First sounds

4

Lesson 4 of 92 (ages 3-6) · Getting Ready · Ages 3-6 · about 10 min

GOAL

Your child can hear and say the first sound of a spoken word.

WHY IT MATTERS

Hearing the first sound is the first step to hearing EVERY sound in a word. It's how your child will later link a sound to its letter: sun starts with /s/, so it starts with s.

YOU'LL NEED

- Nothing is required.
- Optional: a bag of small toys or objects from around the house.
- The lesson page, for the listening game.

LESSON FLOW about 10 minutes

1 min — Warm up

Play I spy with sounds, not letters.

SAY *"I spy something that starts with /s/... (sock!)"*

2 min — Listen

Play sun, moon and bus on the lesson page. Stretch or bounce the first sound.

SAY *"Ssssun. Sun starts with /s/!"*

2 min — Show how

Say a word, then say just its first sound. Use the pure sound, never the letter name.

SAY *"Mmmoon. The first sound is /m/."*
"Bus: b... b... bus. The first sound is /b/."

2 min — Do it together

Pull toys out of a bag one at a time. Your child says the first sound of each.

2 min — Play

Play the listening game: your child hears a sound and taps the picture that starts with it.

1 min — Wrap up

Find the first sound of everyone's name at the table.

USE WITH THIS LESSON

- **This lesson online (listening + games)**
  phonicademy.com/plan/session/awareness-first-sounds
- **Read: Phonological Awareness: 8-Level Progression with Ready Activities**
  phonicademy.com/blog/phonological-awareness-activities
- **Printable: 5-Minute Daily Routine Card (PDF)**
  phonicademy.com/printables/abc-phonics-5min-routine
- **Read: Is My Child Ready to Read? 10 Signs of Reading Readiness**
  phonicademy.com/blog/reading-readiness-checklist

ANSWER KEY

The same rounds as the online game, to play out loud with no screen. Tick each one your child gets on the first try.

#	SAY / SHOW	CHOICES	ANSWER	
1	/s/	cat, dog, sun	**sun**	☐
2	/m/	bee, fish, moon	**moon**	☐
3	/b/	bus, hat, sun	**bus**	☐
4	/f/	cow, fish, pig	**fish**	☐
5	/d/	dog, fan, map	**dog**	☐
6	/p/	bed, pig, sun	**pig**	☐

WATCH FOR common mix-ups and what to do

Says the letter name ("ess") instead of the sound.	->	Say: "That's its name. What sound does it make?" and model /s/.
Says the whole first syllable ("sun" -> "su").	->	Stretch only the first sound: sssss... then stop before the vowel.
Picks the last sound instead.	->	Say the word slowly and hold the first sound much longer than the rest.

TOO HARD? MAKE IT EASIER

Use only stretchy first sounds (s, m, f) that are easy to hear: ssssun, mmmmoon.

TOO EASY? MAKE IT HARDER

Ask for a word that starts with the same sound: "sun... sock... sand!"

HOW DID IT GO?

MY CHILD CAN...

- ☐ Says the first sound of a word you say.
- ☐ Picks the picture that starts with a given sound.

Date: _____ **Colour in the stars:** ☆ ☆ ☆

Notes: _____