

Common Core Literacy Centers Kids Love

Presented by Heidi Butkus heidi@heidisongs.com

Tips for Managing Centers with NO HELP!

1. Write names of kids in each color group on colored construction paper and assign a child to take it with him to each center. Use it to make sure each child arrived in the right spot before you begin teaching.

Sample Rotation:

1. Work with teacher.
2. Listening Center or Easy Worksheets
3. Write in journals
4. Mini-Centers- Kids split into pairs here and work in different places in the room. They look for their names on another NUMBERED sign and go to that center.

Examples:

- Mini Center 1: CVC Word Work
- Mini Center 2: Sight Word Work
- Mini Center 3: iPad

After school on Monday, just rotate the numbered signs with the kids' names so that they will go to the next mini center on Tuesday. Rotate the signs in the same direction each day after school so that it is set up for the next day.

My routine was to keep the group together on Thursdays and do something else, such as give them a box full of the books we read that week to look at.

On Fridays, I do whole group activities, such as book buddies.

Rules:

1. Kids must stay at the center until the bell rings.
2. If they finish early, there is something else to do, but it is usually just books to read. Nothing more "fun" than the center itself!
3. If they leave the center and wander around the room, there are consequences.

Good Things to Know

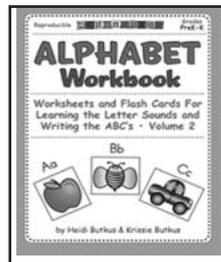
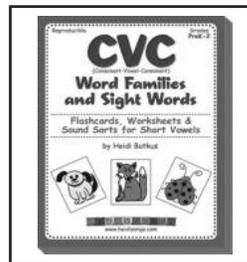
1. Expect kids to test you on boundaries of centers. Be consistent!
2. If they are absent and miss a day, they just miss it. I don't go have them go back and make it up.
3. You could add a fourth mini-center if desired.

4. Get out all materials and set them up before you leave the previous day.
5. Kids should be given ALL directions before they are dismissed to centers, so they can sit down and begin without help.
6. Find some kids that love to organize and give them the job of re-organizing your supplies at the end of each day.
7. Avoid reinforcing unwanted behaviors, such as interruptions of your reading group.
8. Start with some VERY short centers, and work your way up from there.
9. Give kids a chance to move and stretch in between centers to avoid rowdy behavior from restless children.

Transitioning from one group to another:

1. Establish a routine. I always played songs and had the kids sing with me in a central part of the room.
2. Before you dismiss them to their next center, have them point to where they are going.
3. Assign a buddy to anyone who is perpetually "lost."

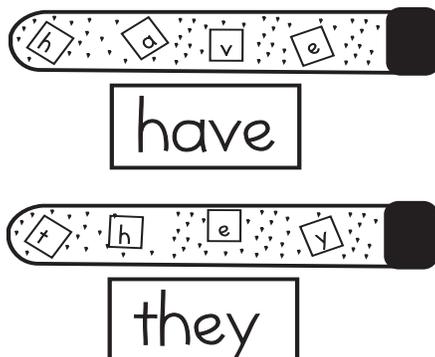
Literacy Centers Ideas



Many of the following centers were made using parts of the worksheets and some of the flash cards from the Sounds Fun Phonics Workbooks, the CVC Workbooks, or the Alphabet Workbooks from www.heidisongs.com. However, most could probably be made with any worksheets or flash cards.

Sight Word Wands

Get some small bottles. I used 6 inch 16 x 150 mm plastic test tubes with caps. Ten for \$3.99 from Amazon. Put letter beads for certain sight words, glitter and water in the bottles. I used .27 Inch (7mm) alphabet beads from Bead Landing. Let kids look at the tubes without opening them and try to match them to the correct sight word and write it down. (Inspired from an idea from <http://kellyskindergarten.blogspot.com>)



Sight Word Wands

have

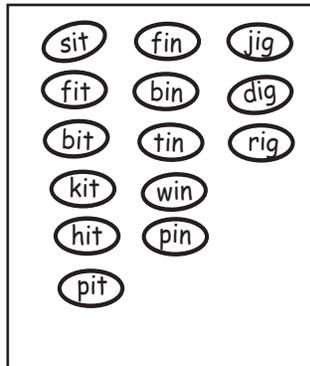
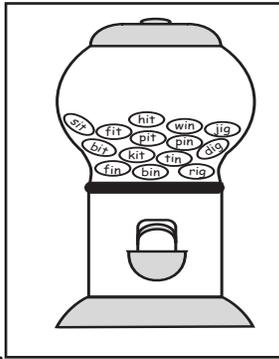
they

Name: _____

© 2013 Heidi Butkus www.heidisongs.com

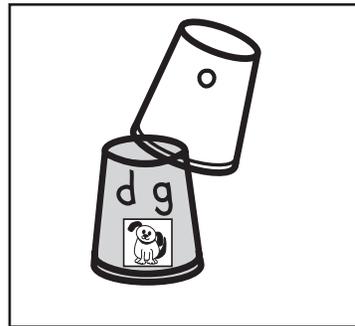
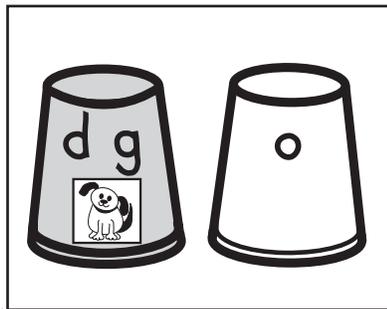
CVC Gumballs

* Get a gumball machine and some decorative gems. Use Mod Podge to adhere CVC words onto the gems, and then let them dry. Then, have the children push the button to release the gems. They then read the words, sort them into word families, and match them to the flash cards with the words.



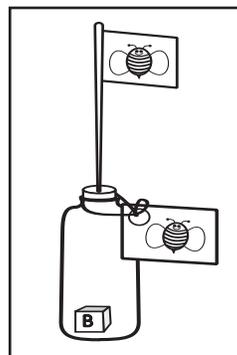
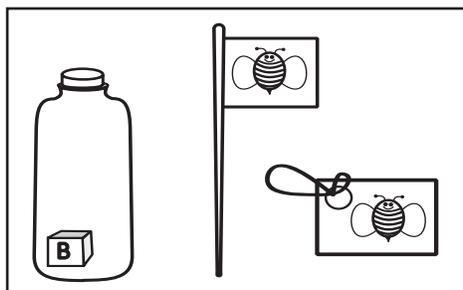
Middle Sound Cups

Write a CVC word on a colored cup, leaving out the vowel. Glue the corresponding CVC picture to the cup under the word. Write the vowel on a clear cup that will fit over the top of the colored cup. Have kids match the correct vowel sound to complete the word.



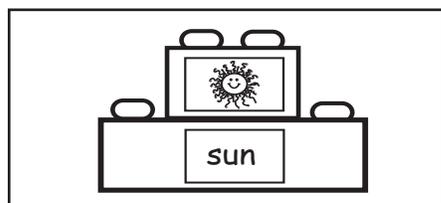
Beginning Sounds Flags and Tags

Put a letter bead in a small bottle with a cork lid. (I filled up the rest of the space in my bottles with squished up water beads!) Then get some small beginning sound pictures to match the letter beads. (Mine are from the HeidiSongs Alphabet Book, Vol. 2.) Punch a hole in the pictures that you want to loop around the necks of the bottles.



Get some tiny rubber bands from the hair section of the dollar store, and loop them through the holes in the tiny flash cards. I also taped the pictures onto toothpicks to make flags that could be inserted into the corks. Great fine motor challenge!

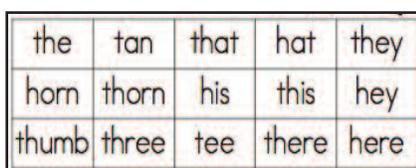
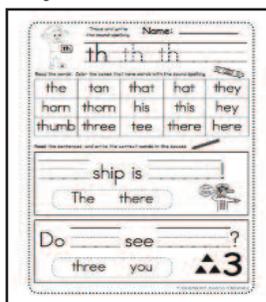
CVC Duplos



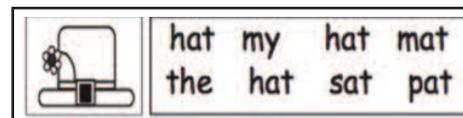
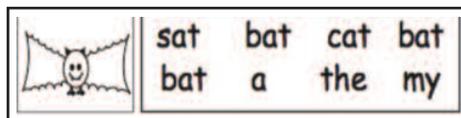
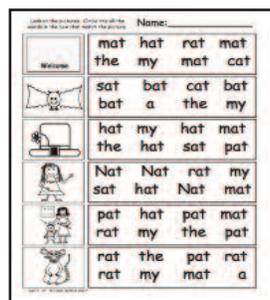
* Copy small CVC pictures and words, and tape them onto Duplo blocks. Have kids match the pictures with the words, and snap them together.

Visual Discrimination Cards with Jewels or Markers

- * Copy and laminate just the visual discrimination part of a worksheet. Children can complete many of these with dry or wet erase markers in a very short period of time.
- Place jewels on the matching words or letters.



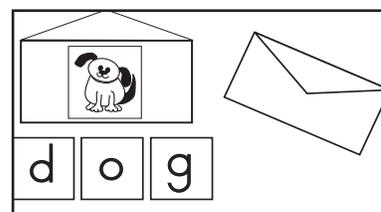
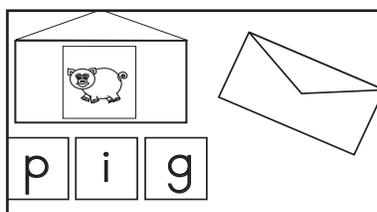
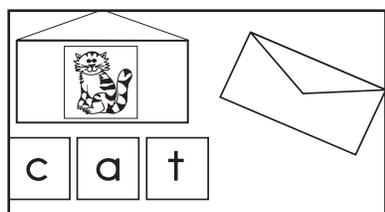
Have children put jewels on all of the "th" words, etc. (Example from HeidiSongs Sounds Fun Workbook).



Have children put jewels on the CVC word that is pictured to the left. (Example from HeidiSongs CVC Workbook Vol. 1).

CVC Pockets

- * Make your own CVC Pockets from pictures and letter cards, or download mine from HeidiSongs.com.



CVC Puzzles

- * Make your own from pictures and letter cards, or download mine from HeidiSongs.com.



b u g



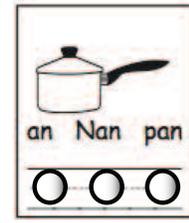
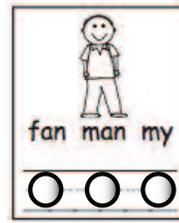
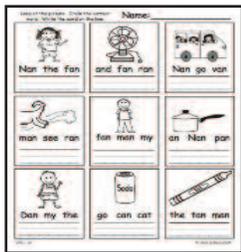
d i g



d o g

Word Pokers

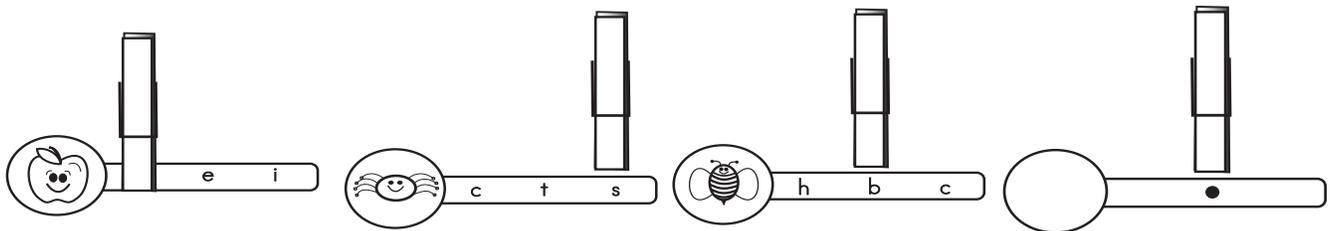
* Word Pokers example shown is from HeidiSongs CVC book, but can be done with any similar workbook page.



Kids poke a pencil through the holes under the correct word, then check the back of the card. If it is correct, they will find the hole circled on the back of the card with a red marker.

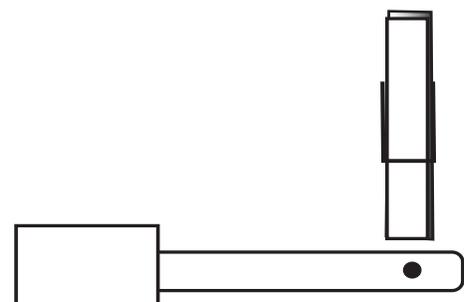
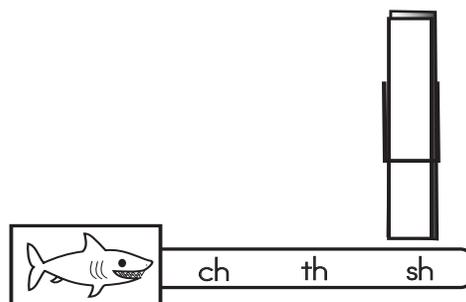
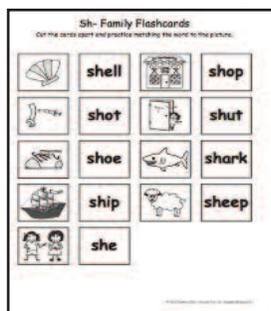
Phonics Sticks and Clips

* Beginning Sounds Sticks and Clips (Idea from <http://MakeTakeTeach.com>).



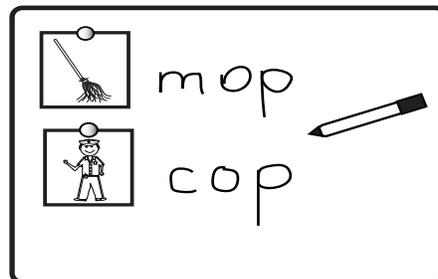
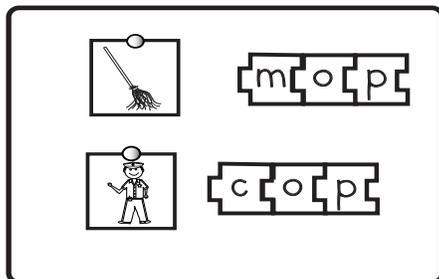
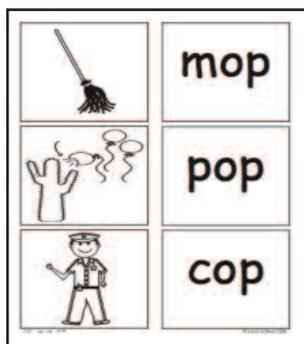
Staple a picture to the end of a craft stick. Write some letters on the stick. Put a dot on the back of the stick behind the correct letter. Children clip a clothespin on the stick over the correct letter, and check to see if it covered up the dot.

* I adapted the idea for Digraph Sticks using the Sounds Fun Student Flashcards from the Workbook. The idea is adaptable for beginning, middle, or ending sounds, the number of sounds in a word, or syllables, etc.



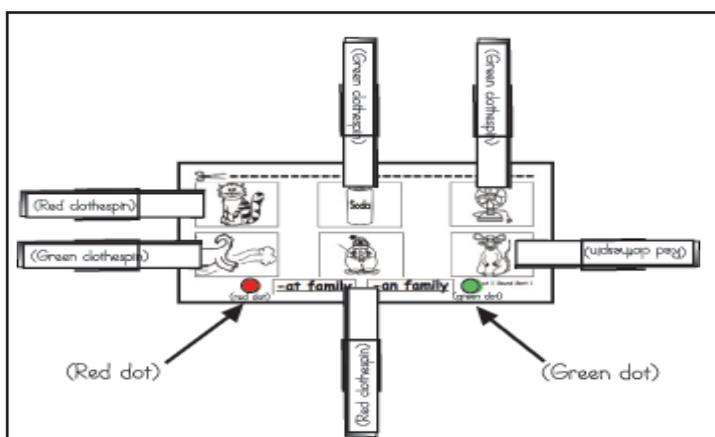
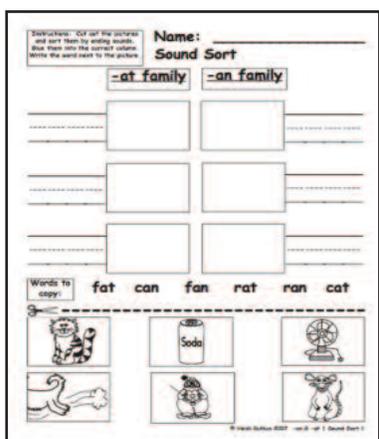
CVC cards & Magnetic Letters or White Boards

- * Magnetic Letters and CVC or Other Word Family Picture Flash Cards. Example shown is from HeidiSongs CVC Book.
- * Flash cards, white boards, and markers



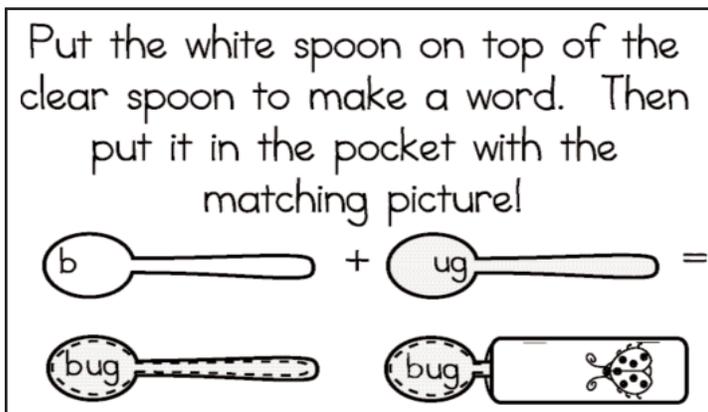
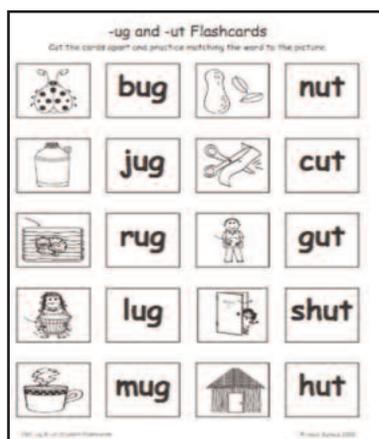
Word Family Clips

- * For practice sorting words into word families. I used the bottom of the Sound Sort Worksheets from my CVC Workbooks to create them.



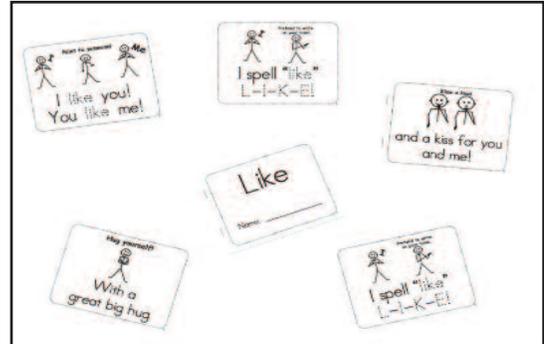
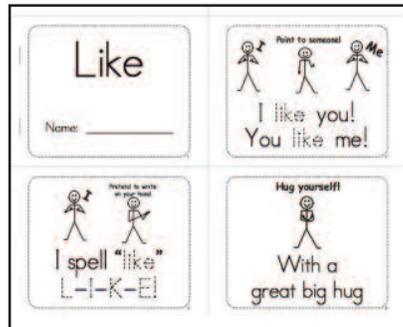
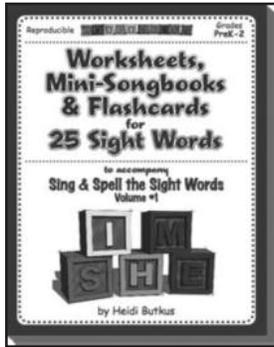
CVC Spoons

- * This is for practice building CVC words and matching them to the correct picture. Use the Student Flashcards from the CVC book for the pictures on the pockets. Pockets are made out of file folders cut 2.75 inches wide and four inches tall, and folded in half.



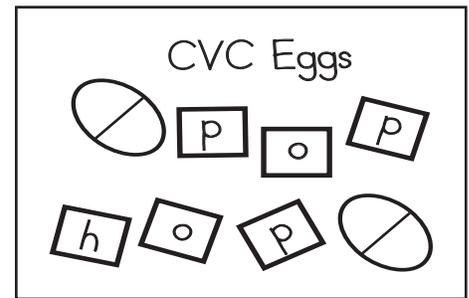
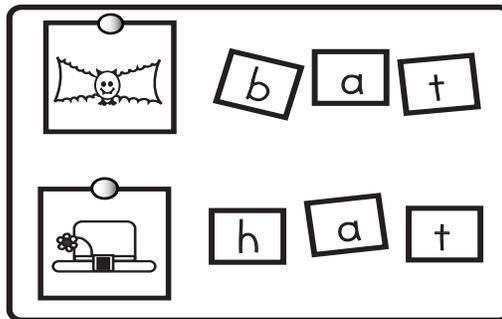
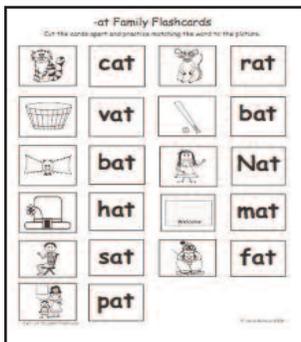
Sight Word Songs Lyrics Mix Up

* This is for practice reading the lyrics to the songs, comprehending them, and then putting them back into the correct order using the picture clues and the child's knowledge of the song as a guide. This could be done with any song book. Example is from HeidiSongs Worksheets, Mini-Songbooks, & Flashcards Resource Book (Vol. 1).



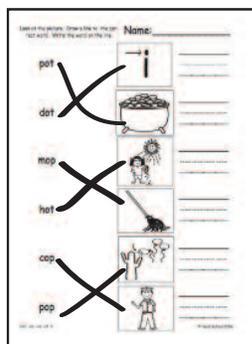
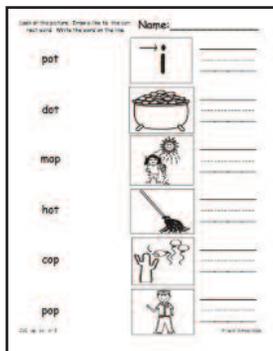
CVC cards & Ceramic Tiles

- * Ceramic Tiles can be purchased cheaply at hardware stores such as Home Depot.
- * Remove any adhesive backing thoroughly before writing letters on the front.
- * Put tiles in plastic eggs and let kids unscramble them to make words.



Worksheets and Wikki Stix

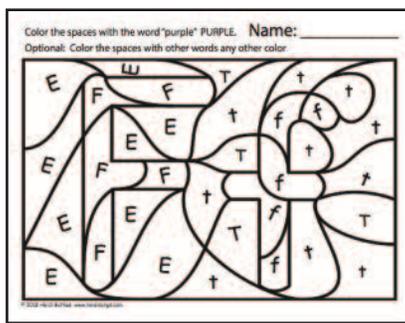
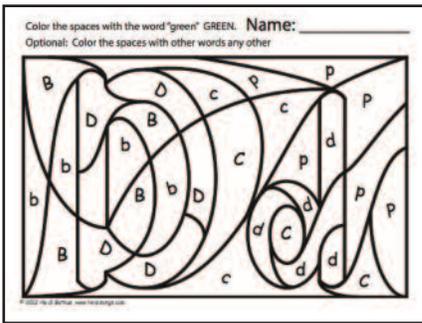
* Worksheets that ask children to draw a line to match the answers can often be completed with Wikki Stix. Example is from HeidiSongs CVC Book Vol. 1.



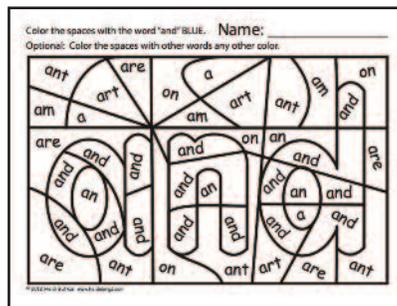
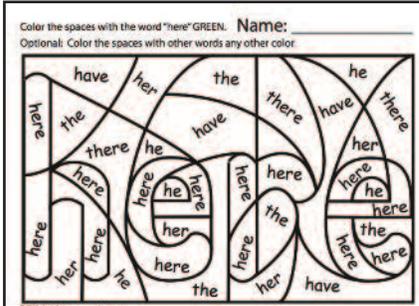
Place the worksheets in page protectors. Then let children make the lines with Wikki Stix.

Hidden Word or Letter Worksheets and Jewels

* This activity is for visual discrimination of words or letters. Have children put the jewels on the target words or letters.



Hidden Alphabet
Worksheets from
HeidiSongs

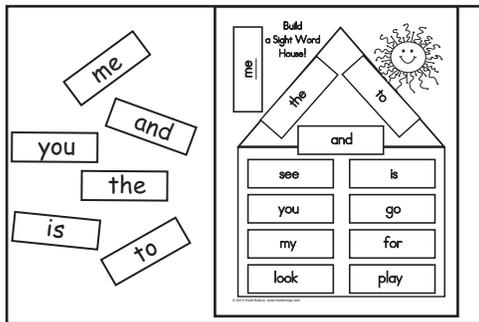


Hidden Sight Word
Worksheets from
HeidiSongs

Writing Words with the iPad or iPod

- * Load sight word or alphabet songs into the iPod or iPad. Have children listen to the music and write the letters or words featured in the songs.

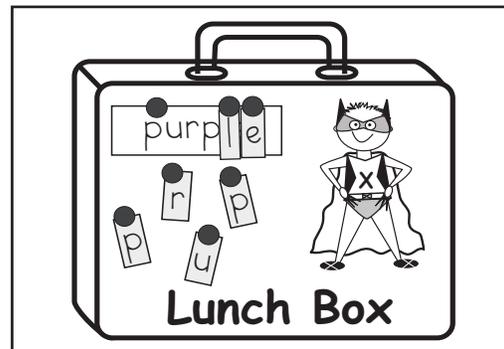
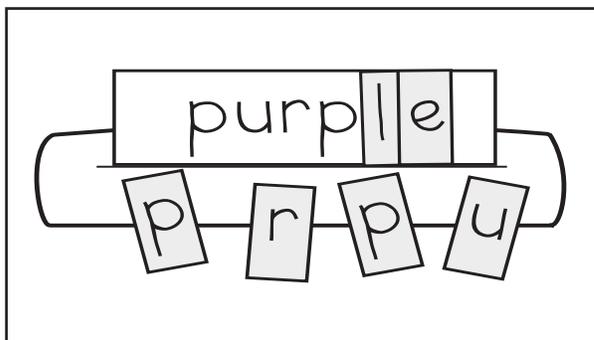
Sight Word Block House



- * Write words on Jenga blocks and have kids match them to the word blocks on the house. Free download on Heidi's blog: Aug. 23, 2013.

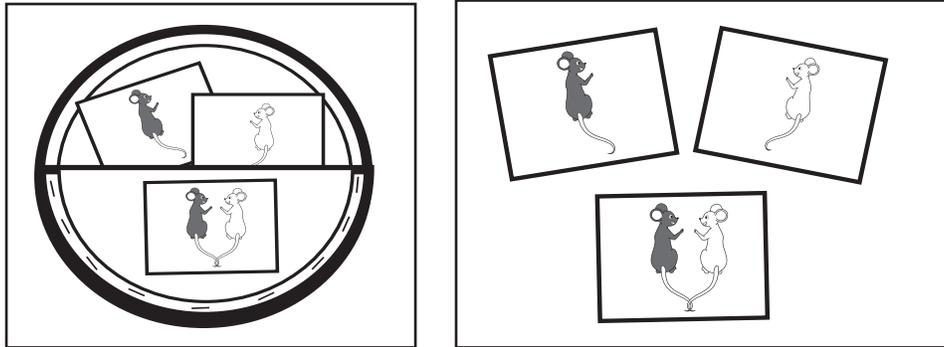
Pool Noodle Spelling Center (or Superhero Lunchbox Spelling Center)

- * Cut a pool noodle in half and make a slit in the top with a knife. Insert a flash card. Cut another flash card with the same word on it apart, and have kids rebuild the word, inserting the letters into the slit. More info on blog post Sept. 10, 2013.



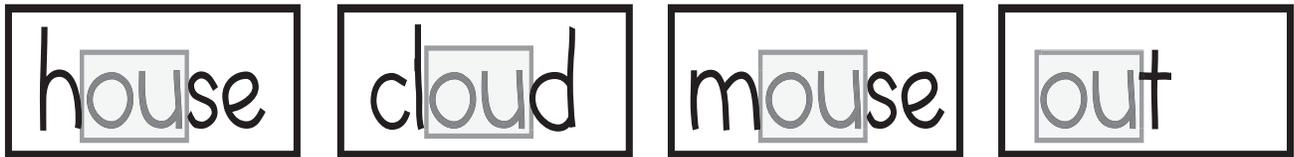
Opposite Plate Pockets

* Cut one paper plate in half, and staple it on top of the other plate, forming a pocket. Children put the opposite pairs in the pockets that are formed. Example from HeidiSongs Opposite Rhyming Song Book and Flashcards.



Highlighting Word Families

* For the next activity, you have to prep your kids ahead of time by teaching them how to find words that belong to word families. We used highlighter tape and taped up the words all around the room. With practice, then they were able to do this alone in centers.



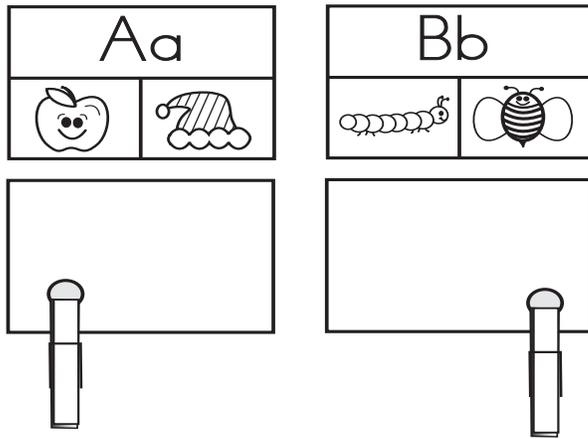
Coding Phonics Spelling Patterns

1. th, ch, sh- Draw a box around the two letters because they always work together.
 2. ow, ou- Draw a big U under the two letters and put arrows on it that point to the sky, since the dogs point their noses to the sky and howl.
 3. ing- Draw a crown for the king and underline the "ing."
 4. oo- Draw a yellow banana over the word, because monkeys like bananas. Underline the "oo."
 5. ew- Draw a triangle with two dots inside it to represent a nose, because the "ew" monster picks his nose. Underline the "ew."
 6. oy, oi- Draw a pink pig's tail and underline the "oi" or "oy."
- Etc.!

Building Words with Toys

* Try chain links, blocks, etc. Motivate children to build words rather than just play by offering to take a picture of their words when they are done, or let them take a picture.

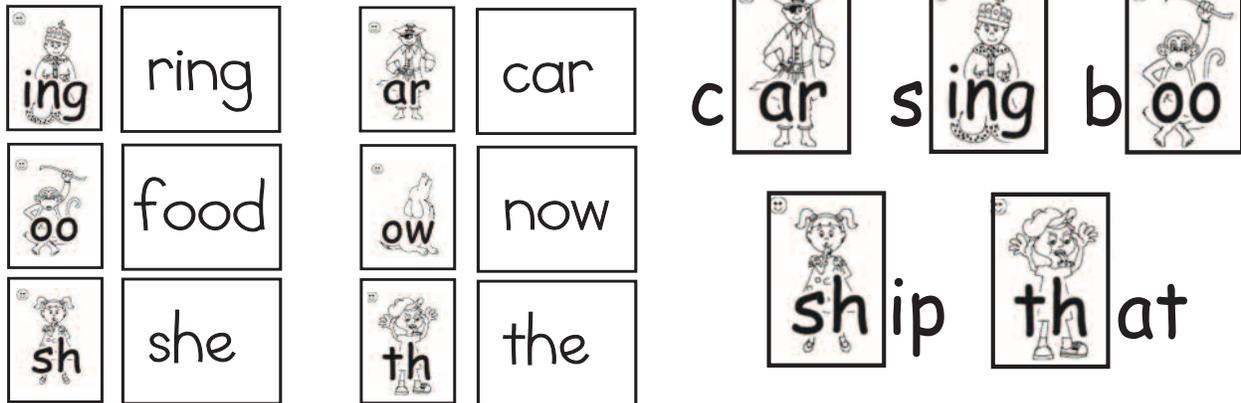
Beginning Sounds Manipulatives



Free file from
www.prekinders.com. Make
 it self-checking by putting
 a sticker on the back of
 the correct answer.

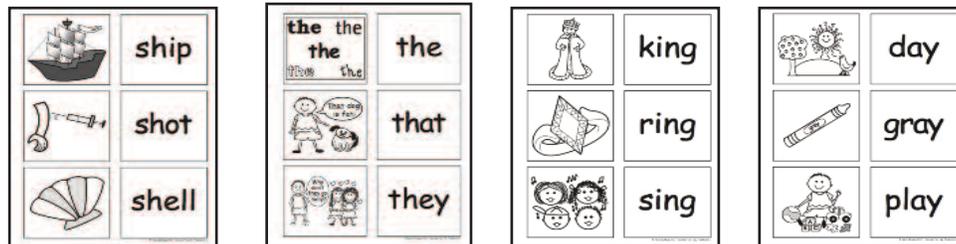
Word Building with the Sounds Fun Word Building Kit

Match Sounds Fun Word Building
 Kit Cards to Word Cards



Activities with Flash Cards

* Copy and laminate the flash cards. Have kids highlight the target sounds with wet erase markers. Then match the words to the pictures. (Could also be done with the full page of flash cards in dry erase sheet protectors.)



Making Words with Alphabet Jewels

You can glue alphabet stickers on the bottom or the top of the larger, flat, jewels they sell in the floral section of the dollar store and make words with them!

CVC Sting Ups

Glue a flash card with a CVC picture on one side of a piece of colored index paper. Glue a flash card with the word written out on the back of it. Laminate and punch a hole in a corner. Loop a pipe cleaner through the hole. String manuscript alphabet beads through the pipe cleaners.

To see the research base for HeidiSongs, please visit our website:

<http://www.heidisongs.com/contact/page.php?id=1&keywords=Research>

List of Related Citations Common Core Literacy Centers Kids Love Presented by Heidi Butkus

- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Jensen, E. (2008). *Brain-Based Learning: The New Paradigm of Teaching*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Jensen, E. (1998). *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Hannaford, C. & Pert, C. (2005). *Smart Moves: Why Learning Is Not All in Your Head*. Stoddard, WI: Great River Books.
- Heggerty, Michael. (2004). *Phonemic Awareness: The Skills That They Need To Help Them Succeed! (Kindergarten Version)*. River Forest, IL: Literacy Resources, Inc.
- Marzano, R., Pickering, J. & Pollock, J. (2001). *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Marzano, R. (2004). *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement: Research on What Works in Schools*, Alexandria, VA: ASCD
- Marzano, R. (2007). *The Art and Science of Teaching*, Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- McIntosh, E. & Peck, M. (2005) *Multisensory Strategies: Lessons and Classroom Management Techniques to Reach All Learners*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc.

Follow me!

Twitter: @heidisongs
Google+: Heidi Butkus
Facebook: HeidiSongs
Pinterest: Heidi Songs
Blog: <http://heidisongs.blogspot.com>

Questions?

email: heidi@heidisongs.com