

Introduction to the Short Vowel Sounds

Levels 1-5

What is a short vowel sound? It is the vowel sound you hear when you read the words “cat”, “bed”, “dig”, “box”, and “fun”. If a vowel has a breve over the letter (ă, ě, ĭ, ֆ, ŭ), this indicates the letter makes the short vowel sound. This symbol is not commonly used, but it is helpful to know its meaning.

When reading the short vowel word “cat”, cover the letter after the “a” with your finger. Then, together with the student, blend the beginning letter with the “a” making the sound “că”. Then say, “Let’s add the sound of the last letter to see what the word is. ‘Că...t. Our cat is soft.’” This can be repeated with the other short vowels.

Introduction to the Long Vowel Sounds

Level 6

What is a long vowel sound? This is the vowel sound you hear when singing the traditional “A, B, C” song. A long vowel sound is also referred to as the vowel’s “name”. If a vowel has a straight line over the letter (ā, ē, ī, ō, ū), this indicates the letter makes the long vowel sound (it says its name). This symbol is called a macron. It is not commonly used, but it is helpful to know its meaning.

Two Vowel Rule - When two vowels are together in a word, the first vowel is a long vowel (it says its “name”) and the second vowel is silent. Examples are “sail”, “heat”, and “toad”.

Explain this new rule to the student. Then, cover the letter after the first vowel with your finger. Together with the student, blend the beginning letter(s) with the long vowel sound, for example “sā”. Then say, “Let’s add the sound of the last letter to see what the word is. “sā...l. It is fun to sail on the lake.”