

# Build Writing Power with "Listen and Count the Sounds!"

## A Short Explicit Phonics Lesson

Children learn there are two types of words: words they are expected to write by heart and words they listen to, stretch out, and write the sounds for.

Good writers need to master a growing collection of high-frequency "heart words" so they have **instant writing fluency**. This is especially powerful with the "heart word" sentences: I love... I see the... I like my... I can... I have... Children also need short bursts of explicit, systematic phonics instruction to develop confident phonetic spelling skills. Here is a short kindergarten-friendly lesson for isolating, pronouncing, and writing phonemes in three-phoneme CVC words.

Teacher: **"And what do good "Kid Writers" do when they come to a word they don't know by heart?"**

(Children chorally respond and physically demonstrate the actions.)

Children: **"They listen and count the sounds!"**

Teacher: **"Ready?"** (Each child holds up a fist.) **"Count with your fingers!"**

bat: /b/ - /a/ - /t/



bat  
mop  
sun  
pig  
pen

Children in unison: **"Three sounds. Three letters. I write!"**



Under the **Phonological Awareness** component of foundational reading skills, children will **isolate** and **pronounce** the initial, medial vowels, and final sounds (phonemes) in **three-phoneme** (consonant-vowel-consonant or **CVC**) words."

*Saying and doing increases retention of new information up to 90%*

- Pat Wolfe from *Building the Reading Brain*. ASCD, 2009.

From *Phonics for Fluency and Writing Proficiency* (Workshop Resource Book) with Nellie Edge and Diane Bonica, 2017