

# The Building Blocks of Reading Course Sample Package

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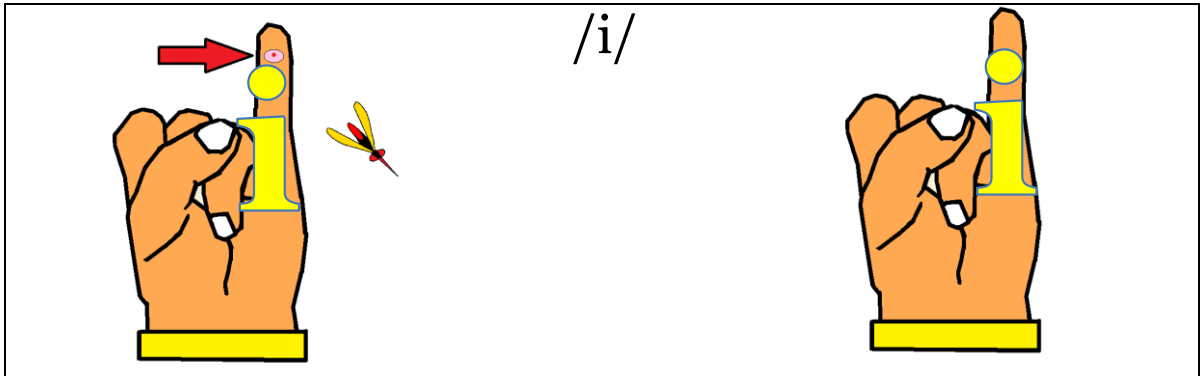
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# /i/ in it's itchy = i



**/i/** it's itchy It's an itchy, infected finger insects irritate.  
List of /i/ words: **it's itchy**, **it**, **igloo**, **in**, **if**, **ill**, **important**,  
**influenza**, **instead**, **instantly**, **inside**, **internet**, **crystal**,  
**bicycle**, **syrup**, **biscuit**, **captain**



i

i

in

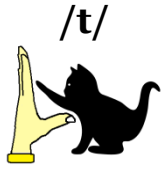
inn



nn

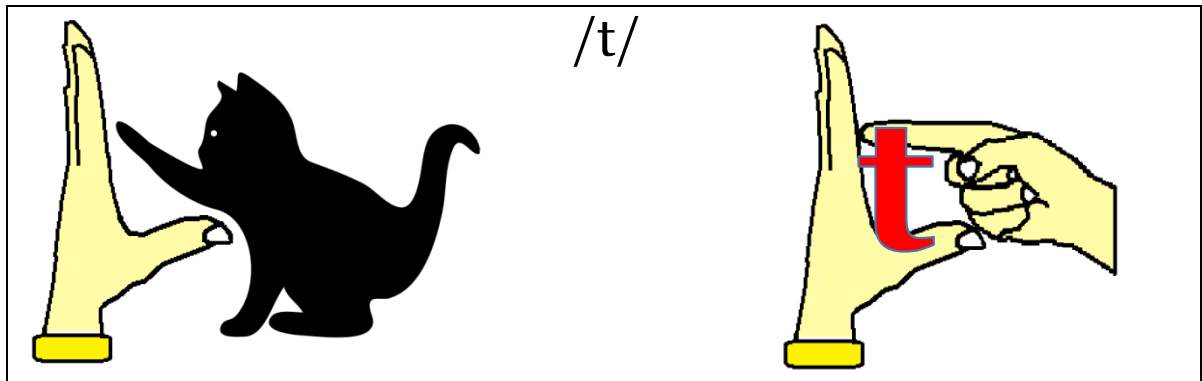
Now add this Rule Flashcard to your pile of daily flashcards. Rule: Double letters are only said once.

# /t/ in touch = t



touch Tasmanian tigers touch type.

List of /t/ words: touch, table, towel, tadpole, tooth, telescope, television, test, term, ticket, bit, cat, pecked, locked, Thomas, Kathmandu



t

t

it

tin

nit

tint

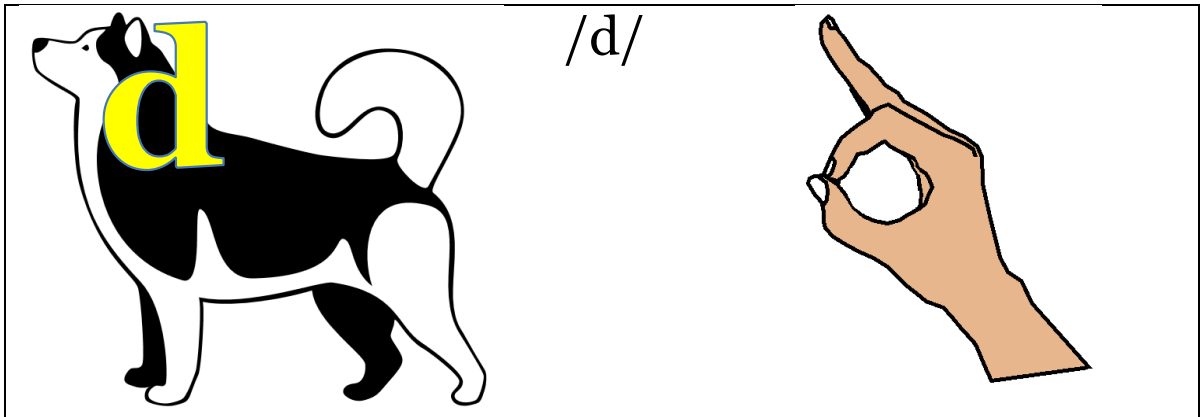
# /d/ in dog = d



**dog** Dogs **dress** **delightfully**.

List of /d/ words: **dog**, **d**ash, **D**almatian, **d**awn, **d**aylight, **d**irection, **d**emolish, **d**en, **d**ifferent, **mud**, **f**ed, **t**inned, **g**rinned, **o**pened

You might prefer to make the straight part of this hand sign with your pointer finger, and the circle with your other fingers.



d

d

did

din

dint

dit

# /s/ in snake = s

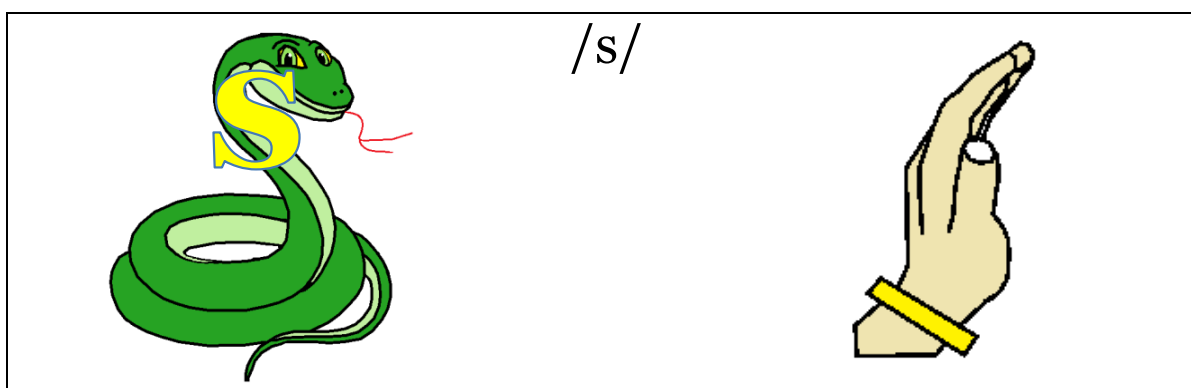


/s/

snake Six snakes slide and skid.

List of /s/ words: **s**nake, **s**andwich, **s**ausage roll, **s**aw, **s**ay, **s**ea, **s**entence, **s**ee, **s**even, **s**ip, **s**keleton, **s**lips, **s**tamps, **s**lice, **s**cience, **s**tencil, **s**muscle, **s**fancy, **s**spicy, **s**scissors

The curve of the hand sign is similar to the curve of the snake's neck.



S

S

its

sit

tints

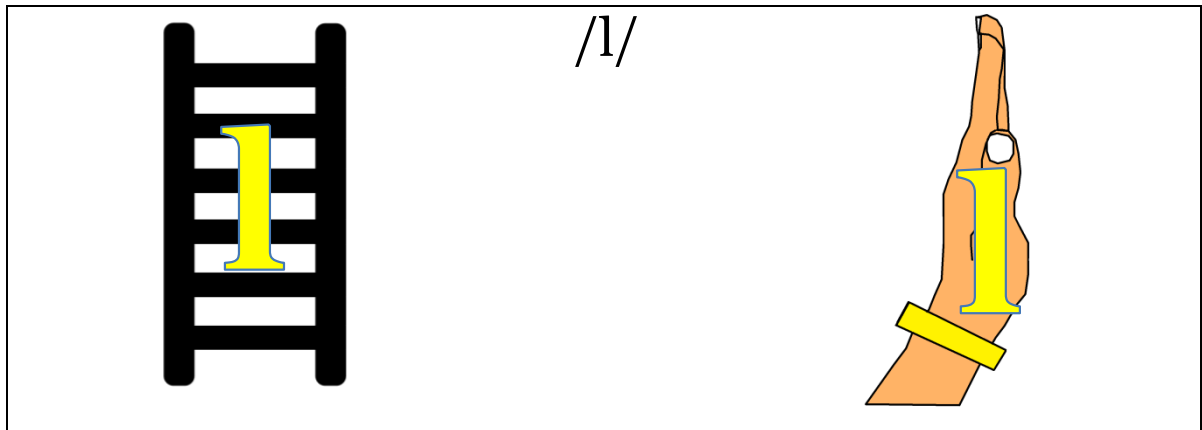
stint

# /l/ in ladder = l

/l/  


ladder Little lambs love ladders.

List of /l/ words: ladder, laptop, lamp, lady, letter box, light, late, lunch, tall, fill, table, wobble



l

l

ill

lid

till

lit

lilt

sill

tilt

stilts

list

still

slit

lists



# Comprehension Lesson 1



sit



in



list



lid



tin



ill

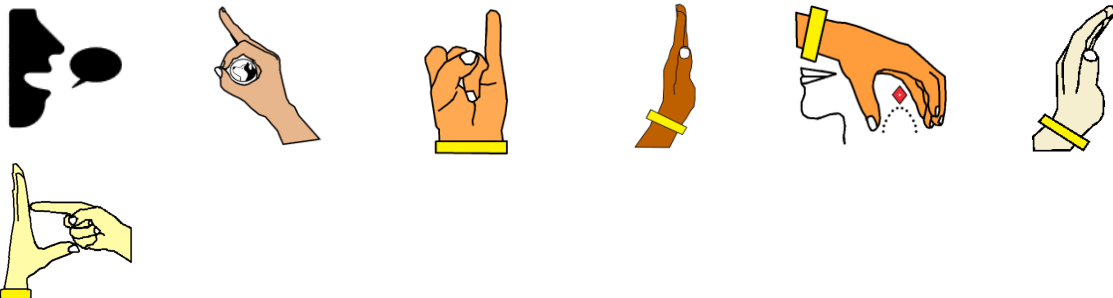


stilts



tint

The student is to start at the left, sounding each word out aloud. Students are to point to the correct picture. Make sure students are clear about which picture they're pointing to. PURPOSE: To check comprehension of single words



**The open mouth icon means:** What should you say when you see these signs? The teacher points to the hand sign pictures.

PURPOSE: To check students know the sound for each hand sign

**The open mouth mini icon means:** Here are the answers.



/d/

/i/

/l/

/n/

/s/



it sits

## Comprehension Lesson 1 continued



its still



it tilts



it did it

PURPOSE: To check sentence comprehension



/l/

/d/

/s/

/t/

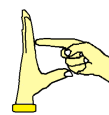
/i/

/n/

**The hand means:** What is the hand sign for each of these sounds? The teacher says the sounds, and sees that the student makes the correct hand sign.

PURPOSE: To check students know the hand sign for each sound.


**The mini hand means:** Here are the answers.



The black and white icons in this course come from [www.thenounproject.com](http://www.thenounproject.com)

# The Flashcards


<p>d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>/d/ in <b>dog</b></p>
----------	-----------------------------------

<p> i</p>	<p>i</p> <p>/i/ in <b>It's</b> /ie/ in <b>Ivan (who)</b> Foreign /ee/ in <b>skis</b> Foreign /y/ in <b>brilliantly.</b></p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>l</p>	<p>l</p> <p>/l/ <b>ladder</b></p>
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## Flashcards continued

<p>n</p>	<p>n</p> <p>/n/ in necklace</p>
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<p>s</p> 	<p>s</p> <p>(The) /s/ in snake's /z/ in his!</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------


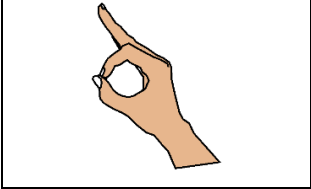
<p>t</p>	<p>t</p> <p>/t/ in touch</p>
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## The Rule Card

 <p data-bbox="416 344 564 414"><b>nn</b></p>	<p data-bbox="1050 344 1106 376"><b>nn</b></p> <p data-bbox="815 427 1345 506"><b>Double letters are only said once.</b></p>
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# The Teaching Aids pages

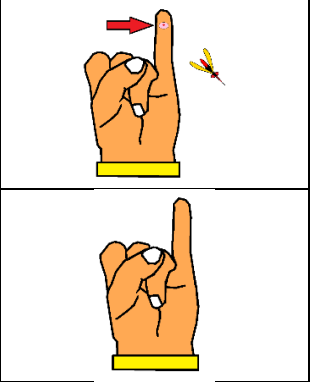
/d/ in **dog**

	/d/  d	d D  <b>dog</b>
		

d	d	d	d	d
---	---	---	---	---

# The Teaching Aids pages continued



## /i/ in **it's itchy**

	<p>/i/</p> <p>i</p>	<p>i I</p> <p><b>it's itchy</b></p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------------------

<p><b>i</b></p>	<p><b>i</b></p>	<p><b>i</b></p>	<p><b>i</b></p>	<p><b>i</b></p>
-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------

# The Teaching Aids pages continued

## /l/ in ladder

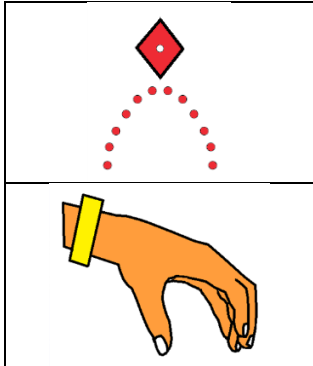
 	/l/  l	l L  ladder
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------	-------------------

l	l	l	l	l
---	---	---	---	---



# The Teaching Aids pages continued



## /n/ in necklace

	/n/  n	n N  <b>necklace</b>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------	----------------------------

n	n	n	n	n
---	---	---	---	---

# The Teaching Aids pages continued

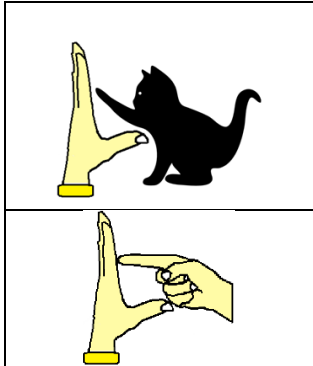
/s/ in **snake**

	/s/  s	s S  snake
		

S	S	S	S	S
---	---	---	---	---

# The Teaching Aids pages continued

/t/ in **touch**

	<p>/t/  t</p>	<p>t T  touch</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

t	t	t	t	t
---	---	---	---	---

# Before Teaching a Lesson

I've prepared some notes that will explain how you should prepare to teach reading.

## 1. Read all the work you think your student might complete

Many students do 2 pages a day, so be ready in case your student does that. You'll quickly work out the speed at which your student will progress.

Reading the work aloud is best, as it's easier to recognise the sounds when you hear them spoken. This will take 1 – 2 minutes per page. Remember to do the activities and practice the hand sign!

A very important reason for pre-reading the day's work is that you and I will pronounce some words differently, and you'll need to delete those words.

Rather than reading your student a word from the List of Words that doesn't use the sound the lesson teaches – just put a line through that word before beginning the lesson.

And rather than asking your student to read a word that doesn't illustrate the sound that's being taught, just put a line through that word before beginning the lesson.

## 2. Prepare the teaching aids

I'll show you how to do that in another video. This preparation will take just a few minutes. Preparing ahead like this leaves you and your student free to concentrate on getting through the work in the lesson.

## 3. Mark your left wrist and your student's left wrist

This is in preparation for using the hand signs. I explain more about them in the Phonemic Awareness Course videos.

# Reading Tasks List

In this article, I explain why I teach the way I do, and why it's a useful way for you to teach the same way.

There is a good reason why people are often overwhelmed when they are learning to read. And it's not really the number of tasks involved in reading that cause the problem.

The **real** problem is that humans have only a tiny amount of working memory available, and lots of memory power is needed in order to do all the tasks involved in reading.

But there's a way around this problem.

If you'll give your student access to a bit of your memory power, you can do the tasks he's not able to do yet. This will leave him free to concentrate on the first task he has to learn - sounding out accurately! You will do the remembering the sounds and saying the sounds more so that they're blended into a word.

When he's able to sound out well, he can take over more of the tasks, and you'll do less. And when he can sound out, blend, say the word, and know what word it is, he'll have learnt all the basic reading skills!

This is one of those situations where two heads really are better than one!

You can explain to your student that learning to read is difficult, so you're going to start by dividing the work between you.

In order to be able to read well, students need to be able to do all the following tasks:

Sound out the word

Remember the sounds they've sounded out

Say those sounds again, more rapidly so they can hear what the word is

And work out what the word means

I teach how to do all these tasks in the Phonemic Awareness Course.

## Reading Tasks continued

Once your child is able to do as many of these tasks as possible, he or she only has to learn the letters – and they do that in the Reading Course.

Explain to your student that he'll do 2 jobs, and you'll do 2 jobs.

His first job will be to:

1) sound out the letters correctly,

Your first job will be to:

1) check he's sounded out correctly,

Your second job will be to:

2) repeat exactly what he said **more quickly**.

His second job will be to:

2) listen to what you say, then **repeat what you say**.

(I'm wanting you to say “repeat exactly what he said more quickly” to let him know that's all blending is – without saying blending – because the word blending frightens lots of students who've had trouble learning to read!)

Doing things this way means that all he has to concentrate on the first time round is sounding out the letters correctly.

Then, his next job is to repeat exactly what you said. He only has to concentrate on one task at a time. It won't take long for him to be able to do more of the reading tasks, but one job at a time is enough for a very stressed person.

# Ways to Use the Hand Signs

I use the hand signs to help students:

- Learn the sound, and the letter for each sound;
- Orient each letter correctly;
- Differentiate between similar letters;
- ‘Write’ dictation, even if they can’t handwrite

## **Learn the sound, and the letter for each sound**

Using hand signs makes it easier for students to link a sound and a letter. Students who learn best by **doing** something, find hand signs particularly useful, so do visual learners.

## **Orient each letter correctly**

Hand signs help students orient each letter correctly, so students learn to face their letters in the correct direction. This stops students reversing letters.

## **Differentiate between similar letters**

Hand signs help students differentiate between similar letters. Letters b and d, and letters p and q are all the same shape, but the hand signs are very different, so they help reduce confusion.

## **‘Write’ dictation, even if they can’t handwrite**

With hand signs, students can ‘write’ dictation, even if they can’t handwrite yet. Once students have learnt a few letters, they can hand sign the sounds to show answers to questions such as: Hand sign the word “in” for me. This makes students think of the sounds, rather than concentrating on letter names.

## Ways to Use the Hand Signs continued

I also use the hand signs to help students:

- Let me know when they mean a sound they can't say;
- Remember the correct way to pronounce or write words they habitually get wrong; and
- Help students who have trouble hearing some sounds.

### **Let you know when they mean a sound they can't say**

Students can use hand signs to let you know when they mean a sound they can't say. For example, students who are trying to say snake, but can only say thnake, can use the /s/ hand sign to make sure you know they mean snake, and let you know they know the sound snake really starts with.

### **Remember the correct way to pronounce or write words they habitually get wrong**

The movements necessary to make hand signs can help students remember the correct way to pronounce or write words they habitually get wrong. Many people say the word crate, when they mean create. You can use hand signs to help people re-learn words so they pronounce them correctly.

### **Help students who have trouble hearing some sounds**

Hand signs can be used to help students who have trouble hearing some sounds. For example, students who are learning English often have trouble hearing the first sounds in **thirsty** and **there**. You can use hand signs to make totally clear to students which sound you mean.

Many students, including those who have hearing difficulties, often can't hear the final sound in a word, especially if it's a quiet sound. So they say: I use to go there, when they should say: I used to go there. You can use a hand sign to show each of the sounds in a word, so students can see when they've not noticed a sound.

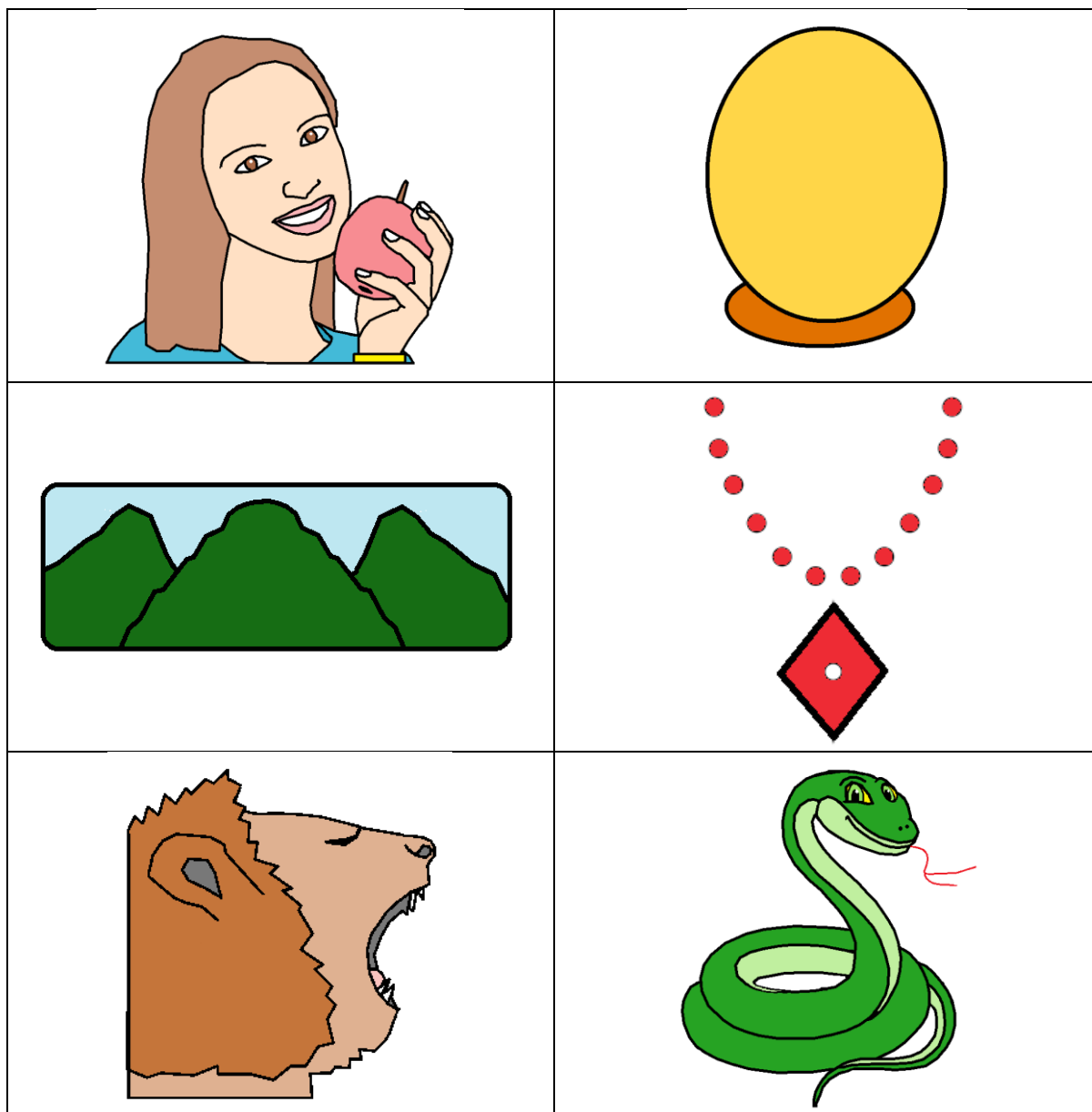
You're likely to invent additional ways to use the hand signs.



## How Written English Works Activity

After you and your student have watched the two videos that explain how written English works, you might like to do this optional activity. Only do it if you think it will help your student, AND your student wishes to do it.

Here are the 6 memory pictures used in these videos.



## How Written English Works Activity continued

Your student might like to sound out a few words you have written with these pictures. Or your student might even like to write a few words you've sounded out from the list of words below – then you could blend for your student, who could echo what you said.

am  
an  
man  
men  
ram  
ran  
sam

## Further Notes:

Once you have worked through the Phonemic Awareness Video Course and the Learning Letters videos, you'll know whether *The Building Blocks of Reading Course* would suit you and your student, or whether you'd prefer to go on to a different Phonics course.

If you'd like to do a different course, and you don't have a course yet – look at my Articles page, and scroll down to Courses. I list several courses there that all work. (I am not compensated in any way for recommending those courses; I recommend them because I know that one size doesn't fit everyone.

Best wishes,

Merrin