

Lesson 1

Preparation

- Materials: This lesson you will need three crayons or markers, one red, one yellow and one green. Also, at each lesson, have sharpened pencils, a good eraser and a stack of Post-it Notes for marking pages to be reviewed later.
- Seating: Have your child sit on a comfortable chair, both feet on the floor or on something raised up and sturdy if his feet don't reach the floor, and sitting straight rather than leaning over the desk or table.
- Familiarize yourself with the *Notations for the 44 Sounds* in Appendix 1.
- See Appendix 2 on properly forming the 26 small letters. For this lesson, read how to tell your child to write the lowercase letters **i**, **t**, **n** and **s**.
- Read the lesson—Always review each lesson before presenting it to your child.

{Parent Guidance: These blocks labeled “Parent Guidance” (and eventually just “Guidance”) are to inform you of various aspects of the program. Read them when you are previewing the lesson, but skip over them when teaching the lesson to your child.

This one covers the notation used for sounds and for letter names. The *sounds* of letters are enclosed in slash marks like this /../ and letter names are capitalized like this **A**, **B**, **C**. So, /m/ is the sound of the letter **M** and /t/ is the sound of the letter **T**. When you see the /../ say a sound and when you see a bolded letter like **M** say the letter name.}

You can begin now. Each paragraph starts with **bold** text indicating what you should *say* to your child and end with *instructions* in parentheses on what you should do when you read the text.

“I want you to say the sentence ‘It is in his mitt.’” (Hold your hand open and slap your fist in it like you’re punching the pocket of a baseball mitt. Your child’s response: “It is in his mitt.”)

“The word *it* has two sounds, /i/ and /t/.” (Remember to say the *sounds* /i/ and /t/, *not* their letter names, **i** and **t**. Note: In the instructions, letter names will be bolded, not capitalized.)

“I’m going to write the word *it* three times on the lines below. I’m going to say the sounds /i/ and /t/ each time I write the word. Watch how I write the letters for the /i/ and /t/ sounds.”
(You yourself print the letter **i** on the first line while saying the /i/ sound. Then print **t** on the second line while saying /t/. After printing the word, say *it*. Do that two more times.)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
.....				
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

“That is how we use letters to spell the word *it*. We print one letter for the /i/ sound and one letter for the /t/ sound. Now you say the sounds with me while I print *it* two more times. And say ‘*it*’ with me when I’m done.” (Print *it* on the last two lines, while you *both* say /i/ and /t/ as you write them. Then both of you say *it* when you’ve finished each word.)

{Parent Guidance: If your child has difficulty with this, repeat a few more times on a separate piece of paper. Breaking a word up into its separate sounds is a *skill* that takes both training and practice. This skill is called *segmenting*. The opposite skill, saying the sounds, then combining them to get a word, is called *blending*. This skill also requires both training and practice.}

{Parent Guidance: Correct letter formation is very important! Form the two letters like this: i t. For the *i*, draw the line starting at the dotted line and go down to the bottom line and then put the dot above the dotted line. For the *t*, draw the vertical line downward starting just below the top line and go all the way down to the bottom line, then draw the horizontal line on the dotted line. Again, see Page 18 for instructions on forming all the letters properly.}

“All words that we say are made up of sounds like /i/ and /t/. Now I’m going to print the word *in*. The word *in* also has two sounds. They are /i/ and /n/. Say /n/ for me.” (Wait for a response.) **“I’m going to use the same letter for the /i/ sound, but a different one for the /n/ sound. Watch as I print the letters for the /i/ and /n/ sounds.”** (Print *in* on the first two lines below, saying /i/ and /n/, and then *in* as you do so. Repeat two more times.)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
.....				
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

{Parent Guidance: Form the letters like this: i n. For the *n*, start at the dotted line, go down to the bottom line and then retrace up almost to the dotted line then make the curve so it touches the dotted line and then end down on the bottom line, all without lifting the pencil from the page. Again, see page 18 for instructions on forming all the letters properly.}

“So that’s how we use letters to spell the word *in*. We print one letter for the /i/ sound and one letter for the /n/ sound. Now you say the sounds with me as I print the word *in* two more times. Then say ‘*in*’ when I’m done.” (You print *in* on the last two lines, while you *both* say /i/ and /n/ as you write them. Then both of you say *in* when you’ve finished each word.)

“Next I’m going to write the word *is*. The word *is* has two sounds. Do you know what the first sound is?” (If he says /i/, offer praise. If your child doesn’t know yet, just tell him it’s the /i/ sound.)

“Okay, so the /i/ sound is the first sound in the word *is*. The second sound is the /z/ sound. Say /z/ for me.” (Wait for a response.) **“I’m going to use the same letter for the /i/ sound, and a new one for the /z/ sound. Watch as I write the letters for the /i/ and /z/ sounds.”** (You write *is* on the first two lines below saying /i/ and /z/ as you do so and then the word *is* when you’re done. Then repeat on the next two sets of lines. Form the letters like this: i s.)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
.....				
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

“That is how we use letters to spell the word *is*. We use one letter for the /i/ sound and one letter for the /z/ sound. Now you say the sounds with me while I print *is* two more times. Say ‘*is*’ when I’m done with the word.” (Print *is* on the last two lines. *Both* of you say /i/ and /z/ while you print them. Then both of you say *is* when you’ve finished each word.)

{Parent Guidance: First, don’t be concerned about the letter *s* being used for the /z/ sound. That will be cleared up in the next lesson.

Next, you will be checking to see if your child is picking up on the specific sounds in these words. If he’s not, don’t worry. They will be covered again. Offer praise if he gets one and just tell him the sound if he doesn’t.}

“Do you know the first sound in all three of the words, *is*, *in*, and *it*?” (Get a response.) **“What is it?”** (If your child can do this, he should respond with the *sound* /i/, not the letter name *i*. If he says the letter name, tell him you want the sound, not the letter name.)

“And do you know the last sound in the word *is*?” (Drag out the /z/ sound, saying *izzzz* to help your child hear the final sound, /z/. If your child can do it, he should respond with the /z/ sound, not a letter name like *s* or *z*. If he doesn’t say /z/, just tell him and repeat *izzzz*.)

“And what is the second sound in the word *in*?” (Again, drag out the /n/ sound just a bit like this: *innnn*. Your child should respond with the /n/ sound.)

“And what is the second sound in the word *it*?” (You can’t drag out the /t/ sound, so just say “*it*.” Your child should respond with the /t/ sound.)

{Parent Guidance: Remember, the fact that words are made up of individual sounds could be a completely new and strange concept to your child so don’t worry if he’s not picking it up so far.}

“A long time ago, someone figured out that *all* words are made up of sounds like /i/ and /t/ and /n/ and /z/. They also figured out that there aren’t all that many sounds altogether. How many sounds do you think it takes to make up all the words in any book?” (First, get a response from your child and then tell him the actual number is 44.)

“So, once they figured out that every word is made up of individual sounds, and that there were only 44 of them, they decided that they could write the sounds down using a code. The code they made up uses letters like the ones I used to write the words *it*, *in*, and *is*.” (Point to the word *in* that you wrote on the previous page.)

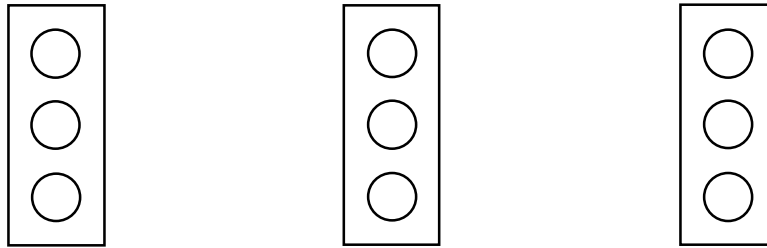
“See, this is the code for the /i/ sound and this is the code for the /n/ sound in the word *in*.” (Point to each letter as you say its sound.)

“So letters are just a code for sounds. But, do you really understand what a code is?” (Get a response, don’t worry how accurate it is, and move on.)

“Just to be sure that you’re clear on what a code is, I’ll show you an example. This is a code that I’ll bet you already know something about.” (Point to the first vertical rectangle with the three circles in it.)

“Pretend this is a stoplight like you see at an intersection when you’re riding in a car.” (Use a red crayon and color the top circle in the first rectangle red.)

“If the light is red, what does it mean?” (Get an answer, likely just “stop,” but tell your child if he doesn’t know yet. Now color the bottom circle in the middle rectangle green.)



“And what does it mean if the light is green?” (Point to the second rectangle. Again, get an answer, but tell your child if he doesn’t know yet. Now color the middle circle in the last rectangle yellow.)

“You might not know this one so I’ll give you a hint. What color is the light going to change to after yellow?” (Get the answer, red, or tell your child that it turns red next.)

“So yellow is a warning that the light is getting ready to turn red and that we should be prepared to stop, right?” (Get a response.)

“So the red, green, and yellow lights are just a *code* for stop and go. That code tells drivers what to do when they get to the intersection. They can *go* if it’s green. They must *stop* if it’s red. And they must *get ready to stop* if it’s yellow, right?” (Confirm from your child’s response that he understands the stoplight code.)

“Now, what would happen if a lot of drivers didn’t know the stoplight code?” (Discuss briefly, and conclude that traffic at intersections would be a lot more dangerous.)

it in is

“So, we need to know the stoplight code to drive safely. Now, like I said before, letters are just a code too. They are the code for the *sounds* that make up words. I’ve shown you the code for the /i/ and /t/ sounds in the word *it*, right? And for the sounds in the words *in* and *is*?” (Point to the words *it*, *in*, and *is* up above as you discuss their code.)

“So now you know that letters are just a code for sounds. In here you’re going to learn what sounds each letter stands for, or represents. It’s called the phonics code. And once you know the phonics code for all 44 sounds, you will be able to read almost any word.”

“Here is another way to think of the phonics code. Letters are really just pictures of sounds.”
(Point to the letter *i* in the words *it* on the previous page.)

“So this letter is just a picture of the /i/ sound in the word *it*.” (Remember to say the /i/ sound, not the letter name. Now point to the ending letter in the word *it*.)

“Do you remember what the sound for this letter is?” (If your child doesn’t remember yet, just tell him it’s a picture of the /t/ sound. Repeat with the words *in* and *is*.)

“Now you’re going to practice writing the letters yourself. We’ll start with the /i/ sound. But, first, there’s something important that you need to know. The letter that we spell the /i/ sound with can also be used to spell the /ie/ sound sometimes. So, when you write the letter, you need to say both sounds in this order: /i../ie/. That will help you remember that it can be the code for either sound.” (On the first set of lines below show your child how to write the letter *i* while you say /i../ie/. Then have him practice writing the letter *i* four times while saying /i../ie/ each time. The remaining seven lines are for later review.)

.....

{Parent Guidance on using Post-it Notes to manage the review process: Your child will need additional practice at both forming the letter *i* and remembering its two sounds, /i/ and /ie/. Place a small Post-it Note at the top of the page. Return to this page at the beginning of the next lesson and have your child write the letter *i* two or three more times while saying /i../ie/. Once he has memorized the sounds and can make the letter correctly, remove the Post-it Note. Use lined paper for additional practice. If you find a lot of Post-it Notes at the beginning of a later lesson, consider spending that entire lesson period reviewing the marked pages.}

“Good. Next you can practice writing the /t/ sound. I will show you how to write it first. Then you practice writing the /t/ sound four times. Say /t/ each time you write it. Watch how I write the /t/ sound.” (Write the letter *t* on the first set of lines while saying the sound /t/. Show your child how to write the letter correctly and then have him write it four times, saying /t/ each time. Return to practice on the extra lines at the next lesson, if needed.)

.....

“Good job. Now you can write the word *it* by yourself. Just say /i/ when you write the first letter and /t/ when you write the second. Saying the sounds out loud will help you remember how to spell them. Do it three times.” (Have your child write *it* three times below while saying /i/, then /t/ as he writes each letter, and then saying *it* when he’s finished writing the word. Use the last two lines for review. Don’t forget to put a Post-It Note at the top of this page as a reminder to review it.)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
.....				
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

{Parent Guidance: Your child should only say the /i/ sound, not /i../ie/, when he is writing an entire word. He only says /i../ie/ when he writes the single letter while learning its two sounds or as a response to a flashcard with the letter *i* on it when you ask what sounds it can be.}

“Great. Now you know how to write the word *it*. You might be able read it now too! We read words by saying each sound and then putting the sounds together to get the word. We call that *Sounding out the word*.” (Point to the last *it* that he wrote.)

“Sound out this word. Say each sound and then the word.” (Either offer praise or any needed correction. For example, if your child says the /n/ sound for the letter *t*, say “You said /n/ for this letter. It’s never the /n/ sound. Do you remember what it is?” If he doesn’t recall it, just provide the information and continue. Or, if your child says /i../t/ correctly but then says the word is *in*, say “You said ‘in’. This isn’t the /n/ sound. Try again” while pointing to the letter *t*.)

{Parent Guidance: When you asked your child to read the word *it* that he had just written, don’t be surprised if he not only couldn’t read it, but that he also had trouble decoding it again. Remember, all of this could be new to your child. He might not have realized that words are made up of sounds and he might not have known the sounds of the letters *i* and *t*. He also might have had no practice at the skill of blending sounds together to get a word.

If your child *did* struggle, be prepared to do a lot of review and repetition at the next two or three lessons. Use the flashcards in Appendix 6, do the segmenting exercise at the end of Lesson 2 regularly, and have your child repeat the writing of individual letters and words he has already been taught.}

{Parent Guidance on corrections: Some possible corrections are given here, but the correction process is important and the right correction depends upon what error needs correcting. **Before going much further in the lessons, be sure to read *Appendix 3: Making Proper Error Corrections* on page 21.** It’s extremely important that you follow the correct procedure. You will be making needed corrections all the way to the end of the program, so study the procedure closely at first and then review it several times during the program.}