Year 1 English Phonics

Student assessment

Sound-letter knowledge, blending, segmenting, digraphs and early spelling. Suggested time: 20–30 minutes. An adult should read instructions aloud.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Try each question. You may draw pictures or explain your thinking. Ask an adult to read instructions if needed.

Letter sounds and blending

1. Say the most common sound for each letter: m, s, t, a, p. (Adult listens.)

2. Read these words aloud: sat, pin, mop, sun.

3. Blend these sounds said aloud by an adult: /c/ /a/ /t/; /sh/ /i/ /p/.

4. Which word rhymes with cat: sun, hat or dog?

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Sound patterns and reading

5. Read aloud: ship, chin, thin, shop.

6. Circle the word with the /ch/ sound: ship, chip, thin.

7. Read aloud: rain, play, light. Which letters work together to make the long vowel sound?

8. Read this short sentence aloud: The fish is in the pond.

Spelling and sound awareness

9. Adult says “map”. Child writes the word.

10. Adult says “shop”. Child writes the word.

11. Adult says “train”. Child writes the word.

12. How many sounds can you hear in “ship”? Say them slowly.

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How to use this assessment

Allow breaks and let your child explain ideas aloud. Do not coach answers during the initial attempt. Note whether each answer was independent, prompted or supported. This is a learning snapshot, not a formal diagnosis or a fixed ability label.

Suggested answers and assessment notes

1. Listen for /m/, /s/, /t/, short /a/, /p/

2. sat, pin, mop, sun read accurately

3. cat; ship

4. hat

5. ship, chin, thin, shop

6. chip

7. rain: ai; play: ay; light: igh

8. Listen for accurate blending and smooth reading

9. map

10. shop

11. train

12. 3 sounds: /sh/ /i/ /p/

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What parents should look for

Say pure consonant sounds without adding “uh”. For dictation, say the word naturally, repeat it, then use it in a short sentence. Mark separately whether the child hears sounds, selects graphemes and reads fluently. Some words have alternative spellings; explicitly teach patterns rather than expecting guessing. Practise 5–10 minutes with letter tiles and short decodable texts.

Simple observation record

Strengths noticed: _____

Skills to revisit: _____

Next activity to try: _____

Please encourage effort, reasoning and curiosity. Use the results to plan gentle next steps, not to compare children.