

Skills Guide

1. **Letter Groups.** Students learn the name, sound, and upper- and lowercase formation of each letter. Five key words are used to help students remember the five short sounds of the vowels: *a* - at, *e* - Ed, *o* - odd, *u* - up, *i* - it.

Letter Group #1: B, F, D, G, A

Letter Group #2: H, J, L, M, E

Letter Group #3: N, P, R, S, O

Letter Group #4: T, V, W, X, Y, U

Letter Group #5: C, K, Q, Z, I

2. **Slide.** A consonant is added to the beginning of a vowel to form a new sound. A slide arrow is used to show that the two letters slide together. All vowels have the short sound. ba le ro tu zi

3. **Three-letter Words.** After the letters and sounds are learned in each section, students add a final consonant to form three-letter real and nonsense words. An X is placed under the vowel to identify it. bag yes rob hut sit

4. **Blends.** A blend is two or three consonants standing together, each keeping its own sound. The blends may be pronounced with a schwa sound in isolation.

6 L-blends: bl cl fl gl pl sl

7 R-blends: br er dr fr gr pr tr

8 Two-letter S-blends: sc sk sl sm sn sp st sw

5 Three-letter S-blends: scr spr str squ spl

2 Extra blends: dw tw

5. **Special Vowel Combinations.** Vowels with double *l*, *ng*, or *nk* at the end of short words.

ball tell doll gull pill

hang song lung ring

tank honk bunk wink

6. **Long and Short Vowels.** Students learn the long sounds of the vowels and review the short sounds of the vowels. The name of the vowel is the long sound and the sound of the vowel the is short ound. Diacritical markings are used to distinguish between long and short vowels. ā ē ō ū ī ă ĕ ĭ ŏ ĭ

7. **Phonetic Skill #1** (one guardian) - When the vowel is followed by one guardian (or consonant), the vowel is short. A guardian star is placed over the guardian consonant. mĕt sĭp băt cŏp sŭn

8. **Phonetic Skill #2** (two guardians) - When the vowel is followed by two guardians (or consonants), the vowel is short. A guardian star is placed over each guardian consonant. jŭmp hĕlp mĭst căst pŏnd

9. **Phonetic Skill #3** (vowel stands alone) - When a vowel stands alone at the end of a word, the vowel is long. gō nō hī wē mē

10. **Phonetic Skill #4** (silent E) - When *e* appears at the end of word, it is silent and makes the first vowel long. căke stŏve cŭbe lĭke măke

11. **Phonetic Skill #5** (adjacent vowels) - When a word has adjacent vowels, the second vowel is silent, and the first vowel is long.

gŏat dăy tĭe răin mĕăt tŏe

The most common adjacent vowels are: *ai*, *ea*, *oa*, *ui*, *ay*, *ee*, *oe*, *ue*, and *ie*.

12. **CE/CI -- GE/GI.** These are also called rainbow-*s* and rainbow-*j* sounds, or the soft sound of *C* and *G*. făcĕ cĭtĕ gĕm stăgeĭ

13. **Adding Endings -ing, -er, -ed, and -est.** In Phonetic Skills #1 and #2, there should always be two consonants at the end of a word before adding the endings (i.e. running; jumping). In Phonetic Skill #3 words, just add the ending (i.e. going). In Phonetic Skill #4 words, drop the silent *e* and add the ending (i.e. taking). If a rainbow-*s* and rainbow-*j* comes at the end of the word, use the silent *e* rule with the ending -ing; with all other endings the silent *e* should remain while the ending is added.

running jumping going
 taking dancing

14. CK, K, and KE at the End of Words.

- When the first vowel is long, the ending will be KE. $\bar{c}a\bar{k}e$
- When the sound follows phonetic skill #5, the ending will be K. $\bar{o}a\bar{k}$
- When the first vowel is short, the ending will be CK. $\bar{l}i\bar{c}k$
- When the sound follows a murmur diphthong or a special vowel sound, the ending will be K. $\bar{l}u\bar{r}k$ $\bar{h}a\bar{w}k$
- When there are two more syllables, the ending of the syllable will be a C. $\bar{a}\bar{t}\bar{l}\bar{a}\bar{n}\bar{t}\bar{i}\bar{c}$

15. Many Jobs of Y.

Y says its consonant sound when it comes at the beginning of the word.

$\bar{y}\bar{e}\bar{s}$

Y acts as a vowel when it comes anywhere else in the word. Use the five phonetic skills to determine the sound of the vowel y.

Y says short i when it has one or two guardians following it.

$\bar{m}\bar{y}\bar{t}\bar{h}$

Y says long i when it is the only working vowel in the word, as a silent e, or comes at the end of the word.

$\bar{t}\bar{y}\bar{p}\bar{e}$ $\bar{m}\bar{y}$

Y says no sound when it is the adjacent vowel, such as ay (day) and ey (key).

$\bar{d}\bar{a}\bar{y}$

Y says long e when it comes after another working vowel.

$\bar{l}\bar{a}\bar{d}\bar{y}$

16. **Decoding Skill #1** (one guardian goes on) - Mark the words left to right. Look at the first vowel. How many guardians follow it? If there is only one guardian, it moves to the next syllable. Then mark each syllable using the five phonetic skills.

$\bar{m}\bar{o}\bar{t}\bar{e}\bar{l}$ $\bar{s}\bar{t}\bar{u}\bar{d}\bar{e}\bar{n}\bar{t}$ $\bar{o}\bar{p}\bar{e}\bar{n}$

17. **Decoding Skill #2** (two guardians split) - Mark the word left to right. Look at the first vowel. How many guardians follow it? If there are two, they will split. The first will go with the first vowel; the second will move on with the second vowel. Mark each syllable using the five phonetic skills.

$\bar{i}\bar{n}\bar{d}\bar{e}\bar{n}\bar{t}$ $\bar{c}\bar{a}\bar{m}\bar{p}\bar{u}\bar{s}$ $\bar{n}\bar{a}\bar{p}\bar{k}\bar{i}\bar{n}$

18. **Murmur Diphthongs** (R-controlled vowels). Each vowel can have the consonant r following. When this happens, the vowel sound will change: ar will say the consonant r sound; or says the sound of the short word 'or'; er, ir, and ur all share the same sound.

$\bar{s}\bar{t}\bar{a}\bar{r}\bar{t}$ $\bar{h}\bar{o}\bar{r}\bar{n}$ $\bar{h}\bar{e}\bar{r}$ $\bar{b}\bar{i}\bar{r}\bar{d}$ $\bar{c}\bar{u}\bar{r}\bar{b}$

19. **Digraphs** (two consonants that stand together but make only one sound). The digraphs ch, sh, wh, th (voiceless), and th (voiced) make new sounds, while the digraphs ph, gn, kn, wr, and ck make the sound of the consonants, /f/, /n/, /n/, /r/, and /k/, respectively.

$\bar{c}\bar{h}\bar{u}\bar{r}\bar{c}\bar{h}$ $\bar{f}\bar{i}\bar{s}\bar{h}$ $\bar{w}\bar{h}\bar{i}\bar{t}\bar{e}$ $\bar{t}\bar{h}\bar{i}\bar{n}$ $\bar{t}\bar{h}\bar{a}\bar{t}$
 $\bar{p}\bar{h}\bar{o}\bar{n}\bar{e}$ $\bar{g}\bar{n}\bar{a}\bar{t}$ $\bar{k}\bar{n}\bar{i}\bar{t}$ $\bar{w}\bar{r}\bar{i}\bar{t}\bar{e}$ $\bar{t}\bar{r}\bar{u}\bar{c}\bar{k}$

20. **Special Vowel Sounds** (two vowels that stand together to make a new vowel sound). There are four sets of special vowel sounds - au/aw, ou/ow, oi/oy, and oo (as in look)/oo (as in zoo).

$\bar{h}\bar{a}\bar{u}\bar{l}$ $\bar{l}\bar{a}\bar{w}\bar{n}$ $\bar{p}\bar{r}\bar{o}\bar{u}\bar{d}$ $\bar{b}\bar{r}\bar{o}\bar{w}\bar{n}$ $\bar{t}\bar{o}\bar{i}\bar{l}$ $\bar{b}\bar{o}\bar{y}$ $\bar{s}\bar{h}\bar{o}\bar{o}\bar{k}$ $\bar{z}\bar{o}\bar{o}\bar{m}$