

Mini-lesson plan

Letter clusters

General:

Level:	2: Early starters (students have some experience with the alphabet but need phonics practice)
Time:	10-15 minutes
Objectives:	Identify and recognize 3 letter clusters per mini-lesson

You will need to download:

Flashcards:	Letter clusters – <i>have the lowercase letter cluster on one side of the flashcard and the corresponding image on the other side</i>
Printables:	Printing sheet for the 3 letter clusters practiced
Songs:	The ABC song

These can be downloaded at <https://www.eslkidstuff.com/esl-kids-lesson-plans.html>

You will also need:

- Blackboard / Whiteboard with chalk / markers
- CD player / computer or something to play the song on

Notes:

Use this mini-lesson within your main lesson for alphabet practice – teach 3 letter clusters each lesson.

We strongly advise NOT dedicating a full lesson to letter clusters – we suggest including a 10-15-minute section each lesson for teaching and reviewing the clusters. Different clusters should be taught over a series of lessons and reviewed each lesson.

Suggested order of min-lessons:

Lesson	Clusters	Cluster words	Additional cluster words
1	oo /ʊ/ ee /i:/ ou /aʊ/	<u>foot</u> <u>bee</u> <u>cloud</u>	<u>book</u> , <u>cook</u> <u>green</u> , <u>queen</u> <u>house</u> , <u>mouse</u>
2	th /θ/ sh /ʃ/ ch /tʃ/	<u>three</u> <u>sheep</u> <u>chin</u>	<u>mouth</u> , <u>cloth</u> <u>ship</u> , <u>brush</u> <u>chips</u> , <u>chest</u>
3 (Review of lessons 1 & 2)	oo /ʊ/ ee /i:/ ou /aʊ/ th /θ/ sh /ʃ/ ch /tʃ/	<u>foot</u> <u>bee</u> <u>cloud</u> <u>three</u> <u>sheep</u> <u>chin</u>	<u>book</u> , <u>cook</u> , <u>hook</u> <u>green</u> , <u>queen</u> , <u>teeth</u> <u>house</u> , <u>mouse</u> , <u>shout</u> <u>mouth</u> , <u>cloth</u> , <u>teeth</u> <u>ship</u> , <u>brush</u> , <u>fish</u> , <u>shout</u> <u>chips</u> , <u>chest</u> , <u>bench</u>
4	ai /eɪ/ oa /əʊ/ ea /i:/	<u>train</u> <u>goat</u> <u>sea</u>	<u>snail</u> , <u>rain</u> <u>soap</u> , <u>boat</u> <u>leaf</u> , <u>tea</u>
5	er /ə(r)/ ar /ɑ:(r)/ or /ɔ:(r)/	<u>river</u> <u>car</u> <u>corn</u>	<u>finger</u> , <u>farmer</u> <u>star</u> , <u>shark</u> <u>fork</u> , <u>horse</u>
6 (Review of lessons 4 & 5)	ai /eɪ/ oa /əʊ/ ea /i:/ er /ə(r)/ ar /ɑ:(r)/ or /ɔ:(r)/	<u>train</u> <u>goat</u> <u>sea</u> <u>river</u> <u>car</u> <u>corn</u>	<u>snail</u> , <u>rain</u> , <u>nail</u> <u>soap</u> , <u>boat</u> , <u>road</u> <u>leaf</u> , <u>tea</u> , <u>peas</u> <u>finger</u> , <u>farmer</u> , <u>letter</u> <u>star</u> , <u>shark</u> , <u>arm</u> <u>fork</u> , <u>horse</u> , <u>storm</u>
7	ue /u:/ ui /u:/ oi /ɔɪ/	<u>glue</u> <u>fruit</u> <u>coin</u>	<u>blue</u> , <u>cue</u> <u>juice</u> , <u>suit</u> <u>toilet</u> , <u>soil</u>
8	oo /ʊ/ oo /u:/ th /θ/ th /ð/	<u>foot</u> <u>moon</u> <u>three</u> <u>mother</u>	<u>wood</u> <u>spoon</u> , <u>boot</u> <u>moth</u> <u>clothes</u> , <u>weather</u>

Lesson Overview:

New Learning and Practice:

1. Sing "The ABC Song"
2. Review the letter clusters learned in previous lessons (lesson 2 "th sh ch" onwards)
3. Introduce 3 new clusters with flashcards
4. Check the 3 letter clusters
5. Introduce 6 new words
6. Test the 6 new words
7. Read the words
8. Write the words on the board
9. Write the words on paper
10. Do a letter clusters printing worksheet

Lesson Procedure:

New Learning and Practice:

1. Sing "The ABC Song"

Start this section of the lesson with the ABC song to indicate that it's reading time. If possible, have the letters of the alphabet stuck around the walls of your classroom, high enough so your students can't take them down, and point at each letter as it is sung. If not, it's not a problem, sing along with the song and have fun.

Lyrics for "The ABC Song"

<p>Verse 1: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W and X Y Z</p> <p><i>I can sing my ABCs, Won't you sing along with me?</i></p>	<p>Verse 2: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W and X Y Z</p> <p><i>I can sing my ABCs, Won't you sing along with me?</i></p>
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Alternatively, play the song video and have everyone sing along with the performer.

2. Review the letters clusters learned in previous lessons (lesson 2 “th sh ch” onwards)

Use your flashcards to quickly run through the letter clusters learned in previous lessons.

This should be a quick run through, eliciting each letter, cluster sound and picture:

- 1) Hold up the first letter cluster and ask, “What letters can you see?” – elicit the letters (e.g. “ou”)
- 2) Then ask, “Is for?” – elicit the phonetic sound (e.g. “/aʊ/”)
- 3) Finally, turn over the flashcard showing the picture and ask again, “Is for?” – elicit the word (e.g. “cloud”)
- 4) Continue with the rest of the letter cluster flashcards

3. Introduce the letters with flashcards

For the new letters, follow this basic procedure. This section of the lesson should be fast paced and fun.

- 1) Have everyone gather around you so they are close – have them sit on the floor with you, if possible. You want everyone to be close enough, so you can easily pass cards back and forth with them.
- 2) Hold up a letter cluster flashcard so all students can see it.
- 3) Elicit the letters on the card (e.g. “t” and “h”)
- 4) Teach the sound of the cluster (e.g. “t” “h” is for /θ/). Chorus again and check individually, paying special attention to difficult sounds and tongue/teeth position.
- 5) Provide an example of an object that begins with the letter. Double-sided flashcards with the letter on one side and a picture on the other are great for this. (e.g. “What’s this?” (elicit “t” “h”). “And a is for...?” (elicit “/θ/”). “And ‘/θ/’ is for ... (turning the card over) “three”. Chorus the word and check individually.

Therefore, a typical interaction for a single letter cluster (covering points 2-5 above) would be as follows:

Teacher: (showing a flashcard of the cluster th) “What letters are these?”

Students: “t and h”

T: “Good! th together is /θ/

Ss: “/θ/”

T: “t h is for /θ/ .. /θ/ .. /θ/. Repeat /θ/”

Ss: “/θ/”

T: “/θ/”

Ss: “/θ/”

T: “/θ/”

Ss: "/θ/"

T: "t h, is for /θ/, is for (turning the card over) three .. three .. three .. repeat three"

Ss: "three"

T: "three"

Ss: "three"

T: "three"

Ss: "three"

T: "Good! What's this?" (showing "th")

Ss: "/θ/"

T: "Is for?" (turning the card)

Ss: "three"

T: "Well done!" (now asks individual students)

6) Do a final check:

Teacher: What's this? (holding up the 'th' flashcard)

Students: 'a'

T: And 'a' is for...?

Ss: '/θ/'

T: And '/θ/' is for...?

Ss: 'three!'

7) Then move onto the next letter.

As you teach each letter, use a combination of the activities in 4 below to practice and reinforce each letter.

4. Check the 3 letter clusters

Do a quick final check of the 3 new clusters:

- 1) Hold up the first cluster and ask, "What's this?" – elicit the sound (e.g. "/θ/")
- 2) Turn over the flashcard showing the picture and ask again, "Is for?" – elicit the word (e.g. "three")
- 3) Continue with the other letter clusters

5. Introduce 6 new words

Students will now learn some new words with the 3 clusters they have just learned. Either print out or draw on the board pictures for the additional cluster words (see "Suggested order of min-lessons" on page 2 of this mini-lesson plan).

First, we need to teach / elicit the words. Bring everyone's attention to first picture and teach / Elicit the word. Then chorus 3-5 times. Repeat for all the pictures.

6. Test 6 new words

Can your students remember the new words? If using printed pictures, slowly reveal each picture until a student shouts out the answer. If drawing on the board, slowly start to draw the picture until someone guesses what it is and shouts out the work

7. Read the words

Select a picture but don't show it to your students. Start writing the letters for that word on the board. Get everyone to sound out each letter as you write it. Help with clusters. For example:

m o u t h

Finally, see if anyone can piece together all the sounds to make a word – and show the picture to confirm the correct answer (while giving lots of praise!)

8. Write the words on the board

Give a marker / chalk to a student and have them come to the board. Show him/her one word from the previous slides on a piece of paper, but don't let the rest of the class see.

The student writes the word on the board and the rest of the students must shout out the word.

Repeat for the other words with different students.

9. Write the words on paper

Have everyone sit down with a pencil and piece of paper. Show the pictures and get everyone to write down the words for the pictures.

When everyone has finished, check their answers and give corrections if necessary.

10. Do a letter clusters printing worksheet

Hold up the worksheet and model tracing and printing each letter. Clearly show the directions of printing each letter and emphasize the importance of staying on the line. Then draw a picture of the first word.

Have your students work on their worksheets. Spend time with each student helping, asking what the letter is, and praising.

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- All flashcards, worksheets, craft sheets, readers and songs used in this lesson plan can be downloaded at eslkidstuff.com/esl-kids-lesson-plans.html

- More free Lesson Plans are available at [eslkidstuff.com/esl-kids-lesson-plans.html](https://www.eslkidstuff.com/esl-kids-lesson-plans.html)

Can you suggest any additions to this lesson plan? If you know of any great games, activities, teaching points, links to other sites or any other ideas that can be added to this lesson plan, please email us: <https://www.eslkidstuff.com/contact.htm>

Please report any mistakes at <https://www.eslkidstuff.com/contact.htm>

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