



WORD BUILDERS

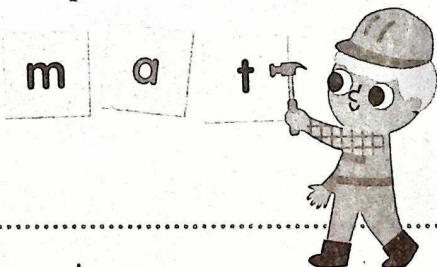
CONSONANTS & VOWELS

Dear Family,

Welcome to *Word Builders: Consonants & Vowels*! If you bought this kit, it's very likely that it's because you want to help your child learn to read. Well, you've made the right choice!

Research shows that the two most powerful predictors of early reading success are **alphabet knowledge** and **phonemic awareness**. Alphabet knowledge means knowing the shapes and names of letters and the sounds they make. Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate separate sounds in spoken words. Another key component of reading is **phonics**, the relationship between sounds and the letters that represent them.

Word Builders: Consonants & Vowels is a playful way to give your child practice in recognizing letters, putting them together to build words, and reading those words. When children can recognize letters quickly and accurately and can distinguish the individual sounds in words (for example, the three sounds in *mat*, /m/ /a/ /t/), they can more easily learn sound-spelling relationships and

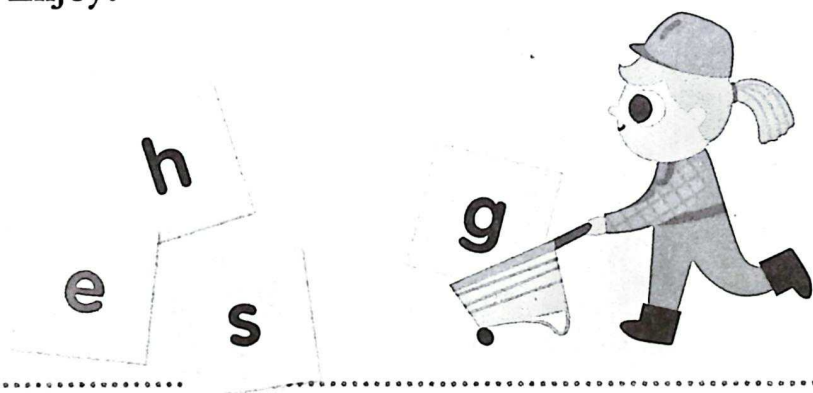


apply that knowledge to decode (or read) words.

Children with strong decoding skills spend less mental energy on recognizing words, leaving them more energy for understanding and enjoying what they read. Research shows that children who can more easily decode words read much more than children who are less skilled at decoding. Educators agree that this increased reading, in turn, results in greater reading growth.

Word Builders: Consonants & Vowels supports your child in acquiring these important skills. Along the way, your child will have plenty of opportunities to experience the “I can do it all by myself” satisfaction that builds confidence in reaching new goals.

Enjoy!



What's Inside *Word Builders*: *Consonants & Vowels*

This box contains 45 easy-grip foam magnetic letter tiles. With these tiles, your child can apply his or her knowledge of letters and build simple words to get started on the road to reading success. The letter tiles include:

- 2 copies of each consonant: *b, c, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, w, z*
- 1 copy of each consonant: *j, k, q, v, x, y**
- 2 copies of each vowel: *e, o*
- 1 copy of each vowel: *a, i, u, y**
- 1 blank tile

*Note: The letter *y* can be used as both a consonant and a vowel.

Word Builders features lowercase letters because these are the letter forms children see most often when they read any text. You'll notice that the consonants are in black type while the vowels are in red. This configuration helps your child recognize and understand word-building patterns.

Also inside the box is a write-on/wipe-off magnetic board for your child to use with the letter tiles. There's also a writing line for your child to practice handwriting the letters and words he or she forms. (Be sure to use a dry-erase marker for easy cleaning.) Research shows that handwriting helps children learn their letters and letter sounds.

Playing and Learning With Word Builders

After your child has had a chance to explore the letter tiles independently, try some of these quick and fun learning activities.

Now I Know My ABCs

- Choose a few letter tiles and place them on the magnetic board. Have your child point to and name the letters he or she knows.
- Take all the letter tiles in the alphabet and put them in order on the magnetic board. Have your child point to and name each letter in order. Or, invite your child to sing “The ABC Song” while pointing to each letter.
- Place the letter tiles on the magnetic board in random order. Then, have your child put the tiles in alphabetical order while saying each letter’s name.
- Use a dry-erase marker to write a few lowercase letters on the magnetic board (for example, *m*, *s*, *e*). Then, have your child place the matching letter tiles next to the written letters. Or, write uppercase letters and have your child place the matching lowercase letters next to them.

Guess My Letter

Pick a few letter tiles and place them face up on the magnetic board. Then, invite your child to guess which

letter you're thinking of while giving a few clues about the letter. For example, you might say: "I'm thinking of a letter. It makes the /n/ sound." (n) Or, "I'm thinking of a letter. It's the letter in the middle of the word *bed*." (e) Or, "I'm thinking of a letter. It has a little circle and a tall line on its left side." (b)

Sound It Out!

Invite your child to blend (put together) letter sounds to read simple CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words. Start with words that begin with consonants that have a continuous sound (you can say its sound for as long as you have breath), such as *m*, *s*, *l*, *f*, or *r*. Take the word *fan*, for example. Place the first letter on the magnetic board. Invite your child to say the letter sound, /f/. Then, place the second letter tile after it and ask your child to say its sound, /a/. Next, place the last letter tile at the end and ask your child to say its sound, /n/. Finally, ask your child to slowly blend the sounds together: /f/ /a/ /n/, stretching each sound out: *ffffffaaaaannnnnnn*. Slide your finger slowly under each letter as your child says each sound. Do this a few times, going a little quicker each time, until your child reads the word: *fan*. Repeat with other CVC words.

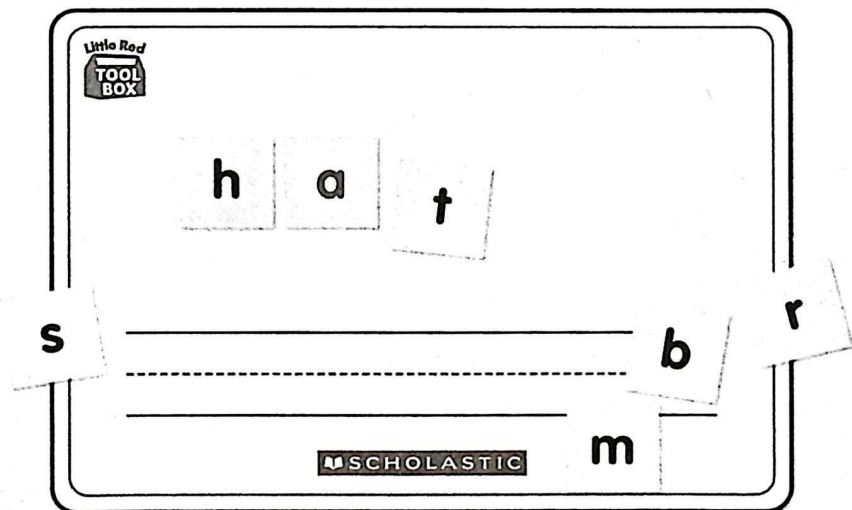


That's My Name!

Have your child use the letter tiles to spell his or her name on the magnetic board. Then, have your child use a dry-erase marker to write the letters on the board. Extend the activity by having your child spell the names of other family members or of friends.

Rhyme Time!

Explore rhyming words with the letter tiles. Start by putting the letters of a simple CVC word, such as *sat*, on the magnetic board. Have your child read the word: *sat*. Next, take away the first letter and replace it with another letter, such as *h*. Ask your child to read the new word: *hat*. Then, take away the *h*. Ask your child: "What other letter can we put there to create another word?" Encourage your



child to try other letters and then read each new word. Continue with other common word endings, such as *-in* (*bin, fin, pin, tin, win*), *-ed* (*bed, fed, led, red, wed*), *-ug* (*bug, dug, hug, mug, pug, rug, tug*), and so on.

Letter Tic-Tac-Toe

Use a dry-erase marker to draw a tic-tac-toe grid on the write-on/wipe-off magnetic board. Place a letter tile on each space. Take turns with your child choosing a space, naming the letter on it, and saying a word that begins with that letter. If correct, the player can claim the space by marking it with an X or O.

Fishing for Vowels

Place all the red vowel tiles face down on a table or tray (magnet side should be face up). Make a fishing pole by tying one end of a 12-inch-long string to a pencil and the other end to a paper clip. Using a dry-erase marker, write a few CVC words on the board, leaving a blank space (big enough for a letter tile to fit in) where the vowel should be—for example, *c_t*, *r_d*, *s_n*, and *d_p*. Then, invite your child to “fish” for a letter tile and decide with which word it belongs. Have your child put the letter tile in place and read aloud the word. Continue until all the words are complete.

a

u

o

e

a

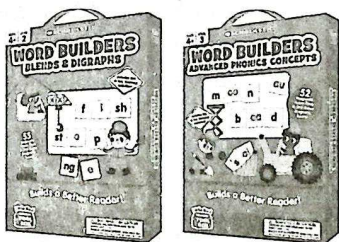
Word Building

Choose a few letter tiles that your child can use to build some words—for example, *a*, *c*, *e*, *m*, *n*, *p*, and *t*. Start by having your child make a simple CVC word, such as *cat*. Then, ask your child to change the letter *t* to the letter *p* and read the new word. (*cap*) Change the *c* to *m*. What's the new word? (*map*) Change the *p* to *n*. What's the new word? (*man*) Change the *a* to *e*. What's the new word? (*men*) Change the *m* to *t*. What's the new word? (*ten*) Continue the activity until your child has built 8 to 10 words. Be sure to give your child time to read each new word and offer support as needed (for example, by helping sound out the letters).



Extend the Learning

For more skill-building fun, check out *Word Builders: Blends & Digraphs (Level 2)* and *Word Builders: Advanced Phonics Concepts (Level 3)*! With all three sets, your child can build hundreds of words to boost his or her reading and spelling skills.



Publisher: Tara Wely. Written by Maria L. Chang. Art Director: Tannaz Fassihi; Designer: Cynthia Ng.
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