

INTRO

Introduction to *English Unlocked:* *Phonics Workbook 1*

What is phonics and phonics instruction?

When you learned to read, did someone teach you the sound of each letter? How about letter combinations like PH or ING? Did you practice blending these sounds together until they sounded like a recognizable word? If you answered “yes,” you probably received some phonics instruction as you learned to read.

Phonics is a method of teaching people to read by learning about the sounds made by individual letters or groups of letters. Beginning readers then learn to blend those sounds together to “sound out,” or **decode**, new words. Over the last 50 years of reading instruction in the United States, phonics has not always been a popular method for teaching beginning readers. Since the mid-90s, however, researchers have been able to show that sounding out words is not an innate ability. In other words, decoding is a skill that people must learn. Although some children and adults do seem to pick up reading on their own, consistent phonics instruction ensures that all beginning readers — children or adults — have the foundational skills to become fluent, independent readers.

In addition to learning the ABCs, students learning to read in English need a keen awareness of the different sounds that make up words. For example, you may have noticed that some young children can name many words that begin with the same sound, like boy, ball, big, barn. They can often do this long before they can recognize or write the letter B. They are able to hear the /b/ sound at the beginning of the word, even if they don’t yet associate it with the letter B.

This familiarity with the sounds in a language is called **phonemic awareness** and it is an important pre-reading step. There are three distinct skills that build toward reading. First, readers must recognize and produce individual letters and the sounds they make. Second, they must be able to blend sounds together in sequence (ie. the sounds /b/, /i/, /g/ when blended together form the word ‘big’). Finally, they must be able to recognize words after they sound them out. Activities in this workbook address all three of these skills.

Why did we create this phonics workbook?

A significant amount of research shows that phonics instruction is the most effective way to teach students of any age to read. There are some high-quality research-based phonics programs available, but they can be expensive, and often require extensive teacher training. Meanwhile, Adult Basic Education includes many volunteers and teachers with little training in teaching reading — especially phonics. These teachers often know that their adult students would benefit from phonics instruction but are not sure where to begin.

We created this book to meet the need for an easy-to-use phonics program that caters to the needs of adult English language learners. We know that it is important for students to build their understanding of the English code letter by letter so they can see their progress and gain confidence in their reading abilities. We know that teachers and students benefit from routine activities that simplify the work of teaching and learning.

Who is this workbook for?

Phonics Workbook 1 was created for students, teachers, and tutors of low-literacy adult English language learners (ELLs). It may also be suitable for teachers of adolescents. Adolescent and adult ELLs may have had limited or interrupted formal education, and may be learning to read for the first time in their lives. This workbook is flexible enough to use in a large classroom setting, for small group pull-out work, and for one-on-one tutoring.

Every lesson begins with review of the letters and sounds that were previously taught. This format allows teachers to backtrack, start over, or skip ahead, based on their observations of student work. In some cases, it may make sense to divide students into two or more groups for phonics instruction.

Building phonics instruction into current classroom work

Phonics Workbook 1 is designed as a stand-alone resource. Teachers and students can work through the letters and sounds at a pace that is right for them. Here are a few ways *Phonics Workbook 1* can be included in regular instruction:

- **DAILY “PHONICS TIME”** — 20-30 minutes of whole group instruction. Teach the workbook sequentially and review previously taught material every day.
- **PHONICS PULL-OUT SESSIONS** — 20-30 minutes of small group or one-on-one instruction led by a teaching assistant or volunteer for students who need the most basic phonics skills.
- **“FILL IN THE GAPS”** — For learners who are already reading but make consistent errors with certain letters, select pages from the workbook to address those letter sounds.

Features of *English Unlocked: Phonics Workbook 1*

Daily routine: *Phonics Workbook 1* provides a phonics routine that offers predictability for learners. When learners can anticipate what is coming, they can concentrate on the task at hand — the learning of letters and sounds — rather than struggling to understand unfamiliar instructions.

Multi-sensory approach: Research shows using multiple senses during phonics instruction is more effective. In *Phonics Workbook 1*, students practice tracing and writing letters, as well as pronouncing letter names and sounds. Many of the activities connect physical hand and arm movement with hearing and saying the sounds and words.

“Assist and Challenge” tips: Throughout the workbook there are tips to help teachers adjust the difficulty of the tasks. The “Assist” tips provide ideas when learners are struggling with a task and need extra support before moving on. “Challenge” tips are for students who are ready to deepen their learning.

Integration of sight words: Sight words are words that learners should be able to read at a glance, or “on sight”. Sight words are often the small words that hold a sentence together, and thus learning sight words helps beginning readers read faster and with more fluency. Some sight words are decodable, meaning they can be “sounded out” phonetically (him, it, on). Other sight words cannot be sounded out by saying the sound of each letter (are, is, the). Both types of sight words are included in the workbook.

Is this a complete reading curriculum?

Phonics Workbook 1 is not a comprehensive phonics or reading program. Instead, it is an approachable resource to help teachers confidently begin teaching some phonics right away.

The activities in this workbook are intended to supplement other reading or language learning instruction. Decoding words is just one of several skills that go into becoming a skilled reader. Additional work in vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension is necessary.

Thank you for using *Phonics Workbook 1*. We have been delighted by the results while testing these activities with adult English Language Learners in our classrooms. We wish you and your students great success.

RESOURCE

McShane, S. (2005). *Applying research in reading instruction for adults: First steps for teachers*. Washington, D.C. National Institute for Literacy/The Partnership for Reading.

Phonics Routine Overview

Detailed teacher instructions begin on page 8.

**START
HERE
EVERY
DAY**

REVIEW & REINFORCE

Review previously taught sounds.

1. Letter + Sound: flashcards review.
2. Letter formation: choose from the writing menu on page 8 of the teacher instructions.

The screenshot shows a worksheet page with the following content:

- Section 1: What sound?** Includes a picture of a sun with the word 'sun' written below it, and a box containing the letters 'Ss'. A 'COMPLETED' checkbox is checked.
- Section 2: Write** Includes a handwriting practice box with a dotted line and a house-shaped outline. A 'COMPLETED' checkbox is unchecked.
- Section 3: Listen and repeat** Includes 'Yes' and 'No' options with thumbs up and thumbs down icons respectively. A 'COMPLETED' checkbox is unchecked.

Page number '4' is in the bottom left corner, and 'ENGLISH UNLOCKED' is in the bottom right corner.

1. What sound?

Allow students to associate the word with the picture. Practice the letter sound.

2. Write

Coach students to write the letters using the house metaphor to create proper letter sizes. Students can repeat letters using the blank Handwriting House worksheet on page 31.

3. Listen and repeat

Assess students' listening skills as they listen for the target sound at the beginning of words. The teacher scripts begin on page 20.

Phonics Workbook 1 UNIT 1

4 Blend the sounds

1.

	a	d
--	---	---

2.

s	a	d
---	---	---

3.

d	a	d
---	---	---

5 Listen and write

1. a _ _ 2. s _ _ _ 3. d _ _ _

6 Read

1. ad 2. sad 3. dad

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4. Blend the sounds

Follow teacher instructions to make each letter sound and encourage students to follow along using hand and arm movements to sound out the letters.

5. Listen and write

Students practice writing the letters and sounds from *Activity 4*.

6. Read

Students show understanding of letters and sounds. Encourage students to read along with you as you enunciate the sounds of the letters and the words.

Phonics Workbook 1 UNIT 1 REVIEW

7 Circle and write

1. pat pit

2. top tip

3. sat sit

4. pat pit

5. sap sip

6. sag sit

7. _ _ _ _

8. _ _ _ _

9. _ _ _ _

10. _ _ _ _

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7. Circle and write

Distinguish between recently learned sounds. Write recently learned letters. Teacher scripts begin on page 25.

Phonics Workbook 1 UNIT 1 REVIEW

8 Copy the words

1. ad <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	9. tip <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>
2. sad <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	10. pat <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>
3. dad <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	11. pit <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>
4. gap <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	12. sat <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>
5. gas <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	13. sit <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>
6. sag <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	
7. sap <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	
8. tap <input style="width: 60px;" type="text"/>	

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8. Copy the words

Practice writing recently learned letters in words.

Phonics Workbook 1 UNIT 1 REVIEW

10 Copy and read

1. ad sad dad

2. gap gas sag sap

3. tap pat sat

4. tip pit sit

5. sad sap dad gap

6. pit pat sit sat

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Phonics Workbook 1 UNIT 1 REVIEW

9 Read (word families)

-ad	-ap	-at	-it
sad	gap	pat	pit
dad	sap	sat	sit
	tap		

Sight Words

a to is

and at it

the

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9. Read (word families)

Read lists of words to show knowledge of letter sounds and sound blending. When ready, add reading sight words.

10. Copy and read

Practice reading and writing lists of recently learned words.

**PICK UP
WHERE
CLASS
STOPPED**

Workbook Activities

To practice new letters and sounds: pick up where the class left off in their workbooks, even if this is in the middle of a page.

Use the completion boxes after each activity in the student workbook to track progress.

ACTIVITY 1

1

What sound?



Ss

COMPLETED


What sound?

Introduce letter names and sounds.


1. Read the activity title as you point to it: "What sound?"
2. Point to the letter: "This is the letter S. The letter S says /s/."
3. "Repeat with me. S says /s/. S says /s/. S says /s/."
4. Point to the picture: "What is this? This is the sun."
5. "Sun begins with /s/."
6. "Repeat with me. Sun begins with /s/. Sun begins with /s/."
7. Review by holding up a letter card, or point to the letter in the workbook. "What's the letter name? What's the sound?"
8. Check the completion box ().


Pronounce carefully to avoid adding a vowel sound to consonants. "T says /t/" is preferable to "T says 'tuh'." This helps later when blending sounds to form words.

ACTIVITY 3



Listen and repeat

Yes 

No 

COMPLETED

Listen and repeat

Listen for the target sound at the **beginning** of words **only**.

1. Read the activity title as you point to it: *"Listen and repeat."*
2. *"Listen. I will read words. Listen for the sound, /s/. Does this word begin with the sound /s/?"*
3. Model a thumbs up for *yes* and a thumbs down for *no*.
4. For each word in the script:
 - A:** Say the first word on the list slowly, several times (*"sit," "sit," "sit"*).
 - B:** *"Listen for the sound /s/. Does this word begin with /s/?"*
 - C:** Pause for learners to think and respond with thumb up or down.
 - D:** Confirm the answer and say, *"Yes! Sit begins with /s/"* or *"No, gas does not begin with /s/"*.
 - E:** Repeat with the remaining words on the list.
5. Pay attention to difficult words. Repeat them before moving on.
6. *"Repeat after me."* Go back through the word list. One word at a time, say aloud only the words with the target sound. Students repeat after you.

WORD LISTS
Word list scripts
begin on page 20.

ASSIST: Tap the sounds in the word on your arm. Start at your shoulder and work down to your fingers:

- *"/s/"* [tap shoulder]
- *"/i/"* [brush down arm]
- *"/t/"* [hand at your fingers]

Students repeat with you, emphasizing the beginning sound at the shoulder. For words that have more than three sounds, split the middle sounds in the middle of your arm.

CHALLENGE: Read the pairs of words, some with the same target sound and some without. *"Do these words begin with the same sound?"* Challenge word lists begin on page 20 of the *Teacher Instructions*.