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The Short Vowel Set

The Short Vowel Set provides a variety of resources which enable a wide range of teaching games and activities. The Set is appropriate for school and home use.

Contents

The set includes the following resources:

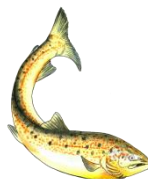
Large picture card set - This includes 35 large picture cards, seven of each short vowel sound.

Set of SWAP cards – There are 9 SWAP cards (three different colours in total), which enable ‘follow suit’ games when used in conjunction with the large picture set.

Small picture set – This includes 42 smaller picture cards. These are intended to be used in conjunction with the bingo boards. The small picture set deliberately has variations which give options when using the bingo boards. Example: When the word on the bingo board is kn - t, the picture used could be ‘knot’ or ‘knit’. l - g could be ‘leg’ or ‘log’.

Bingo boards – There are 6 bingo boards, each double-sided. All bingo boards have one side which has the short vowel letters (a, e, i, o, u). The red, orange and blue bingo boards have words on the other side. The purple, yellow and green boards have pictures on the other side. This enables a wide variety of games (see below for suggestions).

All materials are laminated and a wipe-clean pen is provided, so that you can write letters in on the blank bingo boards. See the insert card for instructions on caring for your materials.



Picture List – large picture set

Large Picture Set				
a	e	i	o	u
bat	dress	witch	frog	brush
crab	hen	zip	golf	cup
lamb	net	twig	mosque	butterfly
match	peg	knit	strong	duck
quack	sled/sledge	chips	knot	thumb
tank	vest	swing	moth	truck
splash	shed	ship	hop	juggle

Picture List – small picture set

Small Picture Set				
a	e	i	o	u
cat	shell	sink	clock	brush
tap	nest	fish	dog	bucket
rat	vet	string	log	duck
cap	pen	zip	fox	cup
crab	leg	skip	knot	jug
band	bed	pin	jog	hutch
fan	bell	knit	rock	bus
van	fence	whistle	strong	truck
		ring	pot	

Remember that the cards can be used for many other activities. They are all single-syllable words. The cards can therefore be used to practice initial sounds, end sounds and medial vowel sounds. They can also be used for auditory discrimination activities, blending and segmentation.



Short Vowel Set Instructions - General

Before using any pictures with learners, it is important to go through the sets with the learner to make sure they know the word which is being used. However, if a learner suggests a valid alternative during a game, it may be appropriate to allow it at the teacher's discretion. Example: The picture for 'strong' could also be used for 'muscle' (also a short vowel sound).



Picture resources are also a good starting point for vocabulary discussion and language use, which is why some less common pictures are included. Learners may well not know the word 'mosque', which gives a stimulus for discussion and vocabulary extension.

Pictures do not have words written on them because they are designed to be used to develop phonological processing, rather than an awareness of spelling patterns. Phonological awareness is the awareness of sounds and sound patterns in language. It includes the awareness of individual sounds in words (phonemic awareness), recognition of the same sound recurring (alliteration), the ability to break a word down into syllables or individual sounds, and rhyming skills. Short vowel sounds cause particular difficulty because of the similarities between sounds (a/u, i/e, in particular).

These materials can be used with all young children to promote the normal development of phonological awareness, but are also useful for much older children or adults who need particular reinforcement in this area. With learners at an early stage of discriminating between vowel sounds, you may decide to use only two vowel sounds at a time, adding a third when the learner is ready.

A number of suggestions for activities have been given here, but the cards have been designed to be very versatile, so there are many possibilities.

Game suggestions



Sorting Games

Remember that many younger children enjoy sorting activities and will happily sort the packs into sets with the same medial vowel sound.

A variation on this can incorporate a labelled tub or box. Use a selection of vowel sounds or all five. Turn shuffled pack (or selection) face down and turn over one card at a time. Each player has to turn over a card, say the word and place it in the correct box, according to the vowel sound. Discuss afterwards, or pick up errors and discuss them as the learner plays. If a learner finds it difficult to identify the medial vowel sound, try the following:

- Get the learner to say the word slowly and clearly, listening to the sounds carefully.
- You may then have to say the word again, again clearly and slowly so the learner can concentrate on listening. If your learner still has difficulty, break the word into phonemes or onset and rime.

Variation: Write the words onto the cards beforehand using a wipe-clean pen. You turn over each card and the learner must decide which pile/tub it goes into from sound alone. Cards can be checked visually afterwards by the learner. This will help develop an awareness of spelling.

The SWAP game

Shuffle the large card pack and the SWAP cards together and deal out 7 cards to each player. Place the remainder face down on the table and turn up the top card, which is then placed next to the pack. Players take it in turns to place one of their cards on the pack. They have to follow suit, i.e. if the card displayed is a card with the 'a' sound, they have to place another card with the 'a' on top of it.

If the player cannot follow suit, there are two possibilities. If he has a SWAP card in his hand, he places that card on the pile and changes the 'sound' to another short vowel sound. "SWAP to 'o'".

The next player then needs to follow suit by placing an 'o' card on the SWAP card (or SWAP again, if necessary).

If the player does not have a SWAP card, then he misses a go and picks up a card from the pack which is face down.

The aim of the game is to get rid of all your cards. The first player to do so is the winner.

Note: Encourage the players to say the word and the short vowel sound each time they put down a card. Also, when a player says "SWAP to ...", you might find it necessary to specify what vowel sound is meant by adding "SWAP to 'o', as in 'hop'". This avoids confusion if the player's articulation of the vowel sound is not absolutely accurate (which it often isn't at this stage!).

Bingo games

Each of the colour-coded bingo games has a set of letters only on one side. There is little variation between the cards, but six have been provided so that groups of 6 learners can play at the same time.



Distribute the bingo cards so that each player has one. (Check that they have the right side up!). Shuffle the small picture cards and place them face down in a pile. Each player takes it in turns to turn over the top card. Encourage the player to say the word out loud. If the card has the same short vowel sound as a free space on the bingo card, the

player places the picture on that space. If all the relevant spaces have been used up, the card is placed face up next to the main pack. You may wish to allow the next player to pick up that card instead of taking one off the pack. Just make sure that you specify the rules from the beginning. Obviously, the first player to cover all their spaces is the winner.

Bingo game variations

On the reverse side of the bingo cards, there are two sets. They are colour coded as follows:

Words	Pictures
Blue	Green
Orange	Yellow
Red	Purple

Words version

This version is designed to develop an awareness of spelling patterns, as well as the phonological processing involved in the previous game. It should therefore only be played when players can successfully complete the previous bingo game (letters only).

We have deliberately included possible variations. In other words, the item 'l – g' could be 'log' or 'leg'. The item 'kn – t' could be 'knot' or 'knit'.

The words version contains a variety of short vowel words. They are printed on the card, with the short vowel missed. The bingo game is played as previously described. This time, though, players have to get the exact picture to match the word. When they have found a picture they need, they use the wipe-clean pen provided to write the correct vowel into the gap. These can be removed later with a damp cloth (or licked finger!). If the correct vowel is not written, they forfeit a go and have to return that card to the main pack.

Note: I would suggest that if this happens (i.e. returning a card), the card is returned to the pack which is still face down. Add the card into the pack and shuffle it again. Otherwise, if you place it on the face-up pile, the player will know that he has no chance of completing his bingo board unless the pack goes round twice.

Word Generation

As each player turns over a card, they have to say as many words as possible with that sound in them. They get one point for each one. Words cannot be used twice – write them down as you go. Note: Only use 3 of each vowel sound, or you will run out of words very quickly. Variation: Players have to put the word/words into a sentence.



Practice Activities using rows of cards

1. Place 4-5 cards in a row face up. Players have to find the two with the same sound.
2. As above, players find the 'odd one out'.

Games using the wipe-clean gameboards

1. Write the vowel sounds into the spaces at random and spread the cards face upwards around the board. Players take turns to throw the dice and move. When they land on a space, they have to say the sound and find a picture which has that sound. They keep that card in their own pile. Play until all pictures have gone. The winner is the one with the most cards.
2. Write the numbers 1-3 at random in the spaces. Players take turns to throw the dice and move. When they have moved, they turn up the next card in the pack and have to give words with the same medial sound as that card. The number of words required depends on the number on the spaces (i.e. land on 3, give 3 words which have the same medial sound). If the player fails, they move back to the previous space.
- 3 Write the vowel sounds into the spaces. Players take it in turns to turn over a card. They can then move their counter to the next space with that sound. Winner is the one who reaches the end first.

Pictures option (two versions)

If the learners is at a very early stage of matching visual pictures, this game can be played so that the aim is to match the picture exactly. i.e. picture card of a fox only goes onto the picture of a fox on the bingo card. This is a simple and useful game with very young children or learners who have major visual processing problems.



For most learners, however, a more useful version is to match the sound. In other words, any picture card with the same short vowel sound can be placed on the board space. i.e. on the fox picture, the following cards could be placed: log, clock, rock etc.

This is more complex than the previous games, because it requires an element of working memory. The learner has to retain the vowel sound for pictures on the bingo board, while working out the vowel sound on each picture card as it is turned over.

Note: Versions of the game can, of course, be mixed if you are playing with a group of learners at different stages.

Snap

As each card is placed on the table, the player says the word aloud. When it is the same sound as the previous card, players say 'SNAP'. The first to SNAP wins the pack.

Caution: Snap games sound as if they're a great idea, but they are skill-based, not chance. Consequently, if you're playing Snap games with a group, you will usually find the same person winning (and unfortunately the same person losing)



most of the time, which is very demoralising for the ones who are struggling. Snap games therefore need to be used with great caution (or avoided entirely)!

Memory Games

1. Select an appropriate number of cards for the level of your learner, making sure they consist of sound pairs or 4s. Shuffle the cards and place them face downwards in a regular pattern on the table. Players take turns turning up two cards. If the cards have the same sound, the player keeps that pair of cards and has another go. The winner is the one with the most pairs at the end of the game.
2. Place a selection of cards face upwards on the table. Allow the learner to study the cards for a few minutes, telling them to remember which cards are there. Then ask the learner to close their eyes and you remove a card, rearranging the others slightly to disguise the 'gap'. Ask the learner to open their eyes and tell you which card is missing. Good for visual memory. Encourage the child to say the items out loud (reinforces auditory strategies).
3. Use a small box or bag. Place several cards into it, one at a time, showing the learner each card and saying its letter (or naming the picture). When all the cards are in the box/bag, ask the learner to tell you which ones are inside. Start with one 3 or 4 and build up as the learner's memory improves.



4. Spread all the cards face upwards on the table. Explain that you want the learner to remember which cards you touched. Then touch 3 cards at random, saying the letter/picture name out loud. Ask the learner to touch the same cards, in the same order. Increase the number touched as the learner becomes more confident.

*Vary the above activity by asking the learner to touch the cards in reverse order. This builds working memory and develops concentration. Be careful, though. It is **much** more difficult.*

Memory challenge

A useful (and fun) memory challenge, which develops auditory sequential memory, working memory, word retrieval and sequencing:

Place 3 or 4 picture cards face up in a row, saying the name of the picture out loud as you do it. Then get your learner to go through them with you, saying the name again out loud.

Go through the row, turning each card face down as you both say the name again out loud. Then ask your learner to name each card from the beginning of the row before you turn it face up to check. If your learner gets to the end of the row with all the pictures correct, add another card, saying the name aloud.

Each time you turn the cards face down, you both say the words (this develops auditory memory). Then the learner goes through independently, saying the word before you turn the picture over to check. Each time the learner gets it correct, you add a new picture card at the end of the row. The challenge is to see how many pictures you can do.

Variation: It is very useful to vary this from time to time. After your learner has done a couple of correct 'recitals', challenge them to recite the pictures backwards (turning the pictures over from the end!).



Other game/activity ideas for language development

Verbal reasoning

Choose picture cards in a particular category (living things, furniture, things you can eat, things with four legs). Place several cards in a row, with one which does not belong to that category. The learner has to identify which is the odd one out.

Sight vocabulary

Use a non-permanent pen and write the names of objects beneath the picture to help develop a sight vocabulary.

Additional materials

There is an extensive range of computer activities and printable resources covering rhyming skills on the Steps software program. A 15-day free trial can be downloaded from the website.



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Have fun!

