

# Week 1

Alright. Here we are at week one. This is the big one: this week, your student reads real words for the first time. Not memorized words — words they work out sound by sound, all by themselves. By Friday they will have read about 150 words of connected text, and every one of them will be earned.

Each day runs twenty to thirty minutes and follows the same six parts, in the same order, every time. You read the lines in the green boxes out loud, word for word. Everything else on the page is me talking to you. By week three the routine will run itself.

One more thing before you start. If a day falls apart — tears, shutdown, a bad night's sleep — stop, say "we're done for today, you worked hard," and mark it on the weekly check. The program adjusts. That's its job, not yours.

## The week's plan

- Day 1 — your student slides sounds together and reads their first real words.
- Day 2 — words that start with a pop, like tap and pat.
- Day 3 — the letter s at the end of a word, and the first real story.
- Day 4 — reading smooth, like talking, and a second story.
- Day 5 — no new material: a reread, the week's game, and a ten-word check.

## What's where

- 2 Day 1 — sliding sounds together (the big day, so it gets two pages)
- 3 Day 1, continued — word work, story, writing
- 4 Day 2 — words that start with a pop
- 5 Day 3 — the letter that means more than one
- 6 Story sheet — At the mat (day 3)
- 7 Day 4 — reading it smooth
- 8 Story sheet — The sap (day 4)
- 9 Day 5 — review, the game, ten-word check, and your check-in
- 10 Game board — Path to the mat
- 11 Cut-out card sheet (cut before day 1)

## Before day 1 — your sound warm-up

Before day 1, one thing to practice on your own: the sounds, said clean. It is /m/ with your lips together and humming, not "muh." It is /t/, a tiny tick, no "tuh." That extra "uh" is the single most common habit to avoid, because "muh-a-tuh" can't be blended back into mat. Play each sound's audio clip once before you start the week — the link is in the email this packet came in.

One more heads-up: in am, the a sounds a little different — slightly squeezed through the nose. That's how English works before m and n. If your student says it that way, that's correct; don't fix it.

## What you need

Everything you need is printed in this packet: the sound cards, the heart word cards, the letter cards, both story sheets, the writing page, the game board, and the game cards. Cut out the card sheet on the last page before day 1 — five minutes with scissors. Beyond the packet you need a pencil, and for the game, two small movers for the board: two buttons or coins work, or any two little things from the junk drawer.

## Handing this week to someone else?

Grandma, dad, a co-op friend — anyone can run this week cold. Give them this page, show them the green boxes ("read those out loud, word for word"), and point them at the page map. Everything else is explained where it happens.

## Day 1 — sliding sounds together

### a Warm-up

2-3 min

"Warm-up time. I show a card, you say the sound."



Shuffle the five sound cards and hold them up one at a time. Right answer: next card, keep it brisk — this should feel like a game, not a quiz. Wrong or slow: say the sound yourself, have your student repeat it, and slip the card back into the middle of the pile so it comes around again. That's the whole correction.

### b The new thing: sliding sounds into a word

4-6 min

"Today's new thing is big: you're going to read real words. Watch me first."

Lay the letter cards m — a — t on the table with space between them.

"I touch each letter and say its sound: /m/ ... /ă/ ... /t/. Now I slide them together: mmmaaat. mat. I just read the word mat."

Push the cards together as you slide the sounds.

"Do it with me this time. Touch and say: /m/ ... /ă/ ... /t/. Slide it: mmmaaat. mat."

"Your turn, all by yourself."

If it falls apart, do one more together, then hand it back. Then build s a t with the letter cards and let your student do the whole thing alone.

### STORY HELPER WORD — 60 SECONDS

"Here's a word we need for stories: the. Most words play fair — these letters don't make their usual sounds yet, so we learn this whole word by heart. It says the. Trace it with your finger and say it: the, the, the."

**c Word work**

5-7 min

"Word time. Touch each letter, say each sound, then slide them together. I'll do the first one."

am · at · mat · sat · Sam · Pam

Word chain — "watch closely, I'm changing one letter. What's the new word?"

am → at → mat → sat

For Sam and Pam, say "this one starts with a capital letter because it's someone's name — read it the same way." If your student gets stuck on a word, don't say "sound it out." Point to the first letter, say "start here — what's this sound?", and walk through it together. Then have your student read the whole word once more, alone. Move on.

**d Story time**

5-8 min

"Story time. Every word here is one you can figure out. First, the cast: this says Sam ... this says Pam."

Sam sat.

Pam sat at the mat.

Sam sat at the mat.

Second read: "make it sound like talking." Then ask: "Who sat at the mat?"

When your student pauses at a word, count three seconds in your head before helping. Then start at the first sound, together. Never cover the word and ask your student to guess — guessing is the habit this program replaces.

**e Writing time**

5 min

"Writing time. I say it, you repeat it, then write it."

Sounds: /m/ ... /s/ ... /ă/ — "write the letter that says..."

Words: am · at · mat · sat — "repeat it. Tap the sounds on your fingers. Write it."

Sentence: Sam sat. — say it once, your student repeats it back, then writes. Capital letter to start, period at the end — remind, don't penalize.

Mistake routine: show the sound card or heart-word card, let your student find the difference and fix it. Crossing out is fine; erasing not required.

**f Finish strong: Beat the count**

2-3 min

Six cards face down: a, m, s, t, p, and the heart card the. You count out loud to ten, slow and steady, like a countdown announcer. Your student reads all six before you hit ten. They will. That's the point. Then say the closing line — "Done. You read six words today. Last week you could read two."

## Day 2 — words that start with a pop

### a Warm-up

2-3 min

"Warm-up time. I show a card, you say the sound."



"Now the heart words. Just read them."



Same routine as yesterday — five sound cards, then the heart card at the end.

### b The new thing: pop sounds first

4-6 min

"Yesterday's words started with sounds you can stretch — mmmat, sssat. Today's new thing: words that start with a pop. /p/ and /t/ are quick pops — you can't stretch them. So you pop the first sound and glue it fast to the next one. Watch: p — at. pat. Again: t — ap. tap."

"Do it with me: p — at, pat."

"Your turn: t — ap."

#### STORY HELPER WORD — 60 SECONDS

"Two tiny story words. This one says a — like 'a mat.' And this one is I — it means you. It's always a capital letter, because you're important. Read them: a ... I."

### c Word work

5-7 min

"Word time. Touch each letter, say each sound, then slide them together. I'll do the first one."

tap · pat · map · sap · at · mat · sat · am

Word chain — "watch closely, I'm changing one letter. What's the new word?"

map → sap → sat → mat → pat

### d Story time

5-8 min

"Story time. Every word here is one you can figure out. First, the cast: this says Sam ... this says Pam."

I am Sam.

I sat at a mat.

Tap the mat, Pam.

Second read: "make it sound like talking." Then ask: "What did Pam get asked to do?"

### e Writing time

5 min

"Writing time. I say it, you repeat it, then write it."

Sounds: /t/ ... /p/ ... /ă/ — "write the letter that says..."

Words: tap · map · sap · pat — "repeat it. Tap the sounds on your fingers. Write it."

Sentence: I am at the mat. — say it once, your student repeats it back, then writes.

### f Finish strong: Mix and fix

2-3 min

Build t a m with the letter cards and say "I tried to build mat — fix me." Then p a s for sap. Your student is the teacher; enjoy being wrong.

## Day 3 — the letter that means more than one

### a Warm-up

2-3 min

"Warm-up time. I show a card, you say the sound."



"Now the heart words. Just read them."



Five sound cards, then all three heart cards. Keep the pace warm and quick — under three minutes.

### b The new thing: adding s

4-6 min

"Today's new thing is one little letter that does a big job. Watch: mat. Now I add s: mats. One mat, two mats. The s on the end means more than one."

"It works on doing-words too: I tap. Sam taps. Listen — tap ... taps."

"Do it with me: pat ... pats. mat ... mats."

"Your turn: map ... ?"

For you: in all of this week's words the ending s sounds like /s/. In some words it buzzes like /z/ — the program teaches that later; don't bring it up now.

### c Word work

5-7 min

"Word time. Touch each letter, say each sound, then slide them together. I'll do the first one."

taps · pats · mats · maps · tap · sat · am · sap

Pair drill:

tap → taps · pat → pats · mat → mats · map → maps

A pair drill instead of a chain today. "Read the pair. What did the s change?"

### d Story time — At the mat

5-8 min

"Story time. Every word in here is one you can figure out. First, the cast." This says Sam. This says Pam. This says Tam.

The story has its own sheet — the next page. After the first read: "read it once more — make it sound like talking."

Then ask the two questions printed under the story.

### e Writing time

5 min

"Writing time. I say it, you repeat it, then write it."

Sounds: /s/ ... /m/ ... /p/ — "write the letter that says..."

Words: taps · mats · pats · Sam — "repeat it. Tap the sounds on your fingers. Write it."

Sentence: Pam taps the mat. — say it once, your student repeats it back, then writes.

### f Finish strong: Word swat

2-3 min

Lay out four cards: tap, taps, mat, mats. Say a word; your student swats the matching card. Speed up. Trade jobs for the last two.

The cast: Sam Pam Tam

## At the mat

Sam sat at the mat.

Pam sat at the mat.

Tam sat at the mat.

Sam, tap the mat.

Tap, tap, tap.

Pam, pat the mat.

Pat, pat, pat.

I am at the mat.

I tap the mat.

I pat the mat.

Sam, Pam, Tam sat at the mat.

Questions after the second read: "Who sat at the mat first?" · "Show me on your leg how Sam tapped the mat."

Draw what happened.

## Day 4 — reading it smooth

### a Warm-up

2-3 min

"Warm-up time. I show a card, you say the sound."



"Now the heart words. Just read them."



All the cards today — five sounds, three hearts. Brisk and warm.

### b The new thing: reading like talking

4-6 min

"You can read words. Today's new thing is reading them smooth — the way people talk. Listen to me read like a robot: Sam ... sat ... at ... the ... mat. Now like talking: Sam sat at the mat. Hear the difference?"

"Do it with me: Pam taps the mat." (robot once, talking once)

"Your turn — robot first if you want, then talking."

### c Word work

5-7 min

"Word time. Touch each letter, say each sound, then slide them together. I'll do the first one."

am · sat · taps · map · pats · sap · mats · at · pat · tap

Word chain — "watch closely, I'm changing one letter. What's the new word?"

pat → pats → mats → maps

The chain has two changes per step today — watch closely and say so out loud: "watch two changes this time — one letter each step."

### d Story time — The sap

5-8 min

Set the scene before reading — you say this, your student doesn't read it: "Sap is the sticky juice inside a tree — like where syrup comes from. In this story, Sam and Pam tap a tree to get the sap out. Watch what the sap does back."

"Story time. Every word in here is one you can figure out. First, the cast." This says Sam. This says Pam.

The story has its own sheet — the next page. After the first read: "read it once more — make it sound like talking." Then ask the two questions printed under the story.

### e Writing time

5 min

"Writing time. I say it, you repeat it, then write it."

Sounds: /ă/ ... /t/ ... /s/ — "write the letter that says..."

Words: maps · sap · pats · am — "repeat it. Tap the sounds on your fingers. Write it."

Sentence: Sam taps the sap. — say it once, your student repeats it back, then writes.

### f Finish strong: Race the parent

2-3 min

Flip a word card; if your student reads it before you slowly say "one banana, two banana, three banana," they keep it. Six cards. They should end up with at least five.

The cast: Sam Pam

## The sap

Sam taps the sap.

Pam taps the sap.

Tap, tap, tap.

I tap the sap.

The sap taps Sam.

The sap taps Pam.

The sap taps the mat.

Sam pats the mat.

Pam pats the mat.

I pat the mat.

Sam sat. Pam sat. I sat.

The sap sat at the mat.

Questions after the second read: "What dripped on Sam and Pam?" · "The story says the sap sat at the mat. What do you think that looked like?"

Draw what happened.

## Day 5 — review and games

No new material today. Fifteen to twenty-five minutes, four parts.

### 1 Favorite reread

5 min

"Pick your favorite story from this week and read it to me one more time."

Rereading familiar text is fluency practice, not cheating.

### 2 The week's game: Path to the mat

10 min

Set-up: The printed path board — twelve spaces, start at the tree, finish at the mat. Word cards face down in a pile. Two buttons or coins as movers. You play too.

- On your turn, flip a card and read it out loud.
- Read a word card: move one space. Read a heart card: move two spaces — heart words are extra strong.
- Stuck on a card: the other player reads it, you stay put, and the card goes back into the pile.
- First one to the mat wins. Play twice if the first game is quick.
- You may get stuck once or twice yourself. Being read to by your student is good for both of you.

### 3 Ten-word check

3 min

"Last thing: read me these ten, one at a time. I'll just listen."

at	<input type="checkbox"/>	mat	<input type="checkbox"/>	sat	<input type="checkbox"/>	tap	<input type="checkbox"/>	map	<input type="checkbox"/>
sap	<input type="checkbox"/>	taps	<input type="checkbox"/>	mats	<input type="checkbox"/>	the	<input type="checkbox"/>	I	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mark each one. No teaching during the check — "thank you," next word. Afterward, show the marks and name what landed: "eight out of ten. Those two wobblers go in Monday's warm-up."

### 4 Weekly check-in

2 min, you only



Ready for the next packet? Two minutes, whenever you are — the link is in the email this packet came in. Most families check in Thursday through Sunday, but there's no schedule to keep.

1. Lessons completed this week: 0 · 1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
  2. Overall, this week felt: too easy · about right · too hard
  3. Ten-word check score: \_\_\_/10 — and list any sounds or words that kept wobbling.
- Whatever wobbled goes straight into Monday's warm-up. That's a promise, not a hope.

**Why this week looks the way it does.** Your student reads only words built from sounds they've been taught, plus three "heart words" learned on purpose. That's not a small selection of easy words — it's the whole design. When every word is one your student can work out, guessing stops paying and sounding-out starts winning. The word lists repeat on purpose. The stories are short on purpose. By Friday, your student has read about 150 words of connected text — every one of them earned.

## Path to the mat — game board

Start at the tree, finish at the mat. Movers: two buttons or coins.

 start	1	2	3
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	 the mat		

## Cut-out cards

Cut along the dashed lines before day 1. A zip bag or an envelope keeps the week's cards together.

### Sound cards

a	m	s	t	p
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### Heart word cards

the	a	I
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### Word cards

at	mat	sat	tap	map
sap	taps	mats	pats	am

### Letter cards (for building words)

a	m	s	t	p
a	m	s	t	p