First Short U Words: Picture Sound Boxes

Say what the picture is. Then put one tile in a box for each sound you hear.

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Adult says the word slowly, stretching each sound. Mmm-aaa-p.

2
Kid puts a sound tile in a box for each sound they hear.

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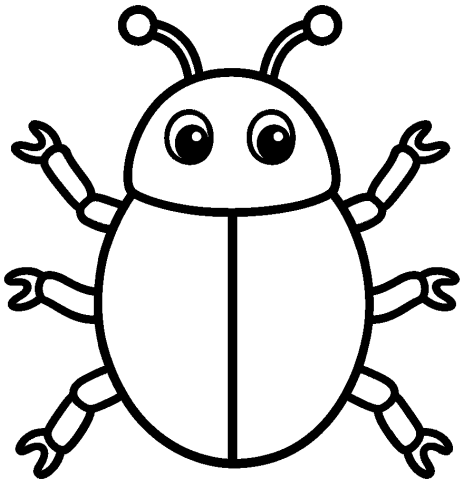
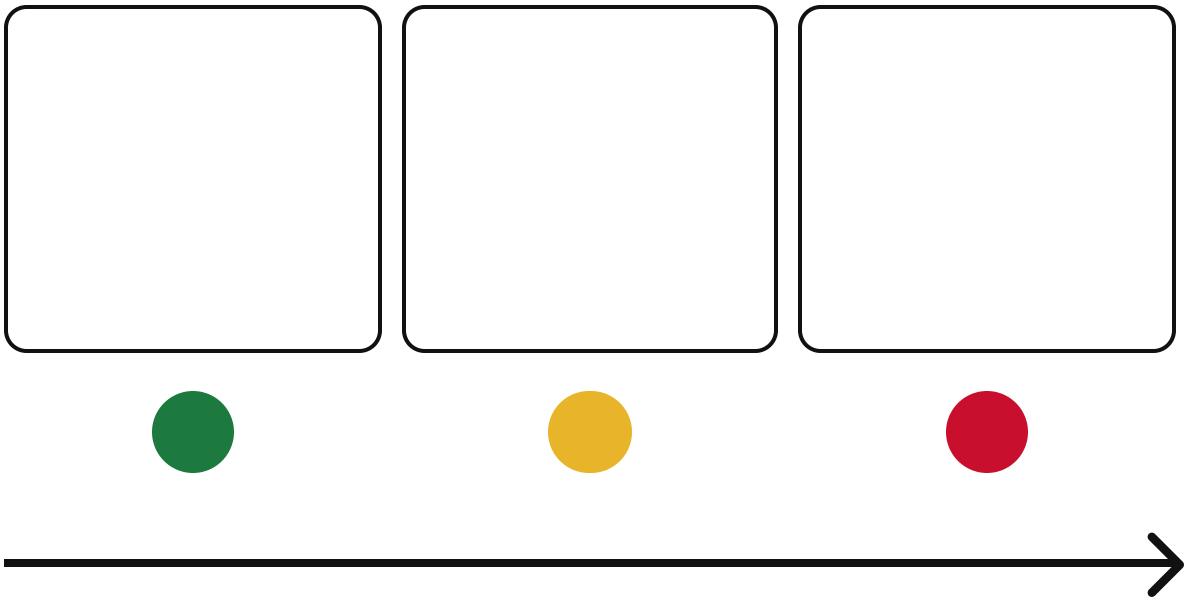
Kid touches each dot and says that sound on its own.

4
Kid sweeps along the arrow and blends the sounds.

5
Kid takes the tiles off and writes the word, saying each sound.





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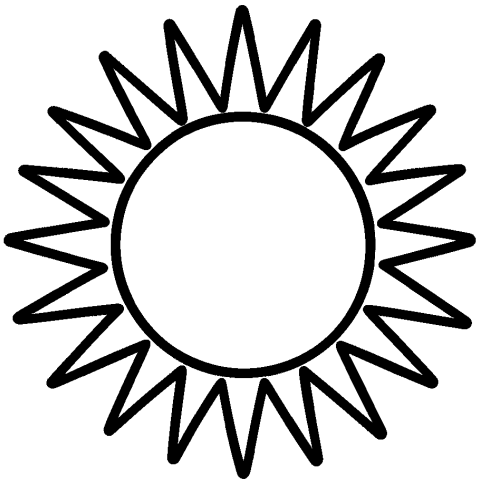

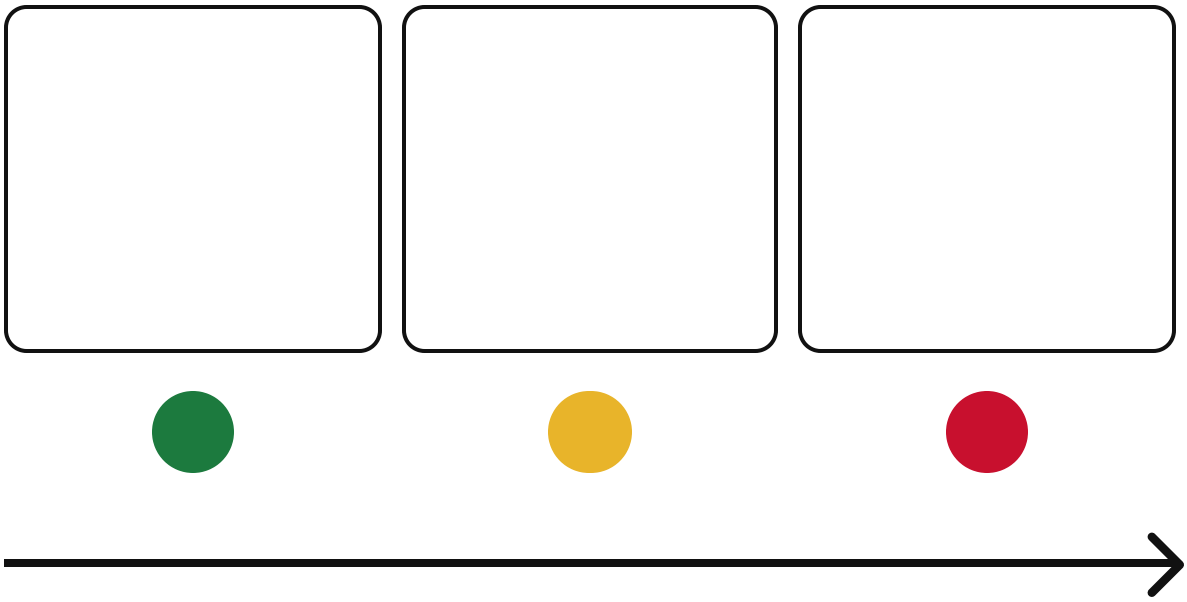

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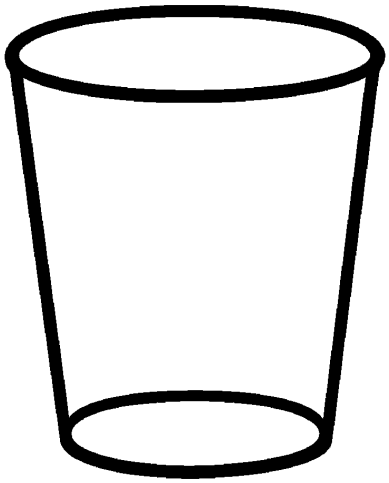

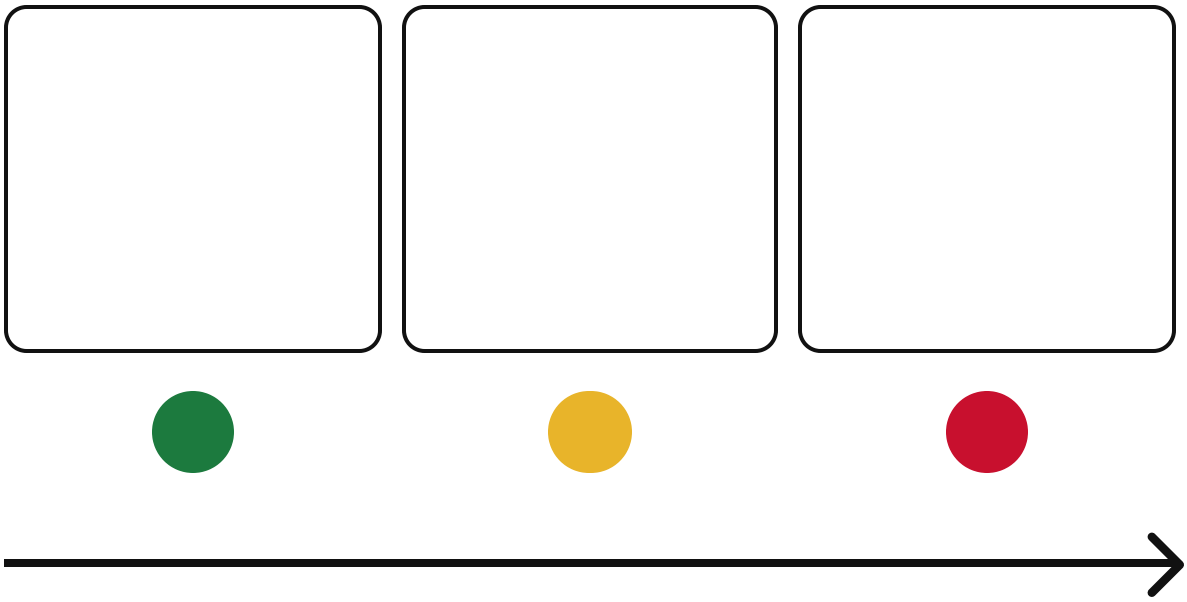

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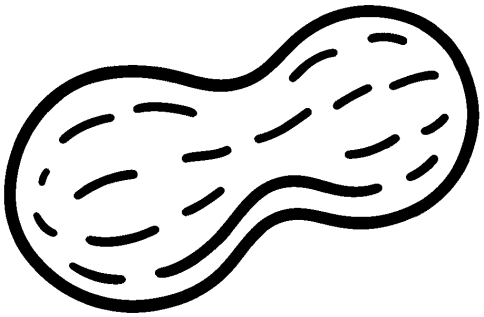

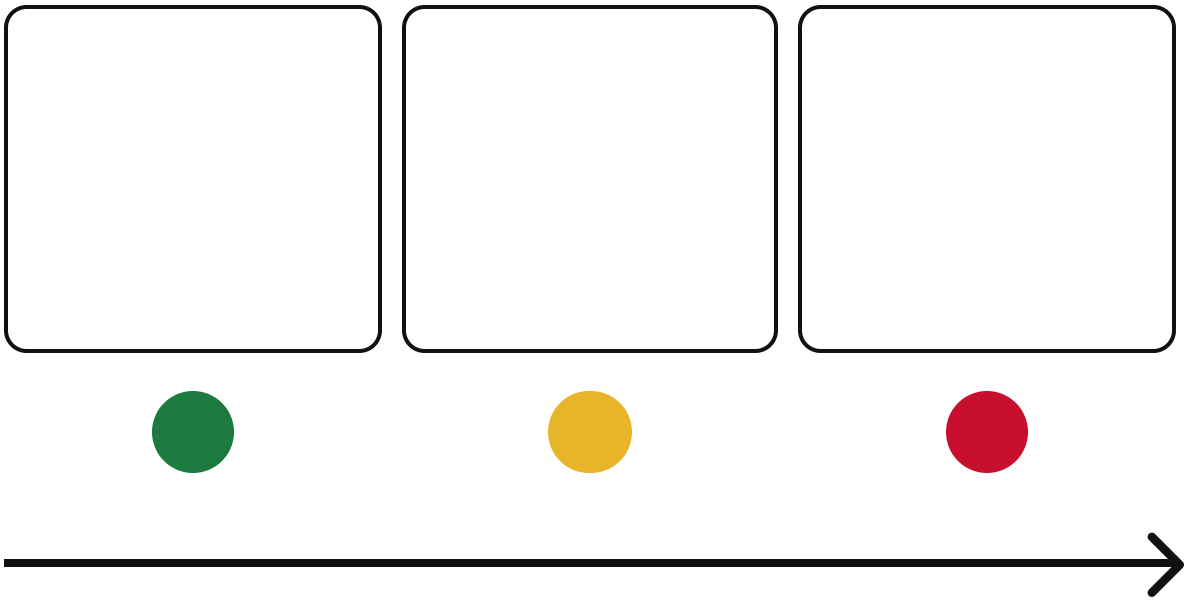

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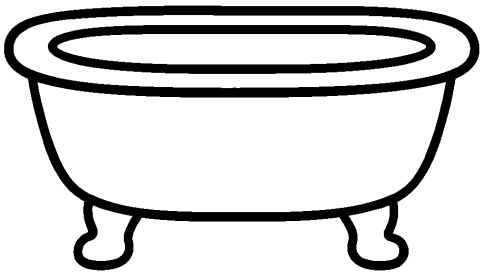

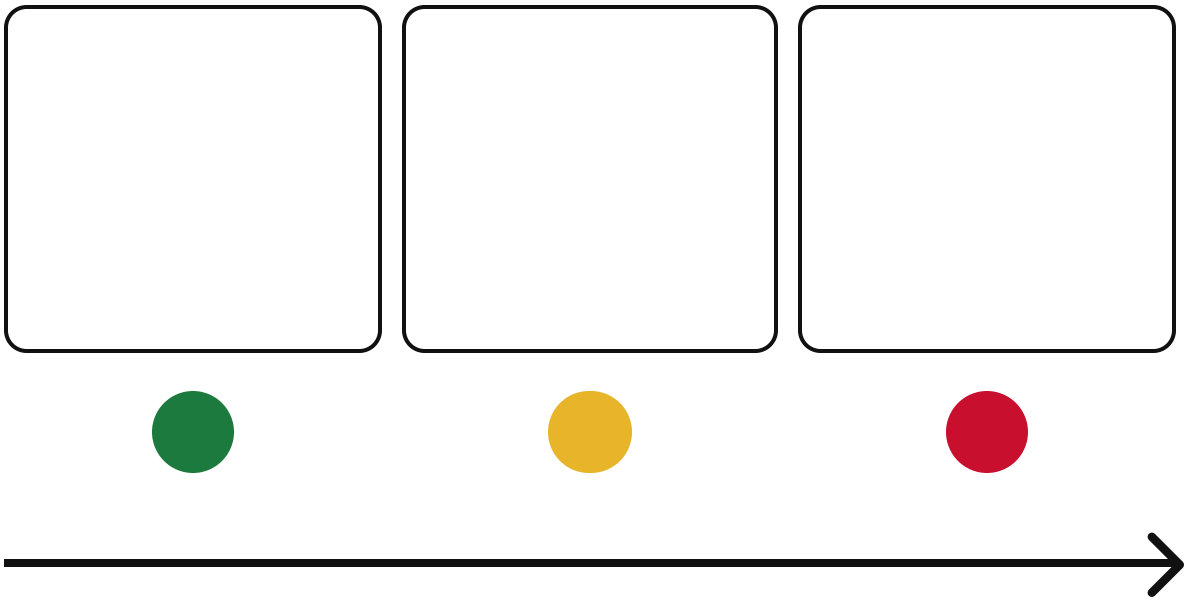

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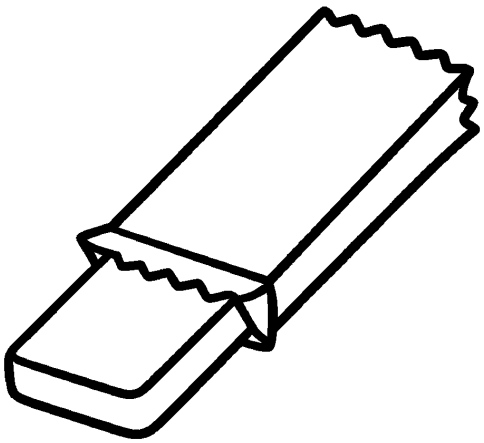
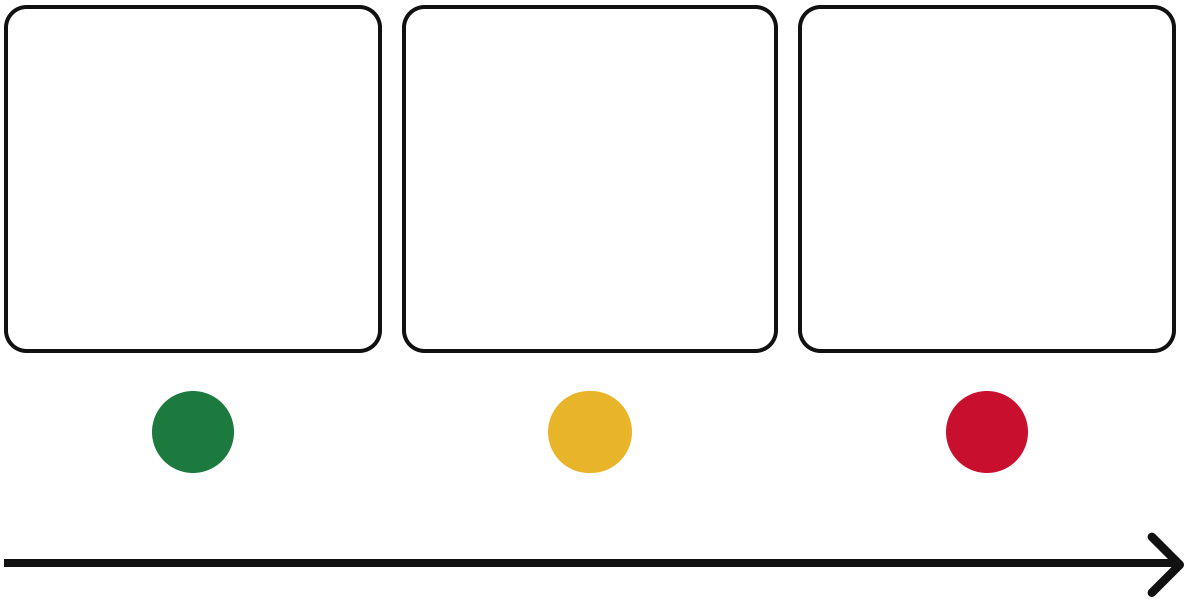




First Short U Words: Sound Tiles

Cut these out. They are every sound the pictures in this pack need, and nothing else.

Consonants

One tile is one sound. Cut them out and keep them in an envelope.

b	c	g	m	n	p
s	t				

Vowels

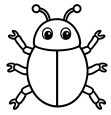
u

Counters

For the stage before letters — one counter per sound. Colour them in before you cut.

First Short U Words: Picture Sound Boxes Answer Key

For the grown-up. Each picture, the word it is, and the sounds in it.

1		bug	b | u | g
2		sun	s | u | n
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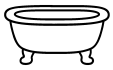
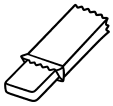
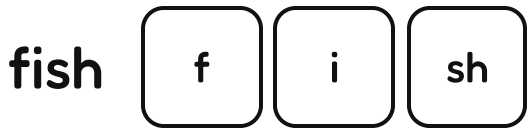
5		tub	t | u | b
6		gum	g | u | m

Elkonin Sound Boxes: How to Use Them

For the grown-up. Ten minutes, one word at a time — tonight's word from school, from a story, or your child's own name.

One box for each sound — not each letter



Four letters, **three sounds**. **sh** is one sound, so it takes one box. English does not let you count sounds by counting letters — which is exactly why the boxes help.

Do it together — five steps

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> **You are in every session.** Step 1 is the whole scaffold — your child cannot pull a word apart into sounds until they hear it pulled apart. Say it again, slower, whenever they stall. Never spell it for them.

Worth knowing

- **No letters yet? Use the counters.** Same five steps, one counter per sound, no spelling. That is where a four-year-old starts.
- **Green to red.** The dots and the arrow are the direction the word is read — first sound on green, last on red.
- **Count sounds, not letters, to pick the page.** *up* → 2. *ship*, *rain* → 3. *frog* → 4. *stamp* → 5.
- **Two letters can be one sound.** *sh, ch, th, ck, ee, ai* and the doubles (*ll, ss, ff*) each take one box.
- **There is no q tile.** *q* never works alone — use *qu*. It says two sounds, /k/ and /w/, and most teachers keep it in one box.
- **x is two sounds**, /k/ and /s/. Let the *x* tile straddle two boxes, or use *k* and *s*.