Countdown Practice Cards Mini-Deck User's Guide

Welcome to the *Countdown Practice Cards Mini-Deck*! We hope that these cards provide countless opportunities for your students to practice the foundational skills they are learning in their *Countdown* lessons or other foundational skills instruction. The cards can be used to practice the following skills and more:

- Rhyming
- Initial phoneme identification/matching
- Final phoneme identification/matching
- Vowel phoneme identification/ matching/categorization
- Counting phonemes
- Segmenting or blending phonemes
- Letter-sound identification

Below are some brief instructions for a few games that can be played with the cards. Feel free to modify these to meet your needs. For most of these card games, you will need to presort and choose the cards that you want students to work with. Feel free to play any additional phonemic awareness and phonics games you come up with using the cards. A list of all of the words contained in the deck and their attributes can be found at the end of this guide.

Card Components

This mini-deck is a small sample from the larger *Countdown Practice Cards* deck. The *Countdown Practice Cards* have been designed to showcase the specific phonemic and phonological features of spoken words, allowing you to use these features to help students practice targeted skills. The following keys explain the presentation of information on the back of each card in the deck. Notice the following features:

- Colorful wedges represent each distinct attribute of the word.
- The color of the grass at the bottom of the cards indicates whether the word's vowel sound is short or long. Short vowel words have light green grass, and long vowel words have dark green grass. This enables you to quickly sort the cards by the category of their vowel sound.
- The letters **B** and **D** beside the rocket ship indicate if the word has a 2-sound blend (**B**) or a digraph (**D**).

3-Phoneme/Short Vowel Word

- 6 wedges
- Light green grass at bottom of card indicates that the word has a short vowel
- No **B** or **D** indicates there is no Blend or Digraph in this word.
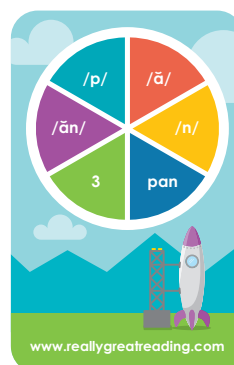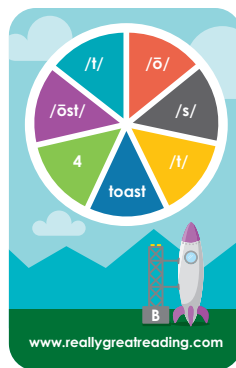
B = Blend
D = Digraph

1. **teal** = initial sound
2. **red** = vowel sound
3. **yellow** = final sound
4. **blue** = word
5. **green** = number of sounds
6. **purple** = rime

4-Phoneme/Long Vowel Word

- 7 wedges
- Dark green grass at bottom of card indicates that the word has a long vowel
- **B** indicates there is a Blend in this word.

B = Blend
D = Digraph

1. **teal** = initial sound
2. **gray** = additional consonant sound in a 2-sound blend (note that the gray wedge may come before or after the red/vowel wedge)
3. **red** = vowel sound
4. **yellow** = final sound
5. **blue** = word
6. **green** = number of sounds
7. **purple** = rime

2-Phoneme/Long Vowel Word

- 6 wedges (but one is blank)
- Dark green grass at bottom of card indicates that the word has a long vowel
- No **B** or **D** indicates there is no Blend or Digraph in this word.

B = Blend
D = Digraph
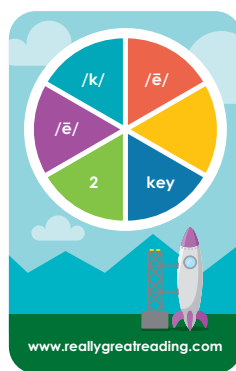
1. **teal** = initial sound
2. **red** = vowel sound
3. **yellow** = blank (no final consonant sound)
4. **blue** = word
5. **green** = number of sounds
6. **purple** = rime

Examples of Games to Play with the *Countdown Practice Cards*

MATCH IT

Match It is a game that can be played in a guided group, with partners, or independently.

Object: To match cards according to specific attributes.

To play:

1. Teacher selects a specific phonemic attribute he/she she wants the students to match. The attribute might be initial sounds, vowel sounds, final sounds, or rimes.

2. The teacher chooses four pairs of cards for the selected attribute to be matched (initial, vowel, or final sound, or rime). Each pair should have a unique phoneme/rime. For instance, if the chosen attribute to match is initial sound, the teacher may choose two cards with the initial /n/ sound, two with initial /w/, two with initial /sh/, and two with initial /p/.
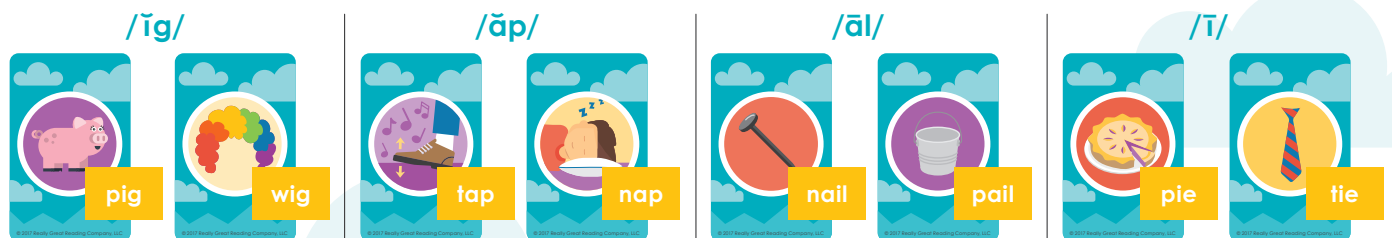
3. Teacher lays out the eight cards, either face down or face up.

4. Students look for pairs of cards with a matching attribute (same initial sound, same rime, etc.) and collect the matches. Students can take turns selecting the matching pairs.

Examples:

Matching Initial Sounds

/n/	/w/	/sh/	/p/
neck · nap	wig · wave	shell · ship	peas · pail

Matching Rimes

/ĭg/	/ăp/	/āl/	/ī/
pig · wig	tap · nap	nail · pail	pie · tie

SLAP THE SOUND

Slap the Sound is a game that can be played in a guided group or in partners.

Object: To collect the most cards by identifying a specific phoneme. *(This game is best played by matching phonemes—initial, vowel, or final.)*

To play:

1. Teacher evenly deals cards to students. (You will use the whole mini-deck of 26 cards for this activity.)

2. Students place cards in a pile, icon side down.

3. Teacher determines "Winner is the '_____'" *(whatever skill he or she wants the students to work on).* For example, teacher might say, "Winner is the sound /t/."

4. Students flip over cards as the same time and look for the attribute.

5. When a student sees an icon with that attribute, he or she will need to slap it. For example, if "Winner is the '/t/'" and the three cards flipped (if three students are playing) are **nap**, **wax** and **tap**, then the student who notices that the **tap** has the /t/ sound and slaps the **tap** card wins that round.

6. Student that correctly slaps the correct icon first collects all the cards for that round. If the attribute does not appear on any cards in a round, teacher can have one student or all students flip another card.

7. Whoever has the most cards when all cards have been used wins.

Example:

"Winner is the sound /t/." Students must "slap" whichever of these cards beginning with /t/ is flipped, rather than the non-/t/ card.

Possible cards to "slap":

| tie | tap | tape | toast | teeth | toes |

Variation:

Simply place the full deck face down on the table and flip two cards. Then, based on the cards that were flipped, teachers chooses an attribute to ask for. Students then slap the card (no matter whose card it is) with the requested attribute.

LETTER-SOUND MATCH IT

Letter-Sound Match It is a game that can be played whole group, in a guided group, or in partners using letter tiles or letters printed on squares of paper.

Object: To correctly identify the letter tile that matches a specific phoneme.

To play:

1. The teacher puts the cards, icon side down, in a pile.

2. The teacher draws a card and asks the students to find the letter tile on their holding board that spells the first sound in the icon word and hold up that tile. For example, if the icon is the **pan**, the student should find the **p** tile.

3. The first student to find and hold up the correct tile wins that round and gets to keep the card.

Example:
Teacher's Cards:

| nail | pig | shed | tape | win |

| n | p | sh | t | w |

COMPLETE LIST OF CARDS, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Icon Image	Icon Name	First Phoneme	Short Vowel Phoneme	Long Vowel Phoneme	Final Phoneme	Number of Phonemes	Rime	Beginning/End Blend	Digraph	Segmented Sounds in Words with Blends
	knife	/n/		/ī/	/f/	3	/īf/			
	nail	/n/		/ā/	/l/	3	/āl/			
	nap	/n/	/ă/		/p/	3	/ăp/			
	neck	/n/	/ĕ/		/k/	3	/ĕk/		ck	
	net	/n/	/ĕ/		/t/	3	/ĕt/			
	pail	/p/		/ā/	/l/	3	/āl/			
	pan	/p/	/ă/		/n/	3	/ăn/			
	peas	/p/		/ē/	/z/	3	/ēz/			
	pie	/p/		/ī/	/ī/	2	/ī/			
	pig	/p/	/ĭ/		/g/	3	/ĭg/			

Icon Image	Icon Name	First Phoneme	Short Vowel Phoneme	Long Vowel Phoneme	Final Phoneme	Number of Phonemes	Rime	Beginning/ End Blend	Digraph	Segmented Sounds in Words with Blends
	shed	/sh/	/ĕ/		/d/	3	/ĕd/		sh	
	sheep	/sh/		/ē/	/p/	3	/ēp/		sh	
	shell	/sh/	/ĕ/		/l/	3	/ĕl/		sh	
	ship	/sh/	/ĭ/		/p/	3	/ĭp/		sh	
	show	/sh/		/ō/	/ō/	2	/ō/		sh	
	tap	/t/	/ă/		/p/	3	/ăp/			
	tape	/t/		/ā/	/p/	3	/āp/			
	teeth	/t/		/ē/	/th/	3	/ēth/		th	
	tie	/t/		/ī/	/ī/	2	/ī/			
	toast	/t/		/ō/	/t/	4	/ōst/	-st		/t/ /ō/ /s/ /t/

Icon Image	Icon Name	First Phoneme	Short Vowel Phoneme	Long Vowel Phoneme	Final Phoneme	Number of Phonemes	Rime	Beginning/ End Blend	Digraph	Segmented Sounds in Words with Blends
	toes	/t/		/ō/	/z/	3	/ōz/			
	wave	/w/		/ā/	/v/	3	/āv/			
	wax	/w/	/ă/		/ks/	3	/ăks/			
	week	/w/		/ē/	/k/	3	/ēk/			
	wig	/w/	/ĭ/		/g/	3	/ĭg/			
	win	/w/	/ĭ/		/n/	3	/ĭn/			