

# Using Sound Boxes to Teach Phonemic Awareness and Spelling by Mapping Sounds to Print

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Young students need instruction in **phonemic awareness**. Older students who have not mastered those competencies may need PA instruction as well.

Teach *students of all ages to map sounds to print*.

# Phonemic Awareness

- Phonemes: The *individual sounds* that make up speech.
- Awareness of the individual sounds in spoken words. Demonstrated by manipulating sounds in words.
- HIGHLY predictive of *successful reading acquisition*.
- *Connect PA activities to letters through sound-to-print mapping*



# Explicitly Teach the Routine

Arrange three plastic disks above a set of three sound boxes.

## **MODEL/DEMONSTRATE**

My turn! Watch me.

My word is *man*. What word? Students repeat.

I'm going to say the word slowly and smoothly and pull down one disk for each sound in *man*. Listen and watch! I'll pull down the sounds in *man*!

Say **mmmmaaaaaannnn**. Use one pointer finger to pull down one disk into each box at *exactly* the same time as you say its sound. Don't break between the sounds.

Run you finger under the boxes and say the whole word: *man*

# Explicitly Teach the Routine

Pass out student materials.

## **GUIDED PRACTICE**

**Do it with me!** Teacher stretches the word orally with the students and watches them move their disks. Correct errors. Model/demonstrate again as much as needed. Be sure students are saying the word smoothly, with a minimum or no silence between the sounds.

## **INDEPENDENT PRACTICE**

**Your turn!** Have each student stretch the word alone, moving the disks into the boxes as you watch and provide feedback.

When students have learned the routine, give each student a different word. They should learn to apply the task to words that have not been previously modeled.

# Using Sound Boxes To Teach Spelling

- Use **only words with sound-spellings** the students have been taught!
- There will be **one box for each sound, NOT** for each letter in the word.
- Use the sound boxes to teach students that sounds can be spelled using different patterns to arrive at correctly spelled words.
- This is *not* an "**invented spelling**" activity. The goal is to teach sound-spelling patterns, and the result should be a **correctly spelled word**.

How many sounds? How many boxes will you need? (ONE box for each sound!)

m	a	n
---	---	---

man

sh	i	p
----	---	---

ship (consonant digraphs make **one** sound)

f	l	i	p
---	---	---	---

flip (you hear **each** sound in a consonant blend)

s	l	i	pp	er
---	---	---	----	----

slipper

eigh	t
------	---

eight

c	r	a	t
---	---	---	---

 e

crate

p	ea	ch
---	----	----

peach

th	ough	t
----	------	---

thought

Put final silent e outside the boxes to show it does not make a sound but is part of the spelling. It doesn't work to put a\_e inside one box!

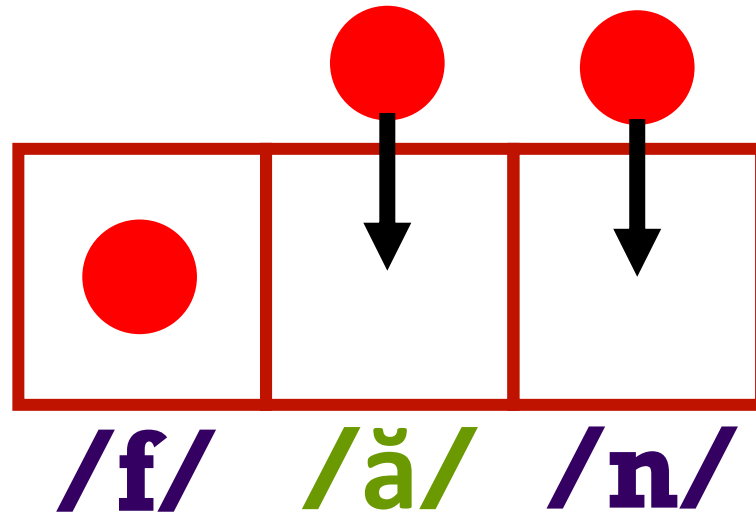
# Progression of Sound Box Activities

1. Phonemic awareness oral activity
  - a. Use **plastic disks** to represent sounds
  - b. Start with 2 or 3-phoneme words with **continuous sounds** (sounds you can hold without distortion, including the vowels and *m, s, f, n, l, r, v, z*)
  - c. One **SOUND** per box
  - d. Students say the sounds and pull down one disk for each sound.
  - e. Students run their fingers under the boxes and say the whole word.
2. Mapping sounds to print oral activity
  - a. Use only words with letter-sounds **that have been taught**.
  - b. Substitute **magnetic letters or letter tiles** for one or more of the sounds.
  - c. Arrange the correct letters above the boxes.
  - d. Students pull **magnetic letters into the boxes** while saying the sounds.



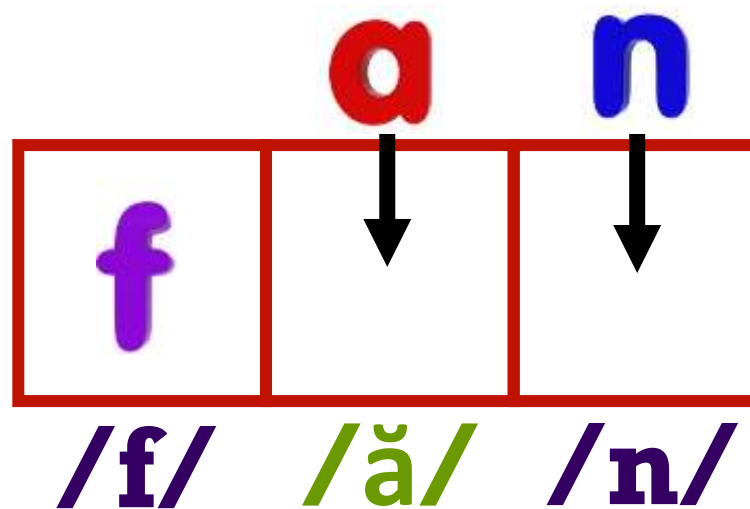
# Sound Boxes: Mapping Sounds to Print

Pull down the sounds in “fan”.



Start with disks to focus attention on sounds

Pull down the sounds in “fan”.



Use letters

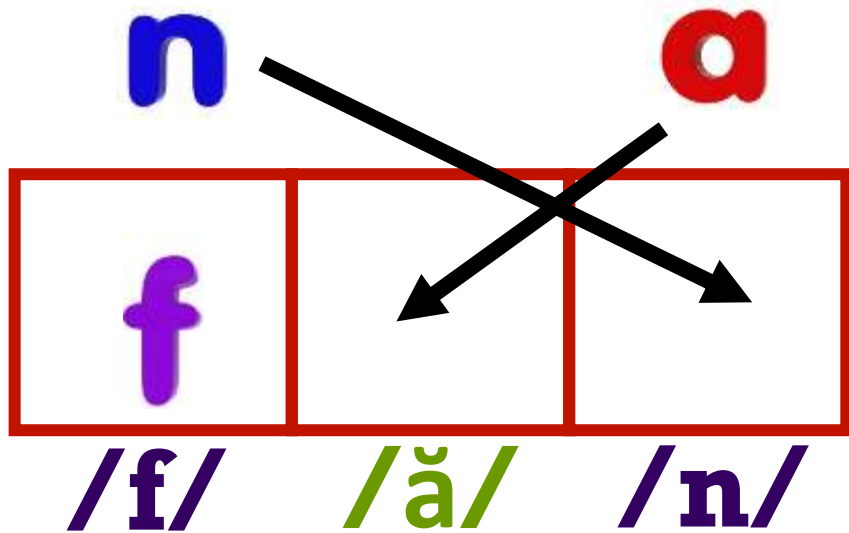
# Progression of Sound Box Activities

## 3. Mix up the magnetic letters

- a. Use ONLY words with letter-sounds **that have been taught**.
- b. Put the required letters to spell the word above the boxes, but put them **out of order**.
- c. Students pull down the sounds into the boxes but must figure out which letter goes in which box.
- d. They pull the selected letters into the boxes while saying the sounds, then run their fingers under the word and say the whole word.

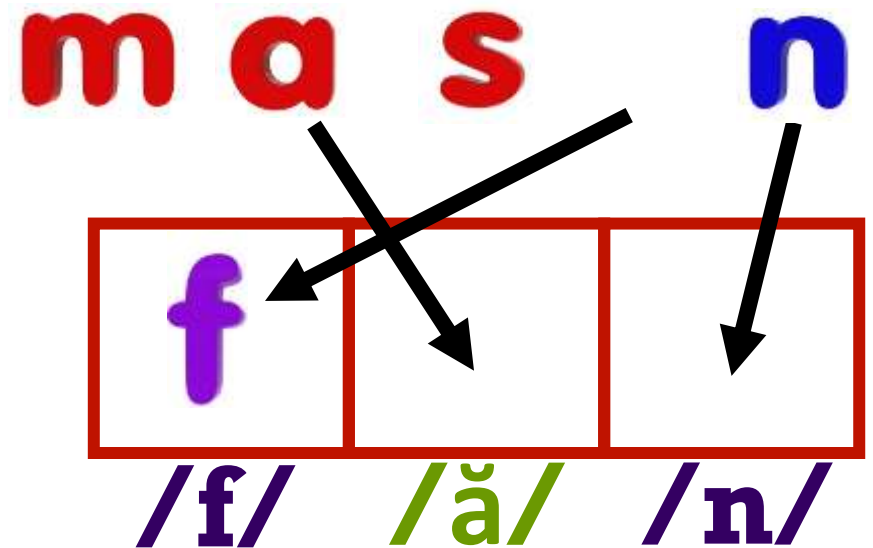
## 4. Add extra magnetic letters

- a. Use ONLY words with letter-sounds **that have been taught**.
- b. Put the required letters to spell the word above the boxes, but mix them up and add 2 or 3 *other* letters that are not in the word.
- c. Students must select from the letters to spell the word. They pull the selected letters into the boxes while saying the sounds, then run their fingers under the word and say the whole word.



Pull down the sounds in “fan”.  
Now find the letters to spell “fan”.  
Say the sounds and pull down the letters.

Run you finger under the boxes and read the whole word.



# Progression of Sound Box Activities

## 5. Sound Box Spelling

- a. Use **ONLY** words with letter-sounds that have been taught.
- b. **This is not an "invented spelling" activity.** The goal is to teach sound-spelling patterns, and the result should be a **correctly spelled word.**
- c. There are **NO** disks or magnetic letters. Students say the sounds as they pull down the sounds **using their fingertips.**
- d. Students **write** each letter (or letter combination if 2 or more letters work together to spell the sound) in a box.
- e. Students run their fingers under the boxes and say the whole word.
- f. Students cover the boxes and say the sounds in the word as they spell the word on the line next to the boxes.
- g. Students uncover the boxes next to the word and **check to be sure they spelled the word correctly.**

# Sound Box Spelling

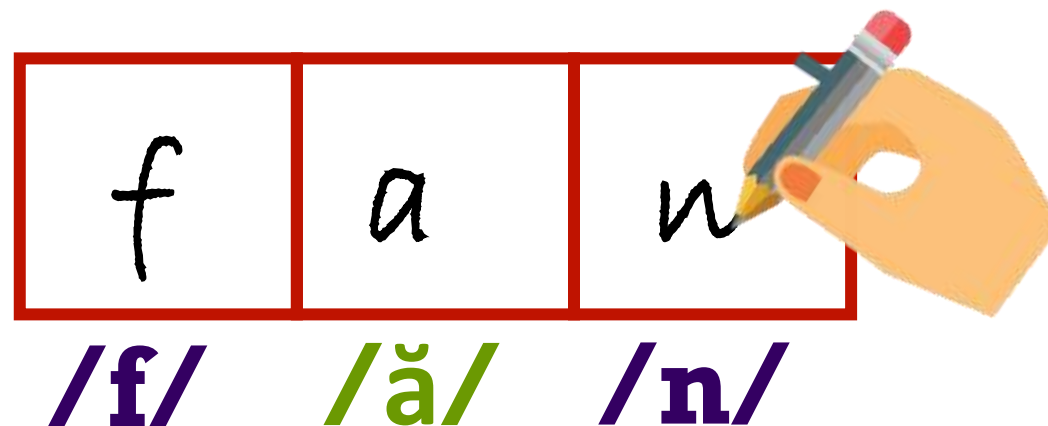
The word is *fan*. What word? Students: *fan*

Pull down the sounds in *fan*.

What do you hear in the first box? Students: /f/

Write the letter in the box.

What do you hear in the next box? (etc.)



# Sound Box Spelling



2  
sounds

--	--

---

---

---

3  
sounds

sh	í	p
----	---	---

---

---

---

ship

4  
sounds

--	--	--	--

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---

---

5  
sounds

--	--	--	--	--

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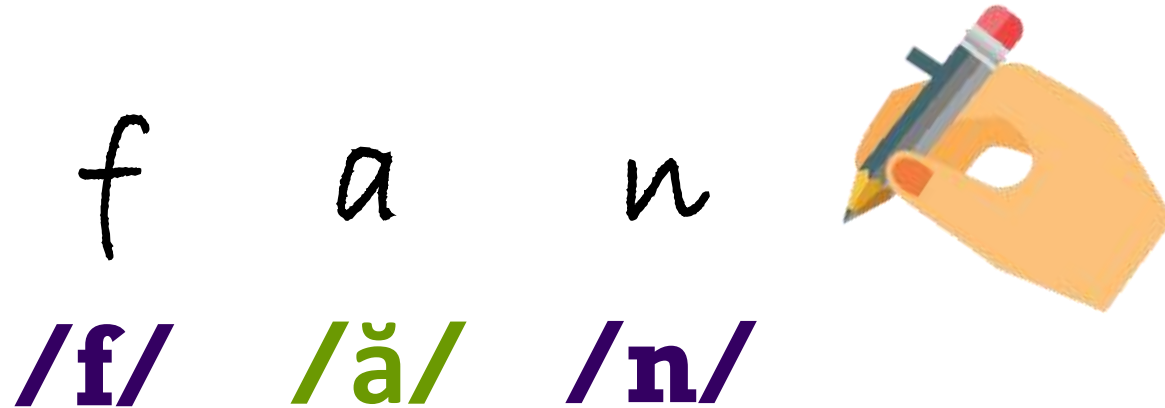
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The word is *ship*. Stretch *ship*. How many sounds are there? Students: 3  
How many boxes do you need? (3). Find the row with 3 boxes.  
Now pull down the sounds in *ship* and write the letters.

Listen and Spell : Mapping Sounds to Print  
(use words with letters or letter combinations  
students have learned)



*Say the sounds* as you write the letters (No boxes).

This is **not an "invented spelling" activity**. The goal is to teach sound-spelling patterns, and the result should be a correctly spelled word.

**SOUND BOXES**

m	y		
v	a	n	
w	i	ll	
th	i	s	
j	u	s	t
y	e	ll	
e	gg		
s	o	ck	
p	ar	k	
w	i	sh	
h	er		
b	o	x	
sh	e		
ch	i	p	
m	ee	t	
n	ow		
c	oa	t	
p	ai	n	t
s	t	r	ay
g	ir	l	
h	ur	t	
f	or		
m	oo	n	
qu	i	ck	
b	oo	k	
c	a	k	e
t	r	ee	
P	e	t	e
ea	t		
ou	t		
s	n	ow	
n	igh	t	
P	au	l	
s	t	r	aw
sh	ou	t	
m	all		
n	ew		
f	oi	l	
b	oy		
t	a	b	le
b	a	b	y
kn	ow		
th	ough	t	



# Sound Box Spelling

1. 

--	--	--

2. 

--	--	--

3. 

--	--	--	--

4. 

--	--	--	--

5. 

--	--	--	--

6. 

--	--	--	--

7. 

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8. 

--	--	--	--	--

9. 

--	--	--	--	--



# WRITE **BIG** WORDS

**1. Say the word and tap the chunks.**



**2. Write the first chunk.  
Stretch and spell if needed.**

**3. Tap the word again and listen for the next chunk.  
Write the chunk.**

**4. If there are more chunks, write them.**

**5. Read the word. Make sure it looks right.**

