

**The Ordinary Parent's Guide to**  
**TEACHING READING**

*Revised Edition*

**Instructor Book**

ALSO BY JESSIE WISE

First Language Lessons for the Well-Trained Mind, Level 1

(WELL-TRAINED MIND PRESS, 2003, 2010)

First Language Lessons for the Well-Trained Mind, Level 2

(WELL-TRAINED MIND PRESS, 2003, 2010)

WITH SARA BUFFINGTON

First Language Lessons for the Well-Trained Mind, Level 3

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WITH SUSAN WISE BAUER

The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home

(W. W. NORTON, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2016)

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# The Ordinary Parent's Guide to TEACHING READING

*Revised Edition*

## Instructor Book

By Jessie Wise and Sara Buffington  
Edited by Raymond Thistlethwaite



CHARLES CITY, VIRGINIA

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# Preface

Twenty years ago, my mother and I were consulting for a big online school startup. We had been asked to weigh in on the best methods for teaching history and language arts, but the actual reading instruction had been handed over to a career reading instructor. And she had this sign on her desk:

## READING IS ROCKET SCIENCE

The reading program that she put together had dozens of components, specialized vocabulary, multiple workbooks and aids—and was so complicated that parents needed to take a whole seminar, just to figure out how to start teaching it.

“Reading,” my mother said to me, “does *not* need to be rocket science!”

That conviction was the beginning of *The Ordinary Parent’s Guide to Teaching Reading*. Of course, some beginning students need additional help, scaffolding, and specialized instruction to become enthusiastic readers. But many more can learn to read through a simple primer approach—one that thoroughly, and simply, teaches the principles of phonics, without subjecting parents and students up to over-complicated lessons, over-priced curricula, and jargon-filled instructions.

For eighteen years, *The Ordinary Parent’s Guide* has given thousands of students a clear, straightforward on-ramp into the joys of reading. This new edition preserves the simplicity and ease of the original, while making the instruction even more accessible to both students and parents. Improved typesetting makes the lessons easier to follow; the separate student book gives young readers a sense of independence, while the instructor book maintains the time-honored, step-by-step, scripted lessons that can help every parent become a reading instructor.

“Anyone who can read,” my mother wrote, back in 2005, “can teach another to read if provided with a systematic method that is used frequently, patiently, and consistently.” This updated edition of *The Ordinary Parent’s Guide* will help you with all three of these vital principles. Use it to instruct your child four or five days per week, with patience and consistency, and you’ll help your young readers step through a door, into worlds beyond their reach in space and time.

And all without having to master rocket science!

Susan Wise Bauer



# Jessie's Original Introduction

## How I Came to the Conclusion That Ordinary Parents Need to Teach Reading

I've been working on this book for most of my life. When I was in second grade, I wrote a simple phonics reading book for a fellow classmate. His name was Elmore, and he couldn't read. I wrote the reading book in pencil, in a tiny notebook with "Royster Fertilizer Company" printed on the front.

Throughout my school years, I felt sorry for classmates who struggled with reading. I didn't understand why they didn't just sound out the letters. But these students had been taught with the "new method" of the time: memorizing whole words. I had been taught phonics at home.

I was adopted by an elderly couple who had been educated in an isolated, rural one-room schoolhouse. By her eighth and final year of school, Meme had studied algebra, Latin, and the literature excerpts in the old McGuffey's readers. Uncle Luther had stopped school after sixth grade, but he had an aptitude for mathematics and taught himself carpentry and draftsmanship. They lived on a small subsistence farm in Tidewater Virginia.

Meme and Uncle Luther had been taught reading and spelling by sounding out letters, and they began to teach me the same way, forming words with alphabet blocks. Later they taught me to write on a small blackboard—I'm sure their own school experience had included a slate!

The first-grade teacher in the local public school heard that Meme and Uncle Luther were teaching me to read at home using old-fashioned methods. The teacher made a special visit to our home to tell them to stop teaching me. "Reading is not taught this way anymore," she warned. "There are new methods. You will ruin her education if you persist in doing things the old-fashioned way."

Meme and Uncle Luther went right on teaching me as before.

The high-school boy who helped Meme with chores brought us books from the local public school. Soon I was reading the old Elson-Grey readers and other books from the school library—Raggedy Ann, fairy tales, Aesop's fables, and easy history books.

My education wasn't ruined by my early reading lessons; I was placed directly into second grade when I started school. I consistently remained at the top of my class throughout school. I was also the only girl

## Jessie's Original Introduction

in that small, rural class to graduate from college. I think the foundation that I was given in reading and the encouragement to do well academically were keys to that success. When I was in elementary school, a kid told me, "You can read good because you're so smart." I know now I did well in school not because I was smart, but because *I could read well*.

When I went to college, I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. One of the required courses for teacher certification was "Teaching Reading in the Elementary School." It was a hodge-podge of lists of sight words, boring readers, and curricula planned around the student's interest rather than academic skills.

When I was face-to-face with my own sixth-grade class that included two boys who had not yet learned to read, I knew I couldn't use the ineffective methods I had been taught in college. I had to rely on the memory of how I had been taught to read. The next year when I taught a second-grade class of thirty-eight students (fifteen of whom didn't yet know their alphabet), I made up phonics cards, again from my memory. I wrote the letter sounds on construction paper and posted them on the walls of my classroom. We drilled these sounds each morning. By the end of the year, every student except one was reading on or above grade level.

Having observed so many students in school who could not read, I remember thinking, "If I ever have children, I will teach them to read *before* they go to school."

So when my oldest child turned four, I said to him one day, "Bob, would you rather take a nap, or would you like to learn how to read?" He chose reading! I started him on the old-fashioned phonics I'd been taught when I was a child. I'd lie down with him on his little bed after lunch and work on letter sounds. (Since I also had a two-year-old and a thirteen-month-old, I was always glad to lie down.) That year we practiced vowels and consonants and sounded out new words. We called it "doing kindergarten."

The next year, my middle child was three, and she wanted to be included. "My do kindergarten, too," she said. I held her in my lap and taught her the letter sounds. She learned to read that year!

When I had the children tested by a psychologist two years later, Bob, a second-grader, was reading on a seventh-grade level. Susan, a kindergartner, was reading on a fifth-grade level. The psychologist suggested that I teach them at home because they were so advanced. In 1973, I had never heard of modern homeschooling, but I began that academic journey. I believe early reading instruction played a major role in the academic success of my children.

I have also taught my grandchildren to read. I started their formal reading instruction when they were each four years old. By second grade, they were all reading books on or above a fourth-grade level.

I began by telling you about Meme and Uncle Luther (the elderly couple who adopted me). Except for driving me to college, they never went more than fifty miles from their subsistence farm. Yet, because of their diligence in my early education, their influence is reaching a *third* generation in my family.

I am sure they would find it unbelievable that through travel, writing, and the internet, their sphere of influence has spread to parts of the world quite distant from their little Virginia farm. So, as you work with your child, you cannot know what effect your work will have on the life of your children and on generations to come!

## Jessie's Original Introduction

A student who reads well possesses a tool to make academic success possible. Reading is a lifetime skill that allows the student to fulfill professional dreams and function in a world of educated people. It can give pleasure and access to worlds beyond the reach of space and in time.

I advocate teaching reading to the very young when possible. Children can recognize and name hundreds of things. They understand thousands of words. They are excited about learning new grown-up skills. If you can teach reading before school-age, the child will remain ahead in reading for the rest of the K–12 years.

But if you have a school-age student who is struggling with reading, don't waste time. The longer students struggle, the more discouraged they can become, and this discouragement can affect overall academic performance.

I have taught many students who had been given a disability label. They all learned to read. I believe that in each case there was a *teaching* disability in the student's educational history—usually a faulty method of teaching reading. I believe that all students who are not suffering from severe developmental delays or severe emotional upset can learn to read. And anyone who can read can teach another to read if provided with a systematic method that is used frequently, patiently, and consistently.

**You can begin with Part 1: The Lessons right away, or, if you'd like additional guidance on reading readiness, pre-reading, the reading process, managing the reading lesson, remedial reading, or other issues, go to page 535.**



Part 1

# **The Lessons**





# How to Use this Curriculum

## Recommendations and Notes for Using the *Instructor Book* and *Student Book*

By now your student knows how to talk, and you have read many books out loud. The first step in independent reading is simple: learning the names of the alphabet letters in sequence (either by saying or singing) and recognizing all of the individual big and little alphabet letters when they are not in **a-z** sequence.

Lessons 1-26 are “hear-see-and-say-after-me” exercises. Your student is *not* expected to read words. Spend as many days as necessary repeating Lessons 1-26 until she has mastered each letter and the sound. In the lessons, the sounds of the letters are written with special notation, such as /ă/. A complete list of the phonetic symbols used in this book is located on page 557.

Some of the lessons require the use of word cards (to learn the letters, sight words, and for use in games). You may make up these cards yourself by writing the words or phrases on 3 x 5 index cards as you go through the lessons, or you may purchase a set of printed cards from Well-Trained Mind Press ([www.welltrainedmind.com](http://www.welltrainedmind.com)). The set contains all the cards you will need for this book: over three hundred. If you purchase this set, you will show the appropriate card when the instructions in the book tell you to “write on a card.”

You will also need a magnetic board with alphabet tiles. You may purchase this from Dowling Magnets, from [www.welltrainedmind.com](http://www.welltrainedmind.com), or from a store that sells education products. If you would like to keep the letter-tiles organized, you should consider purchasing another magnetic board (without the tiles). You can use one board to store the letters and the other for the lesson activity.

**You will need for the lessons:**

a magnetic board with alphabet tiles

3 x 5 index cards (or use the printed word cards you can purchase), scissors, pens, pencils, and drawing supplies

paperclips, yarn, magnets, and a dowel (for one special activity)

a piece of paper or 3 x 5 index card specifically for hiding text in the Student Book to help your student focus.

## Using the Lessons

**Instructor:** Words that the instructor will say to the student are written in this format.

If the instructor is to spell letters aloud, they will be written like this: the vowel **a**, the consonant **b**, the ending **ing**.

Notes for the instructor's use only are written in this format.

**Student:** *Suggested wording for the student is written in this format.*

**Text the student interacts directly with, usually appearing in the Student Book, is written in this format.**

## Using the Student Book

**Your student must have a Student Book to complete this curriculum.** The text that the student reads is included in your text for your reference. However, it is VERY important that you interact with that text in the student book by pointing to it, placing your finger under it, or in other ways actively bringing the student's attention to the words on the student's page. Have a piece of paper on hand as you will regularly cover up parts of the Student Book, particularly during the earlier lessons.

Through Lesson 179, text that is part of one paragraph is kept on the same page or two-page spread to make the words easier to read. Starting at Lesson 180, the student is advanced enough to practice turning the page to continue reading a paragraph.

# Section 1

## Short-Vowel Sounds

### Lesson 1: The Vowel A a

**You will need:** *A blank index card and a pen. If you purchased the printed cards, use the card marked for Lesson 1. Anytime the lesson materials call for blank index cards, substitute the appropriate printed cards (each card is marked with its lesson number). When the lesson tells you to write a letter or a word on a card, you will just show the already printed card.*

*Some children may need to see the letters in three dimensions. You may substitute foam, wooden, or plastic letters for the index cards in Lessons 1-26.*

The **a** vowel sound in this lesson is the sound at the beginning of **apple**. It is the short sound of **a** and is marked in the dictionary as **a** with a breve over it: /ă/.

• New •

**Instructor:** Today we are going to learn the letter **a**. **A** is a special kind of letter called a *vowel*. All letters stand for sounds. Your tongue or lips do not block the sounds of the vowel letters when you say them. Watch my mouth as I say the names of the vowels. I will not close my lips or use my tongue to block the sound.

Prolong each vowel name so your student can see that you do not block the sound.

## Section 1

**Instructor:** **a, e, i, o, u. A** is the first vowel you will learn. This is the big **A**. It is also called the capital or uppercase **A**. We will say big **A** from now on.

Point to the letter in your student's book. As a reminder, the text that the student reads is included in your text for your reference. However, it is VERY important that you interact with that text in the student book by pointing to it, placing your finger under it, or in other ways actively bringing the student's attention to the words on the student's page.

### A

**Instructor:** There are two ways to write the little or lowercase **a**. You will need to know them both because different books print the little **a** different ways.

Point to the letters in your student's book.

**a**    **ɑ**

**Instructor:** The first **a** is the kind you will read in this book. The second **ɑ** is used in handwriting books. I will write the vowel **a** on a card for you. First I will write the big **A** and then I will write both kinds of little **a**'s.

Write **A** and **a** and **ɑ** side-by-side on a card (or show the purchased **A a ɑ** card).

**Instructor:** When you see the letter **a** at the beginning or in the middle of a short word, you usually say this sound: /ă/ in *apple*. The letter **a** stands for the sound /ă/. The sound /ă/ is called the short-**a** vowel sound. Remember, the little **a** is written two different ways. I will point to the card and say the short-**a** vowel sound five times: /ă/, /ă/, /ă/, /ă/, /ă/. Now we will say the sound together.

**Together:** /ă/, /ă/, /ă/, /ă/, /ă/.

**Instructor:** I am going to teach you a poem that will help you remember the sounds of the short vowels. It is called "The Five Vowels." This is the first verse:

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**Instructor:** I will say this to you three more times.

## Lesson 1: The Vowel A a

Say the verse slowly three times, taking care to emphasize the sound /ă/.

**Instructor:** Now repeat after me: “**A** is the first vowel we will say.”

**Student:** *A is the first vowel we will say.*

**Instructor:** /ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**Student:** */ă/ is the short-vowel sound of a.*

**Instructor:** Now let’s say both lines together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **a**? The answer is the last part of the verse.

**Student:** */ă/ is the short-vowel sound of a.*

---



### • Follow-Up •

Ask the student to repeat the **a** verse from the poem two more times during the day. You may also record yourself or your student saying this verse, to allow listening to the poem over and over. As each verse of the poem is added in subsequent lessons, record them as well. Point out the letter **a** to the student whenever you see it (on signs, on food boxes or cans, and in books you read aloud) and ask the student to recite the verse from this lesson to you.

## Lesson 2: The Vowel E e

**You will need:** *The a card you previously used, one blank index card, and a pen.*

The **e** vowel sound in this lesson is the sound at the beginning of *elephant*. It is the short sound of **e** and is marked in the dictionary as **e** with a breve over it: /ĕ/.

### • Review •

**Instructor:** Let's begin this lesson by saying the first verse of the poem "The Five Vowels" together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**Instructor:** Now I will show you the card from the last lesson. Remember there are two ways the little **a** is written.

Point to the **a** card.

**Instructor:** Now I am going to ask you a question about the sounds of the short vowels. What is the short-vowel sound of **a**? The answer is the last part of the verse we said together.

Point to the **a** card. If the student can't remember the answer, say the first part of the verse as a reminder.

**Student:** /ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

### • New •

**Instructor:** Today we are going to learn the letter **e**. **E** is also a vowel. This is the big **E** and little **e**:

## Lesson 2: The Vowel E e

Point to the letters in your student's book.

**E** e

**Instructor:** I will write the vowel **e** on a card for you. First I will write the big **E** and then I will write the little **e**.

Write **E** and **e** side-by-side on a card (or show the purchased **E e** card).

**Instructor:** When you see the letter **e** at the beginning or in the middle of a short word, you usually say this sound: /ĕ/ in *elephant*. The letter **e** stands for the sound /ĕ/. The sound /ĕ/ is called the short-**e** vowel sound. I will point to the card and say the short-**e** vowel sound five times: /ĕ/, /ĕ/, /ĕ/, /ĕ/, /ĕ/. Now we will say the sound together.

**Together:** /ĕ/, /ĕ/, /ĕ/, /ĕ/, /ĕ/.

**Instructor:** I am going to teach you the next verse of the poem "The Five Vowels." This is the second verse:  
**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?  
/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**Instructor:** I will say this to you three more times.

Say the verse slowly three times, taking care to emphasize the sound /ĕ/.

**Instructor:** Now repeat after me: "**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?"

**Student:** *E is the next vowel, don't you see?*

**Instructor:** /ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**Student:** */ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of e.*

**Instructor:** Now let's say both lines together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**Instructor:** Now let's combine the verse you learned in the last lesson with the verse you learned today. Let's say this together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?

## Section 1

*/ĕ/* is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **e**?

**Student:** */ĕ/* is the short-vowel sound of **e**.



### • Follow-Up •

Ask the student to repeat the **e** verse from the poem two more times during the day. If you recorded the first verse, record the new verse as well. Point out the letter **e** to the student whenever you see it (on signs, on food boxes or cans, and in books you read aloud) and ask the student to recite the verse from this lesson to you.



## Lesson 3: The Vowel *i*

**You will need:** *The cards you previously used, one blank index card, and a pen.*

The *i* vowel sound in this lesson is the sound at the beginning of *igloo*. It is the short sound of *i* and is marked in the dictionary as *i* with a breve over it: /*ĭ*/.

### • Review •

**Instructor:** Let's begin this lesson by saying the first and second verses of the poem "The Five Vowels" together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**Instructor:** Now I will show you the cards from the previous lessons. Together let's point to the **a** card and say the short-**a** vowel sound: /ă/. Now let's point to the **e** card and say the short-**e** vowel sound: /ĕ/.

**Instructor:** Now I am going to ask you some questions about the sounds of the short vowels. What is the short-vowel sound of **a**?

Point to the **a** card. If the student can't remember the answer, say the first part of each verse as a reminder.

**Student:** /ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **e**?

Point to the **e** card.

Section 1

**Student:** /ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of e.

• New •

**Instructor:** Today we are going to learn the letter **i**. **I** is also a vowel. There are two ways to write the big **I**. You will need to know them both because different books print the big **I** different ways. The second printed **I** is the kind you will read in this book.

Point to the letters in your student's book.

**I**   **I**

**Instructor:** This is the little **i**.

Point to the letter in your student's book.

**i**

**Instructor:** I will write the vowel **i** on a card for you. First I will write both kinds of big **I**'s and then I will write the little **i**.

Write **I** and **I** and **i** side-by-side on a card (or show the purchased **I I i** card).

**Instructor:** When you see the letter **i** at the beginning or in the middle of a short word, you usually say this sound: /ĭ/ in **igloo**. The letter **i** stands for the sound /ĭ/. The sound /ĭ/ is called the short-**i** vowel sound. Remember, the big **i** is written two different ways. I will point to the card and say the short-**i** vowel sound five times: /ĭ/, /ĭ/, /ĭ/, /ĭ/, /ĭ/. Now we will say the sound together.

**Together:** /ĭ/, /ĭ/, /ĭ/, /ĭ/, /ĭ/.

**Instructor:** I am going to teach you the third verse of the poem "The Five Vowels."

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/ĭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**Instructor:** I will say this to you three more times.

Say the verse slowly three times, taking care to emphasize the sound /ĭ/.

### Lesson 3: The Vowel I i

**Instructor:** Now repeat after me: “**I** is the third vowel that goes by.”

**Student:** *I is the third vowel that goes by.*

**Instructor:** /i/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**Student:** */i/ is the short-vowel sound of i.*

**Instructor:** Now let’s say both lines together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/i/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**Instructor:** Let’s add today’s verse to all the verses you have learned, and say them together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don’t you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/i/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **i**?

**Student:** */i/ is the short-vowel sound of i.*

---



### • Follow-Up •

Ask the student to repeat the **i** verse from the poem two more times during the day. If you recorded the previous verses, record the new verse as well. Point out the letter **i** to the student whenever you see it (on signs, on food boxes or cans, and in books you read aloud) and ask the student to recite the verse from this lesson to you.

## Lesson 4: The Vowel O o

**You will need:** *The cards you previously used, one blank index card, and a pen.*

The **o** vowel sound in this lesson is the sound at the beginning of *octopus*. It is the short sound of **o** and is marked in the dictionary as **o** with a breve over it: /**ö**/.

### • Review •

**Instructor:** Let's begin this lesson by saying the first, second, and third verses of the poem "The Five Vowels" together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/ĭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**Instructor:** Now I will show you the cards from the previous lessons. Together let's point to the **a** card and say the short-**a** vowel sound: /ă/. Now let's point to the **e** card and say the short-**e** vowel sound: /ĕ/. Now let's point to the **i** card and say the short-**i** vowel sound: /ĭ/.

**Instructor:** Now I am going to ask you some questions about the sounds of the short vowels. What is the short-vowel sound of **a**?

Point to the **a** card. If the student can't remember the answer, say the first part of each verse as a reminder.

**Student:** /ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **e**?

Point to the **e** card.

Lesson 4: The Vowel O o

**Student:** /ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of e.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of i?

Point to the i card.

**Student:** /ĭ/ is the short-vowel sound of i.

• New •

**Instructor:** Today we are going to learn the letter o. O is also a vowel. This is the big O and the little o:

Point to the letters in your student's book.

O o

**Instructor:** I will write the vowel o on a card for you. I will write the big O and the little o.

Write O and o side-by-side on a card (or show the purchased O o card).

**Instructor:** When you see the letter o at the beginning or in the middle of a short word, you usually say this sound: /ŏ/ as in *octopus*. The letter o stands for the sound /ŏ/. The sound /ŏ/ is called the short-o vowel sound. I will point to the card and say the short-o vowel sound five times: /ŏ/, /ŏ/, /ŏ/, /ŏ/, /ŏ/. Now we will say the sound together.

**Together:** /ŏ/, /ŏ/, /ŏ/, /ŏ/, /ŏ/.

**Instructor:** I am going to teach you the fourth verse of the poem "The Five Vowels."

O is the fourth vowel that I know.

/ŏ/ is the short-vowel sound of o.

**Instructor:** I will say this to you three more times.

Say the verse slowly three times, taking care to emphasize the sound /ŏ/.

**Instructor:** Now repeat after me: "O is the fourth vowel that I know."

**Student:** O is the fourth vowel that I know.

**Instructor:** /ŏ/ is the short-vowel sound of o.

Section 1

**Student:** /ɔ̃/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

**Instructor:** Now let's say both lines together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**O** is the fourth vowel that I know.

/ɔ̃/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

**Instructor:** Let's add today's verse to all the verses you have learned and say them together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/i/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**O** is the fourth vowel that I know.

/ɔ̃/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **o**?

**Student:** /ɔ̃/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

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• Follow-Up •

Ask your student to repeat the **o** verse from the poem two more times during the day. If you recorded the previous verses, record the new verse as well. Point out the letter **o** to the student whenever you see it (on signs, on food boxes or cans, and in books you read aloud) and ask the student to recite the verse from this lesson to you.

## Lesson 5: The Vowel U u

**You will need:** *The cards you previously used, one blank index card, and a pen.*

The **u** vowel sound in this lesson is the sound at the beginning of *umbrella*. It is the short sound of **u** and is marked in the dictionary as **u** with a breve over it: /**ü**/.

### • Review •

**Instructor:** Let's begin this lesson by saying the first four verses of the poem "The Five Vowels" together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don't you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/ĭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**O** is the fourth vowel that I know.

/ŏ/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

**Instructor:** Now I will show you the cards from the previous lessons. Together let's point to the **a** card and say the short-**a** vowel sound: /ă/. Now let's point to the **e** card and say the short-**e** vowel sound: /ĕ/. Let's point to the **i** card and say the short-**i** vowel sound: /ĭ/. Let's point to the **o** card and say the short-**o** vowel sound: /ŏ/.

**Instructor:** Now I am going to ask you some questions about the sounds of the short vowels. What is the short-vowel sound of **a**?

Point to the **a** card. If your student can't remember the answer, say the first part of each verse as a reminder.

**Student:** /ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

Section 1

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **e**?

Point to the **e** card.

**Student:** /ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **i**?

Point to the **i** card.

**Student:** /ĭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **o**?

Point to the **o** card.

**Student:** /ŏ/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

• New •

**Instructor:** Today we are going to learn the letter **u**. **U** is also a vowel. This is the big **U** and the little **u**.

Point to the letters in your student's book.

**U**   **u**

**Instructor:** I will write the vowel **u** on a card for you. First I will write the big **U** and then I will write the little **u**.

Write **U** and **u** side-by-side on a card (or show the purchased **U u** card).

**Instructor:** When you see the letter **u** at the beginning or in the middle of a short word, you usually say this sound: /ŭ/. The letter **u** stands for the sound /ŭ/ in *umbrella*. The sound /ŭ/ is called the short-**u** vowel sound. I will point to the **u** card and say the short-**u** vowel sound five times: /ŭ/, /ŭ/, /ŭ/, /ŭ/, /ŭ/. Now we will say the sound together.



Lesson 5: The Vowel U u

**Together:** /ŭ/, /ŭ/, /ŭ/, /ŭ/, /ŭ/.

**Instructor:** I am going to teach you the last verse of the poem “The Five Vowels”:

**U** is the fifth vowel; that is true.

/ŭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **u**.

**Instructor:** I will say this to you three more times.

Say the verse slowly three times, taking care to emphasize the sound /ŭ/.

**Instructor:** Now repeat after me: “**U** is the fifth vowel; that is true.”

**Student:** *U is the fifth vowel; that is true.*

**Instructor:** /ŭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **u**.

**Student:** */ŭ/ is the short-vowel sound of u.*

**Instructor:** Now let’s say both lines together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**U** is the fifth vowel; that is true.

/ŭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **u**.

**Instructor:** Now let’s combine the verses you learned in the last four lessons with the verse you learned today. Let’s say the entire poem together three times.

**Together** (three times):

**A** is the first vowel we will say.

/ă/ is the short-vowel sound of **a**.

**E** is the next vowel, don’t you see?

/ĕ/ is the short-vowel sound of **e**.

**I** is the third vowel that goes by.

/ĭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **i**.

**O** is the fourth vowel that I know.

/ŏ/ is the short-vowel sound of **o**.

**U** is the fifth vowel; that is true.

/ŭ/ is the short-vowel sound of **u**.

**Instructor:** What is the short-vowel sound of **u**?

**Student:** */ŭ/ is the short-vowel sound of u.*

## Section 1

### • Game: Short-Vowel Pick-Up •

Put all the vowel cards on the table. Say one of the short-vowel sounds. The student will then pick up the letter card that represents that sound. If the student picks the right card, hand over the card. If he doesn't pick the right card, you get the card. Once you have gone through all the vowels, have the student practice the vowel sounds on the cards that you are holding. Then shuffle all the cards and begin the game again.

### • Follow-Up •

Ask the student to repeat the **u** verse from the poem two more times during the day. If you recorded the previous verses, record the new verse as well. Point out the letter **u** to her whenever you see it (on signs, on food boxes or cans, and in books you read aloud) and ask your student to recite the verse from this lesson to you.

## Lesson 150: The Silent Letter B

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Sight Word: gone

**You will need:** *One index card and a pen.*

Do the “Two Review and One New” today.

**Instructor:** In this lesson you will read words in which the letter **b** is silent. First I will read each word, and then you will read it. Once we have read all the words, you will go back and read them by yourself. In these words, the single vowels stand for short-vowel sounds.

**lamb**      **limb**      **dumb**      **crumb**      **thumb**      **debt**

**Instructor:** In this next word, the **ou** vowel pair stands for the /ou/ sound. I will read this word. Then you will read this word. Remember, the **b** is silent. I *doubt* if you will have any trouble with this!

**doubt**

**Instructor:** In these next two words, the vowel sounds are long. I will read each word, and then you will read it.

**comb**      **climb**

**Instructor:** I am going to give you a new word to memorize.

**gone**

Write this word on a card and pronounce the word for the student. Let the student practice saying the word. Keep the card in sight as you read the stories in your student’s book. Read the stories once normally. Then have the student read the stories again. Tell the student to pick up the card when ever the word occurs in a sentence. Put the card in the sight word stack at the end of the lesson.

Lesson 150: The Silent Letter B

**Instructor:** Now you are ready to read some stories. To help you keep your place, I will put a folded piece of paper under the line you are reading.

I am glad that the cake is not all gone.  
I pledge to eat the last crumb of that cake.  
I lick the last crumb off my thumb.  
Did you doubt that I would?  
Now all the cake is gone.

The cat climbs out on a tree limb.  
The cat is too close to the edge of that bough.  
Dumb cat! He could fall from the tree.  
I call Mom out to help.  
By the time she comes out, the cat is gone.  
He must have found a way out of the tree.  
I doubt if he will climb back up.