

# **OnTrack Reading Middle School Phonics Course**

**A Mini-Curriculum to Strengthen  
Multisyllable Word Decoding**

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# Lesson 1: Introducing the Main Rule


## Purpose

1. Introduce the *Main Rule* to be used when an unfamiliar multisyllable word is encountered.
2. Explain what a vowel sound is.

 PRE-CLASS PREPARATION
1. Determine who will be doing the teaching, identify the students, and decide how the lesson content intended for display will be presented (blackboard, digital whiteboard, etc.)
2. Review the lesson plan below.
3. Be aware that the notation /f/ means a sound, not a letter name, and the word <i>fish</i> has three sounds, /f/, /i/, and /sh/. For a complete list of the notation used for the 43 sounds in this curriculum, see <i>Appendix 1</i> .
4. Write on the board: <b>Main Rule: Stop each chunk after the vowel sound and try the First Vowel Sound.</b>

 LESSON 1 PLAN	TIME ELAPSED
1. Explain to your students that you are going to spend about 15 minutes of class time for the next ten classes describing the OnTrack Reading Multisyllable Method in order to help them decode unfamiliar words they encounter in their textbooks or other reading materials.	 5 minutes
2. Direct their attention to the Main Rule written on the board. Read it aloud and explain that the Main Rule is the first step of the decoding process, and that they need to have a clear understanding of vowel sounds to use it.	
3. Ask the students what a vowel sound is.	
4. Listen to their answers. It's likely that they will be vague, uncertain, or incomplete, but possibly not.	
5. Explain that <b>vowel sounds give words their volume</b> . Ask them if they know what volume means here.	

Lesson continues on next page

 LESSON 1 PLAN (Continued)	TIME ELAPSED
<p>6. Explain that it's the same as volume on the radio or television, and that vowel sounds make words loud.</p>	
<p>7. Demonstrate this concept by discussing the word <i>fish</i>. Get general agreement that <i>fish</i> has three sounds, a /f/, an /i/, and a /sh/ sound, and then make sure all are aware that the /i/ sound is the vowel sound in <i>fish</i>. Now, tell them that the everyone is going to yell <i>fish</i>, but without the vowel sound, /i/, as loud as they can. Point out that this means you are all going to be yelling “FSH!” (just /f/+/sh/, no /i/ sound.) As you do this, you’ll notice that you can all yell “FSH!” as loud as you want without drawing very much attention.</p>	
<p>8. Now, tell them you’re going to put the little /i/ sound back in and you’re all going to yell “FISH!” at the top of your lungs. It’s obvious what the result will be, so use your classroom management skills to keep things under control.</p>	
<p>9. Make the point that it was that little /i/ sound (the vowel sound) that put all that volume into <i>fish</i>, and restate the concept: <b>Vowel sounds give words their volume.</b> Then mention that the quiet sounds in fish, /f/ and /sh/, are consonant sounds. Others are /m/, /n/, /ch/, /k/, and more.</p>	
<p>10. Give the students two more examples – <i>show</i> without the /oe/ sound (just /sh/), and <i>toy</i> without the /oy/ sound (just /t/) – to further demonstrate that it’s the vowel sounds that gives words their volume. Then tell them there are 19 vowel sounds and challenge them to come up with at least 15 of them on their own before the next class.</p>	<div data-bbox="1344 1192 1377 1224" data-label="Image"></div> 15 minutes

## APPENDIX 1

### Notation for the 43 Sounds

Whenever a phonics curriculum is devised, a decision has to be made as to how to break down all English words into component phonics sounds, or phonemes. The *OnTrack Reading Phonics Program* teaches spellings for 43 specific English phonemes, consisting of 24 consonant sounds and 19 vowel sounds.

#### Consonant Sounds

/b/	<b>bet</b>
/k/	<b>cot</b>
/d/	<b>dip</b>
/f/	<b>fan</b>
/g/	<b>got</b>
/h/	<b>hot</b>
/j/	<b>jar</b>
/l/	<b>land</b>
/m/	<b>mat</b>
/n/	<b>nap</b>
/p/	<b>pet</b>
/r/	<b>red</b>
/s/	<b>sip</b>
/t/	<b>tip</b>
/v/	<b>van</b>
/w/	<b>wet</b>
/z/	<b>zip</b>
/sh/	<b>ship</b>
/ch/	<b>chip</b>
/th/	<b>thin</b>
/the/	<b>this</b>
/ng/	<b>rung</b>
/hw/	<b>when</b>
/zh/	<b>vision</b>

#### Vowel Sounds

/a/	<b>cat</b>
/e/	<b>bet</b>
/i/	<b>kid</b>
/o/	<b>hot</b>
/u/	<b>nut</b>
/ae/	<b>favor</b>
/ee/	<b>see</b>
/ie/	<b>tie</b>
/oe/	<b>toe</b>
/ue/	<b>cue</b>
/oo/	<b>zoo</b>
/oul/	<b>would</b>
/ow/	<b>cow</b>
/oy/	<b>boy</b>
/aw/	<b>saw</b>
/er/	<b>her</b>
/ar/	<b>car</b>
/or/	<b>for</b>
/err/	<b>merry</b>