Onset & Rime* Cards

Teaching Resource

* The "onset" is the initial phonological unit of any single-syllable word or a syllable (e.g. c in cat). The rime refers to the string of letters that follow, usually a vowel and final consonants (e.g. at in cat). Not all words have onsets.
Introduction
Before children can systematically read multisyllabic words, they must first figure out the vowel sounds in single-syllable words (i.e. in common CVC, CVCe and CVVC words).

Focusing on common onset and rime patterns is one way to help learners focus on single-syllable word patterns. The onset is the initial phonological unit of any single-syllable word, often represented as a consonant (e.g. “c” in cat). The rime refers to the string of letters that follow, usually a vowel and final consonant (e.g. “at” in cat). There are many words that learners can create and explore with common consonants and the 48 most common rime patterns (contained in this resource).
**Onset-Rime Map**

```
| B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |

*Note: The table above includes the pronunciation of onsets and rimes for various combinations of consonants and vowels, helping in teaching the phonics of English. Each row and column represents a specific sound or combination of sounds, aiding in the development of phonemic awareness.*
Sample Activity: Rime Machine

**NB: Rule on display**

If a word (a) ends with /k/ sound AND (b) the preceding vowel is a single-letter, short vowel, then the /k/ sound is represented by the “ck” grapheme (as in “lock” or “snack” or “knock” or “lack”)

If a word (a) ends with /k/ sound AND (b) the preceding vowel is a single-letter, long vowel, then the CVCe pattern applies and the /k/ sound is represented by “-ke”. (as in “take” or “lack” or “broke”)

If a words (a) ends with /k/ sound AND (b) the preceding vowel is a diphthong (e.g. the two-letter vowel combination “oo”), then the /k/ sound is represented by the “k” grapheme. (as in “look” or “t ook” or “brook”)
Map of Orthographic Development

**Six Most Common Syllable Patterns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>This syllable ends with a consonant and contains a single following, often in its short form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>This syllable type ends with a vowel and the vowel is often long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent e or vowel consonant e (ed)</td>
<td>This syllable has a silent e at the end which often signals that the vowel will be long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowel team or vowel pair</td>
<td>This syllable type contains two vowels that make one sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-controlled vowel</td>
<td>This syllable contains a vowel with the letter r, and the vowel is neither short nor long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consonant + e</td>
<td>This syllable contains an a followed by the letter e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Emergent (3 to 5 yrs old)**

- A - Z
  - Concept of Word
    - Pre-speller to spell it how it sounds
      - Oral language, print awareness, phonemic awareness and alphabetic awareness are the key features of this stage. These are the building blocks for formal literacy.

**Letter-Name Alphabetic (4 to 7 years old)**

- CVC
  - Spell it how it sounds
    - The single-syllable, CVC form is the easiest way for learners to master consonant sounds, consonant digraphs, consonant blends, the short form of the vowels and simple r-controlled vowels.
    - **Consonant** - cat, bed, pig, sun, bot, bog, gig, bib, quit ...
    - **Digraph** - with, chat, ship, fish, mush ...
    - **Blends** - plan, flag, -car, far, fir, stir, star, blur
  - NB: the short form of each vowel (a, e, i, o, u) is only represented by a small number of spelling options … unlike the long form —>

**Within-Word Pattern (7 to 9 Years old)**

- CVC
  - Spell it by pattern
    - Once a learner has mastered the CVC pattern, it is time to contrast the short vowel sounds with long vowel sound.
    - Once this contrast is developing, learners explore the various diphthong forms and diverse vowel sounds in single-syllable words, such as bright. Learners also explore plurals, contractions, homophones, homographs and compound words.

**Affixes/Suffixes (9 to 11 years old)**

- -ed, -ing, -ly, re-
  - 2-3 ...
  - syllable words
  - schwa

**Derivational (11 years & older)**

- **prefixes**
- **suffices**
- **bases**
- **roots**

**Spell by rule & dictionary aids**

By this stage, learners can decode most, if not all, single syllable words. At this stage, learners become adept at adding common prefixes and suffixes as well as spelling a range of multisyllabic words, which requires that they identify syllable junctures. The unstressed, ambiguous schwa sound (often pronounced “uh”) is also present in many multisyllabic words, such as alone and confident. Learners will need to turn to other tools to disambiguate these unclear vowel sounds.

END NOTE: As encoding and decoding skills become automatic, there is a gradual shift in the treatment of literacy. There is a shift away from encoding/decoding and toward composition/comprehension. Consequently, teachers assume that learners have the skills to create and consume texts. There is now an onus on conveying and extracting meaning and intentions through text. For instance, it is assumed that one can read the text [government form], but does one know what its means in context?

10 - 13: use many strategies / 13+: spell from knowledge

At this stage, there are few items which are missing from one's skill set. Instead, spelling & vocabulary learning are inextricably linked.

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The Alphabetic Code
the interface between oral and print language

https://youtu.be/dA4nt3rxTYM

Word Sorts
This activity is designed to help learners become increasingly confident with the spelling patterns of English. By taking learners from simple to complex structures, this approach helps learners make logical sense of word reading and writing in English.

https://youtu.be/D7vUhqVXLWg
Onset Cards

(including consonant digraphs - ch, sh, th and wh)
**b**
- **b** is /b/ as in **bed**, **baby**
- **bb** is /b/ as in **bubbly**
- **bh** is /b/ as in **Bhutan** (uncommon)
- **bt** is /t/ in **doubt**
- **mb** is /m/ in **thumb**

**c**
- **c** is /k/ in **cat**
- **c** is /s/ in **circle** or **bicycle**
- **c** is /sh/ in **appreciate**
- **C** softens to /s/ when followed by **E, I or Y**. Otherwise, **C** says /k/.
- **sc** is /s/ in **scent**
- **sc** is /s/ + /k/ in **scare**

**d**
- **d** is /d/ as in **dog**
- **dd** is /d/ as in **daddy**
- **-ed** is /d/ as in **moved**
- **-ed** is /t/ as in **jumped**

**f**
- **f** is /f/ as in **fun**
- **f** is /v/ in **of** (this is irregular)
- **ff** is /f/ as in **stuffy**
- **lf** is /f/ as in **calf**
- **ph** is /f/ as in **phone**
- **-gh** is /f/ as in **laugh**

**g**
- **g** is /g/ as in **game**
- **g** is /j/ as in **gem**
- **g** is /zh/ in **regime** (rare)
- **gg** is /g/ as in **jiggle**
- **gh** is /g/ as in **ghost**
- **gu** is /g/ as in **guide**
- **G** softens to /j/ when followed by **E, I or Y**. Otherwise, **G** says /g/.

**h**
- **h** is /h/ in **hole**
- **wh** are /h/ in **whole**
- **h** is often combined in a number of consonant sounds, either as a silent letter - as in **ghost** - or to represent a digraph sound - as in **phone** or **laugh**

**j**
- **j** is /j/ as in **jar**
- **j** is /zh/ in **deja-vu** (rare)
- **yet g -ge & -dge** can also make the /j/ sound
- **G** softens to /j/ when followed by **E, I or Y**. Otherwise, **G** says /g/. **English words don’t end in J**

**k**
- **k** is /k/ in **kite**
- **-ck** is /k/ in **back**
- **k** is silent in **know**, **knight**, and **knot**
- **c, ch & -que** can also make the /k/ sound

**l**
- **l** is /l/ in **little**
- **ll** is /l/ in **silly**
- **-le** is /l/ in **simple**
- **lf** is /f/ in **calf** and in **half**
- **al** is /aw/ in **walk**
- **oul** is /short oo/ in **would**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>m</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **m** is /m/ in **m**ilk  
**mm** is /m/ in **s**ummer  
**mb** is /m/ in **th**umb  
- **mn** is /m/ in **a**utumn  
**m** is always /m/, except in the rare **mn-** is /n/ in **m**nemonic | **n** is /n/ in **n**ow  
**nn** is /n/ in **s**unny  
**kn** is /n/ in **k**now  
**gn** is /n/ in **g**nat  
**pn** is /n/ in **p**neumonia  
- **mn** is /m/ in **a**utumn  
- **ng** is /ng/ in **s**ing | **p** is /p/ in **p**ie  
**pp** is /p/ in **p**uppy  
**ph** is /f/ in **p**hone  
**p** is silent in **pn-** and **pt-** and **ps-** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>qu-</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **qu-** is /kw/ as in **qu**ick  
whereas, **-que** is /k/ as in **che**que  
**q** is always accompanied by the “u” and so “u” is not considered a vowel in this case. | **r** is /r/ in **r**ain  
**rr** is /r/ in **h**urry  
**wr** is /r/ in **w**rite  
**rh** is /r/ in **r**hyme  
**r** is always /r/ and **r** appears in controlled-r vowels as in **fa**r | **s** is /s/ in **s**nake  
**s** is /sh/ in **s**ure  
**s** is /zh/ in **c**asual  
**s** is /z/ in **is**  
**sc** is /s/ in **s**cent  
**-se** is /s/ in **m**ouse  
**ss** is /s/ in **m**essy  
**ps** is /s/ in **p**sychiatry  
**ss** is /sh/ in **p**ressure  
**-se** is /z/ in **ch**oose  
**c** - **ce** are /s/ in **ce**ase & **p**eace |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>v</th>
<th>w</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **v** is /v/ in **v**an  
- **ve** is /v/ in **h**ave  
**f** is /v/ in **o**f  
(this is irregular)  
English words do not end in “v”, which is why there is the “ve” form | **w** is /w/ in **w**ater  
**wh** are /w/ in **w**hale  
**wh** is /hw/ in **w**hile  
**wh** is /h/ in **w**hole  
**wr** is /r/ in **w**rite |
**y**

(as a consonant)

y is /y/ as in yellow when a consonant

y often appears in vowel sounds, which is presented in a separate card

**ch**

ch is /ch/ in cheese
ch is /k/ in chord
ch is /sh/ in chef

t is /ch/ in future
tch is /ch/ in catch
t-ch is only used after a single vowel that does NOT say its name

**sh**

sh- is /sh/ in ship, share,
sh- is /sh/ in s-hake
s is /sh/ in sugar
ss is /sh/ in pressure
ssi is /sh/ in mission
sci- is /sh/ in conscience
ti- is /sh/ in nation
si- is /sh/ in confusion
cli- is /sh/ in physician
ch is /sh/ in chef

**th**

th is /th/ in this, that, the
th is always /th/, except in the rare th is /t/ in thyme
there are voiced/unvoiced forms of /th/

**wh-**

wh are /h/ in whole
wh is /w/ in whale
wh is /hw/ in while
Rime Cards
(to help make CVC, CVCe and CVVC words)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ip</th>
<th>-ill</th>
<th>-in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /p/</td>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /l/</td>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /n/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **words**: sip, lip, flip, hip, zip  
**non-words**: yip | **words**: bill, hill, will, quill, trill  
**non-words**: zill, yill | **words**: win, fin, bin,  
**non-words**: hin, zin, min |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ine</th>
<th>-ink</th>
<th>-ig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /n/</td>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /n/ + /k/</td>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /g/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **words**: mine, twine, line, dine  
**non-words**: zine, nine, bine | **words**: sink, think, blink, wink  
**non-words**: zink, yink, hink | **words**: big, gig, twig, wig  
**non-words**: vig, yig |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ide</th>
<th>-ock</th>
<th>-oke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ᵻ/ + /d/</td>
<td>/ɔ/ + /k/</td>
<td>/ɔ/ + /m/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **words**: side, wide, slide, hide  
**non-words**: zide, yide, dide | **words**: sock, mock, flock, clock  
**non-words**: zock, yock, vock | **words**: poke, smoke, yoke  
**non-words**: doke, loke, voke |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Phoneme(s)</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Non-words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ot</td>
<td>/ɔ/ + /t/</td>
<td>hot, bot, lot, not, rot</td>
<td>yot, zot, vot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-oat</td>
<td>/ɔ/ + /t/</td>
<td>moat, boat, mop, bop</td>
<td>zoat, yoat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-oom</td>
<td>/ɔo/ + /m/</td>
<td>room, boom, zoom</td>
<td>yoom, toom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ook</td>
<td>/ɔo/ + /k/</td>
<td>look, book, took, cook</td>
<td>yook, zook, voork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-op</td>
<td>/ɔ/ + /p/</td>
<td>pop, top, mop, bop</td>
<td>zop, yop, vop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-og</td>
<td>/ɔ/ + /n/</td>
<td>dog, log, bog, blog</td>
<td>zog, yog, vog</td>
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<tr>
<td>-ore</td>
<td>/ɔr/</td>
<td>core, more, store</td>
<td>zore, vore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-uck</td>
<td>/u/ + /k/</td>
<td>yuck, tuck, luck</td>
<td>zuck, vuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ump</td>
<td>/u/ + /m/ + /p/</td>
<td>jump, lump, stump</td>
<td>zump, wump</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
-ug  
/ʊ/ + /g/  
words: hug, bug, tug, lug  
non-words: zug, nug, vug

-un  
/ʊ/ + /n/  
words: fun, bun, sun, run  
non-words: yun, zun, lun

-unk  
/ʊ/ + /n/ + /k/  
words: trunk, sunk, bunk  
non-words: zunk, yunk

-ut  
/ʊ/ + /t/  
words: but, nut, hut, rut, gut  
non-words: sut, lut, yut
Record Keeping
## Record Keeping

**Teacher(s):**

**Learner(s):**

**Ages:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rime(s) Explored</th>
<th>Real Words Explored</th>
<th>Non-Words Explored</th>
<th>Student-Generated Words</th>
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At the end of the cycle, the following graphemes have been explored and mastered:

- ack, -ake, -an, -ane, -ain, -ale, -ail, -at, -ate, -ame, -ap, -ape, -ash, -ank, -ag, -aw, -ay
- eat, -est, -ell, -ed, -en, -ill, -ick, -ice, -ide, -it, -ight, -ite, -ip, -ig, -in, -ine, -ink
- okk, -oke, -ot, -oat, -oom, -ook, -ore, -og, -op, -ug, -ump, -un, -unk, -ut

In the following word structures:

- CVV, CCVV, CVC, CCVC, CVCe, CCVCe, CVCC, CCVCC, CVVC, CCVVC