

The Step-by-Step Reading Program

Introduces students to reading in steps. Level A has ten steps that each include:

- **Lessons** that teach the sound associated with certain letters or letter groups.
- A **review** that also introduces high frequency words.
- A **storybook** that only uses previously taught spellings and high-frequency words.
- **Assessments** that gauge student learning¹.

¹Assessments, activity tiles, and instructions for whiteboard exercises can be found in the accompanying *Level A Curriculum*.

About the program

The written code of the English language is a phonetic code, meaning that symbols are used to represent sounds. Put another way, letters are pictures of sounds. For example, the 'c' in cat is a picture of the /k/ sound. Sometimes, two or more letters form a single sound picture. For example, the 'oa' in boat forms a picture of the /oe/ sound. (In this program, sounds are indicated by a familiar spelling bracketed by slash marks).

Level A of the **Step-by-Step Reading Program** teaches all of the single-letter sound pictures, and begins to introduce more complex sound pictures formed by two letters. In each case, students are taught that letters are pictures of sounds.

How to use the workbook

To complete the workbook exercises students will need a pencil or pen. For some exercises, more than one color pen or highlighters are helpful.

Tips for success

- *Have students work out loud.* Working out loud helps the brain map the written symbol to the sound it represents, and also helps identify problems with understanding of the written code.
- *Use letter sounds rather than letter names.* Letter names can be confusing. For example, the name for the letter c has two sounds, /s/ and /ee/, neither of which is found in the word 'cat'. When introducing the letter c, say "This is a picture of the /k/ sound." If a student uses a letter name, say "That's the name of the letter. What sound does it show?"
- *Do not add vowels to consonant sounds.* Consonants are difficult to say in isolation, and adults and children alike tend to add a vowel afterwards (for example, making /b/ into /bu/). When saying a consonant, make the sound as clipped as possible. Otherwise, students might think the consonant and added-on vowel are one sound.
- *To decrease memory load, the Level A curriculum focuses on small letters.* When the students do encounter capital letters, explain that these are used at the beginning of sentences and in names. Help them with capital letters that look different than small letters (such as capital D).

Level A Step 1

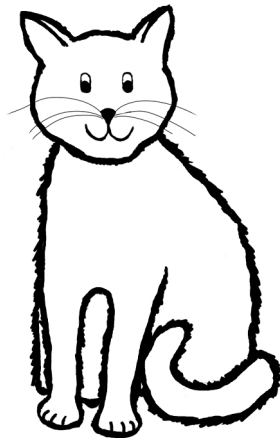
a, c, d, f, i, m, n, o, p, s, t; the

Level A Step 1 Lessons: Do these lessons and the review before reading Level A, book 1.

Step 1 Lesson 1: c, a, t, p

Introducing 'c' with the /k/ sound

1. Point to the picture on this page and ask the students what it is. They should recognize that it is a cat.
2. Point to 'c' and say that it is also a picture, but it is not a picture of a thing. It is a picture of the sound /k/. Ask the students to say this sound.
3. Point to the 'c' in cat, and ask the students what sound they should say when they see this picture. They should say /k/. Say the word 'cat' slowly, with emphasis on the /k/, and ask them if they can hear the /k/ sound in this word.
4. Ask the students to trace and write the /k/ picture while saying the /k/ sound.



C

cat



A. Introducing 'a' with the /a/ sound (as in cat), and introducing 't'

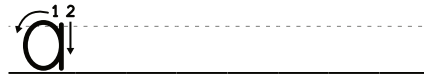
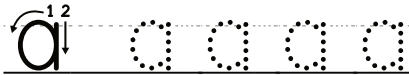
1. Point to the 'a' and say that it is a picture of the /a/ sound. Tell the students to say this sound.
2. Point to the 'a' in cat and say 'cat' slowly, with emphasis on the /a/ sound. Ask the students if they can hear the this sound.
3. Ask the students to trace and write the 'a' picture a while saying the /a/ sound.
4. Repeat this exercise with 't'.

B. Putting it together

1. Point to the 'c' in cat and ask the students what sound they should say when they see this picture. Repeat with 'a' and 't'.
2. **Segment** the sounds in cat (say each sound separately) while pointing to the picture for that sound. Next, ask the students to say each sound as you point to the picture for that sound. **Blend** the sounds in cat together (say each sound slowly but without pausing) while pointing at each sound picture. Ask the students what word you said.

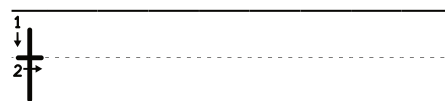
a

cat



t

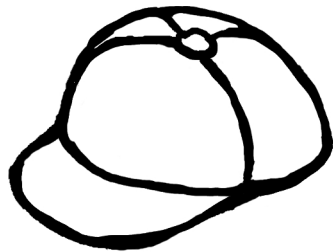
cat



A. Introducing 'p': Follow the page 2, part A instructions for 'p'.

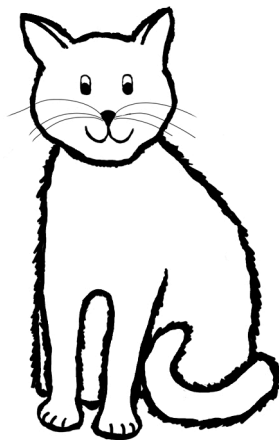
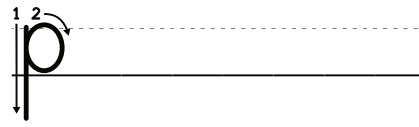
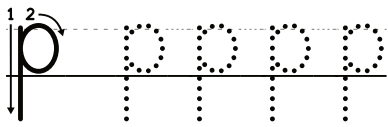
B. Distinguishing Sounds

1. Ask the students to say each sound in 'cat' as you point to the picture for that sound. Ask them to say the word with these sounds. Repeat with 'cap'.
2. Ask the students to say the sound that is different in each word, and to circle the picture for the sound that is different.

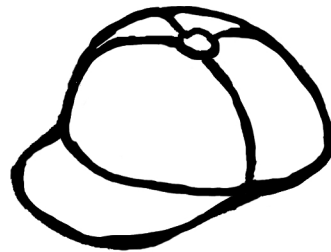


p

cap



cat

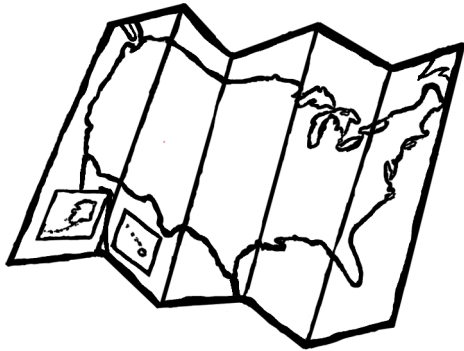


cap

Step 1 Lesson 2: m

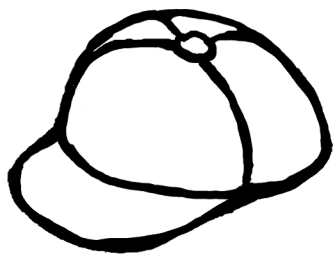
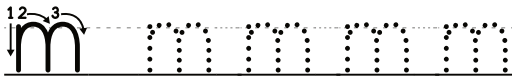
A. Introducing 'm': Follow the page 2, part A instructions for 'm'.

B. Distinguishing Sound Pictures: Follow the page 3, part B instructions for 'cap' and 'map'.

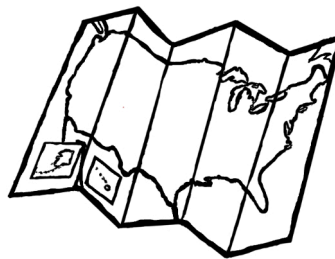


m

map



cap

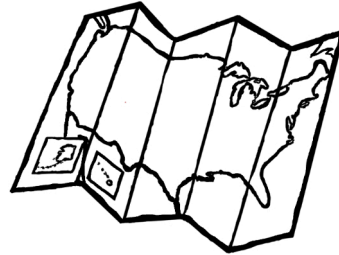


map

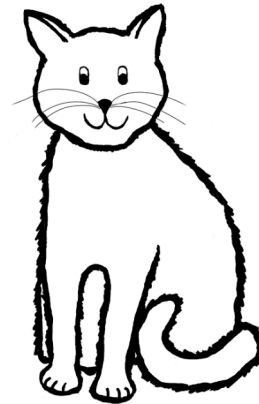
Matching exercise: Ask the students to say each word out loud, and to draw a line from the word to the correct picture.

Identifying sounds: Ask the students to say the two words that begin with the /k/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture of this sound. Ask the students to say the two words that end with the /p/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture of this sound.

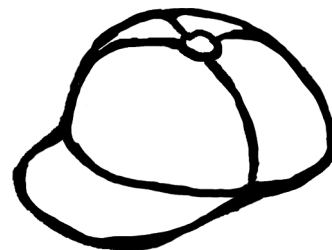
cap



map



cat



Step 1 Lesson 3: d, s

Introducing 'd' and 's'

1. Follow the page 2, part A instructions for 'd'.
2. Follow the page 2, part A instructions for 's'. Tell the students that 'Sam' is a name, and names always begin with capital letters, which are bigger than small letters and sometimes look different.

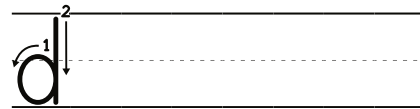
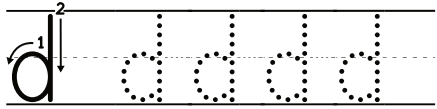


dad

d



mad

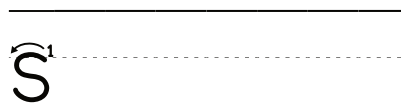
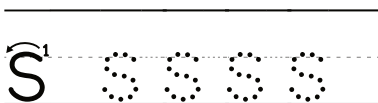


Sam

S



sad



Matching exercise: Ask the students to say each word out loud, and to draw a line from the word to correct picture.

Identifying sounds: Ask the students to say the two words that begin with the /s/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture of this sound. Ask the students to say the two words that end with the /p/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture of this sound.

Sam



mad



sat



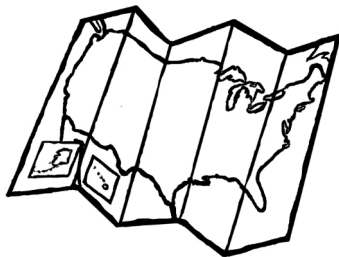
dad



Fill in the blank:

1. Point to each sound picture at the top of the page and ask the students to say the sound it represents.
2. Say the first word slowly (including the part of the word that is missing). Point to each letter or to the blank space as you say each sound.
3. Tell the students to fill in the blank with the picture of the missing sound. If they are not sure what picture to use, ask them to try all of the possibilities. Repeat with the other words.

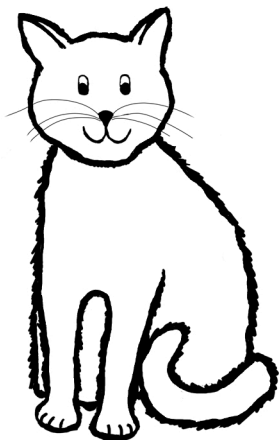
p d t



ma ____



ma ____



ca ____

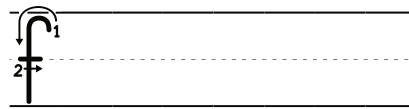
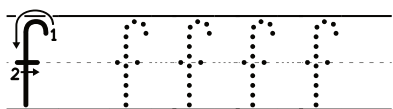
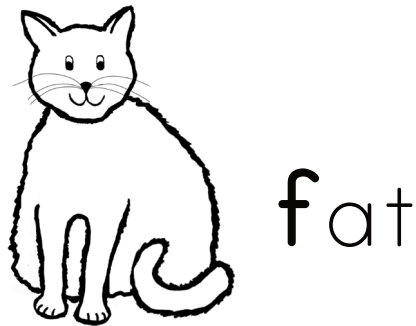
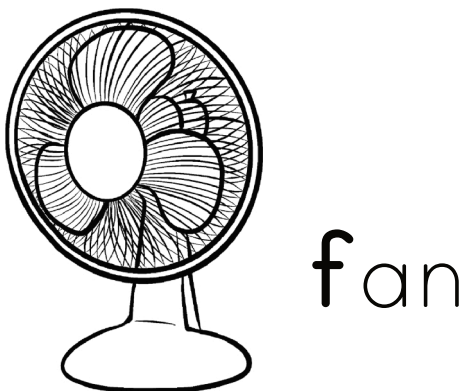
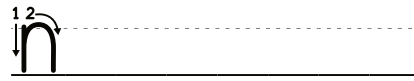
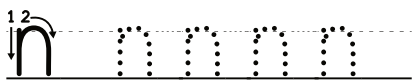


ca ____

Step 1 Lesson 4: n, f

Introducing 'n' and 'f'

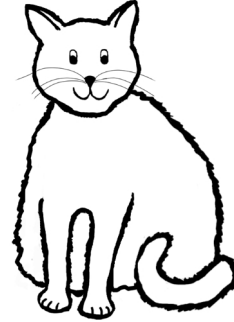
1. Follow the page 2, part A instructions for n. Say the word 'nap' again, and ask the students whether the /n/ sound appears at the beginning or end. Repeat with 'pan'.
2. Follow the page 2, part A instructions for 'f'.



Matching exercise: Ask the students to say each word out loud, and to draw a line from the word to correct picture.

Identifying sounds. Ask the students which two words begin with the /f/ sound. Ask which word begins with the /p/ sound. Ask which word ends with the /p/ sound. Have them point to the picture of each sound as they say it.

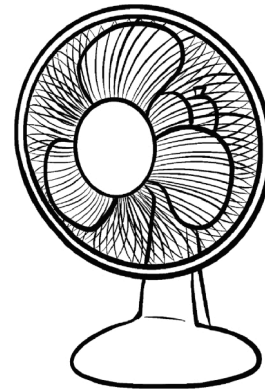
pan



nap



fat



fan

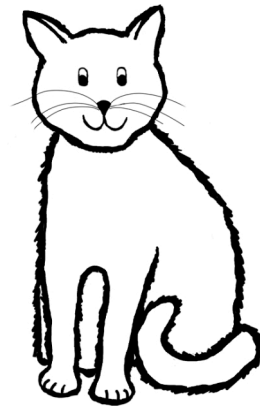


Fill in the blank: Follow the instructions on page 8.

c n p



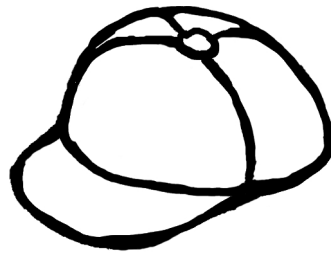
___ at



___ at



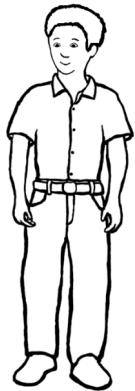
___ ap



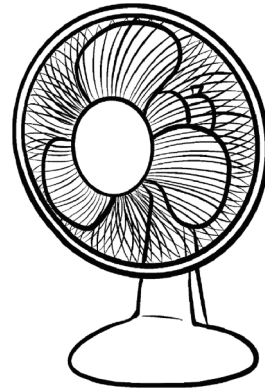
___ ap

Fill in the blank: Follow the instructions on page 8.

m f s



___ an



___ an



___ ad



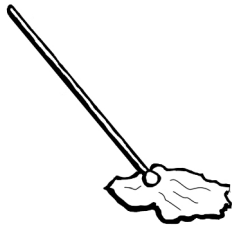
___ ad

Step 1 Lesson 5: o

Introducing 'o' with the /o/ sound: (as in 'mop'): Follow the page 2, part A instructions for o with the /o/ sound.

B. Distinguishing Sounds: Ask the students to say each sound in 'map' as you point to the picture of that sound. Ask them to say the word with these sounds. Repeat with 'mop'. Ask the students to say the sound that is different in each word, and to circle the picture for the sound that is different.

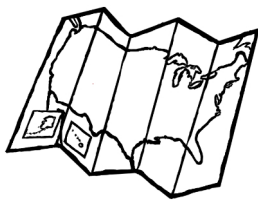
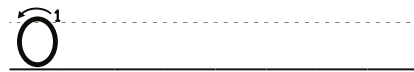
O



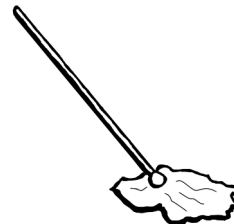
mop



cot



map

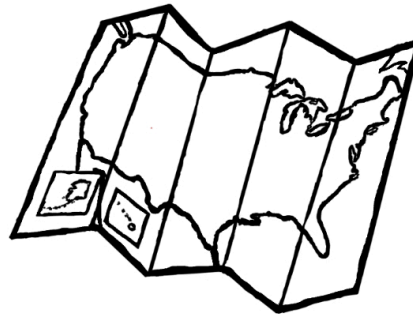


mop

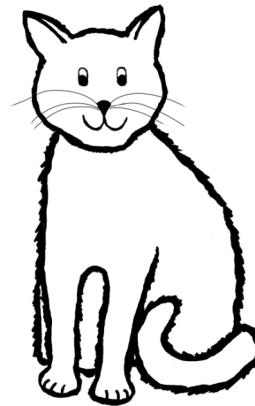
Matching exercise: Ask the students to say each word out loud, and to draw a line from the word to correct picture.

Identifying sounds. Ask the students to say the two words that have the /a/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture of this sound. Repeat with the /o/ sound.

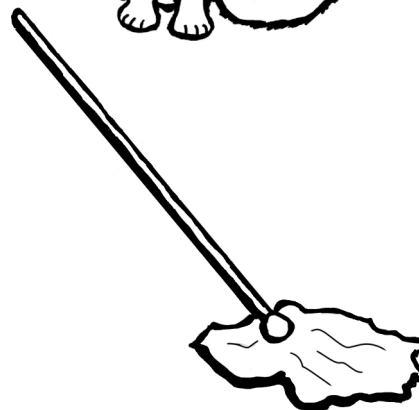
mop



map



cot

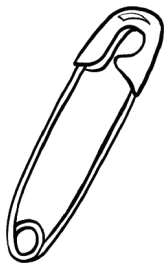


cat



A. Introducing 'i' with the /i/ sound: (as in 'pin'): Follow the page 2, part A instructions for i with the /i/ sound.

B. Distinguishing Sounds: Ask the students to say each sound in 'fin' as you point to the picture of that sound. Ask them to say the word with these sounds. Repeat with 'fan'. Ask the students to say the sound that is different in each word, and to circle the picture for the sound that is different.

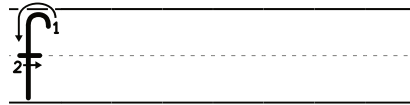
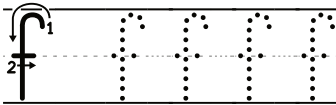


pin

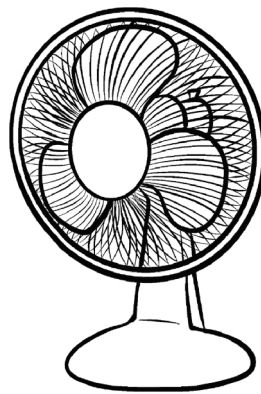
i



fin



fin



fan

Matching exercise: Ask the students to say each word out loud, and to draw a line from the word to correct picture.

Identifying Sounds. Ask the students to say the two words that have the /a/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture for this sound. Ask the students to say the word with the /i/ sound, and have them point to the picture of this sound. Repeat with the /o/ sound.

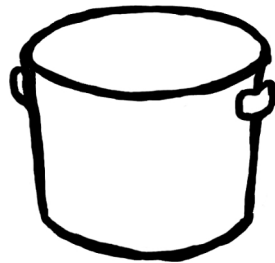
fin



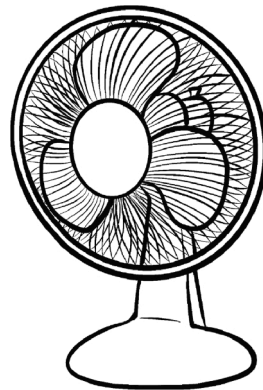
fan



pot



pat



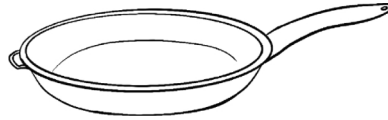
Fill in the blank: Follow the instructions on page 8.

Silly words: Tell the students that they are about to read silly words that make no sense. Ask them say each sound in the first silly word at the bottom of the page separately, then ask them to blend the sounds together. Repeat with the other silly words. For fun, you can ask them to make up a meaning for each word.

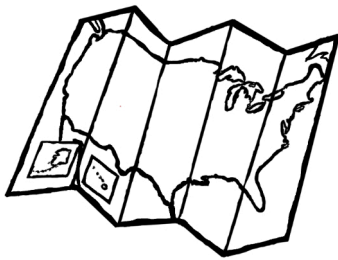
a i o



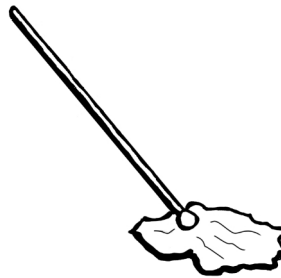
p _ _ n



p _ _ n



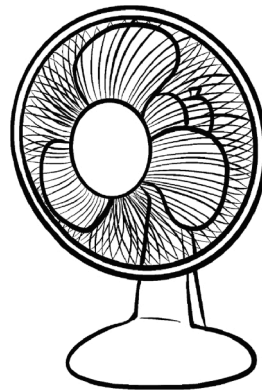
m _ _ p



m _ _ p



f _ _ n



f _ _ n

nif cas dop mot

Step 1 Review

This page shows all the sound pictures taught in **Level A, Step 1** and the tricky word 'the'.

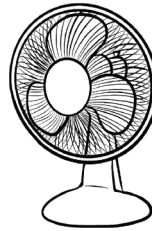
1. Ask the students to read the first word (cat). Point to the letter in bold, and ask them to say the sound this letter represents. Repeat with the other words.
2. Point to 'the' and say the word out loud. Tell the students that this is a word with a tricky spelling that they should remember, as they will see it often.
3. The students are now ready to read Level A, book 1, "**Did the Cat Sit?**" (complete the whiteboard exercises first if you are following the **Level A Curriculum** book). Make sure students understand that a sentence is a complete thought that begins with a capital letter. A regular sentence ends with a period, and a question ends with a question mark.



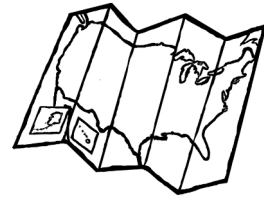
cat



mad



fan



map



nap



cap



sat



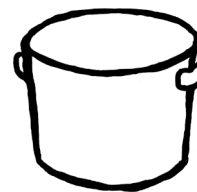
pat



pan



pin



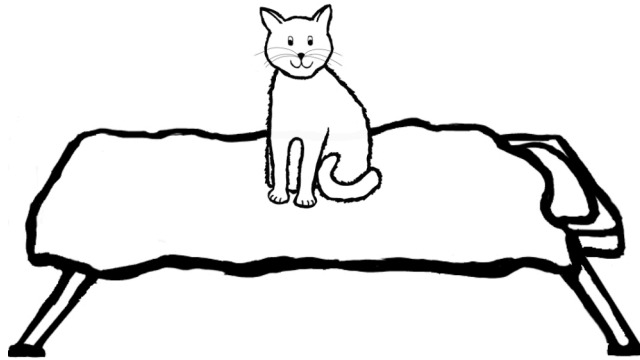
pot

the

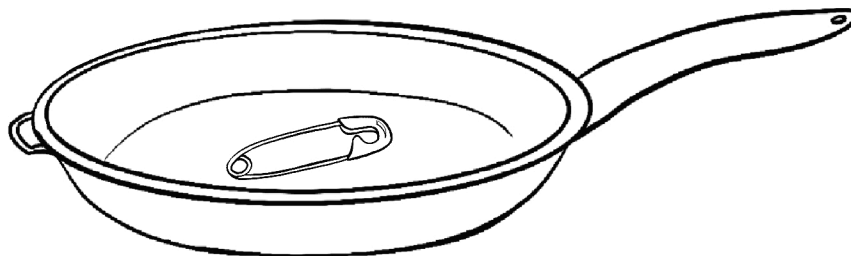
Level A Step 1 Post-assessment: Complete after reading Level A, book 1.

Fill in the blank sentences: *Each student should complete this assessment individually.* Ask the student to say each sentence out loud. Based on the picture, ask what they think the missing words should be. Ask them to write the pictures of the missing sounds in the blank spaces. To assess learning, note whether the student has difficulty reading the text. Also note whether they are able to fill in each blank with the word that makes sense based on the picture.

a i o



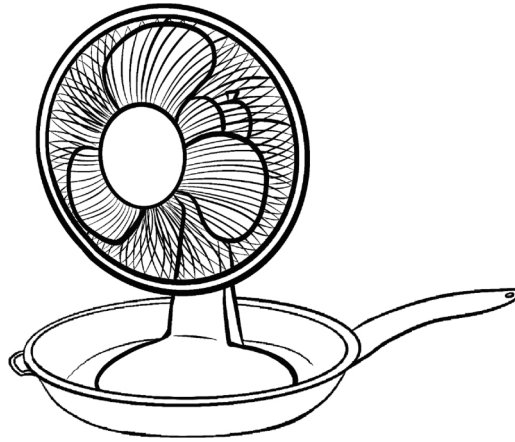
The c__t sat on the c__t.



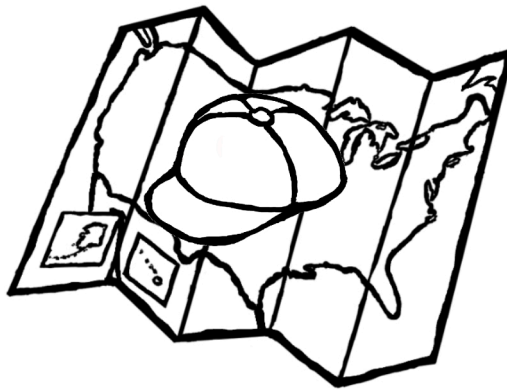
The p__n sat in the p__n.

Fill in the blank sentences: Follow the instructions on page 19.

c f m p



The __an sat in the __an.



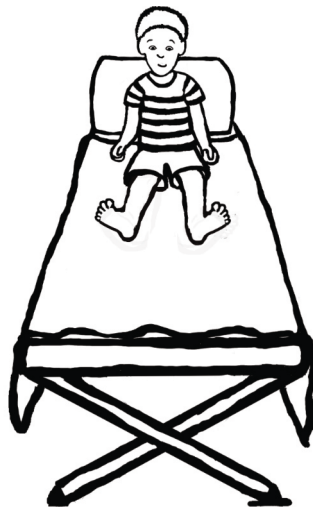
The __ap sat on the __ap.

Fill in the blank sentences: Follow the instructions on page 19.

d n s t



The fa__ sat on da__.



__ am sat on the co__.

Matching exercise: Ask the students to say each word out loud, and to draw a line from the word to correct picture.

Identifying sounds. Ask the students to say the two words that have the /sh/ sound. Ask them to point to the picture of this sound. Repeat with the /s/, /h/, and /w/ sounds.

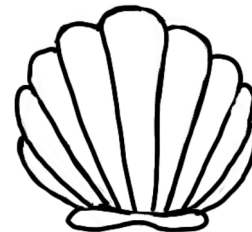
Sam



shell



win



hat



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