Extra Tips and Tricks

can, and, in, am, it, is, his, not, at, on, this, up, get, that – These words are closed syllables. They have one vowel closed up by one or more consonants. The consonants tell the vowel to say its short sound. I like to have kids make a closed fist to represent this kind of syllable. Closed syllables are the first type of syllable kids usually learn to sound out and read.

is, his - After a vowel, s often says /z/. You can also point out that **is** is hidden in **his**.

this, that, the – Th is a digraph that starts many words. A digraph is two letters next to each other that make one new sound. Practice the voiced th sound. Place the tip of your tongue between your teeth. Try to make a buzzing sound as you push air out. If you place your hand on your throat, you will feel a vibration. You can also point out that the word at is found in that.

This is an exception to the s making a /z/ sound after a vowel.

do, to – These words rhyme. Use the words orally in sentences to help children understand the meaning of words. Ex: Can we go to the park? I want to eat ice cream. Once you come to the word two in a later kit, understanding the meaning of each to, two, will be helpful.

I − I says its own name (long sound) It is actually an open syllable, which means a syllable that ends with a vowel and says its long sound.

you - Say the last letter.



Extra Tips and Tricks

be, he, we, she, me – These words are open syllables. They end with a vowel. The vowel is free to say its own name (long sound). I like to have kids hold up an open hand to represent this syllable.

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she - Teach that when we see sh together it makes a new sound /sh/. I often have kids put their finger to their mouth and say /sh/. The child should feel a soft stream of air on their finger. You can explain that a digraph is two letters next to each other that create one sound

or, for. These words are r-controlled syllables. The bossy r controls the vowel. I tell the kids to look for a vowel followed by an r. Or says /or/. I like to have the kids cross two fingers to represent this syllable type because the vowel and the r are tangled up with the r bossing the vowel around. **Or** is found in **for**.

are – I tell kids to say the middle letter r. You can also talk about ar as an r-controlled word with the ar saying /ar/ like in star.

but, with, has, as – These words are closed syllables. With also ends with the digraph th. In the word with, th is unvoiced. The tip of the tongue still goes between the front teeth, but when air is pushed out, it is quiet with no vibration. Finally, after a vowel, s often says /z/. It does this in has and as. **As** is hiding in the word **has.**

of, off – Tell kids over and over that of has one f and off has two. Use the words in sentences. I want one piece of cake. Turn the lights off. Of is tricky. Off follows our closed syllable rule.

have – In English, words don't end with a v. The v needs to be followed by an e. With that in mind the e is a placeholder and is silent. We sound out the word like a closed syllable hav.

by, my – Y is in disguise as a vowel, so these words are open syllables. When y is at the end of a one syllable word, it says the long /i/ sound. These words also rhyme.

from - Talk about what a blend is and how to blend fr.

they – They starts with th and ends with ey. The th is voiced and ey says the long /a/ sound.



Extra Tips and Tricks

say, play, way, day, may – All of these words rhyme. Pl is a beginning blend. Ay together is a vowel team that says the long /a/ sound. We use it at the end of words. I like to have kids hold up their pointer and middle finger together to represent a vowel team.

had, us, him, did, an – These words are all closed syllables and can easily be sounded out. A closed syllable has one vowel closed up by one or more consonants. The consonants tell the vowel it can't say its own name (long sound), so it has to say its short sound.

one – Talk about how this is the number one. Use it in sentences orally. I have one cat. What do you have one of? Have the kids tell you a sentence. Whenever the word is read, ask the kids what kind of one is this. Is it the number one or I won the game?

her, first – These words are r-controlled syllables. The bossy r controls the vowel. Tell the kids to look for a vowel followed by the letter r. Er and ir both say /er/. I like to have the kids cross two fingers to represent this syllable type. A First also has an s blend at the end of the word, s-t.

so, go, no – These words rhyme and are open syllables. An open syllable ends with a vowel. The vowel is free to say its own name (long sound), so all of these words end with the long /o/ sound. I like to have kids hold up an open hand to represent this syllable.

all, call – I like to tell the kids that all is glued together and practice saying it. Then point out that all is in the word call, so we just add the /c/ sound at the beginning. Then orally think of all the words you can that rhyme with all...fall, ball, stall, mall, etc. Depending on how old a child is, you may talk about how they think they would spell these rhyming words.

said, want – Even when a word is tricky, I like to point out the sounds that aren't. We may say /sed/, but that means only the middle sound is tricky. I would say to a child remember the word starts with /s/ and ends with /d/. Do you remember what the ai says in this word? I might also give a prompt. We could use it in this sentence, my mom s... to make my bed. It is the same with want, the /w//n//t/ can all be easily sounded out. Point out that the a says ah like in father.



Extra Tips and Tricks

what, where, which, when – Wh is a digraph that says /w/. A digraph is two letters that make one sound. Also point out the digraph ch at the end of which. When a child says /ch/, the tip of their tongue pushes off the roof of their mouth. Some children may need to practice this.

there, where, were – There and where rhyme, were does not. This can help tremendously when trying to remember how to read or write where and were. Also use the words orally in sentences a lot to help kids remember which word is which!

little – Little is a consonant-le syllable. The consonant-le is found in the final syllable of a word. I like to have kids use their pointer finger and touch the consonant and then drag their finger under the le. The first syllable is lit. This is a closed syllable and easily sounded out. The second syllable is t-le. Sometimes kids will think this is an open syllable and say long /e/ at the end of a word. Little is a great word to teach kids that they say the consonant /t/ and then /ul/ for le.

look – I often tell kids the word starts with /l/ and ends with /k/ and in the middle two eyes are looking at them. I will even draw eyes in the oo.

if, will, which, when – All of these words are closed syllables and can easily be sounded out. A closed syllable has one vowel closed up by one or more consonants. The consonants tell the vowel it can't say its own name (long sound), so it has to say its short sound. Also, almost all words that end in I, end in double II, like in will. This is a great spelling rule to teach with the word will.

two – This is a tricky word. Use it orally in sentences, so kids learn that it is the number two. It does start with the /t/ sound.

out/about - Ou is a vowel team that says /ow/ in these words. Out is found in about.



make, like, use, take, these - These words are all vowel-consonant-e or silent e syllables. The e tells the previous vowel in front of the consonant to say its own name (its long sound) and the e says nothing. I like to have kids put their pointer finger on the first vowel, touch the consonant with their middle finger, and then move their middle finger to the silent e. Their fingers will end up in a V. $\stackrel{\triangleleft}{\bowtie}$

find – I tell kids the ind is glued together and we talk about words that rhyme with find: kind, mind, blind, etc.

was, use, these – The s makes a /z/ sound in these words.

Extra Tips and Tricks

know – When kn is together the k is silent: knot, knight, knit, etc. Ow is a vowel team that can say long /o/ in snow or /ow/ in now. If a child is really struggling with this word, I will cover up the k and w and have them see the word no. Make sure you use the word orally in sentences, so a child learns the right definition.

how, now, down – In these words ow is a vowel team that says /ow/.

after – Spilt the word into syllables: af-ter. Af is a closed syllable, so it is easy to sound out. The f tells the a to say its short sound. Ter is an r-controlled syllable. The bossy r controls the vowel. Er says /er/.

our – Ou is a vowel team that can also make the /ow/ sound. It is pronounced ow-r. This is a hard word for a lot of kids, so make sure you use it orally in sentences. For example: Our van is red.

would, could - These words rhyme.

because – Help the children you are working with split the word into two syllables: be-cause. Be is an open syllable and a word that was hopefully learned in kit two. If they can read be and start the second syllable with the /c/ sound, many kids will start to recognize and read this word.

any, many, only, very – When y is at the end of a two-syllable word, it says the long /e/ sound. Also point out that the word **any** is hidden in the word **many**.

their – This word starts out with the digraph th. Sometimes just being able to start the word is very helpful. Use the word orally in sentences to make sure the children you are working with learn the correct meaning.

come, some – These words rhyme. Point out the beginning sound and the /m/ sound.

give – In English words don't end with the letter v. The v needs to be followed by an e. The e is a placeholder and is silent. The word is sounded out like it was spelled giv.

most – Teach the children you are working with this exception: often ost says long /o//s//t/. Think of words that rhyme: post, ghost, host, etc.

people – Divide the word into two syllables: peo-ple. The first syllable is pronounced /p//ee/ and the second syllable is a consonant-le syllable pronounced /p//ul/. Le is always /ul/ plus the consonant before.



Extra Tips and Tricks

went, then, than, them – These are all closed syllable words. Use them orally in sentences, so correct definitions are learned.

each - Ea is a vowel team used for the long /e/ sound and ch is a digraph.

other – Split the word up into two syllables: oth-er. The first syllable is pronounced /uhth/, so point out the recognizable th. The second syllable is an r-controlled syllable. Er says /er/.

year - There is an ear in year. It starts with the /y/ sound.

time, write, made, more - These words are all vowel-consonant-e or silent e words. The e tells the previous vowel in front of the consonant to say its own name (it's long sound) and the e says nothing. I like to have kids put their pointer finger on the first vowel, touch the consonant with their middle finger, and then move their middle finger to the silent e. Their fingers will end up in a V. $\stackrel{\triangleleft}{\triangleleft}$

write – When the letters wr are together, the w is silent. Other examples are wren, wrestle, and wrong.

think – Think of ink as being glued together and then add the /th/ sound in front. Come up with other words that rhyme with think: pink, sink, drink, etc. The th in think is unvoiced, so there is no vibration when air is pushed out.

good - Make sure they get the first and last sounds. The middle sound is the short oo sound. It is the same as in look.

over – Break over into two syllables: o-ver. The first syllable is open and the o says its own name, long /o/. The second syllable is r-controlled. It says /v/ and the vowel-r says /er/.

again – Break the word into two syllables: a-gain. This word is a little trickier and takes some practice. The /g/ and /n/ sounds are helpful.

new – Ew is a team that makes the long u sound. It says /oo/ like in flute. Sometimes it says /yoo/ like in few.

