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Small Words, Clear Messages - Foundation

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SMALL WORDS, CLEAR MESSAGES

FOUNDATION TEACHER GUIDE



Purpose: Read small words in connected notes, check meaning, and write a clear reply.

Core words:

in it at on am an and the to is was said

Regular or mostly regular:

in, it, at, on, am, an, and

Parts to remember

th - final
to - o says /oo/
z - z says /z/
w - a and s need attention
said - ai says /e/

Pre-check: taught correspondence and oral use of the selected words.

Context words: Tim, Pat, Sam, pen, tin, bag, box, mat, red, sit, run, fun, park, lunch.

Read a name or context word aloud if needed; do not count it as a core-word error.

Equipment: letter tiles, counters, pencils, teacher oral prompts, and a documented taught-correspondence list.

Teaching routine:

Say it.



Map it.



Read the
whole note.



Check the
meaning.



Cover and
write.



Read the
reply.





FIVE-LESSON SEQUENCE



1

LESSON 1 - RETRIEVE THE PARTS

Use the display and model cards. Diagnose with two examples without showing answers. Map regular and unusual parts. Record the exact misconception.

Check: Give one example of a regular part and one part to remember.



2

LESSON 2 - READ NATURAL NOTES

Model a short note and reply. Use simple Guided Word Choices. Revisit only an insect as a prerequisite.

Check: Read a new note and explain how one small word supports the meaning.



3

LESSON 3 - CHOOSE FOR MEANING

Demonstrate one full Message Exchange turn, including an incorrect choice and a constructive correction. Use Mixed Word Choices and the game.

Check: Choose the word that preserves grammar and meaning, then explain.



Timing: 30-40 minutes each, with short literacy or motor practice bursts and breaks as needed.



LESSONS 4 AND 5



LESSON 4 - WRITE, THEN CHECK

Use Transfer and Explain plus Read and Reply Rehearsal. Learners write without a word bank, then check sounds, spelling, grammar and meaning.



LESSON 5 - FRESH NOTE AND REPLY

Use the assessment independently. Observe an individual read and spell sample. Keep the learner's exact attempt and explanation of a correction.



SUPPORT

Fewer already-taught graphemes and oral rehearsal; never use a picture guess as the answer.



CORE

Mixed retrieval without a word list.



EXTENSION

Combine the same taught words in a new natural sentence; do not introduce an untaught rule.



Evidence: accurate reading, retained spelling, a coherent reply, and a specific reason or correction.



Next step: name one word or correspondence to revisit, then ask for a fresh matched application.

SMALL WORDS, CLEAR MESSAGES

Read every part. Check the meaning. Write the reply.



EXAMPLE 1

NOTE: The pen is in the tin.

REPLY: It is in the tin.



is:

i

|

s

The **s** represents /z/
in this word.

EXAMPLE 2

NOTE: I am at the mat.

REPLY: I am on the mat.



at and **on** change the place.

CAREFUL CONTRAST

I am in the mat.



This changes the meaning. Use **on** when
a person sits on top of the mat.

in

Say: in

i n



The pen is in the tin.
inside.

it

Say: it

i t



It is in the tin.

it names the thing already mentioned.

at

Say: at

a t



I am at the mat.

at tells a place.

on

o

n



I am on the mat.

on top of.

am

a

m



I am on the mat.

am goes with I.

an

a

n



It is an ant.

an comes before
a vowel sound.

card 7

and

say:

and

map:

a | n | d

message:

Tim and Pat are at the mat.

meaning:

and joins.



card 8

the

say:

the

map:

th | e

message:

The pen is in the tin.

remember:

the 'th' represents the unstressed vowel.



card 9

to

say:

to

map:

t | o

message:

Pat said to sit.

remember:

o represents /oo/.



Say:

is

i

s



The pen is in the tin.

Remember:
s represents /z/.

Say:

was

w

a

s



It was on the mat.

Remember:
a and s need
attention in this word.

Say:

said

s

ai

d



Tim said, "Sit on the mat."

Remember:
ai represents /e/.

GUIDED WORD CHOICES

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read both choices. Map the word. Choose the word that makes a clear message.

1. The pen is ____ the tin. in / on

Map your choice:

--	--	--

2. Sit ____ the mat. on / in

Map your choice:

--	--	--

3. It ____ in the bag. is / was

Map your choice:

--	--	--

4. Sam ____ to sit. said / and

Map your choice:

--	--	--	--

Tell a partner why one rejected word changes the message.



GUIDED WORD CHOICES

ANSWERS: _____ Date: _____

Read both choices. Map the word. Choose the word that makes a clear message.

1. The pen is in the tin. in / on

Map your choice:

i	n	
---	---	--

2. Sit on the mat. on / in

Map your choice:

o	n	
---	---	--

3. It is in the bag. is / was

Map your choice:

i	s	
---	---	--

4. Sam said to sit. said / and

Map your choice:

s	ai	d	
---	----	---	--

Tell a partner why one rejected word changes the message.

"in the mat" changes the place meaning.



Name: _____ Date: _____

MIXED WORD CHOICES

Choose without a nearby model. Read the complete sentence aloud.

1. I ____ at the mat. am / is
2. The pen ____ in the tin. is / am
3. It was ____ the box. in / at
4. Pat said ____ sit. to / the
5. The bag ____ at the mat. was / and
6. Tim ____ Pat are at the mat. and / to

Check one answer by covering it, spelling it, and rereading the sentence.

Word: _____

My check: _____



ANSWERS: _____ Date: _____

MIXED WORD CHOICES

Choose without a nearby model. Read the complete sentence aloud.

1. I am at the mat. am / is
2. The pen is in the tin. is / am
3. It was in the box. in / at
4. Pat said to sit. to / the
5. The bag was at the mat. was / and
6. Tim and Pat are at the mat. and / to

Check one answer by covering it, spelling it, and rereading the sentence.

Word: is

My check: is = i | s; the s represents /z/.



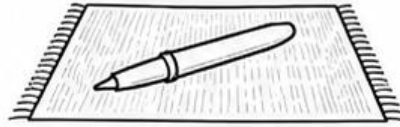
TRANSFER AND EXPLAIN

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Read both notes.

A: The pen was on the mat.

B: The pen is in the tin.



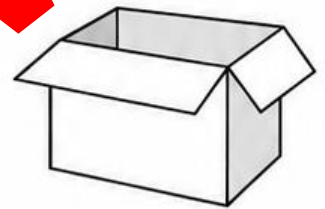
Which two words change the place or time? _____ and _____

Explain: _____

2. Complete the note:

Mia _____, "It is in the box." said / was

Why? _____



3. Write a two-sentence note without a word bank. Use at least three core words.

Circle one unusual part.

Explain your check: _____

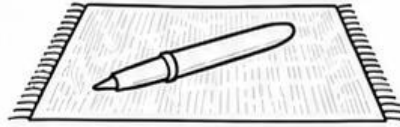
TRANSFER AND EXPLAIN

ANSWERS: _____ Date: _____

1. Read both notes.

A: The pen was on the mat.

B: The pen is in the tin.



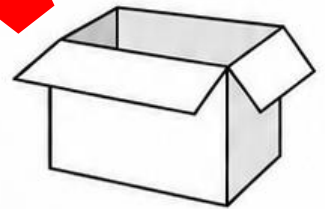
Which two words change the place or time? in and on

Explain: was and is change the time.

2. Complete the note:

Mia said, "It is in the box." said / was

Why? said tells what Mia spoke



3. Write a two-sentence note without a word bank. Use at least three core words.

The pen is in the box. It was on the mat.

Circle one unusual part.

Explain your check: said: ai represents /e/.

MESSAGE EXCHANGE

A READING, SPELLING AND MEANING GAME



Players: 2

You need: challenge cards, paper and pencils.



EACH TURN

- 1 Read one challenge aloud.
- 2 Choose the word that completes the message.
- 3 Explain the sounds, spelling, grammar or meaning.
- 4 Your partner checks the teacher's key.
- 5 Write a short reply using a core word.



WORKED TURN

Challenge: I am ___ to sit. said / was

Choice: said

Reason: said tells what Sam spoke; ai represents /e/.

Reply: I am on the mat.



FINISH

Complete and explain six cards.

Every turn includes reading, reasoning and writing.

No skipped practice.





MESSAGE EXCHANGE - CHALLENGE CARDS 1-6



1



The pen is ____ the tin.

in

on

Explain the place.

2



Sit ____ the mat.

on

in

Explain the place.

3



I ____ at the mat.

am

is

Read the whole sentence.

4



It ____ in the bag.

is

am

Map the chosen word.

5



Sam ____ to sit.

said

was

Explain the action.

6



Tim ____ Pat are at the mat.

and

to

Explain what the word joins.

MESSAGE EXCHANGE - CHALLENGE CARDS 7-12



7

Reply to:
The pen is in the tin.

Use it, is and in.



8

Reply to:
I am at the mat.

Change the place word
to on.



9

Repair:
The pen and in the tin.



10

Repair:
I am was to sit.



11

Which word has an
unusual vowel spelling?

to / at

Explain.



12

Which word has an
unusual middle spelling?

said / in

Explain.



TEACHER KEY

1 in; 2 on; 3 am; 4 is; 5 said; 6 and; 7 It is in the tin.;
8 I am on the mat.; 9 is; 10 said; 11 to; 12 said.



READ AND REPLY REHEARSAL

Name: _____

Date: _____

Read aloud:

The red pen is in the box. Pat said it was on the mat.

1. Underline six core words you read accurately.

2. Map one regular word:

Word: _____

--	--	--	--

3. Map one word with a part to remember:

Word: _____

--	--	--	--

4. Reply to: Where is the pen now?

5. Explain how your reply keeps the note's meaning.



READ AND REPLY REHEARSAL

ANSWERS: _____ Date: _____

Read aloud:

The red pen is in the box. Pat said it was on the mat.

1. Underline six core words you read accurately.

2. Map one regular word:

Word: _____ in _____

i	n		
---	---	--	--

3. Map one word with a part to remember:

Word: _____ said _____

s	ai	d	
---	----	---	--

4. Reply to: Where is the pen now?

It is in the box.

5. Explain how your reply keeps the note's meaning.

The first sentence tells where the pen is now.



REPAIR A SHAPE GUESS



Name: _____

Date: _____

Mia reads:

The pen ____ in the box.

Mia chooses *said* because it looks like a familiar word card.

1. Read the sentence with said. Does it make a grammatical message? YES / NO
2. Choose the word that repairs the sentence: is / said
3. Map the repair word:

--	--	--	--

4. Explain why sounds, grammar and meaning are stronger evidence than word shape.

5. Write a new two-sentence note without a word bank. Tell a partner where to find the pen and what to do.

REPAIR A SHAPE GUESS



ANSWERS: _____

Date: _____

Mia reads:

The pen ____ in the box.

Mia chooses *said* because it looks like a familiar word card.

1. Read the sentence with said. Does it make a grammatical message? YES / NO
2. Choose the word that repairs the sentence: **is** / said
3. Map the repair word:

i	s		
---	---	--	--

4. Explain why sounds, grammar and meaning are stronger evidence than word shape.

— **is** completes the sentence; the **s** represents /z/; _____
_____ **said** names spoken words and does not fit here.

5. Write a new two-sentence note without a word bank. Tell a partner where to find the pen and what to do.

— **The pen is in the tin. Sit on the mat.** _____

FRESH NOTE AND REPLY - ASSESSMENT

Name: _____

Date: _____

Work without a word bank. Your teacher may read a name or context word aloud.

FRESH NOTE

The pen is in the red box. Tim said it was at the mat.

1. Read the complete note aloud.
2. Write a reply that tells Tim where the pen is now.

3. Choose one core word from your reply. Map or spell it from memory.

Word: _____

--	--	--	--

4. Explain one check or correction you made.



Teacher observation: exact read/spell attempt retained separately.

FRESH NOTE AND REPLY - ASSESSMENT

ANSWERS: _____

Date: _____

Work without a word bank. Your teacher may read a name or context word aloud.

FRESH NOTE

The pen is in the red box. Tim said it was at the mat.

1. Read the complete note aloud.
2. Write a reply that tells Tim where the pen is now.

The pen is in the red box.

3. Choose one core word from your reply. Map or spell it from memory.

Word: **in**

i	n		
----------	----------	--	--

4. Explain one check or correction you made.



I reread the first sentence and used in because the pen is inside the box.

Teacher observation: exact read/spell attempt retained separately.

Look for accurate connected reading, retained spelling, a coherent reply, and a specific reason.
Accept a justified alternative wording and accessible response mode.

SMALL WORDS, CLEAR MESSAGES - LEARNING EVIDENCE

Name: _____

Date: _____

CRITERION	NEEDS TEACHING	DEVELOPING WITH SUPPORT	TARGET MET INDEPENDENTLY
Concept and accuracy	Uses a shape guess or an inaccurate sound-spelling link.	Correct on familiar models with a prompt; insecure on a contrast.	Reads and spells the fresh core words accurately in context.
Application	Cannot yet read the note and compose a meaningful reply.	Completes the task with a model or step-by-step prompt.	Reads the fresh note and writes a coherent reply without a word link.
Reason and evidence	Gives a guess or unsupported preference.	Names relevant detail but needs a prompt to connect it.	Explains a choice or correction with sounds, spelling, grammar or meaning.
Transfer and communication	The response is not yet interpretable or the method does not transfer.	Communicates with support; the fresh context remains insecure.	Applies the same learning in a fresh matched message and communicates clearly.

Observed evidence: _____

Targeted next step: _____

Do not mark down an accepted dialect, accessible response mode, or justified alternative interpretation.

**Small Words,
Clear Messages**





Learning Purpose and Success

Read small words in notes.
Check each word against the message.
Write a clear reply.

Success: read a fresh note and independently write a reply that keeps the meaning.



Try first: The pen is in the tin.
Complete: I am ____ the mat.



Words for This Unit

Frequent — seen often in connected text

Regular — parts map to high taught sound-spelling links

Unusual — one part needs explicit attention

Memorise — connect sounds and spellings

Retrieval — bring the spelling back from memory

Before writing: check taught correspondences and oral use of the selected words.





Essential Model

Note: The pen is in the tin.
Reply. ... in the tin.

1. Read every part.
2. Check the meaning.
3. Write the reply.





Map the Word

The pen is in the tin.

/i/ maps to i.

/n/ maps to n.

in tells where the pen is.





Meaning Changes: on or in

I am on the mat.

I am in the mat.

The second sentence changes the place meaning.

Use on when a person is sitting on top of the mat.





Guided Decision: is or said.

The pen ____ the table.

Try **is**. Read the whole sentence.

Try **said**. Read the whole sentence.

Which verb makes a grammatical message? Explain your choice.





Answer and Reason

the pen in the tin.

is completes the sentence and preserves the message.

In this word, the letter s represents /z/.





Read a Fresh Note

It was on the mat.

Which word tells past time?

Which word tells place?

Read the note again to check the message.





Worked Game Turn

Challenge: Sam ____ to sit.

Choose said.

Read: Sam said to sit.

Explain and tells what Sam spoke.

Then write a short reply.





Independent Game Challenge

Tim _____ are at the market.

Choose and or to.

Read the complete sentence.

Explain what your chosen word joins.





Repair the Misconception

Word shape is not enough.

The an ____ in the box.

said me look familiar, it fits the sounds, grammar and meaning.

Read the repaired message aloud.





Near Transfer

The red pen is on the left.
Professor said it was on the mat.

Read the whole note.

Reply: Where is the pen now?

Comment: that your reply keeps the latest place meaning.





Access Routes

Support: rehearse orally and use few already-taught correspondences.

Core: retrieve the selected words from memory without a visible word list.

Extension: combine all sound taught words in a new natural note.

Every route keeps reading, spelling and meaning together.





Assessment: Fresh Note and Reply

1. Read the fresh note aloud.
2. Write a reply without a word bank.
3. Map one word from your reply.
4. Obtain one correction or check.



No answers are displayed during the task.



Reflect on Your Learning

Which word did you retrieve?

Which part was regular or unusual?

What did you change after checking the message?

Record one next step.



Synthesis



Small words carry meaning in connected text.

Secure readers monitor the passage, retrieve the spelling and check that the sentence still
makes sense. They know what they intend.





Well Done!

Read every part. Check the meaning. Write the reply.



PREVIEW

Small Words, Clear Messages Quiz





Question 1

In The pen is in the tin, which word tells where the pen is?



in
the
said



Answer 1

It maps to `read / readn`, and it tells the pen's place.





Question 2

Read both sentences

I am on the mat.

I am the mat.

Which sentence gives the sensible place meaning?





Answer 2

I am on the mat.

or shows that the person is on top of the mat.

it changes the meaning.





Question 3

Read: The red pen is in the box.

Write a short reply to: Where is the pen?





Answer 3

sample: It is the box.

Credit another grammatical copy that keeps the same place meaning.





Question 4

Complete the message.

The pen ____ in the tin.

Choose the correct word or phrase, then read the whole sentence.





Answer 4



Complete the sentence.

The letter represents /z/ in this word.



Question 5

Change only the preposition word.

It is in the box. It is _____ the box when the pen rests on top.





Answer 5

The object changes from inside the box to on top of the box. The rest of the message stays the same.





Question 6

A learner chooses said in The _____ the box because the word looks familiar.

What is the error?

Which word repairs it?





Answer 6

The learner used word shape instead of sounds, grammar and meaning.

He said with is.





Question 7

Complete the challenge.

Sam ____ to sit.

Choose said or was and explain the choice.





Answer 7



...tells what Sam spoke.
...n was to sit and not express the intended message.



Question 8

Compare the messages.

The pen is in the tin.

The pen is in the tin.

What stays the same? What changes?





Answer 8

The man's picture stays the same.

is shown now.

we shows an earlier time.





Question 9

Without a word bank, write a reply to:

I'm at the park. Where are you?

Use at least two core words.





Answer 9

Sample: I am on the mat.

Credit a grammar rule reply that uses taught words and answers the question.





Question 10

For your question 9 response point to one word.

Explain how your source spelling or meaning support your choice.





Answer 10

credit a specific link.

Example: "nas /a/ when /t/ and tells a place."

A class or reference alone is not enough.





Question II

Claim: Every frequent word must be remembered by its shape.

Is the claim accurate?

Could a counterexample.





Answer II

No. Many frequent words can be mapped with known correspondences.

For example, it maps /i/ to i and /n/ to n.





Question 12

Read the note.

The pen is in the red box. Tim said it was at the mat.

What should you do next to show independent success?





Answer 12

Read the composition accurately.

Write a coherent reply without a word bank.

Mark or spell the chosen core word.

Explain the correction or check.





Well Done!

Read every part. Check the meaning. Write the reply.



PREVIEW