

Short vowels and small stories

Marking and next steps

Learners revisiting early English reading, with an adult available to help

Keep this guide separate from the student pages. Accept equivalent correct wording and methods. Discuss the reasoning before repeating a task.

1. Each of the 28 questions is worth 1 point. Each activity is out of 4; the starting and exit checks are separately out of 4.
2. For letter or word tasks, award the point for the requested correct letter or complete word. For P17, both words are required for its 1 point. Accept capital or lower-case letters.
3. For story questions, accept a short phrase or an equivalent correct sentence. P24 earns 1 point for a complete sentence using sat that agrees with the story. Correct unrelated small spelling or punctuation errors as feedback, without an extra deduction.
4. Record support beside the result. A written word-family answer is not proof that the learner heard or pronounced the rhyme correctly. Do not turn the total into a reading age, diagnosis or pass/fail label.

The starting and exit checks are different practice sets, not calibrated parallel tests. Compare specific skills and the support needed rather than treating the score difference as a standardized learning measure. No named teacher or institution has certified these materials.

P01 - P04

Answers with explanations

P01 · Starting check

Write the middle letter of pin.

Answer: i

Pin is written p-i-n. The middle letter is i. This checks the written letter, not a listening response.

Skill: Identify a middle vowel letter

P02 · Starting check

Change the first letter of bag from b to t. Write the new word.

Answer: tag

Keep a and g in place and replace b with t: bag becomes tag.

Skill: Change an initial letter

P03 · Starting check

Choose the word with the same ending letters and rhyme pattern as mat.

Answer: cat

Mat and cat both end in at and rhyme in ordinary English pronunciation. Met and mop have different endings.

Skill: Recognise a written word family

P04 · Starting check

In the story, where does Sam move the cap after the cat taps it?

Answer: To a box. Accept: He puts it in a box.

The story says that Sam moves the cap to a box. The bag is its earlier place.

Skill: Retrieve a detail from connected text

P05 - P08

Answers with explanations

P05 · Short a and short e

Write the missing middle letter to make cat: c _ t.

Answer: a

The target word cat is written c-a-t, with a in the middle.

Skill: Complete a short-a spelling pattern

P06 · Short a and short e

Change the first letter of mat from m to p. Write the new word.

Answer: pat

Replacing m with p keeps the at ending and makes pat, a real word meaning a gentle touch.

Skill: Change an initial letter

P07 · Short a and short e

Choose the word with the same ending letters and rhyme pattern as net.

Answer: pet

Net and pet share the et ending and rhyme. Pot and pin have different middle vowels and endings.

Skill: Recognise a written word family

P08 · Short a and short e

Choose the word that makes sense: Ben uses a ___ to write his name.

Answer: pen

A pen is a tool for writing. A pan is for cooking and a pin is not the intended writing tool.

Skill: Choose a CVC word by sentence meaning

P09 - P12

Answers with explanations

P09 · Short i and short o

Write the missing middle letter to make tin: t _ n.

Answer: i

Tin is written t-i-n, so the missing middle letter is i.

Skill: Complete a short-i spelling pattern

P10 · Short i and short o

Change the first letter of pot from p to h. Write the new word.

Answer: hot

Replacing p with h keeps the ot ending and makes hot.

Skill: Change an initial letter

P11 · Short i and short o

Choose the word with the same ending letters and rhyme pattern as sit.

Answer: fit

Sit and fit share the it ending and rhyme. Sat has a different middle vowel, and cup has a different ending.

Skill: Recognise a written word family

P12 · Short i and short o

In the story, where is the tin box?

Answer: On a mat. Accept: The box is on the mat.

The first sentence gives the place of the box: on a mat.

Skill: Retrieve a detail from connected text

P13 - P16

Answers with explanations

P13 · Short u in useful words

Write the missing middle letter to make cup: c _ p.

Answer: u

Cup is written c-u-p. U is the middle vowel letter.

Skill: Complete a short-u spelling pattern

P14 · Short u in useful words

Change the first letter of sun from s to r. Write the new word.

Answer: run

Replace s with r while keeping un: sun becomes run.

Skill: Change an initial letter

P15 · Short u in useful words

Choose the word with the same ending letters and rhyme pattern as bun.

Answer: sun

Bun and sun share the un ending and rhyme. Bin has a different middle vowel, and bed has a different ending.

Skill: Recognise a written word family

P16 · Short u in useful words

What is in the cup at the start of the story?

Answer: Water. Accept: The cup has water in it.

The first sentence calls it a cup of water. It becomes empty only after Gus waters the plant.

Skill: Retrieve a detail from connected text

P17 - P20

Answers with explanations

P17 · Look at the whole word

Write both words that share the ot ending and rhyme: cot, hot, hit. Both words are needed for 1 point.

Answer: cot and hot, in either order

Cot and hot both end in ot and rhyme. Hit ends in it.

Skill: Group words in a written word family

P18 · Look at the whole word

Which word has a different middle vowel letter: pen, pan, hen?

Answer: pan

Pen and hen have e in the middle. Pan has a, so its middle vowel letter is different.

Skill: Compare middle vowel letters

P19 · Look at the whole word

Change only the middle letter of cap to make a word for a drinking container. Write the new word.

Answer: cup

Changing a to u makes cup, a drinking container. The first and last letters stay c and p.

Skill: Change a middle vowel using meaning

P20 · Look at the whole word

Choose the word that makes sense: I put the lid on the cooking ____.

Answer: pot

A cooking pot can have a lid. Pet and pat do not name the cooking container in this sentence.

Skill: Choose a CVC word by sentence meaning

P21 - P24

Answers with explanations

P21 · Read, find and write

Copy one word from the story that ends in at.

Answer: Accept cat, mat or sat.

Each accepted word appears in the story and has the at ending. Only one is requested.

Skill: Find a word family in connected text

P22 · Read, find and write

Why was Dan's cap wet?

Answer: It fell into the tub of water. Accept any equivalent clear reason from the story.

The story explicitly describes the cap falling into water. This is a stated cause, not an inference test.

Skill: Explain a stated cause

P23 · Read, find and write

Where did Dan put the cap after taking it out of the tub?

Answer: In the sun. Accept: He put it in a sunny place.

The story says that Dan put the wet cap in the sun after taking it out of the water.

Skill: Follow the order of events

P24 · Read, find and write

Write one complete sentence that matches the story and uses sat.

Answer: For example: The cat sat on a mat. Also accept: Dan sat by the cat. Accept another complete, accurate story sentence using sat.

Award 1 point when the sentence uses sat, has a complete idea and agrees with the story. Both the cat and Dan sit in the story, so either can be the subject. Do not require the model wording.

Skill: Write a sentence using a target word

P25 - P28

Answers with explanations

P25 · A different exit check

Write the middle letter of nut.

Answer: u

Nut is written n-u-t, so its middle letter is u.

Skill: Identify a middle vowel letter

P26 · A different exit check

Change the first letter of fan from f to m. Write the new word.

Answer: man

Replace f with m and keep the an ending: fan becomes man.

Skill: Change an initial letter

P27 · A different exit check

Choose the word with the same ending letters and rhyme pattern as hen.

Answer: pen

Hen and pen share the en ending and rhyme. Hat and hip have different endings.

Skill: Recognise a written word family

P28 · A different exit check

In the new story, where does Kim put the map at the end?

Answer: Back in the bag. Accept: In the red bag.

The final sentence puts the map back in the bag. The desk is an earlier place, and the pot holds the pen.

Skill: Retrieve a detail from connected text
