

Day 7 · 50 minutes

Start-of-Year Check 2: Letter Sounds and First Sounds

Today: I show the letter sounds I know, and I listen for the first sound in a word.



Sound games

5 min

Warm-up: Jump or Sit rhyme game, unscored, no letters, no drill.

SAY

Let's wake up our ears. This is just for fun.



Check

15 min

Letter-sound check: 26 small letters on the day 6 card, tick sounds, /26.

SAY

I point to a letter. You tell me the sound it makes, like /sh/.



Check

10 min

First-sound check: model van, practice key, score pizza nose leg web gate, /5.

SAY

Now a listening game. I say a word, you tell me its first sound.



Read together

10 min

Child picks a book, points where reading starts and goes next.

SAY

You worked so hard. You pick the book, I read!



Check

10 min

Record six totals on the Class Tracker; lowest band picks tomorrow's help.

SAY

Thank you for working so hard today. I'm writing a note to help me teach.

You need

[🔗 Sound Check: First Sound](#)
[🔗 Class Tracker](#)
[🔗 How to Read the Check](#)

Small-letter card and record sheet from day 6 (reuse, do not reprint)

Pencil and a picture book

Quick check

Letter sounds: the child says the sound of each small letter on the day 6 card, out of 26 (Got it 18 to 26, Nearly 8 to 17, Not yet 0 to 7).

Step by step?

Open Teach mode on your phone: it walks you through every step, with a timer.

Step by step · everything to say and do



Sound games: Jump or Sit

5 min

Relax and wake up the ears with an unscored rhyme game. No letters and no letter drill today.

1 Show them

Let's wake up our ears. This is just for fun.

Mat, sat. Same end. They rhyme, so I jump!

Top, sun. Different ends. No rhyme, so I sit.

- Stand facing the child. Jump on a rhyme pair. Sit down on a no-rhyme pair.
- Say each word slowly and lean on the end a little: maaat, saaat.

2 Together

Jump with me if they rhyme.

Sam, ham.

Sit with me if they don't. Map, sock.

Am, jam. Jump or sit?

- Jump or sit together on each pair.
- Smile and keep it quick. Nothing is written down in this part.

3 Their turn

Your turn alone. Mat, hat.

Map, sun.

Top, mop.

- The child jumps or sits alone. Praise effort: "Great listening!"
- After 3 pairs, sit side by side at the table for the check.

Stuck? Say: "My turn: mat, hat. Same end. Jump! Our turn: jump. Your turn: mat, hat." Keep it light. No notes and no marks.



Check: Letter-Sound Check

15 min

Find out which of the 26 small-letter sounds the child knows, without teaching. Score out of 26. In class: one child at a time, 5 to 8 minutes each, spread across the day; the others work on pages from days 1 to 5.

1 Show them

I point to a letter. You tell me the sound it makes, like /sh/.

/sh/, the baby is sleeping. Not the letter name, just /sh/.

Some you know, some you will learn soon. That is just fine.

- Sit side by side. Day 6 small-letter card faces the child; record sheet on your lap.
- Explain with /sh/ only. Do not point to or say any letter on the card.

2 Together

Make a train sound with me: /ch/ /ch/ /ch/.

Tell me the sound, like /ch/. You can say "pass" any time.

Ready? Here is the first one.

- Make the train sound together, arms chugging, then sit still and ready.
- Put your pointer finger under the first letter on the card.

3 Their turn

What sound does this letter make?

Thank you. Next one.

You worked so hard. High five!

- Point to each letter in card order. Wait 3 seconds. Tick each right sound.
- c: /k/ or /s/. g: /g/ or /j/. Vowels: count the short sound (/a/ as in apple).

Stuck? Letter name instead (ay)? Say once: "That is its name. What sound does it make?" Wrong or no answer: no tick, no correction, "Thanks, next one." Count stop sounds like /b/ or /d/ even with a small "uh": they are hard to say alone.



Check: First-Sound Check

10 min

Find out if the child can hear and say the first sound in a spoken word. Score out of 5.

1 Show them

Now a listening game. I say a word, you tell me its first sound. Listen: van. /v/ /v/ van. The first sound in van is /v/.

- Hold the Sound Check: First Sound sheet so only you see it. The child sees no letters.
- Hold the /v/ a little: vvv. No "uh" after it.

2 Together

Say key together. What is the first sound? /k/. Yes, /k/.

- Say key together, then the sound together. Practice words are never scored.
- Still unsure? Model key once more, then start the scored words.

3 Their turn

Your turn alone. Pizza. What is the first sound?

Next word: nose. What is the first sound?

All done! Super listening ears.

- Then ask the same way for leg, web and gate. Say each word at most twice.
- Tick right sounds: /p/, /n/, /l/, /w/, /g/. Write the total out of 5.

Stuck? Letter name instead? Ask once: "What sound?" Count /g/ even with a small "uh". Wrong or no answer: no tick, no teaching. Say "Thanks!" and give the next word.



Read together: Where Do I Read?

10 min

Enjoy a thank-you story and show that we read left to right, top to bottom.

1 Show them

You worked so hard. You pick the book, I read!

I read left to right. At the end of a line, I sweep back and down.

- Child picks any picture book. Run your finger under each line as you read.
- At each line's end, sweep your finger back to the left, one line down.

2 Together

Put your finger on mine. Let's sweep together.

Where do I start on this page?

- Read two pages with both fingers moving under the words.
- Pause at the top of a new page and let the child point to the start.

3 Their turn

Show me where I start reading. Show me where I go after this line.

Which page do I read next: this one or that one?

- The child points; you read on. Do this on 3 or 4 pages, not every page.
- In class, read to the whole group and invite 2 or 3 children up to point.

Stuck? Say: "My turn: I start here, top left. Our turn: point with me. Your turn: show me." At a line's end: "My turn: back and down. Our turn. Your turn."



Check: Record and Plan

10 min

Put both days' totals on the Class Tracker and choose each child's help with one band table.

1 Show them

Thank you for working so hard today. I'm writing a note to help me teach.

- Copy totals to the Class Tracker: Capitals, Small, Sounds, Rhyme, Syllables, First sound.
- Find each total's band on How to Read the Check: Got it, Nearly or Not yet.

2 Together

Tell me your favorite part of today while I write.

- Let the child chat or look at the book while you work.
- Use the band of the lowest part to choose the help. Write it in the Group column.

3 Their turn

Tomorrow we play a new listening game. See you then!

- Follow the Got it / Nearly / Not yet boxes below to choose each child's help.
- In class, sort the tracker into three groups by band before tomorrow's lesson.

Stuck? A total looks odd (tired, upset, shy)? Recheck just that part on another day, kindly and briefly. Never share scores in front of the child; praise effort only.

Quick check

1. Letter sounds: the child says the sound of each small letter on the day 6 card, out of 26 (Got it 18 to 26, Nearly 8 to 17, Not yet 0 to 7).
2. First sound: pizza, nose, leg, web, gate after practice with van and key, out of 5 (Got it 4 or 5, Nearly 2 or 3, Not yet 0 or 1).
3. Copy all six totals from days 6 and 7 onto the Class Tracker and use the band of the lowest part to choose the help.

Got it

Lowest part in Got it: Keeps pace with the daily lessons. On review days, give a challenge: read am and at early, or find the first sound in friends' names.

Nearly

Lowest part in Nearly: Daily lessons plus 3 extra minutes with index cards (on a ring) of only the letters and sounds the child missed: say each one, then its key picture.

Not yet

Lowest part in Not yet: Daily lessons plus 5 extra minutes (in class a small group; at home just you and your child): 2 or 3 letters at a time, name, sound and key picture, with sound games. Check again in 4 weeks.

At home in 20 minutes

1. Warm up for 2 minutes with Jump or Sit: jump when two words rhyme (mat, sat) and sit when they don't (map, sun).
2. Letter sounds (6 minutes): point to each letter on the day 6 small-letter card, ask "What sound?", and tick right answers on the day 6 record sheet without correcting.
3. First sound (4 minutes): model van, practice key, then ask the first sound of pizza, nose, leg, web and gate and tick each right one out of 5.
4. Read your child's favorite book for 5 minutes as a thank-you, letting them point to where you start each page.
5. Later (3 minutes), copy the totals onto the Class Tracker and use How to Read the Check: the lowest band picks the help.

Tip: In class, give both checks one child at a time across the day, 5 to 8 minutes each, while others reuse the trace pages, find-the-letter pages and Roll and Cover from days 1-5; at home it is one sitting of about 20 minutes. Never teach or correct during a check, and praise effort, not answers. Black-and-white prints: the green start dot is the big dot.