SAMPLE LESSON

Phonics PLUS™

Designed Specifically for the 3 Tiers of RTI
Grades K–3

Level A: Lesson 23 (Short a)
UNIT 1 Lesson 23a

Ask Nat the Cat

Objectives
To decode short a words
To understand simple sentences

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

- Write Ask Nat the Cat on the board and circle the letter a in Ask, Nat, and Cat. Read the phrase, emphasizing the letter-sound relationships. Have children point to individual words as you read them.
- Help the children find page 48 in their books. Directions: If the answer to the question is yes, draw a smile on Nat the Cat’s face. If the answer to the question is no, draw a sad mouth on Nat’s face.
- Model the first one or two items for the class. Have children read the sentences independently. When the class has finished, discuss their responses and ask children to justify their answers.
- Call children’s attention to the punctuation mark at the end of each question. Remind children that these questions end with a question mark. Writers use this mark to let readers know they are asking a question.

Fluency
Have pairs of children read the sentences to one another for fluency practice.

Challenge
Write challenge questions on the board or on sentence strips. See if children can use letter-sound relationships and context to identify new words. For example:
Can a cat catch a rat?
Is a cat in the sand?
Can a cat have a mask?

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Reteach and Practice, p. 20
Learning Differences, p. 56
English Language Learners, p. 27

C E N T E R S

Reading
Prepare 3 x 3 Bingo cards. Write CVC words with short a in random order on the cards. Write the same words on index cards. Have players...
**Lesson 23b**

**Short a Word Wall**

**Objectives**
- To practice reading short a words with automaticity
- To write additional short a words

**Direct Instruction**
- Tell children that this activity involves their own personal Word Wall of short a words. Explain that they are going to work on reading these words as quickly and accurately as they can.
- Help the children find page 49 in their books.
- Directions: Here’s your own short a Word Wall. Add as many short a words as you can.
- Have children read the four words already on the Word Wall as quickly and as accurately as they can. Have individual children read the words to you and record their time.
- Encourage children to write new short a words in the blank spaces on the Word Wall, including Star Words at and and. Tell children to look at an alphabet strip or use picture-letter cards to help them build words for their wall.

**Challenge**
- Have children use these words in oral and written sentences.

**Writing**
- Prepare paper daisies by cutting petal shapes from white construction paper. Glue five petals around a center circle, then attach the daisy to a pipe cleaner using tape. Have children write a word with short a on each of the petals, then color their flowers. Children can anchor the pipe cleaners in an overturned egg carton to make “short a word gardens.”

**Language**
- Have pairs of children sit back-to-back and give one partner a clipboard. Provide children with starters for rhymes, such as My cat, I have a hat, I ran. One child says the first part of a rhyme aloud, and the other completes it. (My cat is very fat.) Then the children switch roles and repeat the activity.

**Place the index cards facedown in a pile. One player chooses a card and reads the word aloud. All players find the word on their grids and mark it with a counter. The first player to have three in a row, across, down, or diagonally, wins.**

**Add short a words to the Word Wall.**

**Answers will vary.**
Ask Nat the Cat

1. Can a cat nap?

2. Is a cat in the bag?

3. Can a cat bat a fan?

4. Can a cat fan a man?

5. Is a cat on the pad?

6. Can a cat tag a rat?

7. Can a cat tap a map?

Draw a smile on Nat’s face if the answer to the question is yes and a frown on Nat’s face if the answer is no.
Help your child make a Word Wall at home.
LESSONS 22–24
Spelling and Building Short a Words/Short a Word Wall/
Expository Text

Student Edition pages 46–51
BLMs 20 and 21

Objectives
To reteach and reinforce segmenting individual sounds of words
To build, spell, and decode short a words
To comprehend meaning in simple sentences
To reinforce the distinction between narrative and expository text

RETEACH AND REINFORCE
Reinforce with the children that words can be divided into onset and rime (c-at, b-ag, tr-ap, etc.). Words can also be broken into each one of their sounds, also called phonemes (c-a-t, b-a-g, t-r-a-p, etc.).

Play Can You Guess This Word? Say words sound by sound (s-a-d, b-a-t, f-l-a-g, etc.) and see if the children can figure out the words. Then have them try it for you or other classmates to guess.

Draw three or four empty squares on the board horizontally. As you say a word sound by sound, point to a square for each sound you say. Say a short a word like map. Have the children say the first sound as you write that letter in the first square. Continue sound by sound. Do this with several other words (lad, rap, tag, crab, grab) to show that words may have different numbers of sounds.

PRACTICE
Have the children take out the two-inch square letter cards they made in Lesson 21; they may need to make additional cards to supplement their letters, or use the letter cards they created in Lessons 1 and 4. Call out a word, dragging out sounds, and have the children build it around the a. Do this with many words (examples: ban, bad, mad, sap, cap, can, fast, fan, ram, nap, had). Have the children take turns at the board writing the words and drawing out the sounds as they write.

Help the children see what they need to do to change words to new ones. Do they need to add a letter, remove a letter, change a letter at the beginning, at the end, both? Write ban on the board and change it to can by erasing the b and replacing it with c. Other examples include: bag to band, bang; had to sad, hand, hang.

Make a Word Wall of all the short a words you can think of together, including the appropriate Star Words. Have the children practice reading the words with a partner.

Have the children take out the Star Words a, the, in, is, and here, in addition to the short a key word cards ant, cat, hat, and van. Dictate a sentence for them to build, then write it on the board (Examples: The ant is in here. Is the hat here? The cat is in the van.) Remind the children that capital letters begin sentences and proper punctuation marks end them. Do a few together, then have the children try to come up with other sentences by using other short a words.
To achieve fluency, struggling readers need to have multiple opportunities to practice reading these words in context. The activity sheets for “Ar-A-Rat” (Lesson 20), “Ask N at the Cat” (Lesson 23), and “C a ts” (Lesson 24) offer opportunities for practice.

**APPLY**

Distribute **BLMs 20 and 21**. BLM 20 asks the children to spell words first by onset and rime, then sound by sound. Be sure to identify the pictures together: cat, rat, bat, pan, bag, map. After reviewing the pictures in the first column, do the first word in the second column together, emphasizing each sound. Remind the children that all these words have three sounds—a beginning, middle, and end—and that in this part of the exercise, both the beginning and ending sounds will change. The bottom part of the page presents the children with simple phrases of short a words.

**BLM 20 Directions:**

All of the words in the first column rhyme. Look at the pictures in the first column and write the words on the lines next to their pictures.

Look at the pictures in the second column. These pictures share a middle sound with the words alongside, but the beginning and ending sounds are different. Change the beginning and ending sounds, and write the new words on the lines next to their pictures.

At the bottom of the page draw pictures of each of the phrases.

**BLM 21** allows the children to practice reading short a words in simple sentences. You may wish to do choral reading of the text to build fluency. Remind the children about the proper use of question marks. (If needed, review by passing out two notecards to each child, and have them write a question mark on one and a fat period on the other. Ask some questions and make some statements. Have the children hold up the question-mark cards after the questions and the period cards after the statements.)

Some of the BLM 21 comprehension questions ask the children to make simple inferences, so have the children explain their answers. Show them, for example, that the story says that Dan is Sam’s pal, so the answer to the question: “Is Sam mad at Dan?” is “No.” Even though the story does not specifically say that Sam is not mad at Dan, we know the answer is no because they’re pals and they are smiling in the picture.

**BLM 21 Directions:**

Look at the picture and read the story. Then read the questions and circle the thumbs-up if the answer is yes or the thumbs-down if the answer is no.

After the children have completed BLMs 20 and 21, review the difference between narrative text, which tells a story, and expository text, which gives factual information. Recall that the text they read about cats in their student books is expository text because it presents factual information. If the BLM 21 story about Sam at bat had been expository, it might have given information about how to play baseball or the history of baseball. Brainstorm some other things an expository story about baseball could include. Try writing a simple, short expository paragraph with the children about some aspect of baseball that they have talked about, and compare it to the story on BLM 21.

Reinforce with the children that when you are reading something that gives you information, it helps to think about what you already know about the subject, then what you would like to learn more about. Thinking about questions you would like answered helps you pay attention to what you are reading.
Look at the pictures in the first column and write the rhyming words on the lines. Look at the pictures in the second column. The beginning and the ending sounds change. Write the word for each picture.

1. cat
2. at
3. at
4. a
5. a
6. a

Draw a picture of:

a fat cat
a fast bat
Circle the 👍 if the answer is yes or the 👎 if the answer is no.

1. Is Sam at bat?
2. Is Dan fast?
3. Can the cat nap?
4. Can Dad clap for Sam and Dan?
5. Is Sam mad at Dan?

At Bat

Sam has a pal. The pal is Dan. Sam is at bat. She has on a cap. Dan is on the bag. Dan ran. Dan ran fast. Dad is a fan for Sam and Dan. Dad can clap. Dad has a cat. The cat had a nap.
UNIT 1

Lesson 23a
Ask Nat the Cat

Student Edition page 48
No BLMs

Objectives
To decode short a words
To understand questions

Prepare
Write ask Nat the cat on the board and read it aloud. Ask the children to circle every a.

Say: Listen carefully to the next two sentences. I sat on a chair. (Sit down.) Can you sit on a chair?
   (Change your intonation, raise the pitch of your voice at the end, and raise your eyebrows.)

Ask: Which one was a question? How did you know it was a question? (Have the children provide evidence.)

Say: The signal we use at the end of a question is called a question mark. (Draw a question mark on the board.) If you see the signal, you know it is a question. Today, we will ask Nat the cat some . . .
   (Prompt the children to say questions by drawing question marks on the board.)

Teach
Help the children find page 48 in their books. Model the first question: Can a cat nap? Explain that a nap is when you sleep for a little while. Repeat the question. Then say, Yes, a cat can nap. Draw a smile on Nat’s face. Model the second question. Have the children work in pairs to complete the activity sheet.

Apply
Have the children take turns reading the questions and giving their answers. Ask each pair of children to explain their reasoning for making a smile or a frown. Prompt them to restate the question in their answers (A cat can nap because . . .).
LESSON 23b
Short a Word Wall
Student Edition page 49
No BLMs

Objectives
To practice reading short a words with automaticity
To write additional short a words

PREPARE
Read aloud the list on page 49 while the children track. Then read the list aloud chorally. Explain the importance of rate and accuracy: when you read aloud, it is better to start slow and be accurate.

TEACH
It may be helpful for you to know the number of words your children can read correctly in one minute. Create a list of phonetically controlled words for the children to read. Place them on the paper like regular text, from the left to right side of the page. Time children for one minute to calculate the number of words correct per minute (WCPM). This is the number of words on the list minus the number of words read incorrectly. Time children randomly or time a few children every couple of days. For now, you are looking for improvement, not meeting actual scores. If you'd like, and if children will not act competitively, help them graph their results.

APPLY
Have children add more words to the Word Wall.
UNIT 1

LESSON 23a
Ask Nat the Cat
Student Edition page 48

ASSESSMENT QUICK CHECK
Can the children decode short a words?
Can the children understand simple sentences they read?

Objectives
To decode words with the short a sound
To comprehend meaning in simple sentences

TEACHING POINTS
This may be a challenging activity for the children at the beginning stages of English language acquisition to complete independently. Pair the children with native English speakers to complete the activity.

As a follow-up activity, pair English language learners with native English speakers. Ask them to take turns acting out each sentence on the activity sheet. The children can guess which sentence is being performed.

Picture Glossary Words
(no new words)

LESSON 23b
Short a Word Wall
Student Edition page 49

ASSESSMENT QUICK CHECK
Can the children read words with short a automatically?
Can the children write new/additional words with short a?

Objectives
To practice reading short a words automatically
To write additional short a words

TEACHING POINTS
Although most of these words have appeared in previous lessons and should be familiar to the children, some may be new. Scaffold their understanding of unknown words by directing them to their picture dictionaries, providing an illustration in a book or magazine, demonstrating the meaning of the word through physical response, etc. Then follow the directions for the activity.

Picture Glossary Words
(no new words)