

Seven small games. One useful skill.

Choose three to six words that use letter sounds the child has learned. Explain unfamiliar words first. Play one game for a few minutes, without a timer or a race.

Print only the pages you need. Pages 2–6 have 12 cards per short vowel; page 7 has reusable mats and letter tiles. Adults cut along dashed lines. Card sets are starting points, not reading-level assessments. Adapt pronunciation to your child's dialect.

1. Slide and blend

Choose a word using known letter sounds. Touch each letter, say its sound, then slide a finger under the whole word and blend. Continuous sounds such as /m/ can be stretched; keep stop sounds such as /t/ brief.

2. Change one sound

Build mat with letter tiles. Change one letter at a time: mat → sat → sit → sip → lip → lid. Read each new word and say which sound changed. The adult supplies an unfamiliar meaning.

3. Read, hide, build

Read a card together, hide it, and build the word in the three sound boxes using the letter tiles. Uncover the card and compare each sound and letter. Choose an easier word if needed.

4. Vowel detectives

Mix six cards from two familiar vowel sets. Read the whole word, listen for the middle sound, then sort. Ask the child to explain a choice. Do not sort solely by the shape of the middle letter.

5. Read and cover

Choose six known-pattern words and write them on the blank board. Shuffle those six word cards. Draw, read, and cover the matching board word. Finish all six together, or take turns without racing.

6. Find the changed word

Place mat, cat, and cap face up. Read them. Close eyes while an adult removes one and replaces it with tap. Read again and identify the new word. Reuse other cards with familiar patterns.

7. Word-to-message

Draw a word card, read it, and say a short message using it: "The cat sat." The adult may write or help read untaught words. The goal is connecting the decoded word to meaning.

If blending stalls: model the sounds smoothly, blend together, then let the child try. If individual letter sounds are uncertain, teach those before adding more cards. Reading the same few cards from memory is not the same as decoding a new word.

Short a: word cards

Use a small selection first. Adult: cut along the dashed lines. Mix vowel sets only after their sound–spelling patterns are familiar.

map

mat

sat

sad

fan

pan

man

ran

cat

cap

tap

bag

Read it → say what it means → use it in a short message.

The card fronts have no category colors or picture clues. Listen for the sounds and read through the whole word.

Short e: word cards

Use a small selection first. Adult: cut along the dashed lines. Mix vowel sets only after their sound–spelling patterns are familiar.

bed

red

fed

led

hen

pen

ten

men

net

pet

wet

leg

Read it → say what it means → use it in a short message.

The card fronts have no category colors or picture clues. Listen for the sounds and read through the whole word.

Short i: word cards

Use a small selection first. Adult: cut along the dashed lines. Mix vowel sets only after their sound–spelling patterns are familiar.

sit

sip

dip

lip

pin

fin

win

bin

pig

dig

big

lid

Read it → say what it means → use it in a short message.

The card fronts have no category colors or picture clues. Listen for the sounds and read through the whole word.

Short o: word cards

Use a small selection first. Adult: cut along the dashed lines. Mix vowel sets only after their sound–spelling patterns are familiar.

hot

pot

dot

not

top

mop

hop

pop

log

dog

fog

rod

Read it → say what it means → use it in a short message.

The card fronts have no category colors or picture clues. Listen for the sounds and read through the whole word.

Short u: word cards

Use a small selection first. Adult: cut along the dashed lines. Mix vowel sets only after their sound–spelling patterns are familiar.

sun

fun

run

bun

cup

pup

cut

hut

mud

bud

bug

rug

Read it → say what it means → use it in a short message.

The card fronts have no category colors or picture clues. Listen for the sounds and read through the whole word.

Mats and letter tiles

One sound in each box

Say the word. Move a tile into each box as you identify its sounds. Read across the completed word.

--	--	--

Read-and-cover board

Write six selected words, one per box. Use the matching word cards to play.

Cut-apart letter tiles

a	e	i	o	u	b	c
d	f	g	h	l	m	n
p	r	s	t	w		

Write extra tiles on scrap paper if you need them. For further instructions: growmindgrow.com/blog/articles/cvc-blending-games