘We will **go** to the zoo to see the animals.’”

Click to display the yellow dot.

Say “Think about this word and try to remember its tricky part.”

Click to display the green dot.



The Countdown Online Supply Room provides video explanations for the letter-sound and Heart Word games for English learners.

Say:

- “Say the word!
- Let’s look at those words again.”

Continue with the same three Heart Words for two additional rounds.

POP-UP:

Say:

- “Now, we are going to practice reading the Heart Words we just learned by playing two games.
- In our first game, when you see a word pop up onto the screen, say the word out loud.
- If you need help remembering, I can help, but try your best.”

Click to display the Heart Words **my, is, for, here, am, the, and, at, and go** at random. Each word will appear several times.

Read each word together with students as it pops up.

3-UP:

Say:

- “Great job! In our next game, you will see three words on the screen.
- When you see the red dot, **stop** and **look** at the three words. When you see the yellow dot, **think** about the words and try to remember this word and its tricky part(s). When you see the green dot, **say** the three words out loud.”

Click to display the sets of three Heart Words. Each set will contain the following words in a random order: **my, is, for, here, am, the, and, at, and go**. Each word will appear several times.

Look at, think about, and say each set of three words together with students as the sets are displayed Offer support with the 'tricky parts' as needed.

Heart Words Taught in Countdown

Unit	Heart Words Taught	Unit	Heart Words Taught	Unit	Heart Words Taught
8	the, in, my	15	did, too, will	22	ate, our, who
9	a, is, for	16	with, all, me	23	where, what, must
10	I, am, here	17	N/A (Transitional Unit)	24	we, he, she
11	and, at, go	18	was, no, so	25	but, want, there
12	it, like, be	19	say, now, have	26	saw, own, please
13	to, not, can	20	said, come, down	27	make, good, new
14	you, are, do	21	they, that, this	28	out, one, two

Countdown's Heart Words

Countdown gives students ample practice in reading high-frequency words. In *Countdown*, we refer to high-frequency words as "sight words" or "Heart Words." When children can read high-frequency words accurately and automatically, it helps them read any text more fluently.

The expectation is that *Countdown* students will learn and practice 60 high-frequency words by the end of kindergarten. See page 48 for a table listing the order in which the Heart Words are introduced in *Countdown*.

Countdown Online's Supply Room contains a tool called the Heart Word Generator that allows you to choose which high-frequency words to teach and practice if you choose not to use the Heart Words built into *Countdown's* scope and sequence. The back of the *Student Workbook* contains two pages titled "My Heart Words." This is an alphabetical list of the Dolch 220 words and allows you to track student mastery of these words.



Heart Word Magic

In an effort to bridge the gap between reading research and teacher practice, Really Great Reading has developed a tool called Heart Word Magic to help students anchor irregularly spelled high-frequency words (Tricky Heart Words) into their sight word memory.

Be sure to check out the Heart Word Magic videos that teach the tricky parts of the Heart Words taught in *Countdown*. These are found in each *Countdown* Lesson 1, Part 3 (beginning in Unit 8) at the beginning of the Heart Word teaching section.



Free Resource!

Heart Word Magic will help "make the tricky sticky" for our students.

HeartWordMagic.com

Non-Decodable Heart Words

- Many high-frequency words (sight words/ Heart Words) are considered "not decodable" because their phonics patterns are obscure or not yet taught.
- It's important to rely on phonics patterns as much as possible while working toward building fluency and automaticity with the irregular parts.
- The same skills students use for reading decodable words are also helpful in learning to read and spell these non-decodable words.

are	says	said	again
want	you	your	who
any	many	been	some
come	from	other	pull
put	push	love	friend
door	their	often	through
very	walk	talk	would
could	should	to	do

Unit 15 | Lesson 3 | Part 3

Activity 41: Phrase Reading

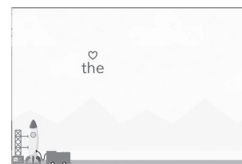
AP: Decoding

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

Objective

Students will practice reading decodable words and Heart Words in three-word phrases.

What Students See



See p. 134 in Teacher Guide Book 2 for a full description of Phrase Reading.

3, 2, 1...

Open Countdown Online to Unit 15, Lesson 3, Part 3 (15.3.3).

Launch!

Say:

- “Now, we are going to put some of our Heart Words together with some words we can sound out and read them together.
- When each word shows up on the screen, we’ll read it together.
- Then, when all three words are up, we are going to read the phrase together.
- Let’s get started!”

Click to display the red word **the**.

Say “Remember, red words are Heart Words. Let’s say it together.” (*the*)

Click to display the black word **hot**.

Say “Remember, we can sound out black words. Let’s sound it out together.” (*Use Touch & Say to sound out the word together: /h/ /ɒ/ /t/, hot.*)

Click to display the black word **tub**.

Say “Remember, we can sound out black words. Let’s sound it out together.” (*Use Touch & Say to sound out the word together: /t/ /ü/ /b/, tub.*)

Say “Now we know all of the words, but let’s try to read them together in order. When I point to a word, read it out loud: **the hot tub**.” (*Point to each word, having students read the words aloud as you go. Begin with a pause between each word, and then repeat the process with shorter pauses on the second and third rounds to build fluency.*)

Say “Let’s try another phrase, or group of words.”

Continue with the following phrases in the same manner: **Jen did* hum; the fox too; dog will* run; you can* win; are not* wax; rub my leg; a pig pen; is so fun; zig and* zag.**



Some of the Heart Words, marked with an asterisk, are also decodable, but they are still written in red because it is beneficial and more efficient for students to see these common words as words they should know by heart. If they struggle to remember these words, feel free to have your students sound the decodable Heart Words out.

Unit 17 | Lesson 1

Vowels vs. Consonants & Letter Sounds vs. Names AP & Sight Words

Objectives

Students will:

- understand that the alphabet is made of 26 letters;
- categorize a letter as a consonant or a vowel;
- identify the letters **a, e, i, o, u** as the vowel letters;
- identify the red vowel letters in the student kit;
- identify the rest of the letters as consonant letters (black letter tiles) in the student kit;
- notice that every word must have at least one vowel.

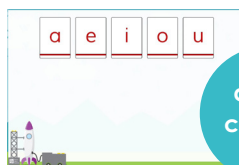
Description

The teacher reviews the idea (introduced in *Countdown Book 2*) that the letters students have been learning about are either vowels or consonants. Students review all letters and their most common sounds while focusing on the type of letter: vowel or consonant. The teacher demonstrates how all real words include at least one vowel.

Student Materials

Holding and working boards from *Countdown Student Kit*

What Students See



To access the accompanying *Countdown Online* components for these activities, visit ExploreCountdown.online.

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting and Concepts of Print into each lesson.

What You Need to Know

- In *Countdown Books 1* and *2*, the program consisted of weekly units with five daily lessons, each consisting of three individual lesson parts. Each lesson part contained one activity that was not related to the other parts of that lesson. In *Book 3*, the structure of the *Countdown* units shifts. *Book 3* still consists of weekly units with five lessons, one lesson for each day of the week. However, the *Book 3* lessons have no individual parts. Each lesson is meant to be approximately 15-20 minutes of continuous instruction.
- For students to respond well to *Countdown* lessons, they need to have a firm understanding of the concept of consonants and vowels.
- We teach students to identify the five common vowels – **a, e, i, o, u**. Earlier in *Countdown*, students learned the short vowel sounds for these five vowel letters. They were introduced to the names and the sounds for each, but the focus was on the letter sounds. They were introduced briefly to the concepts of consonants and vowels. Now, they will learn that these letters are called vowels, and they will learn about their importance in words.

- The terms “consonant” and “vowel” can refer to either a phoneme (a sound) or a letter name.
- In *Countdown*, the vowel letter tiles are red, and the consonant letter tiles are black. This helps students easily find the vowel letters when reading and spelling new words, which facilitates their understanding of some of the rules they will learn. In the *Countdown Student Workbook*, the vowel letters are gray, and the consonant letters are black.

Important Definitions

- **Consonant:** a letter that spells a consonant sound. For example, the letter **y** is a consonant in the word **yes** because it spells the consonant sound /y/. The letter **y** is a vowel in the word **by** because it spells the vowel sound *long i*.
- **Vowel:** a letter that spells a vowel sound.
- **Phonics:** the study of the systematic relationship between sounds and the letters that spell those sounds.
- **Phoneme:** the smallest unit of sound in a spoken word. A phoneme is a sound, not a letter. Spoken words are made up of one or more phonemes. Phonemes are represented by letters inside two slashes, such as /k/, /m/, /ch/, /ă/, and /ou/. In *Countdown*, the two slashes are called a sound box. When you see a letter presented in a sound box, say the sound, not the letter name.
- **Phonemic Awareness:** a person’s ability to identify, segment, blend, hold in memory, and manipulate phonemes (sounds) in words.
- **Grapheme:** a letter or letter combination that spells a phoneme. Graphemes can have up to four letters. In *Countdown*, a grapheme is also referred to as a “sound spelling.”
- **Digraph:** two letters that spell one sound. *Countdown* teaches five consonant digraphs: **sh** spells /sh/ as in **shop**; **th** spells /th/ as in **thin**; **ch** spells /ch/ as in **chat**; **wh** spells /w/ as in **whale**; and **ck** spells /k/ as in **duck**.

Proper Articulation of the Consonant Phonemes

- It is important to have students properly articulate the consonant phonemes as they say them. For example, the articulation of the phoneme /b/ (the sound for the letter **b**) should be short and quick, with no addition of the /uh/ sound to the phoneme. See Appendix B in *Teacher Guide Book 1*, for a chart that details the proper articulation of all the consonant phonemes.

Extra Information About the Letter X

- The letter **x** spells the sounds /ks/ at the end of a syllable, as in **tax** and **maximum**. This is the most common use of the letter **x**. The letter **x** can also spell the sound /z/ at the beginning of a syllable, as in **xylophone** or **xenophobe**.

- The letter **x** always spells the sounds /ks/ in *Countdown*.

Extra Information About the Letter Q

- The letter **q** is almost always followed by the letter **u** in English words, and together they spell the sounds /kw/ as in **queen**, **quack**, and **question**. In the letter combination **qu**, **u** is not a vowel. It represents the phoneme /w/, which is a consonant sound.

Extra Information About the Letter Y

- The letter **y** can be a vowel letter or a consonant letter.
- The letter **y** is a consonant letter when it comes immediately before a vowel letter within the same syllable. The letter **y** spells the consonant sound /y/ in words such as **yam**, **yes**, **yip**, **yodel**, and **yuck**.
- The letter **y** can be a vowel spelling by itself, as in **my**, **myth**, **happy**, and **occupy**, or it can be a part of a vowel spelling when it is immediately after another vowel letter within the same syllable, as in **boy**, **stay**, **key**, and **guy**.
- The letter **y** is used as a consonant letter in *Countdown*.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 17, Lesson 1 (17.1).

Launch!

1 Vowels vs. Consonants

Say:

- “There are 26 letters in the alphabet. All letters make sounds, and you’ve already learned a lot about them.
- When we understand letter sounds, it helps us read correctly.
- We have learned that there are two types of letters. We can sort them into two groups: vowels and consonants.
- Let’s review vowels and consonants by using our letter tiles.”

Students take out holding and working boards from *Countdown Student Kit*.

Say “In English, a letter is either a vowel or a consonant. All of the vowels on our boards are red. Find the red letter tiles, and put them on your smaller board.”

Click to display the five vowel letter tiles: **a**, **e**, **i**, **o**, **u**.

Say:

- “These letters, the red letters, are called **vowels**.

- When I point to a letter tile on the board, I want you to find the same letter on your boards, point to it, and say its name.”

Point to one letter tile at a time, and give students time to find the correct letter tile and say its name.

Say:

- “Every word in English has a vowel in it.
- Let’s look at a few words we’ve heard before to make sure they each have a vowel.”

Click to display examples of real words, one at a time.

Point to and read each word.

h	a	t
---	---	---

w	i	sh
---	---	----

m	e	t
---	---	---

s	o	ck
---	---	----

n	u	t
---	---	---

Say:

- “These can all be real words because each one has a red vowel letter.
- There are also black letters that are not vowels.
- These are called consonants.”

Ask “What are they called?” **A:** consonants

Say:

- “Right, consonants are letters that are not vowels.
- So, the two kinds of letters are called vowels and consonants.
- Let’s review our vowels one more time.”

Click to display the five vowel letter tiles: a, e, i, o, u.

Say “When I say the name of a vowel letter, find it on your board, point to it, and say its name.” (*Say each letter name, one at a time, in random order. After students hold up the correct letter and say its name, have them put that tile back on their holding boards.*)

2 Names vs. Sounds

Say:

- “Every letter has a name, and every letter also has a sound. It is important to know both the name of the letter and the sound.
- We are going to practice them again now.”

Click to display the four rows of guideword images.

Say:

- “Here are our guideword pictures.
- When I point to a picture, I will say the guideword, and it will be your job to peel off the beginning sound.
- Let’s get started!”

Point to and name the **apple**.

Ask “What is the beginning sound in **apple**?” **A:** /ă/

Click to reveal the letter **a**.

Say:

- “When we see each letter, let’s say the name of the letter together.
- If you don’t remember the name of the letter, that is okay. We will practice them together.
- This is the letter **a**. It spells /ă/, like /ă/, **apple**. It is a vowel, so it is red.”

Point to and name the **bear**.

Ask “What is the beginning sound in **bear**?” **A:** /b/

Click to reveal the letter **b**.

Say:

- “This is the letter *(pause to give students time to say the name of the letter)* **b**. It spells /b/, like /b/, **bear**.
- It is not a vowel. It is a consonant, so it is black.”

Point to and name the **cat**.

Ask “Beginning sound?” **A:** /k/

Click to reveal the letter **c**.

Ask “Letter?” *(Pause to give students time to say the name of the letter.)* **A:** c

Say “/k/, like /k/, **cat**.”

Ask:

- “Is **c** a consonant or a vowel?” **A:** consonant
- “How do you know?” **A:** it is black

Continue with the rest of the sounds and letters.



Once students understand the process, feel free to cut down on language. Rather than saying, “What is the beginning sound in **cat**?” simply asking “Beginning sound?” should be sufficient.

Remember:

- You should articulate the letter sounds accurately.
- For the vowels, say the short vowel sounds and remind students that the vowel letters are red.
- The letters **qu** spell two sounds, /kw/. In English, the letters **q** and **u** always stay together to produce a sound. We do not call **u** a vowel when it is after **q**.
- The letter **x** spells /ks/.

Click again after you have completed the alphabet, and the alphabet in letter tiles will appear again.

Say “Now, it’s your turn to say the names of the letters and then the sounds they spell with me. Let’s go.”

Click through the alphabet, and have students say the letter names and sounds with you.

Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Direct Instruction 20–30 minutes daily (15–20 + 5–10 min)	Teacher-led Lesson				
	Letter-Sound & Heart Word Fluency pp. 85-90	Phonemic Awareness pp. 91-98 <i>Guest Teacher videos</i>	Phonics Concept pp. 99-103	Student Practice pp. 104-108	Wrap Up & Show What You Know pp. 109-112
	Handwriting				
	Review Parts of a Sentence	Review Parts of a Sentence	Write New Sound: /sh/	Writing Words: /sh/	Dictation: /sh/
Practice to Mastery 5–10 minutes daily	Resources for ELs				
		<i>/ī/ & /ī/ Articulation videos</i>	Embedded icons facilitate comprehension for ELs.	<i>Detective Work Routine Video</i>	Reading Playground Unit 20 Visual Supports
Small Group Instruction* 20–30 minutes daily	Whole-group dictation with Unit 19's concepts (review)	Heart Word practice with Heart Word Magic templates	Unit 20 Spelling Words introduction	Scaffolded Unit 20 Decodable Passage* "On the Ship" reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 20 Spelling Words practice Unit 20 Decodable Passage Fluency Routine
	Use the Quick Check at the end of each lesson.				
Independent Practice** 30–40 minutes weekly	Additional high-frequency word practice as necessary using Heart Word Magic activities 5–10 minutes	Use additional examples from the Teacher Guide with your small group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 20 Decodable Passage* "On the Ship" cold read 5–10 minutes Unit 20 Spelling Words using the Spell It! template 5–10 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 20 Decodable Passage "On the Ship" practice read 5–10 minutes Unit 20 Spelling Words practice 5–10 minutes Unit 20 Challenge Words practice using the Spell It! template 5 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 20 Decodable Passage "On the Ship" warm read 5–10 minutes Unit 20 Spelling Words practice and (optional) test 5–10 minutes Unit 20 Dictation Sentences 5 minutes
	Review/practice with Unit 19 games*** 10 minutes	Review/practice with Unit 19 games*** 10 minutes			Begin Unit 20 games after teaching the full unit*** 10 minutes
Spanish Resources See Countdown con Español S&S for more details		Learn and practice new words with Unit 20 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 20 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 20 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 20 games 10 minutes
	Heart Word Magic Spanish Supports	<i>/ī/ & /ī/ Articulation in Español videos</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>/sh/ Articulation in Español video</i> <i>Digraph sh in Español Animation</i> 	<i>Detective Work Routine Video in Español</i>	Reading Playground Spanish Supports

*Choose small group activities based on data and student needs. Additional games and reteaching options are indicated in the Reading Playground Formative Assessment guide.

** Students should spend 20-30 minutes a week (10 minutes a day, two or three days) playing RP games and another 20-30 minutes a week (10 minutes a day, two or three days) playing VP games as your schedule permits.

***Choose two or three days after the full unit has been taught for review, practice, and assessment in the Reading Playground. Students often complete RP games from the previous unit on Monday and Tuesday of the following week.

*The decodable eBooks (available in the Reading Playground) can be used instead of the passages.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION	PRACTICE TO MASTERY	SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION	CONCEPTS OF PRINT	HEART WORDS	DECODABLE PASSAGES	SPELLING WORDS	SPANISH RESOURCES
DICTATION SENTENCES	CHALLENGE WORDS	UNLOCK CURRENT UNIT	READING PLAYGROUND	VOCABULARY PLAYGROUND	EL RESOURCES	HANDWRITING	

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Direct Instruction 20–30 minutes daily (15–20 + 5–10 min)	Teacher-led Lesson				
	Letter-Sound & Heart Word Fluency TG3 pp. 277-281	Phonemic Awareness TG3 pp.282-288 <i>Guest Teacher videos</i>	Phonics Concept TG3 pp. 289-296	Student Practice TG3 pp. 297-300	Wrap Up & Show What You Know TG3 pp. 301-303
	Handwriting				
	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Write Closed Syllable Words	Write Closed Syllable Phrases	Dictation: Closed Syllable Sentences
Practice to Mastery 5–10 minutes daily	Resources for ELs				
		<i>Syllable Stomp Routine video</i>	Embedded icons facilitate comprehension for ELs.		Reading Playground Unit 27 Visual Supports
Small Group Instruction* 20–30 minutes daily	Whole-group dictation with Unit 26's concepts (review)	Heart Word practice with Heart Word Magic templates	Unit 27 Spelling Words introduction	Scaffolded Unit 27 Decodable Passage* "The Potluck" reading	• Unit 27 Spelling Words practice • Unit 27 Decodable Passage Fluency Routine
	Use the Quick Check at the end of each lesson.				
Independent Practice** 30–40 minutes weekly	RP Review/practice with Unit 26 games*** 10 minutes	RP Review/practice with Unit 26 games*** 10 minutes			RP Begin Unit 27 games after teaching the full unit*** 10 minutes
		Learn and practice new words with Unit 27 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 27 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 27 games 10 minutes	Learn/practice with Unit 27 games 10 minutes
Spanish Resources See Countdown con Español S&S for more details	Heart Word Magic Spanish Supports	<i>Syllable Stomp in Español video</i>			Reading Playground Spanish Supports

*Choose small group activities based on data and student needs. Additional games and reteaching options are indicated in the Reading **Playground Formative Assessment guide**.

** Students should spend 20-30 minutes a week (10 minutes a day, two or three days) playing RP games and another 20-30 minutes a week (10 minutes a day, two or three days) playing VP games as your schedule permits.

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DIRECT INSTRUCTION	PRATICE TO MASTERY	SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION	CONCEPTS OF PRINT	HEART WORDS	DECODABLE PASSAGES	SPELLING WORDS	SPANISH RESOURCES
DICTION SENTENCES	CHALLENGE WORDS	UNLOCK CURRENT UNIT	READING PLAYGROUND	VOCABULARY PLAYGROUND	EL RESOURCES	HANDWRITING	

Unit 20 | Lesson 3

Phonics Concept: Digraph sh

AP

Objectives

Students will:

- explain that a digraph is two letters that spell one sound;
- identify the letters **sh** as a digraph that spells the phoneme (sound) /sh/;
- accurately spell and read words with the phoneme (sound) /sh/ spelled with digraph **sh**.

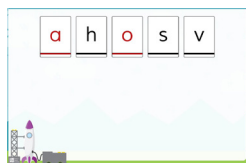
Description

The teacher, as well as an animation, introduces the idea that two letters can work together to spell one sound and that this is called a digraph. Students are introduced to the first digraph, *digraph sh*, which spells the sound /sh/, like in **sheep**. Students build real words with the *digraph sh* and then, optionally, build “silly” nonsense words as a challenge.

Student Materials

Holding and working boards from *Countdown Student Kit*

What Students See



The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting into each lesson.

What You Need to Know

- A consonant digraph is two letters that spell one sound: **ch** in **chat**, **sh** in **shop**, **th** in **thin**, **wh** in **whale**, **ck** in **duck**, **ph** in **phone**, **ng** in **sang**, **gh** in **tough**. (We teach only the digraphs **ch**, **sh**, **th**, **wh**, and **ck** in *Countdown* lessons.)
- Students have been working orally with words with digraphs in *Countdown* Units 1-16 in the phonemic awareness activities. They have isolated the beginning sounds of words with digraphs, like /sh/, **ship** and /ch/, **cheese**, and they have blended and segmented sounds in words with digraphs, like /w/ /ā/ /l/, **whale** and /th/ /ŭ/ /m/, **thumb**. However, this lesson is the first time students will associate letters (a grapheme) with a digraph sound.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 20, Lesson 3 (20.3).

Students take out color and letter tiles and working board from *Countdown Student Kit*.

Launch!**1 Teach Digraph sh**

Click to display the letter tiles **a**, **h**, **o**, **s**, and **v**.

Say:

- “We have been working with lots of letters in our *Countdown* lessons.
- Each letter we have learned spells a sound.
- Let’s say the sounds of these letters together as I point to them.”

Point to each letter, one at a time, and say its sound chorally with students:
“/ă/, /h/, /ö/, /s/, /v/.”

Say:

- “Each of these letters spells a sound by itself. One letter (*point to a*), one sound, /ă/, like in /ă/, **apple**.
- Some sounds are a little different. Some sounds are spelled with two letters instead of just one!”

Click to display the **s** and **h** tiles and the digraph **sh** tile.

Say:

- “This is the letter **s** (*point*), and this is the letter **h** (*point*). The letter **s** spells /s/, and the letter **h** spells /h/.”
- (*Point to the digraph sh.*) “Here, **s** and **h** are together on one tile.
- When we see **s** and **h** together, they have a special name. They are called a **digraph**, and they do something very special!”

Click to display the **sheep**.

Ask:

- “What is this a picture of?” **A:** sheep
- “What is the first sound in **sheep**?” **A:** /sh/

Click to display the digraph **sh** tile below the sheep.

Say:

- “When we see **s** and **h** together, they work together like a team to spell one sound. They don’t spell /s/ or /h/ anymore. They say a brand new sound!
- Their new sound is /sh/, like when we are telling someone to be quiet: /shhhh/.” (*Place forefinger to mouth as if asking someone to be quiet while saying /shhhh/.*)
- “Say /sh/ with me while you put your finger to your lips like you are telling someone to be quiet.”

Students say /shhhh/ with fingers to their lips.

Say:

- “The letters **sh** are called a **digraph**. A **digraph** is two letters that work together to spell just one sound.
- *Digraph **sh** (point to tile) spells the sound /sh/, like in /sh/, **sheep** (point to sheep).*
- In your kits, you have an **sh** tile. You will use this tile when we build words with the *digraph **sh**.*”

2 Build Real Words with *Digraph sh*

Say “Now, we are going to build real words with the *digraph sh*.”

I DO: Build *rash*

Click to display the image for **rash**.

Say “The first word is **rash**, as in, ‘I had an itchy red **rash** on my arm.’”

Stretch the sounds - **rash**, /r/ /ă/ /sh/, **rash**.

Say “I heard three sounds in **rash**, /r/ /ă/ /sh/.”

Click to display one color tile at a time while again saying “/r/ /ă/ /sh/.”

Click to display a letter tile below each color tile to spell each sound while saying the sound.

Use Touch & Say to read **rash** - /r/ /ă/ /sh/, **rash**.

Point to *digraph sh* and say “I see *digraph sh* in this word. I know *digraph sh* has two letters working together to spell one sound, /sh/.”

Say “Now let’s try one together.”

WE DO: Build *ship*

Click to display the **ship**.

Say “Now, let’s build the real word **ship** together, as in, ‘I sailed the toy **ship** in the bathtub.’ Repeat **ship**.” (*Students repeat.*)

Stretch the sounds with students - **ship**, /sh/ /ī/ p/, **ship**.

Click to display one color tile for each sound in **ship** while saying the sounds - /sh/ /ī/ /p/.

Ask individual students the following questions to lead students in spelling each sound by placing letter tiles below the color tiles, one at a time. Click to display each letter tile as students respond with the correct spellings:

- “What is the first sound you hear?” **A:** /sh/



The animation available in *Countdown Online* introduces the concept of digraphs and *digraph sh* in a fun and engaging way. We recommend showing it after teaching Section 1 as a review of the content or to reinforce the content for students who might need more direct instruction.

- “What letters say /sh/?” **A:** sh (Click to display **sh**; students place the **sh** tile on their boards.)
- “What is the next sound you hear?” **A:** /i/
- “What letter spells /i/?” **A:** i (Click to display **i**; students place the **i** tile on their boards.)
- “What is the last sound you hear?” **A:** /p/
- “What letter spells /p/?” **A:** p (Click to display **p**; students place the **p** tile on their boards.)

Use Touch & Say to read **ship** with students - /sh/ /i/ /p/, **ship**.

Ask:

- “Which letters in **ship** spell the sound /sh/?” **A:** sh
- “What do we call the letters **sh**?” **A:** a digraph (or digraph sh)

Students clear boards.

.....
YOU DO: Build real words with digraph sh

Say “Now, you are going to use your color and letter tiles to build four real words. Each word will have *digraph sh*.”

Click to display each image and dictate the words and sentences below, one at a time, following the *Build a Word* steps for each word and helping students as needed.

dish – “Please put the **dish** in the sink.”

hush – “**Hush** means to quiet down. The librarian told us to **hush**.”

dash – “**Dash** means to run quickly. I had to **dash** to the bus stop because I slept late.”

shed – “A **shed** is a small outdoor building that is used to store things. I kept my bike in the **shed** in our backyard.”

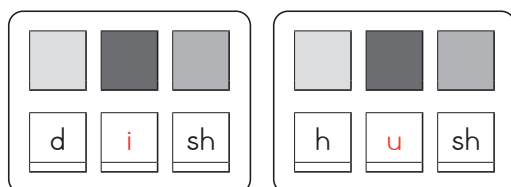
Students build each word independently, one word at a time. Students should:

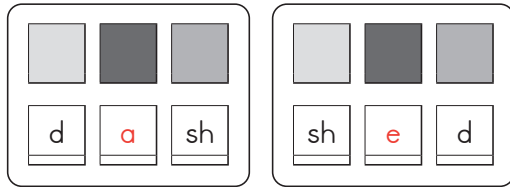
Say the word.

Stretch the sounds in the word.

Place one color tile on boards for each sound while saying the sound.

Spell the word by placing one letter tile below each color tile.





Use Touch & Say to read the word.

Hold up their boards so you can check their spelling and provide Positive Error Correction as needed.

Click to display the correct placement of color and letter tiles for each word.

Students clear boards and wait for the next word to be dictated.

3 Optional Challenge: Build **Silly** Words

Say “Now, you are going to build some super silly words that have *digraph sh*. Remember, these words are very silly! They don’t mean anything because they are not real words, but we can spell them and read them because the letters will tell us what sounds to say.”

Click to display the silly image, and dictate the silly words below, one at a time, following the *Build a Word* steps for each word and helping students as needed.

tash

shup

losh

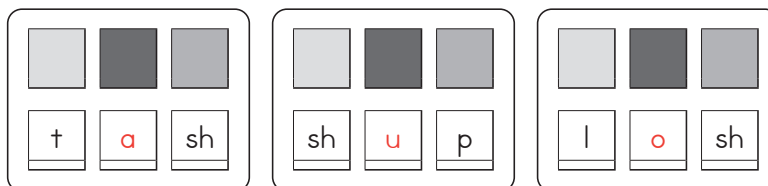
Students build each word independently, one word at a time. Students should:

Say the word.

Stretch the sounds in the word.

Place one color tile on boards for each sound while saying the sound.

Spell the word by placing one letter tile below each color tile.



Use Touch & Say to read the word.

Hold up their boards so you can check their spelling and provide Positive Error Correction as needed.

Click to display the correct placement of color and letter tiles for each word.

Students clear boards and wait for the next word to be dictated.



Remember to use Positive Error Correction if students make a mistake while building words. Steps for Positive Error Correction can be found on p. 47 of *Teacher Guide Book 3*.

Unit 20 | Lesson 4

Student Practice

AP

Objectives

Students will:

- identify the graphemes in printed words and produce the proper phoneme for each grapheme; blend the graphemes together to produce real words (*Detective Work*);
- read words, identify their vowel sounds, and determine if they have digraph **sh** (*Word Sort*).

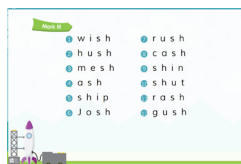
Description

Teacher leads students through the *Mark It!* and *Read It!* procedures in the *Detective Work* activity, and then leads students through a model word(s) for the *Word Sort*. Students then read the remaining words on their own, first listening carefully for the vowel sound and matching it with the guideword image for the vowel sound they hear and then listening carefully for digraph **sh**. Teacher reviews the answers with students, allowing time for students to correct their work if needed.

Student Materials

- *Countdown Student Workbook*
- Pencil

What Students See



What You Need to Know

Detective Work Overview

- *Detective Work* is introduced in this unit and appears in all subsequent units.
- The objective of *Detective Work* is to have students pay attention to the letters in words and to use the phonics concept taught in the lesson to read words accurately.
- The student work page consists of two activities, *Mark It!* and *Read It!*
- *Mark It!* is a scaffolded activity where students become “phonics detectives,” with the teacher leading them through underlining the graphemes (a letter or letter combination that spells a phoneme) and reading the words. Some of the words may be unknown by the students, so the teacher will model the correct underlining and reading of each word.
- In the *Mark It!* section, students identify and underline the target phonics concept in the words before reading them.
- During the *Read It!* activity, there is no underlining taking place, just reading.

- In *Read It!*, students are either Reader or Checkers. One student will read a row of words while the rest of the group listens for accuracy. If the student reads all the words correctly, the group gives them a thumbs-up. If the student misreads a word or words, the group signals for the Reader to go back and reread the words by giving a thumbs-to-the-side.
- Both *Mark It!* and *Read It!* contain the same words in a different order. The goal is for students to read the words with 100% accuracy on their first attempt during the *Read It!* activity.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 20, Lesson 4 (20.4).

OPTIONAL

Before teaching this lesson, you may wish to run the *Letter-Sound* and *Heart Word Pop-Up* and *3-Up* activities in *Countdown Online* to practice the letter sounds and Heart Words taught in Lesson 1.

Launch!

1 *Detective Work: Mark It! Overview*

Students open workbooks to page 8. →

Say:


- “Every Lesson 4 from now on will have an activity called *Detective Work*.
- The activity is called *Detective Work* because we are going to be ‘letter and sound detectives.’ We have talked about detectives before! Remember, a detective is a person who pays close attention to clues and then solves a problem.
- So as ‘letter and sound detectives,’ we will be using what we have learned to pay close attention to each letter in a word and then read the word.”

Click to display the *Mark It!* words.

Say:

- “In *Mark It!*, we will underline letters and say the sounds that those letters make. Then, we will blend the sounds together to make a word.
- Watch as I underline letters while saying their sounds and then read the whole word.
- When we see *digraph sh*, we will underline both letters with one line because, together, they spell one sound, /sh/.”





The Countdown Online Supply Room provides video explanations for the Detective Work activity for English learners.

Click three times to underline the spellings (graphemes) in the first word while saying the sounds:

- “/w/” while underlining the **w**
- “/iiii/” while underlining the **i**
- “/sh/” while underlining the **sh**
- “wish”

Students repeat the process in their workbooks for the word **wish**.

Model the process above for the rest of the words one at a time. After each word, have students repeat orally and on paper. Make sure students are underlining each letter (or letters **sh** together with one line for *digraph sh*) as they are saying the proper sound.

2 **Detective Work: Read It! Overview**

Say:

- “The next part of *Detective Work* is called *Read It!*”
- In this section, I will be calling on one student at a time to read a row of words out loud to the group.
- In *Read It!*, we do not underline the letters. We just read the words.
- When it is your turn to read, read loudly enough so everyone can hear.
- When it is not your turn to read, you will be a Checker, listening carefully.
- We will give the Reader a thumbs-up if they read all of the words correctly, and we will give them a thumbs-to-the-side if there is a word they need to try again.”

Students read a row of words out loud.



POSITIVE ERROR CORRECTION FOR READ IT!

The following steps outline how you should provide Positive Error Correction when students are reading single-syllable words in *Read It!*

1. If the Reader misreads any of the single-syllable words in the row, provide Positive Error Correction:
 - **Tell** the Reader how many words were read correctly. (“You read two words correctly,” or “You read the first and last word correctly.”)
 - **Prompt** the student to reread a word. (“In the word you misread, you read the first and last sound correctly. Can you retry that middle sound?” “Now, can you retry the middle word?”)

- The Reader reads the word again.
 - If the Reader reads the word accurately, the Reader then reads all three words again.
 - If the Reader reads all three words accurately this time, you and all Checkers congratulate the Reader.
2. If the Reader misses any single-syllable word again:
- **Guide** the Reader to use Touch & Say to read the misread word.
 - If necessary, Checkers assist by using Touch & Say to chorally read the word.
 - The Reader independently uses Touch & Say to read the word correctly.
 - The Reader reads all three words again.
 - Always finish with the Reader independently reading all three words correctly.
 - The Reader then aims to read another row of words accurately on the first attempt.
3. Responding to self-corrections:
- It is important not to praise the Reader for self-correcting.
 - The goal is for the Reader to read all three words accurately the first time. Self-correcting is better than an error, but it is short of the goal.
 - If the Reader reads all words accurately with a self-correction on any word, say, “You read all three words accurately after you self-corrected. Please read the words again without self-correcting.”
 - After the Reader reads all three words with no errors or self-corrections, praise the Reader by saying, “Excellent accurate reading!”

3 **Word Sort: Short Vowels and Digraph sh**

Say:

- “Remember, when we are doing a *Word Sort*, I will always model the first one or two words to show you how to sort the words.
- Sorting words will help you to pay attention to the spelling of the words.
- In this lesson, we will sort words in two ways. First, we will decide which vowel sound we hear. We will read the word first and then decide if the vowel sounds like /ă/, **apple**; /ĕ/, **edge**; /ĭ/, **itch**; /ŏ/, **octopus**; or /ŭ/, **up**.
- Next, we will read the word again and listen carefully for the sound of *digraph sh*, /sh/. If we hear *digraph sh* in the word, we will circle it.”

Click to display the top section of the *Word Sort*.

Students open workbooks to page 9. 



When beginning the *Word Sort*, you should model as many words as you deem necessary for your students to grasp the concept and proceed independently.





In this sort, students are given only three short vowel sounds to choose from for each word. In later sorts, they will choose from all five short vowel sounds.



If your students are not yet able to read these words on their own, feel free to read each word aloud for them and have them independently select the correct vowel sounds and circle the digraphs.



The final five words are displayed on the next screen in *Countdown Online*.

Read and finger-stretch the first word aloud: **shop**, /sh/ /ō/ /p/, **shop**.

Ask:

- “What vowel sound did you hear in the middle?” **A:** /ō/
- “What letter spells /ō/ in this word?” **A:** o
- “Is /ō/ the same as the beginning of **aaaapple**, **oooctopus**, or **uuuup**?”
A: octopus
- “Right! So, which picture should we circle?” **A:** octopus

Click to circle the **octopus**.

Prompt students to circle the **octopus**.

Say “Now, let’s stretch out the sounds in the word again: **shop**, /sh/ /ō/ /p/, **shop**.”

Ask:

- “Did you hear the sound /sh/ in this word?” **A:** yes
- “What letters spell /sh/ in this word?” **A:** sh
- “What do we call these letters?” **A:** digraph sh

Say “Right! Let’s circle the letters that spell /sh/.”

Click to circle *digraph sh*.

Prompt students to circle *digraph sh*.


Say:


- “Now, you are going to circle the picture for the vowel sound and circle *digraph sh* if you see it in the rest of the words on your own.
- Listen carefully for the vowel sound when you say each word.
- Then listen carefully for the *digraph sh* sound, /sh/.”

Use *Countdown Online* to check answers with students.

Call on individual students to read a word, identify the vowel sound and the correct guideword image, and identify the digraph.

Students check answers.

 The Countdown Online Supply Room provides video explanations for the Word Sort activity for English learners.

 Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.



Mark It!

1. wish

2. hush

3. mesh

4. ash

5. ship

6. Josh

7. rush

8. cash

9. shin

10. shut

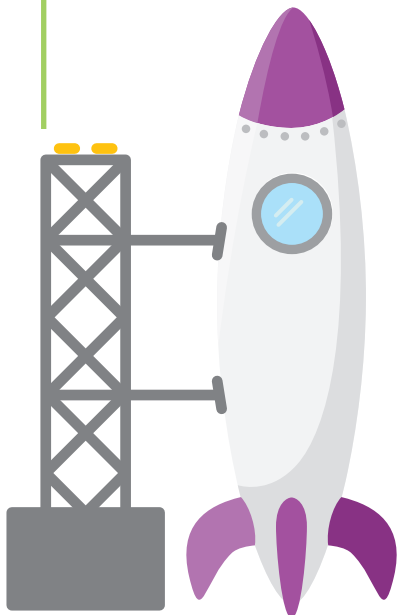
11. rash

12. gush



Read It!

- | | | |
|---------|------|------|
| 1. rash | ship | mesh |
| 2. shin | gush | ash |
| 3. Josh | cash | shut |
| 4. wish | rush | hush |
| 5. cash | shin | Josh |
| 6. mesh | hush | ash |
| 7. gush | wish | rash |





1. sh o p



2. sh e d



3. f u n



4. di sh



5. s a p



6. m u sh



7. g o sh



8. ki d



9. ba sh



10. sh u t



Unit 20 | Lesson 5

Wrap Up & Show What You Know

AP

Objectives

Students will:

- accurately articulate the phonemes reviewed in this unit;
- accurately read phrases and sentences that contain the concepts, words, and phonemes taught in this and previous units;
- accurately spell words with a controlled set of concepts and phonemes.

Description

In *Phrases and Sentences to Read*, students read short phrases and sentences out loud to the class. Their goal is to read each phrase and sentence accurately the first time. In *Spell It!*, students see an image, which the teacher names. Teacher and students finger-stretch the sounds in the word together, counting the sounds. They then fill in a circle for each sound they heard and write the corresponding letter(s) in each box with a filled in circle, spelling the target word.

Student Materials

- *Countdown Student Workbook*
- Pencil

What Students See



What You Need to Know

No new concepts.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 20, Lesson 5 (20.5).

OPTIONAL

Before teaching this lesson, you may wish to run the *Letter-Sound* and *Heart Word Pop-Up*, *3-Up*, and *Read a Row* activities in *Countdown Online* to practice and assess the letter sounds and Heart Words taught in Lesson 1.

The Countdown Online Supply Room provides video explanations for the *Phrases & Sentences to Read* and *Spell It!* activities for English learners.

Launch!

1 Phrases and Sentences to Read

Say:

- “Today, we are going to read some phrases and some sentences in our workbooks.
- I will call on you to read a phrase or a sentence when it is your turn to be the Reader, and the rest of us will be Checkers, touching each word as the Reader reads it out loud.”

← Students open workbooks to page 10.

Individual students read phrases and sentences. Since there are only 8 phrases and 8 sentences, it is okay to have a student reread a phrase or sentence that has been previously read.

Direct Checkers to give a thumbs-up if the Reader reads all of the words correctly or a thumbs-to-the-side if the Reader misreads a word(s). If the Reader misreads any words, teacher follows Positive Error Correction instructions on p. 80 in *Teacher Guide Book 1*.

2 Spell It!

Say:

- “Now, we are going to spell some words with the sounds we have been practicing.
- We are going to start by stretching out the sounds in a word so we can hear them clearly.”

← Students open workbooks to *Spell It!* on page 11.

Say “We are going to spell words that you will hear me say aloud. Let’s start with number 1 at the top of your page.”

Click to display the ship.

Say “The first word is **ship**, as in ‘The **ship** sailed across the ocean.’ Let’s stretch it together. **Ship**, /sh/ /i/ /p/, **ship**.” (*Finger-stretch **ship** along with students.*)

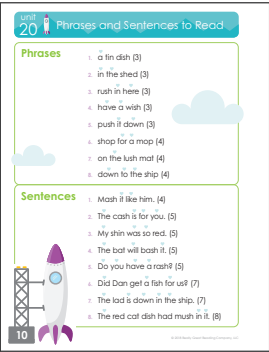
Ask “How many sounds did we hear?” **A:** three

Say “Since **ship** has three sounds, /sh/ /i/ /p/, we will fill in three dots, one for each sound, like this.”

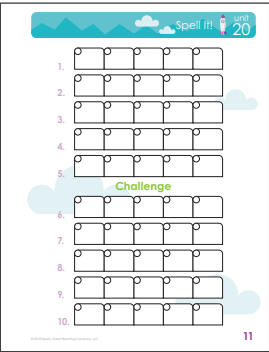
Click three times to fill in the first three dots, and have students fill in the first three dots on their workbook pages.

1.

<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div></div>
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If time permits, provide each student with the opportunity to read at least one phrase or sentence. In small groups, you might consider letting each student read two phrases or sentences. Students who struggle should be given additional phrases or sentences for more practice.



Say:

- “Since **ship** has three sounds, it will also have three spellings. A ‘spelling’ is a letter or a group of letters that spells one sound. We will write one letter, or two if it is a digraph sound, in each box that has a dot filled in. Let’s stretch **ship** again slowly so we can hear each sound and write it down.”
- “/sh/” (PAUSE for students to write **sh** in the first box; if necessary, remind them that /sh/ is spelled by the digraph **sh**) “/i/” (PAUSE for students to write **i** in the second box) “/p/” (PAUSE for students to write **p** in the third box)

Click three times to fill in the letters **sh i p**, and have students check their work, correcting their spelling if needed.

sh	i	p		
----	---	---	--	--

Continue the above process with the following words, one at a time.

2. **shut** (Optional sentence: Please **shut** the door when you leave.)

sh	u	t		
----	---	---	--	--

3. **dish** (Optional sentence: My sister put some more potatoes onto her **dish**.)

d	i	sh		
---	---	----	--	--

4. **rash** (Optional sentence: I had an itchy, red **rash** on my arm.)

r	a	sh		
---	---	----	--	--

5. **shot** (Optional sentence: I was brave when the doctor gave me a **shot**.)

sh	o	t		
----	---	---	--	--

OPTIONAL CHALLENGE WORDS:

6. **shed** (Optional sentence: We kept the bikes in our **shed** in the backyard.)

sh	e	d		
----	---	---	--	--

7. **wax** (Optional sentence: The **wax** dripped down the side of the candle.)

w	a	x		
---	---	---	--	--

8. **cap** (Optional sentence: I wore my baseball **cap** at the game.)

c	a	p		
---	---	---	--	--



If students struggle to spell the individual sounds, you may want to ask students how each sound is spelled before moving on to the next, as you do in *Build a Word*.

9. **hush** (Optional sentence: We had to **hush** when we were too loud.)

h	u	sh		
---	---	----	--	--


10. **bed** (Optional sentence: Mom said it was time for **bed**.)

b	e	d		
---	---	---	--	--



DIFFERENTIATION OPTION

If you want to have students *Build a Word* with letter tiles and color tiles prior to putting pencil to paper, it may increase their understanding of the spelling concept.



Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.

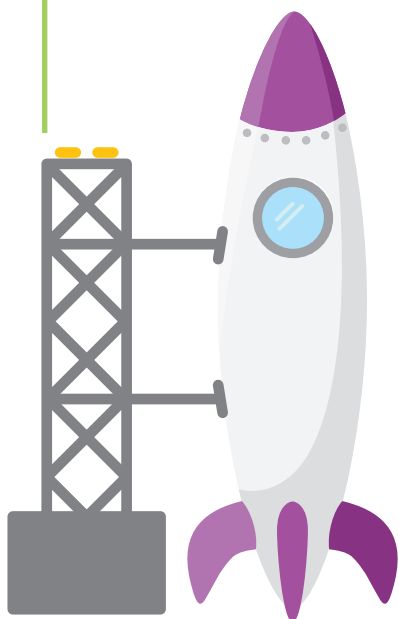


Phrases

1. a tin dish (3)
2. in the shed (3)
3. rush in here (3)
4. have a wish (3)
5. push it down (3)
6. shop for a mop (4)
7. on the lush mat (4)
8. down to the ship (4)

Sentences

1. Mash it like him. (4)
2. The cash is for you. (5)
3. My shin was so red. (5)
4. The bat will bash it. (5)
5. Do you have a rash? (5)
6. Did Dan get a fish for us? (7)
7. The lad is down in the ship. (7)
8. The red cat dish had mush in it. (8)





1.

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2.

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3.

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4.

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5.

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Challenge

6.

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7.

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8.

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9.

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10.

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Unit 27 | Lesson 3

Phonics Concept: Reading Two-Syllable Words with Closed Syllables

AP

Objectives

Students will accurately read two-syllable words in which both syllables are closed.

What Students See



Description

The teacher explains that the Vowel-Consonant pattern they learned earlier in the program has another name, a Closed Syllable. Then, teacher and students read two-syllable words with Closed Syllables by asking three key questions: “How many vowels are in the word?”; “Are the vowels next to each other?”; and “How many syllables are there?”

Student Materials

- Two SyllaBoards™, mini eraser, and dry-erase marker
- Holding and working boards from *Countdown Student Kit*

The Unit Planner explains how to tie Handwriting into each lesson.

What You Need to Know

Closed Syllables

- The term Closed Syllable refers to a syllable pattern that occurs with great regularity in English. Some researchers estimate that Closed Syllables make up around half of the syllables in English words.
- The Closed Syllable pattern can be recognized visually by examining the pattern of vowels and consonants in words and their relationship to each other. Earlier in *Countdown*, students learned about the pattern of Closed Syllables (it was called the “Vowel-Consonant pattern”), but were not introduced to the term “Closed Syllable” yet.
- The Vowel-Consonant pattern of a Closed Syllable is one vowel letter followed by one or more consonants; **at**, **cat**, **cash**, and **catch** are all Closed Syllables.
- Closed Syllables occur in single-syllable and multisyllabic words; **nap-kin**, **sub-tract**, **es-tab-lish**, **Wis-con-sin**, and **un-in-hab-it-ed** are examples of words that are solely comprised of Closed Syllables.
- A Closed Syllable ends in one or more consonants but does not need to have a consonant letter before the vowel; **at**, **Ed**, **it**, **on**, and **up** are all Closed Syllables.
- Most of the time, the vowel letter in a Closed Syllable spells its short phoneme. Examples are: **ad**, **cab**, **trap**, **last**, **bland**, **shack**, **Ed**, **met**, **step**, **best**,

trend, mesh, then, in, flip, hint, blimp, thick, on, pop, flop, pomp, stomp, shock, us, sun, glum, lump, slump, and shuck.

- Many educators refer to Closed Syllables as a spelling pattern. It is very helpful in spelling, but it is extremely useful when decoding unfamiliar words.

Reading Two-Syllable Words

- Even good readers break unfamiliar long words into syllables to decode them.
- The most effective way to read an unfamiliar two-syllable word is by looking for the vowels and breaking the word into syllables around the vowel letters.
- Every syllable has a vowel sound and almost every syllable has a vowel letter.
- When one vowel letter is by itself, not next to another vowel, it is typically the only vowel in the syllable. It is a Closed Syllable the majority of the time.
- Complete directions for the procedure for reading multisyllabic words as well as Positive Error Correction can be found in Appendix A of *Teacher Guide Book 1*.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online to Unit 27, Lesson 3 (27.3).*

Students take out two *SyllaBoards™*, mini eraser, and dry-erase marker from *Countdown Student Kit*.

Launch!

1 Teach Closed Syllables

Say:

- “All of the words we have been reading and spelling have only been one syllable, and all of them have followed the Vowel-Consonant pattern we learned.
- Let’s look at a few words.”

Click to display the word **mug** spelled out in letter tiles.

Say “This word has only one vowel, **u**.”

Click to display an arrow under the **u** letter tile.

Say “This word has a consonant after the vowel.”

Click to display a box around the **g** letter tile.

Say:

- “That means that this word follows our Vowel-Consonant pattern, and it also means that the **u** (*point to the u tile*) probably spells its short sound, /ŭ/.

- This word is /m/ /ŭ/ /g/ (*Touch & Say each tile while you say its sound*), **mug**.”

Click to display the **mug**.

Say “Our Vowel-Consonant pattern has another name. It is also called a Closed Syllable because the consonant, or consonants, at the end of the syllable ‘close’ in the vowel and make it spell its short sound.”

Click to display the word **sit** spelled out in letter tiles.

Say “Let’s look at another word.”

Ask “How many vowel letters do you see in this word?” **A:** one

Click to display an arrow under the **i** tile.

Ask “Do you see any consonants after the vowel?” **A:** yes

Click to display a box around the **t** tile.

Ask:

- “Does the word follow our Vowel-Consonant pattern?” **A:** yes
- “What is the vowel sound in this word?” **A:** probably the short i sound, /ĭ/

Touch & Say the word with students - /s/ /ĭ/ /t/, **sit**.

Ask “What kind of syllable is this word?” **A:** Closed Syllable

2 Reading Two-Syllable Words

Say:

- “Yesterday, we blended longer words by *Syllable Stomping* them. Today, we are going to learn how to read words that have two syllables.
- When we read and spell two-syllable words, we do not use letter tiles anymore. We use *SyllaBoards™*.
- *SyllaBoards™* are the small boards in our kits. We will use each board to represent one syllable.
- We are going to read words with more than one syllable today, and all of the syllables will be Closed Syllables.”

.....
I DO: Read *cabin*

Click to display the word **cabin**.

Say “This word is different from all of the words we have read so far because it has two vowels, not just one. It has an **a** and an **i**.”

Click to underline each vowel letter.

Say “Since this word has two vowels and the vowel letters are not next to each other, I know that this word has two syllables.”

Click to display two *SyllaBoards™* under **cabin**.

Say:

- “I want to break this word into syllables to help me read it, so I am going to use my *SyllaBoards™*.”
- Because the word has two syllables, I need two boards.
- Next, I am going to write one vowel letter in the middle of each board.”

Click to display the letter **a** on the first board and the letter **i** on the second board.

Say “Now, I can add my consonants around the vowels so that each board ends with a consonant. We call this ‘closing the syllables’ because it makes each syllable a Closed Syllable.”

Click to add the letters **c** and **b** to the first board and the letter **n** to the second board.

Say:

- “These are both Closed Syllables.
- Each syllable has one vowel and each ends with a consonant.
- So, now I know how to read this word because the pattern tells me that the vowels will spell their short sounds.”

Point to and read each *SyllaBoard™* with a pause between, **cab in**.

Sweep your hand from left to right under the syllables and read the whole word, **cabin**.

Click to display the **cabin**.

Say:

- “There are three questions we will ask when we want to read a word with more than one syllable:
 - o How many vowels are in the word?
 - o Are the vowels next to each other?
 - o How many syllables are there?
- If the vowels are not next to each other, then each vowel will be in a different syllable and on a different *SyllaBoard™*.”

.....
WE DO: Read *unzip* and *catfish*

Click to display the word **unzip**.

Say “We are going to use those questions to help us read this new word.”

Ask “How many vowels do we see in this word?” **A:** two, u and i

Click to underline each vowel letter.

Ask “Are the vowels next to each other?” **A:** no

Say:

- “Since this word has two vowels and the vowel letters are not next to each other, I know that this word has two syllables.
- Because the word has two syllables, I need two *SyllaBoards™*.”

Click to display two *SyllaBoards™* under **unzip**, and ask students to put two boards on their desks.

Say “Next, I am going to write one vowel letter in the middle of each board.”

Click to display the letter **u** on the first board and the letter **i** on the second board, and ask students to do the same.

Say “Now, I can add my consonants around the vowels so that each board ends with a consonant because that closes the syllable.”

Click to add the letter **n** to the first board and the letters **z** and **p** to the second board, and ask students to do the same.

Say:

- “These are both Closed Syllables.
- Each syllable has one vowel and each ends with a consonant.
- So, now we know how to read this word because the pattern tells us that the vowels will spell their short sounds.
- Let’s read it together.”

Point to and read each *SyllaBoard™* with students, **un zip**.

Sweep your hand from left to right under the syllables and read the whole word, **unzip**.

Click to display the image for **unzip**.

Say “Let’s do one more together.”

Click to display the word **catfish**.

Say “We are going to use those questions to help us read this new word.”

Ask “How many vowels do we see in this word?” **A:** two

Click to underline each vowel letter.

Ask “Are the vowels next to each other?” **A:** they are not

Ask “Since this word has two vowels and the vowel letters are not next to

each other, how many syllables does it have?" **A:** two

Say "Yes! Because the word has two syllables, I need two *SyllaBoards™*."

Click to display two *SyllaBoards™* under **catfish**, and ask students to put two boards on their desks.

Say "Next, I am going to write one vowel letter in the middle of each board."

Click to display the letter **a** on the first board and the letter **i** on the second board, and ask students to do the same.

Say "Now, I can add my consonants around the vowels so that each board ends with a consonant. We'll call this 'closing our syllables.'"

Click to add the letters **c** and **t** to the first board and the letters **f** and **sh** to the second board, and ask students to do the same.

Say:

- "These are both Closed Syllables.
- Each syllable has one vowel and each ends with a consonant.
- So, now we know how to read this word because the pattern tells us that the vowels will spell their short sounds.
- Let's read it together."

Point to and read each *SyllaBoard™* with students, **cat fish**.

Sweep your hand from left to right under the syllables and read the whole word, **catfish**.

Click to display the **catfish**.

.....
YOU DO: Read *two-syllable words with Closed Syllables*

Say:

- "Now, it's your turn to read some two-syllable words on your own.
- You are going to use your *SyllaBoards™* to read four, two-syllable words.
- Remember, since each syllable has one vowel, put one vowel letter on each board. Then 'close each syllable' (make it end with a consonant) so you get two Closed Syllables."

Ask "When we are trying to read a big word, should we first look for the vowels or the consonants?" **A:** vowels

Click to display each of the following words on the board.

hiccup

radish

napkin

rabbit

Ask for each word:

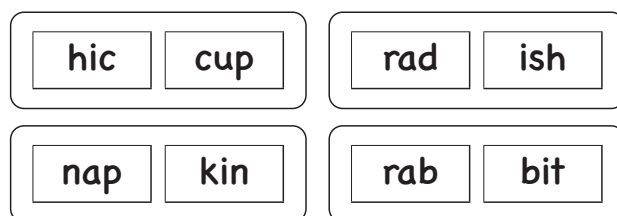
- “How many vowels are in this word?” **A:** two
- “Are the vowels next to each other?” **A:** no
- “Since they are not next to each other, how many syllables are there?”
A: two
- “And how many *SyllaBoards™* will we need?” **A:** two

All students:

Use *SyllaBoards™* to read each word.

Write vowels on the *SyllaBoards™*.

Write consonants around the vowels on the *SyllaBoards™* (“close each syllable”) so that each board contains a Closed Syllable (ends with a consonant).



Individual students touch each *SyllaBoard™*, read the syllables, then drag hand under the *SyllaBoards™* to blend and read each word.

Check work and correct by clicking through the process for each word, using Positive Error Correction as needed.

Help students notice that each syllable is a Closed Syllable.

All students read each word together.

Clear boards.

Click to display the image.

Suggestions for helping students adjust their boards:

Help students move consonants so that their syllables are closed.

Help students notice that there are two Closed Syllables in the words.

3 Optional Challenge: Read Two-Syllable **Silly** Words

Teach how to read nonsense words with the same two-syllable pattern.



The animation available in *Countdown Online* introduces reading words with two Closed Syllables in a fun and engaging way. We recommend showing it after teaching Section 2 as a review of the content or to reinforce the content for students who might need more direct instruction.

Write each of the following words on the board one at a time:

cadput finbap

Ask:

- “How many vowels are in this word?” **A:** two
- “Are the vowels next to each other?” **A:** no
- “How many syllables are there?” **A:** two


After teacher writes each word, all students use *SyllaBoards™* to read the words, one at a time.



POSITIVE ERROR CORRECTION FOR READING MULTISYLLABIC WORDS

If a student misreads a multisyllabic word, provide Positive Error Correction:

1. **Identify** the syllables the student read correctly.
2. **Prompt student** to use *Touch & Say* to reread the incorrect syllable. Then, have the student read the whole word.
3. If necessary, guide student to ask the vowel questions for multisyllabic words. (How many vowels are in the word? Are they next to each other? How many syllables are there?)
4. **Prompt student** to read each syllable separately and then blend the syllables to read the whole word.
5. **Have student** independently reread the word correctly.
6. If a student decodes all the sounds in a word correctly but pronounces the word incorrectly:
 - **Identify** the syllable the student pronounced correctly.
 - **Prompt student** to read the incorrectly pronounced syllable again.
 - Always finish with the student reading the whole word independently and correctly.

 Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.

Unit 27 | Lesson 4

Student Practice

AP

Objectives

Students will:

- identify the graphemes (sound spellings) in printed words and produce the proper sound for each grapheme; blend the graphemes together to produce real words (*Detective Work*);
- identify the vowels in words, identify the number of syllables, and read the words, one syllable at a time if necessary (*Word Sort*).

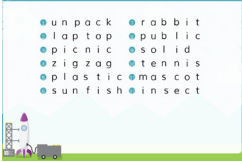
Description

Teacher leads students through the *Mark It!* and *Read It!* procedures in the *Detective Work* activity, and then leads students through a model word(s) for the *Word Sort*. Students then read the remaining words on their own, first underlining the vowels, counting the number of syllables, and then dividing the syllables. Teacher reviews the answers with students, allowing time for students to correct their work if needed.

Student Materials

- *Countdown Student Workbook*
- Pencil

What Students See



What You Need to Know

No new concepts.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 27, Lesson 4 (27.4).

OPTIONAL

Before teaching this lesson, you may wish to run the *Letter-Sound* and *Heart Word Pop-Up* and *3-Up* activities in *Countdown Online* to practice the letter sounds and Heart Words taught in Lesson 1.

Launch!

1 *Detective Work: Mark It!*

Students open workbooks to page 36. 



Say:

- “In *Detective Work* today, we are going to be reading big words with two syllables.
- Instead of drawing lines under each sound in the word, we will just circle the vowels, and then we will draw a rectangle around each syllable.
- I’ll show you with the first word.”

Click to display the *Mark It!* words.

Point to the first word, **unpack**.

Ask:

- “How many vowels are in this word?” **A:** two
- “Are they next to each other?” **A:** no

Click to circle the vowel letters **u** and **a** while saying their names.

Ask “How many syllables are there?” **A:** two

Click to display a rectangle around each syllable, **un** and **pack**.

Say:

- “**Un**” (*pointing to the first rectangle*) “**pack**” (*pointing to the second rectangle*)
- “**Unpack**” (*dragging finger under the word from left to right*)

Students repeat the process in their workbooks for the word **unpack**.

Model the process above for the rest of the words one at a time. After each word, have students repeat orally and on paper. Make sure students are underlining each vowel and boxing in each syllable.

2 **Detective Work: Read It!**

Say:

- “Remember, in *Read It!*, we do not underline or circle the letters. We just read the words.
- When it is your turn to read, read loudly enough so everyone can hear.
- When it is not your turn to read, you will be a Checker, listening carefully.
- We will give the Reader a thumbs-up if they read all of the words correctly, and we will give them a thumbs-to-the-side if there is a word they need to try again.”

Students read a row of words out loud.



Be sure to use Positive Error Correction if students misread any words in *Read It!* Positive Error Correction steps can be found on p. 106 in *Teacher Guide Book 3*.

3 Word Sort: How Many Syllables?**Say:**

- “Remember, when we are doing a *Word Sort*, I will always model the first one or two words to show you how to sort the words.
- Sorting words will help you to pay attention to the spelling of the words.
- First, we will underline the vowels.
- Next, we will count the number of syllables and circle the correct number.
- Last, if there are two syllables, we will draw a line between the syllables to help us read the syllables, one at a time.”

Click to display the top section of the *Word Sort*.**Students open** workbooks to page 37. **Ask** “How many vowels are in this word?” **A:** two, i and i**Click to underline** the vowels, and have students do the same in their workbooks.**Ask:**

- “Are the vowels next to each other?” **A:** no
- “So, how many syllables are there?” **A:** two

Say “Let’s circle the number **2**.”**Click to circle** the number **2**, and have students do the same.**Say:**

- “Now, to help us read this two-syllable word, we are going to divide the syllables by drawing a line between them. That way, we can read one syllable at a time before we blend them together.
- I am going to make sure that each syllable has a consonant at the end so it is a Closed Syllable.
- I will draw my line after **p i c**.”

Click to display a line between the syllables **pic** and **nic**, and have students do the same.**Say** “This word is **pic** (*point to the first syllable*) **nic** (*point to the second syllable*), **picnic** (*drag finger under the word from left to right*).”**Say:**

- “Now, you are going to underline the vowels and circle the number of syllables.



When beginning the *Word Sort*, you should model as many words as you deem necessary for your students to grasp the concept and proceed independently.



The final five words are displayed on the next screen in *Countdown Online*.



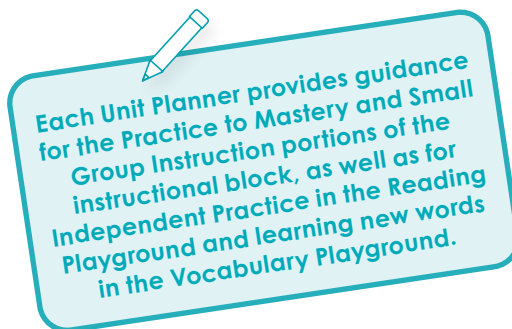
If your students are not yet able to read these words on their own, feel free to read each word aloud for them and have them independently underline the vowels and circle the number of syllables.

- Then, if the word has two syllables, you will draw a line between them.”

Use *Countdown Online* to check answers with students.

Call on individual students to identify the vowel letters, to give the number of syllables, to say each syllable separately, and to read the whole word.

Students check answers.



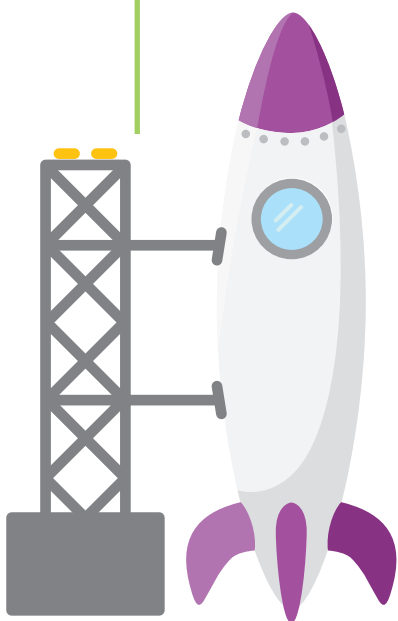


Mark It!

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| 1. unpack | 7. rabbit |
| 2. laptop | 8. public |
| 3. picnic | 9. solid |
| 4. zigzag | 10. tennis |
| 5. plastic | 11. mascot |
| 6. sunfish | 12. insect |

Read It!

- | | | |
|------------|---------|---------|
| 1. mascot | zigzag | sunfish |
| 2. insect | rabbit | public |
| 3. unpack | solid | laptop |
| 4. plastic | tennis | picnic |
| 5. zigzag | laptop | unpack |
| 6. sunfish | plastic | rabbit |
| 7. tennis | mascot | solid |



1. picnic 1 2

2. step 1 2

3. radish 1 2

4. jump 1 2

5. insect 1 2

6. crush 1 2

7. glad 1 2

8. bathtub 1 2

9. contest 1 2

10. trash 1 2

Unit 27 | Lesson 5

Wrap Up & Show What You Know

AP

Objectives

Students will:

- accurately articulate the phonemes reviewed in this unit;
- accurately read sentences that contain the concepts, words, and phonemes taught in this unit and previous units;
- accurately break two-syllable words into two Closed Syllables, decoding each syllable and blending them together to read the word.

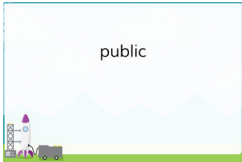
Description

In *Sentences to Read*, students read sentences out loud to the class. Their goal is to read each sentence accurately the first time. In *Two-Syllable Word Reading*, students look for the vowel letters in words and then break those words into syllables, decoding each syllable and then blending the syllables into a real word.

Student Materials

- *Countdown Student Workbook*
- Pencil

What Students See



What You Need to Know

No new concepts.

3, 2, 1...

Open *Countdown Online* to Unit 27, Lesson 5 (27.5).

OPTIONAL

.....

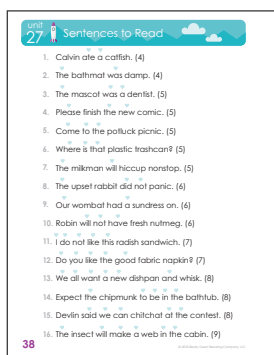
Before teaching this lesson, you may wish to run the *Letter-Sound* and *Heart Word Pop-Up, 3-Up*, and *Read a Row* activities in *Countdown Online* to practice and assess the letter sounds and Heart Words taught in Lesson 1.

Launch!

1 *Sentences to Read*

Say:

- “We are going to read some sentences in our workbooks today.



- I will call on you to read a sentence when it is your turn to be the Reader, and the rest of us will be Checkers, touching each word as the Reader reads it out loud.”

← **Students open** workbooks to page 38.

Individual students read sentences. Since there are only 16 sentences, it is okay to have a student reread a sentence that has been previously read.

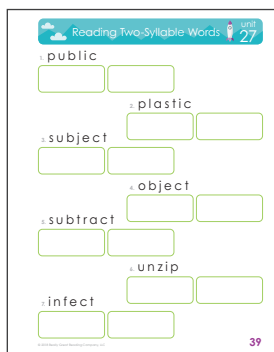
Direct Checkers to give a thumbs-up if the Reader reads all of the words correctly or a thumbs-to-the-side if the Reader misreads a word(s). If the Reader misreads any words, teacher follows Positive Error Correction instructions.

2 **Two-Syllable Word Reading**

Say:

- “Now, we are going to read some big words.
- You will do just what you have been doing when you read words with your *SyllaBoards™*, except you won’t be using real *SyllaBoards™*. You will be using pictures of *SyllaBoards™* in your workbook instead.”

← **Students open** workbooks to *Reading Two-Syllable Words* on page 39.



Say “Let’s start with the first word at the top left of your page.”

Click to display the word **public**.

Say “We are going to use our questions to help us read this new word.”

Ask “How many vowels do we see in this word?” **A:** two, u and i

Click to underline each vowel letter.

Ask:

- “Are the vowels next to each other?” **A:** no
- “Since this word has two vowels and the vowel letters are not next to each other, how many syllables does this word have?” **A:** two

Say “Yes, and since the word has two syllables, you will use both of the *SyllaBoards™* pictures printed in your workbook.”

Click to display two *SyllaBoards™* under **public**, and ask students to point to the two *SyllaBoards™* in their workbooks.

Say “Next, we will write one vowel letter in the middle of each board.”

Click to display the letter **u** on the first board and the letter **i** on the second board, and ask students to write each vowel letter on one of the *SyllaBoards™* in their workbooks.



Say “Now, we should add the consonants around the vowels so that each board ends with a consonant because that closes the syllable.”

Click to add the letters **p** and **b** to the first board and the letters **l** and **c** to the second board, and ask students to do the same.

pub	lic
-----	-----

Say:

- “These are both Closed Syllables.
- Each syllable has one vowel and each ends with a consonant.
- So, now we know how to read this word because the pattern tells us that the vowels will spell their short sounds.
- Let’s read it together.”

Point to and read each *SyllaBoard™* with students, **pub lic**.

Sweep your hand from left to right under the syllables and read the whole word, **public**.

Say “**Public** means something that is open to everyone.”

Check that all students spelled the word correctly with one Closed Syllable in each box. Provide assistance as necessary.

Continue the above process with the following words, one at a time:

2. plastic

plas	tic
------	-----

3. subject

sub	ject
-----	------

4. object

ob	ject
----	------

5. subtract


sub	tract
-----	-------

6. unzip

un	zip
----	-----

7. infect

in	fect
----	------

 Each Unit Planner provides guidance for the Practice to Mastery and Small Group Instruction portions of the instructional block, as well as for Independent Practice in the Reading Playground and learning new words in the Vocabulary Playground.



1. Calvin ate a catfish. (4)
2. The bathmat was damp. (4)
3. The mascot was a dentist. (5)
4. Please finish the new comic. (5)
5. Come to the potluck picnic. (5)
6. Where is that plastic trashcan? (5)
7. The milkman will hiccup nonstop. (5)
8. The upset rabbit did not panic. (6)
9. Our wombat had a sundress on. (6)
10. Robin will not have fresh nutmeg. (6)
11. I do not like this radish sandwich. (7)
12. Do you like the good fabric napkin? (7)
13. We all want a new dishpan and whisk. (8)
14. Expect the chipmunk to be in the bathtub. (8)
15. Devlin said we can chitchat at the contest. (8)
16. The insect will make a web in the cabin. (9)

1. public

2. plastic

3. subject

4. object

5. subtract

6. unzip

7. infect

Countdown Scope and Sequence

BOOK 1

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
Unit 1 (Intro)	Introduction to <i>Countdown</i>	Introduction to Category	Eat vs. Wear Sort	Before/After	Beginning/Middle/End
	Describing and Comparing: Similarities	Introduction to Category: Exclusion from	Left to Right & One to One: Directionality & Order	Whole/Part	Above/Below
	Describing and Comparing: Differences	Hear That Rhyme	First/Next/Last, Before/After: Directionality & Spatial Sequence	Hear That Rhyme	First/Next/Last: Temporal Sequencing
Unit 2	Peel That Sound	Peel and Sort	Peel That Sound	Peel and Sort	Peel and Say
	Sound Stories - /m/	Sound Stories - /s/	Sound Stories - /l/	Sound Stories - /n/	Sound Stories - /f/
	Mystery Bag: Blending Compound Words	Which Words Rhyme?	Mystery Bag: Blending Compound Words	Which Words Rhyme?	Mystery Bag: Blending Onset-Rime
Unit 3	Peel That Sound	Peel and Sort	Peel That Sound	Peel and Match	This or That?
	Sound Stories - /r/	Sound Stories - /v/	Sound Stories - /z/	Sound Stories - /p/	Sound Stories - /g/
	What's That Word?	Creating Rhymes	What's That Word?	Creating Rhymes	What's That Word?
Unit 4	Peel That Sound	Peel and Say	This or That?	Peel and Sort	Peel and Match
	Sound Stories - /d/	Sound Stories - /t/	Sound Stories - /k/	Sound Stories - /b/	Sound Stories - /w/
	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	What's That Word?	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds
Unit 5	Peel That Sound	Peel and Say	Peel and Sort	This or That?	Peel and Match
	Sound Stories - /h/	Sound Stories - /kw/	Sound Stories - /j/	Sound Stories - /y/	Sound Stories - /ks/
	What's That Word?	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	What's That Word?	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	What's That Word?

BOOK 2

Unit 6 (Cluster 1: m, t, p, a)	Letter-Sound Intro	Peel and Sort	Peel and Match	Letters Make Words	Connect the Letter
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Find That Letter	Touch & Say
	Peel and Say	Stretch Those Sounds	Stretch Those Sounds	Stretch Those Sounds	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds
Unit 7 (Cluster 2: s, h, c, i)	Stretch Those Sounds	This or That?	What's That Word?	Peel and Sort	Stretch Those Sounds
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Connect the Letter	Touch & Say
	Which Letter?	Guess My Word	Find That Letter	Which Letter?	Unscramble This
Unit 8 (Cluster 3: d, f, r, o)	Peel and Say	Stretch Those Sounds	Where's That Heart Word? (the, in, my)	Stretch Those Sounds	Connect the Letter
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Find That Letter	Pop Up, 3-Up (the, in, my)
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (the, in, my)	Guess My Word	Which Letter?	Unscramble This	Touch & Say

Countdown Scope and Sequence, continued

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
Unit 9 (Review Clusters 1-3)	This Letter or That?	Stretch Those Sounds	Peel and Match	Count the Sounds	This Letter or That?
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (a, is, for)	Find That Letter	Where's That Heart Word? (a, is, for)	Connect the Letter	Pop Up, 3-Up (a, is, for)
	Which Letter?	Unscramble This	Guess My Word	Build a Word	Touch & Say
Unit 10 (Cluster 4: g, l, n, u)	This or That?	Touch & Say	Connect the Letter	Find That Letter	Count the Sounds
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Stretch Those Sounds	Pop Up, 3-Up (l, am, here)
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (l, am, here)	Build a Word	Where's That Heart Word? (l, am, here)	Unscramble This	Phrase Reading
Unit 11 (Cluster 5: b, k, v, e)	Peel and Sort	Guess My Word	Stretch Those Sounds	Find That Letter	Count the Sounds
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Touch & Say	Pop Up, 3-Up (and, at, go)
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (and, at, go)	Which Letter?	Where's That Heart Word? (and, at, go)	Build a Word	Phrase Reading
Unit 12 (Review Clusters 1-5)	This Letter or That?	Stretch Those Sounds	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	Count the Sounds	This Letter or That?
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (it, like, be)	Find That Letter	Where's That Heart Word? (it, like, be)	Connect the Letter	Pop Up, 3-Up (it, like, be)
	Touch & Say	Unscramble This	Guess My Word	Build a Word	Phrase Reading
Unit 13 (Cluster 6: j, w, z)	Peel and Match	Add That Sound	Find That Letter	Touch & Say	Add That Sound
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Stretch Those Sounds	Pop Up, 3-Up (to, not, can)
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (to, not, can)	Which Letter?	Where's That Heart Word? (to, not, can)	Build a Word	Phrase Reading
Unit 14 (Cluster 7: qu, x, y)	This or That?	Guess My Word	Add That Sound	Connect the Letter	Touch & Say
	Name That Sound	This Letter or That?	This Letter or That?	Unscramble This	Pop Up, 3-Up (you, are, do)
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (you, are, do)	Which Letter?	Where's That Heart Word? (you, are, do)	Build a Word	Phrase Reading
Unit 15 (Review Clusters 1-7)	Mystery Bag: Blending Sounds	Letter-Sound Review	Which Letter?	Add That Sound	Touch & Say
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (did, too, will)	Find That Letter	Where's That Heart Word? (did, too, will)	Connect the Letter	Pop Up, 3-Up (did, too, will)
	Touch & Say	Unscramble This	Phrase Reading	Build a Word	Phrase Reading
Unit 16 (Review Clusters 1-7)	Touch & Say	Sound Swap	Sound Swap	Sound Swap	Touch & Say
	Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up (with, all, me)	Connect the Letter	Where's That Heart Word? (with, all, me)	Find That Letter	Pop Up, 3-Up (with, all, me)
	Which Letter?	Unscramble This	Phrase Reading	Build a Word	Letter-Sound Review

KEY

Functional Vocabulary	Phonemic Awareness: Beginning Sound Isolation	Alphabetic Principle: Letter Identification
Rhyming	Phonemic Awareness: Blending	Alphabetic Principle: Encoding
Sound Stories	Phonemic Awareness: Segmenting	Alphabetic Principle: Decoding
Sight Word Automaticity	Phonemic Awareness: Manipulation	

Countdown Scope and Sequence, continued

BOOK 3

	Lesson 1 <i>Letter-Sound Fluency</i> <i>Heart Word Fluency</i>	Lesson 2 <i>Phonemic Awareness</i>	Lessons 3, 4, 5 <i>Phonics Concept, Reading,</i> <i>and Spelling</i>
UNIT 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowels vs. Consonants Letter Names vs. Sounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review what makes words Introduce <i>Word Sort</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review short vowel sounds and motions Review finger-stretching phonemes
UNIT 18	Letter-Sound Review was, no, so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce long vowel sounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Vowel-Consonant pattern (Closed Syllables) Introduce Build a Word Introduce <i>Spell It!</i>
UNIT 19	Letter-Sound Review say, now, have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short a vs. Long a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce <i>Phrases & Sentences to Read</i> Reading and spelling real and nonsense words with all short vowels
UNIT 20	Letter-Sound Review said, come, down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short i vs. Long i 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digraph sh Reading and spelling with all short vowels Introduce <i>Detective Work</i>
UNIT 21	Letter-Sound Review they, that, this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short u vs. Long u 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digraph th Reading and spelling with all short vowels
UNIT 22	Letter-Sound Review ate, our, who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short o vs. Long o 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review digraphs sh & th Reading and spelling with all short vowels
UNIT 23	Letter-Sound Review where, what, must	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short e vs. Long e 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digraphs ch & wh Reading and spelling with all short vowels
UNIT 24	Letter-Sound Review we, he, she	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all short and long vowels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digraph ck Reading and spelling with all short vowels
UNIT 25	Letter-Sound Review but, want, there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound Buddies (2-sound blends) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chunk all and digraph review Reading and spelling with all short vowels
UNIT 26	Letter-Sound Review saw, own, please	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound Buddies (2-sound blends) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-sound blends (initial and final)
UNIT 27	Letter-Sound Review make, good, new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce <i>Syllable Stomp</i> Introduce blending syllables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce terms “syllable” and “Closed Syllable” Reading two-syllable words with Closed Syllables
UNIT 28	Letter-Sound Review out, one, two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review <i>Syllable Stomp</i> Review blending syllables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More reading two-syllable words with Closed Syllables

KEY

Alphabetic Principle: Letter Identification
Sight Word Automaticity
Phonemic Awareness

Alphabetic Principle:
Encoding and Decoding

Countdown Alternative Scope & Sequence

The *Countdown Alternative Scope & Sequence* is a set of three units with five lessons each that focus primarily on building functional, or instructional, vocabulary; Whole Brain Learning; Whole Body Listening; and basic skills such as categorization, sorting, and 1:1 correspondence. These skills are all foundational and should be in place for students

to benefit from *Countdown* instruction. These three alternative units can replace Unit 1 in the regular scope and sequence for students needing more support in these areas before beginning instruction. Upon completion of the alternative units, students would progress directly into Unit 2 of the regular scope and sequence.

Student Workbook Activities as Formative Assessment

Some *Countdown Student Workbook* activities may be useful as weekly formative assessments for measuring students' mastery of the phonics concepts taught in the lessons beginning in Unit 17.

Word Sort

Teachers can either collect workbooks, have students check and grade their own work, or have students swap and grade each other's workbooks to gain an understanding of which students require additional review and practice.

Phrases and Sentences to Read

Teachers can use their clean copy of the *Student Workbook* to keep track of the number of words students read correctly.

Spell It!

This can be useful for tracking all students' individual acquisition of a unit's target skill. Teachers can collect workbooks, have students check and grade their own work, or have students swap and grade each other's workbooks.

Read a Row

This can help assess letter sound and Heart Word mastery. The Read a Row tracking chart, available in *Countdown Online* in the Letter-Sound and Heart Word Generators, can be used for this purpose.



Components



CDLP



CDOL



PG_CDSW



CDKIT

CDSORTCARD



CDWALL

Countdown Teacher Guide Set CDLP \$255

Contains three lesson plan books; Books 1 and 2 are designed to be taught in the first half of kindergarten and finish with students reading simple CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words. Through these books, students learn about and build confidence with phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle. They encode and decode simple words and build fluency with high-frequency words. Book 3 continues with more advanced concepts and is designed to be taught in the second half of kindergarten. Book 3 instruction finishes with students reading and understanding the substructures of more complex single-syllable words like hush, flash, pond, and dust, and even exposes students to two-syllable words like catfish, sunset, and insect.

Countdown Online CDOL \$99

Countdown Online is a teacher presentation tool and an essential online companion piece to the *Teacher Guide Set*. It is designed to facilitate smooth and efficient instruction. It helps bring your classroom to life with colorful, iconic imagery that allows the teacher to deliver many exposures and practice opportunities while virtually eliminating teacher prep time.

Countdown Student Workbook & Reading Playground Bundle PG_CDSW \$24

Countdown has one *Student Workbook* that contains the printed material a student needs to practice and build mastery with the skills taught during the week. The activities increase student outcomes and also serve as light formative assessment so teachers can understand who has really mastered the concepts and which students may need more instruction.

Countdown Student Kit CDKIT \$50

The *Countdown Student Kit* is designed to work in conjunction with the Countdown phonics lessons. It includes the letter tiles, color tiles, and other components needed to complete all 28 units of Countdown. Note: There is a way of upgrading the *Blast Kit* to work with Countdown (CDUP \$5).

Supplemental Countdown Products

Countdown Sort and Play Card Deck CDSORTCARD \$25

Countdown Vowel Posters CDVPOST \$8

Countdown Wall Cards CDWALL \$24

Countdown Online

An
essential online
interactive
teacher
presentation
tool.



- Includes integrated, fun, colorful, and lively animations; vowel posters; virtual letter tiles; and virtual SyllaBoards™
- Virtually eliminates teacher prep time and setup
- Helps students learn concepts faster and retain them better by making concepts highly visual
- Essential to teaching *Countdown*
- Log in at ReallyGreatReading.com; annual subscription required

Letter-Sound & Heart Word Generators

The Letter-Sound and Heart Word Generators allow you to customize Lesson 1's content beginning in Unit 18. If you choose not to use the default settings, which align to the student practice, you can use the generators to choose which letter sounds and Heart Words you want to teach and practice. Choose from single consonant and vowel graphemes and 300+ high-frequency words.

Supply Room

Countdown Online has a growing body of instructional resources to enhance and extend your instruction. The Supply Room section, which can be accessed through the home screen in *Countdown Online*, has several sections, each with a variety of items and tools. These include:

1. Teacher Resources: A variety of teacher tools and resources are available in the Supply Room, including Getting Started Guides, Assessments, Grouping Tools, Classroom Demonstration videos, resources to differentiate instruction for students who need additional help or more of a challenge, home connection resources, research information, the full set of Unit Planners, and more. Be sure to utilize the Activity Overview Videos to help with classroom instruction in the Rhyming, Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, and Sight Word Automaticity activities.

2. Instructional Resources: Many essential instructional resources are housed in the Supply Room. These are referenced in the Unit Planners and guidance for their use is provided throughout the Teacher Guides. These resources include the sound story videos, decodable passages, mini-lessons and alternative start lessons, spelling words, dictation sentences, challenge words, concepts of print lessons, extension units, interactive resources (including a sound-spelling wall), articulation and vowel videos, and a variety of posters, linking charts, and additional activities for reinforcement.

3. Reading Playground: The resources housed here include Getting Started Guides, Assessments, Student Reports, Whole Class Activities, and many more. These resources will help guide instruction by providing the necessary benchmark tools to track student progress. When the resources here are paired with the Reading Playgrounds, they will provide a clearer understanding of student comprehension with new concepts. Plan for student learning with game mapping guides, whole group activities, and leveraging the Reading Playgrounds for ELs.

Continued on next page

Supply Room, continued

4. Handwriting: The Handwriting Scope and Sequence will guide instruction alongside the robust amount of printables in this tab. Handwriting lessons will be named throughout the teacher guide and can be found in Teacher Resources. Along with printable lessons, this tab includes videos for Handwriting Foundations, Capital and Lowercase Letters, and Numbers to support instruction. Student Resources includes the full student workbook and a student checklist to allow students to monitor their progress throughout the curriculum.

5. EL Resources: A robust variety of resources and supports are included in the EL Resources. All of the EL and Spanish Support animations and videos are housed here. Each video and animation will be referenced throughout the teacher guide to aid in student skill building and comprehension. There is also a collection of Student, Teacher, and Home resources to use in and out of the classroom.

6. Vocabulary: The Vocabulary tab includes resources for the Vocabulary Playgrounds, instruction, and morphology. Here you will find a lesson to support student learning in the Vocabulary Playgrounds. Our online program will help students learn vocabulary through diverse images, multiple contexts, and interactive learning.

7. Heart Word Magic: All of the PDF resources needed to explain and teach Heart Words are housed here, including the full library of the *Countdown Heart Words* by Unit videos and Spelling Templates. Heart Words in Español will include a full library of videos to help EL students comprehend. Use the activities included in Heart Word Spelling during small group instruction to solidify student understanding.

We are continually adding to our body of instructional resources in the Supply Room, so check back often to see what is new.

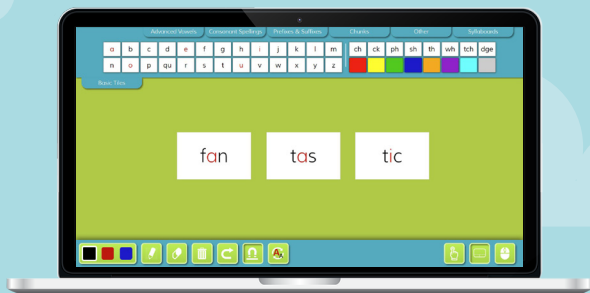
Examples of Resources in the Supply Room



VOWEL ANIMATION VIDEOS



INSTRUCTIONAL ANIMATIONS



INTERACTIVE TOOLS AND RESOURCES



HEART WORD MAGIC VIDEOS

Countdown Reading Playground

The *Countdown Reading Playground* helps students independently practice the foundational literacy skills they are learning in *Countdown*.



The Reading Playground includes:

- A play-based digital platform that merges learning, assessment, and practice.
- Research-aligned activities designed to accelerate the acquisition of skills and knowledge necessary to transform unfamiliar words into familiar and instantly recognizable words.
- An adaptive platform that honors the diversity of students' abilities to master their phonics skills at different rates and with different amounts of practice.
- Responsive capabilities, so it can be used across multiple devices and platforms.
- An easy-to-read teacher dashboard, so you can monitor individual student performance and determine next steps for differentiated instruction.

The *Countdown Reading Playground* is a research-aligned online tool for fun and engaging game-based independent student practice. Each unit of instruction has nine corresponding games within the *Reading Playground*. The first three games in each unit can be utilized as formative assessment. Teachers can monitor student progress through their dashboard, which includes student data reports. Progress Monitoring assessments built into the Playground provide teachers with even more data on student performance.

The *Countdown Reading Playground* augments and solidifies the guided practice found in the lessons and in the student workbook. The workbook activities are designed to facilitate guided practice. Guided practice is a crucial component for most students because there is no replacement for a teacher hearing a child read out loud and offering real-time corrective (adjusting) feedback. The *Reading Playground* provides independent practice, which when coupled with the "magical" touch that a teacher provides, can be extremely beneficial at helping students reach mastery and providing the extra support they need when they don't master concepts right away.

Visit ***my.rgr.fun*** and enter password *cd.cd.cd* to experience some of the Reading Playground games *Countdown* students might play after participating in *Countdown* lessons. Have fun exploring the playgrounds with these sample games.



INCLUDED IN YOUR
CLASSROOM SETUP!



Embark on an educational, space-themed handwriting journey with Really Great Handwriting, a research-aligned supplement designed to elevate your literacy instruction. Seamlessly integrated into *Countdown* for kindergarten, *Blast* for 1st grade, and *HD Word* for 2nd grade, this tool empowers students to excel in printed and cursive handwriting, spelling, and written expression.

This comprehensive approach ensures that students learn to form letters correctly as they are mastering their letter-sound knowledge, setting the stage for a well-rounded literacy education.

For Countdown, Blast, & HD Word Users:

- ✓ Letter Formation Animations for All Lowercase and Uppercase Print Letters *(with scripted teacher lessons)*
- ✓ Letter Formation Animations for All Lowercase and Uppercase Cursive Letters *(HD Word only; with scripted teacher lessons)*
- ✓ Formation Animations for Numbers 0-10
- ✓ Lessons Embedded into Online Tools and the Reading Playgrounds
- ✓ Direct, Explicit Instruction in Posture, Pencil Grip, and Spacing
- ✓ Fun, Engaging Verbal Pathways that Break Letter Formation into a Series of Space-Themed Rocket Movements
- ✓ Multisensory Tips and Tricks
- ✓ Pre-Writing Activities like Dot-to-Dots and Coloring Direction Sheets
- ✓ Printable Handwriting Paper
- ✓ Handwriting Teacher Guides, Complete with an Appendix of Resources
- ✓ Options to Adapt to Different Classroom Needs

Fun, Space-Themed Adventure

Really Great Handwriting turns the process into a grand space adventure, making handwriting exceptionally fun and engaging. It turns pencils into rockets and paper into a vast, exciting universe!

Research-Backed Impact on Spelling & Reading

Grounded in studies that show links between mastering handwriting and improved literacy skills.

Complementary Literacy Tool

Tailored for grades K–3, Really Great Handwriting is a versatile addition to the *Countdown*, *Blast*, and *HD Word* programs.

Not yet available for Launchpad

Elevate English Literacy with Spanish Supports for *Countdown, Blast*, and *HD Word*

Help your English Learners (ELs) unlock their full potential with our cutting-edge EL Resources and Spanish Supports. Designed by EL educators, these materials offer a rich, research-based toolkit for teachers to provide daily focused English instruction.



Phoneme
Articulation
Videos

Spanish
Instructional
Videos



Unlock Bilingual Success

Combines the power of *Countdown, Blast*, and *HD Word* with essential Spanish language supports. For non-Spanish speaking ELs, explicit, visual supports, facilitate comprehension in lessons and activities.



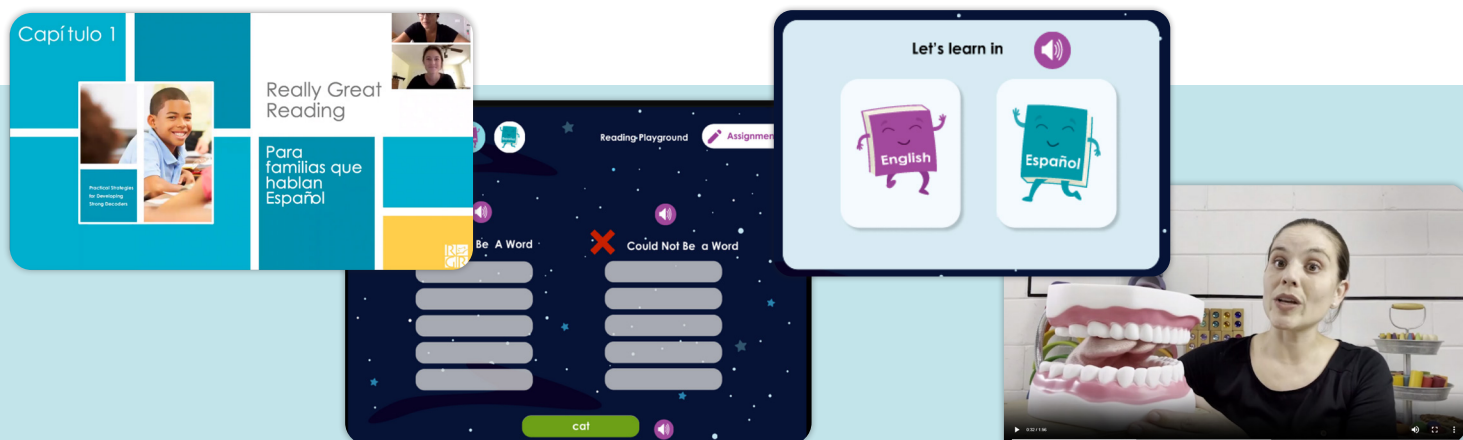
Crosslinguistic Benefits

Leverage the natural synergies between English and Spanish to accelerate learning. Teach once and reinforce in both languages, saving precious instructional time.



Equitable and Culturally Responsive

From classroom to home, we offer a holistic learning experience that respects and utilizes the child's native language as a learning asset.



Decodable Books: Essential Tools for Early Readers

Decodable books are an essential tool as students are learning to read. They build confidence, reinforce phonics skills, develop high-frequency word fluency, and support reading comprehension. Our decodable texts are perfectly aligned with *Countdown*, *Blast*, and *HD Word*, creating a supportive environment for practicing word decoding and building fluency.



Confidence
through
Practice!

Expertly,
Intricately
Aligned!



Decodable eBooks

The new eBooks are accessible through the Reading Playgrounds included with the Classroom Setups, offering engaging and interactive reading practice.



Printable Decodables

Teachers can print and send home perfectly aligned decodables for practice outside the classroom, ensuring continuous learning. These are accessible through the Online Teacher's Supply Room.



Decodable Book Sets

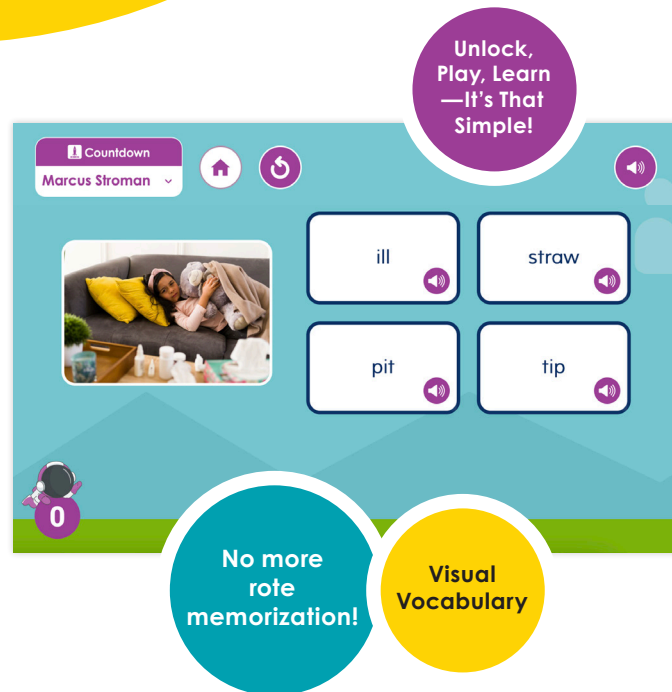
(available for purchase)

Beautifully illustrated, these science-of-reading decodable books align with *Countdown*, *Blast*, and *HD Word*. Check out samples of these books at Really Great Reading Decodable Readers.



Vocabulary Playgrounds: Where Vocabulary Meets Foundational Skill-Building

Really Great Reading's Vocabulary Playgrounds tool is more than a simple vocabulary builder. It's a dynamic practice platform that simulates the natural process of vocabulary acquisition through rich, contextual encounters with words. This digital platform not only enriches vocabulary but also enhances oral language skills, builds background knowledge, and sharpens inferencing and critical thinking abilities.



Mimics Real-World Encounters

The Vocabulary Playgrounds platform is designed to help students internalize vocabulary through visuals and contextual clues, making each word both memorable and relatable.



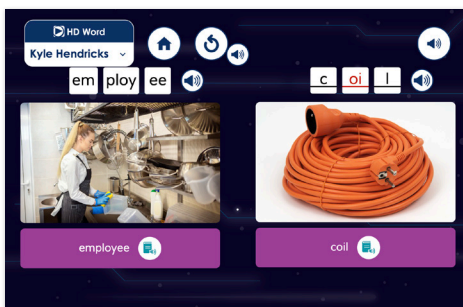
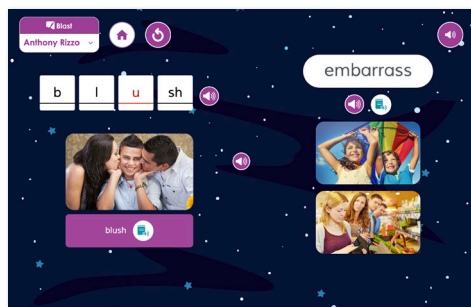
Linking Vocabulary and Phonics

Vocabulary words are meticulously chosen from our *Countdown*, *Blast*, and *HD Word* programs. This ensures age-appropriate and phonologically aligned instruction, enhancing orthographic mapping through phoneme-grapheme associations.



Easy to Implement, Seamless Integration

Vocabulary Playgrounds units are designed to pre-teach vocabulary that will be decoded in upcoming *Countdown*, *Blast*, and *HD Word* units. All teachers need to do is unlock the units and let their students play.



More Than Vocabulary—It's Complete Language Enrichment

Countdown Classroom Setup

Everything
one teacher
needs to teach
20 students

1
set



TEACHER GUIDES

28 units in 3 books

1
login



COUNTDOWN ONLINE

1-year subscription

10
kits



COUNTDOWN STUDENT KIT

20



GUIDED PRACTICE WORKBOOK

To be used with
Teacher Guide Book 3

20
seats



COUNTDOWN READING PLAYGROUND (INCLUDES VOCABULARY PLAYGROUND)

20 student seats

1
seat



VIRTUAL IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING COURSE

1 teacher seat/year

All the lessons are built for the teacher and include a thorough explanation of the concepts, routines, and procedures. The lessons are easy to follow, so they can be taught by a wide range of educators, not just seasoned literacy professionals and phonics specialists. For those unfamiliar with teaching phonemic awareness and phonics, the guides include incremental professional development for each lesson.

Skills Taught in Countdown Books 1 & 2

- Identify rhymes
- Generate rhymes
- Isolate the initial sounds of words
- Identify short vowel and consonant sounds
- Distinguish between letter sounds
- Identify letter-sound correspondences for short vowels and consonant sounds
- Blend the parts of spoken compound words
- Blend the onsets and rimes of spoken words
- Blend the sounds in 2- and 3-phoneme words
- Segment the sounds in 2- and 3-phoneme words
- Print capital and lowercase letters with correct formation
- Develop an understanding of basic print concepts

first half of
kindergarten

- Encode 2- and 3-phoneme words with short vowels
- Decode 2- and 3-phoneme words with short vowels
- Read 20-30 high-frequency words

Skills Taught in Countdown Book 3

second
half of
kindergarten

- Blend the sounds in 3- and 4-phoneme words
- Segment the sounds in 3- and 4-phoneme words
- Encode 3- and 4-phoneme words with short vowels
- Decode 3- and 4-phoneme words with short vowels
- Master 40-75 high-frequency sight words
- Read short, decodable phrases and sentences with fluency and automaticity
- Distinguish between long and short vowel phonemes
- Delete, add, and substitute initial, medial, and final phonemes in words
- Identify and decode words with digraphs
- Identify and decode words containing consonant blends
- Identify and decode Closed Syllable words
- Segment the syllables in two-syllable words
- Blend the syllables in two-syllable words
- Decode two-syllable words with Closed Syllables
- Print capital and lowercase letters with correct formation