

READING RODS®

Phonics Word-Building

Set para formar palabras con el método Phonics
Kit de construction de mots phoniques
Set zur Schreibweise von englischen Phonemen



*A hands-on approach
to early literacy skills!*

WARNING:
CHOKING HAZARD - Small
parts. Not for children under 3 years.



Introduction

Prepare young learners for reading success with a color-coded visual and tactile experience! Reading Rods® are scientifically based, multisensory tools that allow children to practice, reinforce, and master essential literacy skills. In addition to consonants and digraphs, these fun-to-use, interlocking rods feature short and long vowels, variant vowels, affixes, and more. Help children recognize vowel sounds and spelling patterns in words to master word building.

Why Use Reading Rods?

- Hands-on learning deepens understanding and supports fine motor skills
- Color-coded system to identify letters, sounds, and more
- Rods stay fixed in position until children rearrange them, unlike cards or tiles
- Made of durable, lightweight plastic that's easy to handle and built to last
- Versatile design (digraphs, variant vowels, affixes) to meet the needs of different learners

Reading Rods Phonics Word-Building

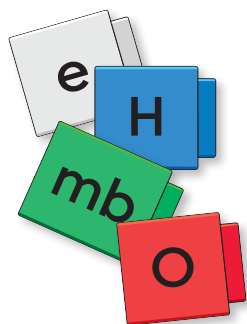
Reading Rods Phonics Word-Building helps children begin to distinguish between different vowel sounds and spelling patterns. By using the rods in this set, children will gain exposure to various vowel sounds and build phonetic skills that contribute to reading success. Digraph rods (two consonants that make one new sound) allow children to recognize letters that make one sound together. Variant vowel rods, such as *vowel teams* (ea, ee), *r-controlled vowels* (ir, ur), and *diphthongs* (oi, au) are also included. See the Variant Vowel Rods Chart on page 7. These vowels make a new sound when they appear together on a rod and within a word. The affix rods (prefixes and suffixes) allow children to manipulate base and root words and change their meaning. Children will learn a variety of new words to prepare them for independent reading!

Cover Key Literacy Skills:

- Long and Short Vowel Sounds
- Digraphs
- Variant Vowels (vowel teams, diphthongs, r-controlled vowels)

How to Teach Vowel Sounds

Begin by teaching children short vowel sounds. These are easier for children to learn because they follow regular patterns for reading and don't change unexpectedly. Consonant-Vowel-Consonant (CVC) words like *tap*, *bud*, or *set*, for example, contain short vowels. Explain to children that long vowels, however, "say their name" and need a second vowel to create their sound—like a silent e or a vowel team. Examples are in words like *cape*, *tune*, *seed*, or *leap*. See page 7 for a chart of words with long and short vowels. Once children are comfortable working with short and long vowels in regular patterns, introduce digraphs and variant vowels to build recognition of new sounds and irregular spelling patterns.



Includes

70 Color-Coded Reading Rods®

37 consonant rods



Each rod features
1 uppercase & 3
lowercase letters

1 silent "e" rod



The white "e" rod represents the silent e
at the end of CVCe (Consonant-Vowel-
Consonant-e) words

8 vowel rods



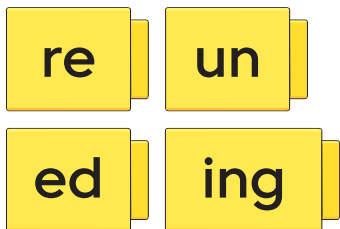
7 digraph rods (two consonants that make one sound)



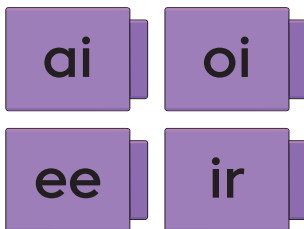
Each rod features 4 digraphs

4 affix rods

(added to the beginning [prefix]
or end [suffix] of a word)



13 variant vowel rods (two consecutive letters that make a new sound)



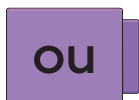
Each rod features 4 variant vowels

Blank rods are included to be used as placeholders

This set features variant vowels. Variant vowels include vowel teams, diphthongs, and r-controlled vowels. By using the rods in this set, children will learn the different types of variant vowel patterns, preparing them to recognize and decode new words. Children will be armed with the tools necessary for conquering higher-level text! A list of the purple variant vowel rods included in this set is provided on page 7.



vowel team



diphthong



r-controlled vowel

Get Started

To introduce this set, have children explore the different rods on their own. Then ask: *What do rods of the same color have in common?* (blue are consonants, and red are vowels). Point out the other types of rods and their colors: *Green are digraphs, purple are variant vowels, and yellow are affixes.* *What kinds of letters are on these rods?* (vowels, consonants) *What sounds do you think the vowels make when they are together?* (answers will vary) Say: *Sometimes vowels have a short sound. Sometimes they have a long sound. Vowels can also work together to make a whole new sound!* As you try the following activities, children may think of their own fun ways to teach you how to use the rods.

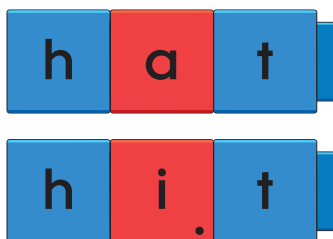
Activities

Long and Short Vowel Sounds

Skill: Recognize long and short vowels within words.

Place the Short Vowel Sound

Download the Vowel Word Lists below. Place the red vowel rods in front of children. Create a CVC word from the short vowel list, such as *hat*, with the Reading Rods®. Read the word aloud together. Now ask children to use the vowel rods to turn *hat* to *hit*, *hit* to *hot*, and *hot* to *hut*. Children will practice listening for the vowel sound within words and then manipulating the sound to create new words with different vowel sounds. Repeat with other CVC words from the list, and then add your own.



Download the Vowel
Word Lists here!

[hand2mind.com/
rr-phonics-word-building](http://hand2mind.com/rr-phonics-word-building)

Short to Long

Download the Vowel Word Lists above. Create a CVC word from the lists that contains a short vowel rod, such as *cut*. Read the word together. Ask: *Does this word have a short or long vowel?* (short) *What would the word be if this vowel made a long sound?* (cute) *What do I need to do to change this word?* (add an e to the end) Have children add the white “e” rod to the end of the word to create the new word and check their answer on the long vowel list. Play again with new words. As you select your starting word, keep in mind that some words will need a vowel team instead of an e at the end to change to a long vowel sound. For example: *bed* to *bead*. To avoid frustration, make sure children have mastered adding a silent e to the end of words before you introduce other variant vowel configurations.

Vowel Sounds

Download the Vowel Word Lists (see page 4). Start by building words from the list with short vowel sounds, using the different letter rods. Read them aloud with children. Then have children build and read the words with long vowel sounds one at a time, using the white silent “e” rod. Once children are comfortable with this skill, introduce words that make the long vowel sound using vowel teams (see page 7). Read these new words aloud. This activity helps children build words, recognize the difference between short and long vowel sounds, and see that there are different ways to create words with long vowel sounds.



Download the Tic-Tac-Toe Board here!
hand2mind.com/rr-phonics-word-building

Tic-Tac-Toe

Download the Tic-Tac-Toe Board and place a vowel or variant vowel rod in each section of the board. Children pick the spot on the board and create a word by adding rods to that vowel or variant vowel rod. Play one round by creating words with short vowel sounds. Play a second round with long vowel sound words. Three words in a row in any direction wins!

Vowel Word Families

Download the Word Families Charts for reference. Say: *Word families are words that contain the same ending sound.* Build word families using the rods and have children add beginning letters.



Download the Word Families Charts here!
hand2mind.com/rr-phonics-word-building

- Begin by introducing children to the short vowel word families chart. A few common short vowel word families for early readers include -an, -ap, -at, -in, -ip, -it, -op, -ot, and -ug.
- As children feel comfortable with these short vowel, CVC word families, you can move on to word families that also contain digraphs, such as -ash, -ack, -ick, -uck, and -ush.
- When children are comfortable with short vowel sounds and are ready to move on to long vowels, you can use this activity to teach long vowel word families. Some of the common long vowel word families include -ale, -ain, -ake, -eat, -ice, -ide, -ight, -ine, -oke, and -ore.



When you familiarize children with word families, it helps build automaticity in reading words that contain them. For example: *ban, can, ran; cash, mash, rash; pale, tale, sale.* Make sure to point out the rod colors and spelling patterns when a silent “e” (white), variant vowel (purple), or digraph (green) rod are used in a word to reinforce these visual cues for children as they build and learn words. Ask children to identify these patterns on their own as their skills grow.

Advanced Phonics Skills

Skill: Spell words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.

R-Controlled Words

Download the R-Controlled Word List. Say: *When a word contains a vowel immediately followed by an r, it is an “r-controlled vowel” and makes a new sound (ar, er, ir, or, ur). So words with an r-controlled vowel cannot have their individual letters sounded out. The word car is not /k/, /a/, /r/. It is /k/, /ar/ because the a and r placed together make one new sound together.*



Download the R-Controlled Word List here!

hand2mind.com/rr-phonics-word-building

Begin this activity by building simple words with the rods (*tan, tap, tab, tag*). Sound out each letter together. Now build *tar*. Ask: *What do you notice that is different about this word? That's right! It has an r-controlled vowel, meaning there are only two letter sounds. When an r is right after a vowel, it makes a new sound!*

Try this again with other words found on the R-Controlled Word List to practice spelling and reading these words. It is important to note that some r-controlled vowels make different sounds in different words. Words with *er, ir, or, ur, ear, ure, and ar* can be pronounced /er/. Words that have *or, ore, oar, our, and oor* can be pronounced /or/. For example, in the word *bar*, the /ar/ makes a different sound than in the word *soar*. In the word *soar*, the vowel team in the middle overrides the r-controlled vowel. When it is not clear what sound to make, have children say the possible combinations aloud and select the one that makes the most sense in that context.

Vowel Team or Diphthong

Download the Diphthongs and Vowel Team Chart. Variant vowel patterns include vowel teams and diphthongs. Say: *A vowel team is when two vowels are next to each other in a word and make a long vowel sound (like fear). A diphthong is when two vowels are next to each other in a word and make a new sound (like cloud). Create words with the rods that have either vowel teams or diphthongs. Give them to children to read and sort into two groups. This activity and the R-Controlled Words activity above help children read words with different types of variant vowels and encourage them to practice recognizing patterns in words.*



Download the Diphthongs and Vowel Team Chart here!

hand2mind.com/rr-phonics-word-building

Word Family Sounds

Download the Word Families Charts (see page 5). Say: *When we think of word families, we think of words that end the same way (cat, bat, sat or fog, log, bog). Word families can also include words that have the same ending sound but are spelled differently, such as late and wait. Guide children to use the rods to build words that have the same word family sound. How many words can the children come up with? This activity teaches children that although words may not look the same, they can sound the same and be part of the same word family.*

Vowel Lists

Use these lists of CVC words (Consonant-Vowel-Consonant words with short vowel sounds) and CVCe words (long vowel words with a silent e) as suggestions for the activities in this guide. Add to these lists as children grow in their word-building skills!

Short Vowel Words (CVC)

Short a	Short e	Short i	Short o	Short u
bat	bed	did	box	bug
cab	fed	fin	dog	bus
cat	get	fit	fox	cub
ham	hen	him	got	cut
hat	leg	kid	hot	fun
jam	met	pin	job	gum
mad	pen	rip	log	hum
pan	red	tin	nod	hut
ran	set	wig	not	rut
tag	web	win	rod	sun
van	wet	zip	top	tug

Long Vowel Words (CVCe)

_a_e	_e_e	_i_e	_o_e	_u_e
cake	eve	bite	cone	cube
game	here	dime	hole	cute
gate	Pete	five	joke	mute
lake	scene	life	note	rude
make	theme	like	rode	rule
name	these	nine	rope	tube

Variant Vowel Rods

Side 1	Side 2	Side 3	Side 4
ai	ay	ai	ay
oa	oe	oa	oe
ew	ue	ew	ue
ea	ee	ea	ee
igh	ie	igh	ie
ou	ow	ou	ow
oi	oy	oi	oy
au	aw	au	aw
oo	oo	oo	oo
ar	or	ar	or
ir	ur	ir	ur
or	er	or	er

vowel teams

diphthongs

r-controlled

Discover more ways to learn with Reading Rods®

High-Frequency Words/Sight Words
Alphabet/Letter Recognition
Rhyming
Beginning/Ending Sounds
Syllables
Sound Isolation
CVC Words
Short and Long Vowels
Advanced Phonics Skills (variant vowels)
Prefixes and Suffixes (multisyllabic words)
Word Families
Sentence Construction

[illegible]

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Rods resources!**

hand2mind.com/reading-rods

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