



An Introduction to
Shapeys[®] Steps
Phonics System

The Author

Adrian Alexander, who created, wrote and illustrated the original Shapeys educational books, is an English teacher from Great Britain.

The Team

Adrian was assisted by a team of international editors and English teachers.

The Research

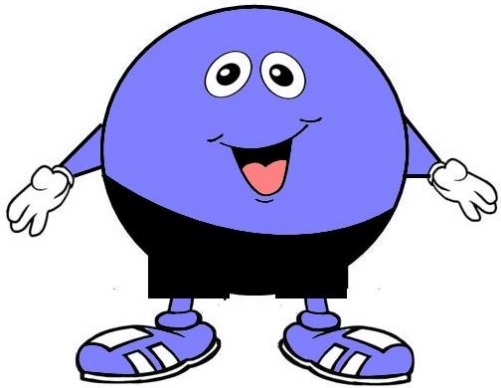
The team studied many methods of introducing the English language via phonics systems. It took into consideration the possibility of the student learning English as a second language. To make the system accessible to remote areas where the advantage of technology is not present, the system is designed to be contained in a portable box and used anywhere.

The Language Used

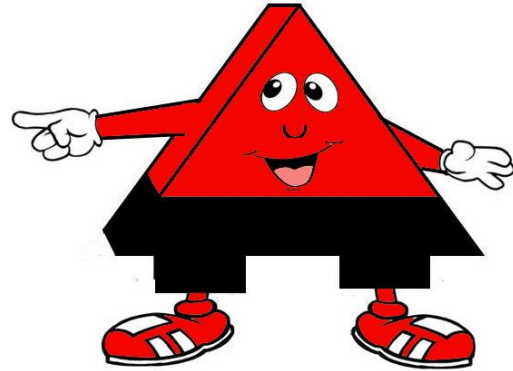
The books are written in UK English.

Characters

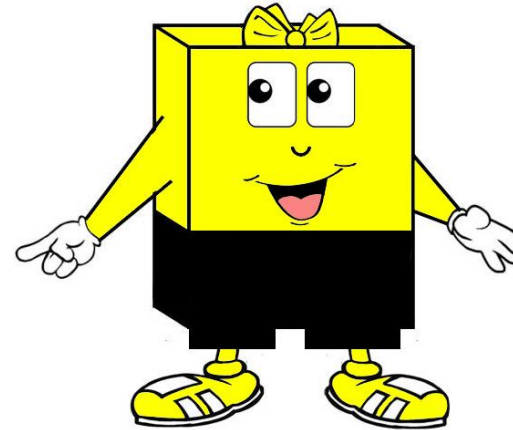
The Shapeys® educational products are based around the four Shapeys® characters.



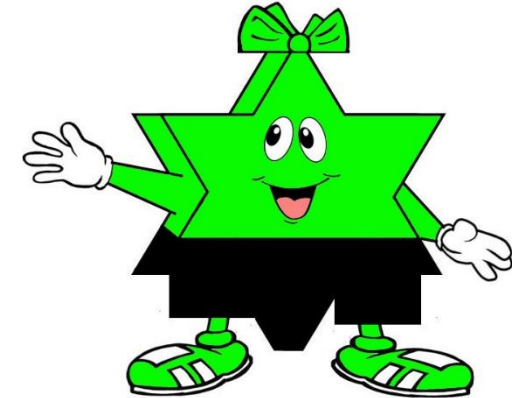
Baw



Boo



Mimi



Gaga

The characters engage the children and ensure that their attention is fully focused during the lessons.

How the System Works

These are the top 100 High Usage words in the English Language, shown in usage order.

The main objective of the Shapeys® Steps system is to introduce these words to new students and for them to recognise and pronounce them. This will serve as a good foundation and enable the student to continue to learn English with confidence.

This is not the order in which the words are taught....



The Top 100 High Usage English Words in Usage Order									
1. the	2. and	3. a	4. to	5. said	6. in	7. he	8. I	9. of	10. it
11. was	12. you	13. they	14. on	15. she	16. is	17. for	18. at	19. his	20. but
21. that	22. with	23. all	24. we	25. can	26. are	27. up	28. had	29. my	30. her
31. what	32. there	33. out	34. this	35. have	36. went	37. be	38. like	39. some	40. so
41. not	42. then	43. were	44. go	45. little	46. as	47. no	48. mum	49. one	50. them
51. do	52. me	53. down	54. dad	55. big	56. when	57. it's	58. see	59. looked	60. very
61. look	62. don't	63. come	64. will	65. into	66. back	67. from	68. children	69. him	70. Mr
71. get	72. just	73. now	74. came	75. oh	76. about	77. got	78. their	79. people	80. your
81. put	82. could	83. house	84. old	85. too	86. by	87. day	88. made	89. time	90. I'm
91. if	92. help	93. Mrs	94. called	95. here	96. off	97. asked	98. saw	99. make	100. an

How the System Works

This is the order in which the words are taught.

The system introduces the first 50 words that are decodable using the Shapeys® Steps system.

Then the other 50 words that are not decodable are introduced. These are called “tricky” or “on sight” words.

This is done in three main steps.



Top 100 Words In Teaching Order

Words That Can Be Decoded by the STEPS system (50)

a	as	at	and	dad	is	in	it	It's	an
can	got	not	on	get	had	him	his	mum	asked
up	back	big	but	from	help	if	of	off	for
went	will	just	that	with	this	then	them	they	children
see	look	looked	too	down	now	out	about	house	when

Words That Cannot Be Decoded (50)

I	the	he	she	we	me	be	so	no	go
old	oh	to	do	into	are	have	little	some	come
like	time	make	made	came	people	was	what	all	called
were	here	her	very	you	your	could	saw	said	one
put	their	there	I'm	don't	Mr	Mrs	my	by	day

Step 1

Objectives of **STEPS** Step One;

- a)** Introduce environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, oral blending and segmentation.
- b)** Encourage the child to listen and discriminate sounds forming a good basis for the remaining steps.

Step 2

Objective of **STEPS** Step Two;

- a)** Introduce a decodable sound for each of the 26 letters in the English alphabet.
- b)** Introduce the decodable words contained within the high use top 100 English words.

Step 3

Objective of **STEPS** Step Three;

- a)** Introduce the sounds of some double letters (e.g. ch, sh, st).
- b)** Introduce the names of the letters by learning an alphabet song.
- c)** Learn tricky words or non-decodable words (sometimes referred to as sight words) and the remaining non-decodable words.



Step	Number of Weeks	Lessons and Activities
Step 1	7 Weeks	77 Lessons and Activities Combined
Step 2	7 Weeks	28 Lessons, 49 Activities
Step 3	9 Weeks	51 Lessons, 57 Activities



Week	Teaching Focus (Sounds)
1	General Sound Discrimination - Environmental
2	General Sound Discrimination - Instrumental
3	General Sound Discrimination – Body Percussion
4	Rhythm and Rhyme
5	Sound Repetition
6	Voice Sounds
7	Oral Blending and Segmenting
Objective	The objective of Step 1 is to introduce environmental and instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, oral blending and segmentation. In addition, to encourage the child to listen and discriminate sounds forming a good basis for the remaining steps.



Week	Teaching Focus (Letter Sounds)				Top 100 Words Learned
1	s	a	p	t	a, as, at
2	d	i	m	n	and, dad, is, in, it, it's, an.
3	c	g	k	o	can, got, not, on.
4	e	h	r	u	get, had, him, his, mum, asked, up.
5	b	f	l		back, big, but, from, help, if, of, off, for.
6	j	v	w		went, will, just.
7	x	y	z	q	

The objective of STEP 2 is to introduce a sound for each letter of the alphabet.



Week	Teaching Focus (Double letters, Tricky Words)					Top 100 Words Learned
1	sh	ch	th	ng	st	that, with, this, then, they, them, children.
2	ai	ee	or	oa	oo	see, look, looked, too
3	ar	ur	ow	oi	qu	down, now.
4	ie	ou	ue	er		out, about, house.
5	br	bl	wh	ph		when
6	Non Decodable Tricky Words					I, the, he, she, we, me, be, so, no, go, old, oh, to, do, into.
7	Non Decodable Tricky Words					are, have, little, some, come, like, time, make, made, came, people.
8	Non Decodable Tricky Words					was, what, all, called, were, here, her, very, you, your, could.
9	Non Decodable Tricky Words					saw, said, one, put, their, there, I'm, don't, Mr. Mrs. my, by, day

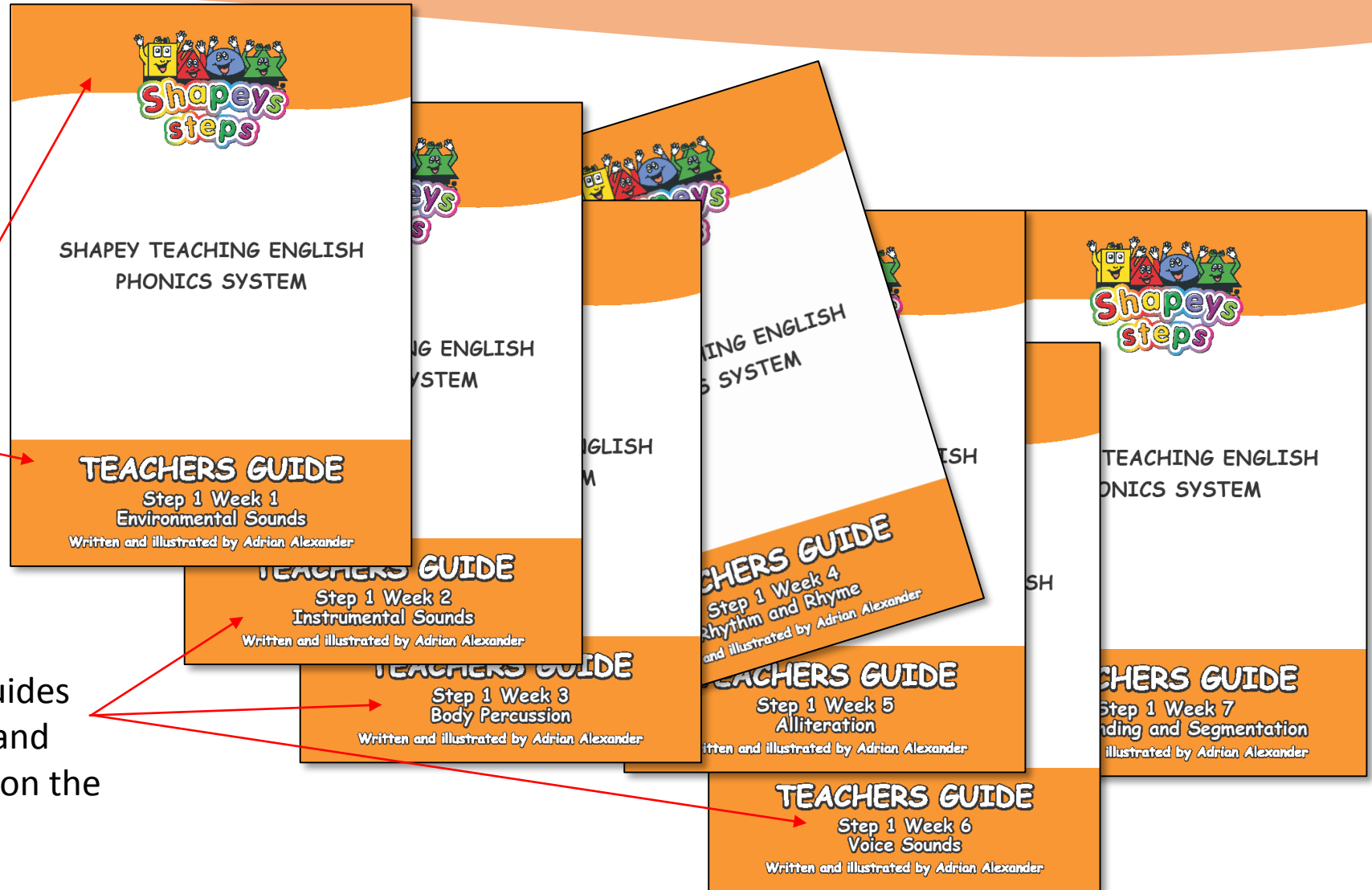
The objective of STEP 3 is to introduce a sound for various double letter combinations, introduce the top 100 non-decoding tricky words, the alphabet and capital letters.

Teaching Tools Step 1

Step one has a Teachers Guide book for each of the first seven weeks.

Step one Teachers Guides have an orange colour scheme for ease of identification

Step one Teachers Guides have the step, week and focus clearly marked on the base of the guide.

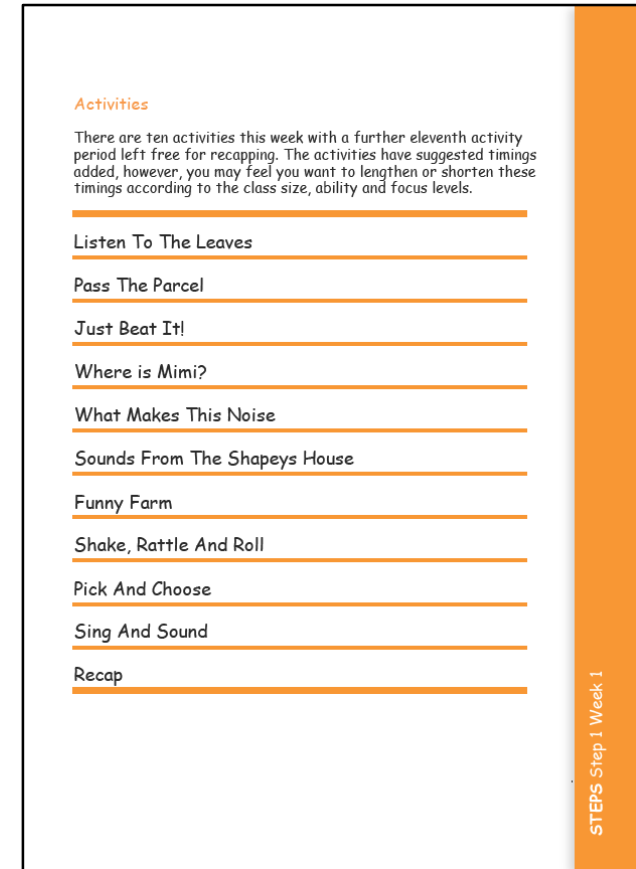


Teaching Tools Step 1

Inside the Step One Teachers Guides are clear and helpful hints for the teacher.



All of the activities are listed



Teaching Tools Step 1

Each of the 77 activities in Step One has a clear and easy to use lesson plan.

Lesson objectives are here

Suggested timing and Title for the lesson are here

Shapeys Teaching English Phonics System

Step: 1 Week: 1 Activity: 2

Learning objectives for this activity
To develop children's listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment

Teachers preparation for the activity:
This can be an indoor or outdoor activity.
Prepare a parcel or an object to pass about.
Have two sounds ready, such as a pen with a click top, and keys to jangle.

Suggested Timing
Activity Title
Pass the parcel

Ask the children to sit in a group.
Remind the children again about the things that a good listener does (*for example, keep quiet, have ears and eyes ready*). Invite the children to demonstrate to you how good they are at listening and talk about why listening carefully is important.
Demonstrate how they can listen and remember all the sounds they hear when they listen for a moment.
It may be useful to use a sand timer or a wrist watch to demonstrate, for example, the passing of 10-15 seconds.
Ask them what made each sound and encourage them to try to make the sound themselves.
Ask the children to stand in a line. Give the child on the right hand side a parcel (or any object). The child is asked to make a noise and then pass the object to the child on his or her left. That child in turn copies the same noise and passes the object on. When the object reaches the far left hand side, the child carries the object to the far right hand side and generates a noise of his or her desire. So the activity commences until all have made a noise.
Ask the children which sounds they liked the best and to repeat them.
Start the activity again but this time stand the children in a circle. Introduce two sounds, such as a click of a pen and a rattle of keys. Instruct them that a "pen click" sends the parcel (object) to the right and the "key jangle" sends the parcel to the left. The children who get it wrong leave the circle. You can increase the speed as the game progresses.

Look, Listen, Question and Record
Observe how the children listen and focus. Check that they understand how to listen and how they recall the sounds they have heard.

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STEPS Step 1 Week 1

The actions to prepare for the lesson are shown here

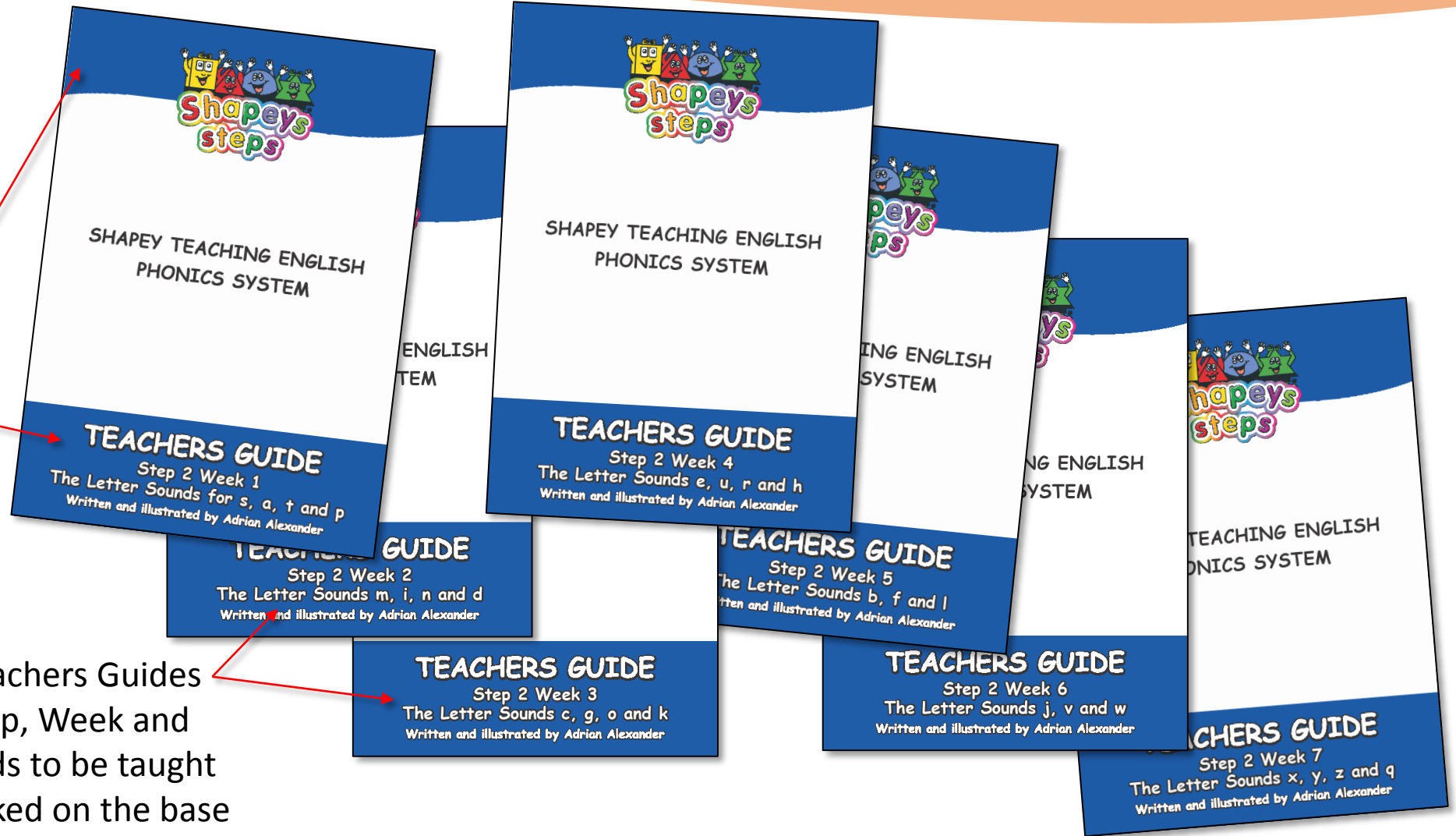
How to teach the lesson is shown here

Teaching Tools Step 2

Step two has a Teachers Guide book for each of the next seven weeks.

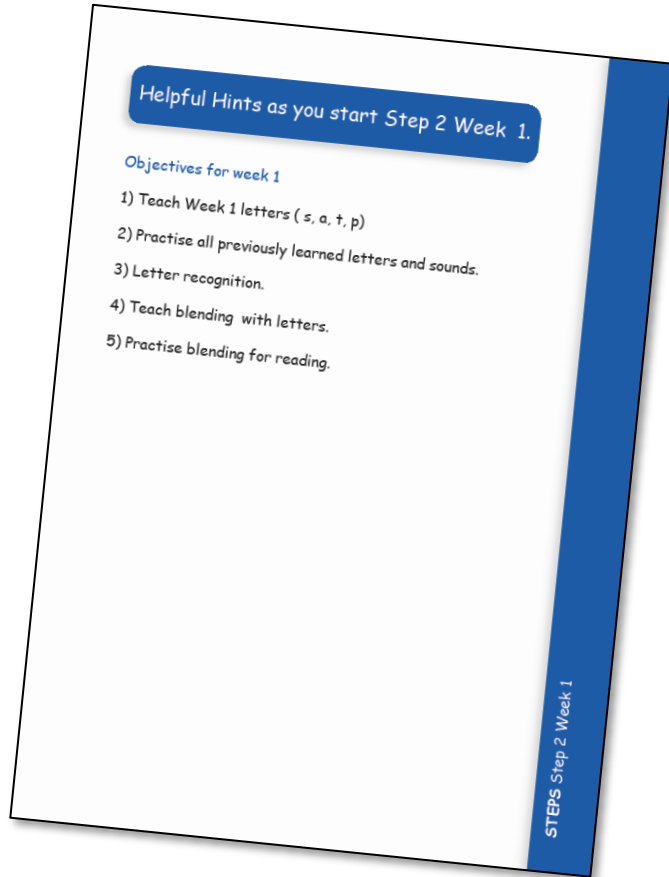
Step two Teachers Guides have a blue colour scheme for ease of Identification.

Step two Teachers Guides have the Step, Week and Letter Sounds to be taught clearly marked on the base of the guide.

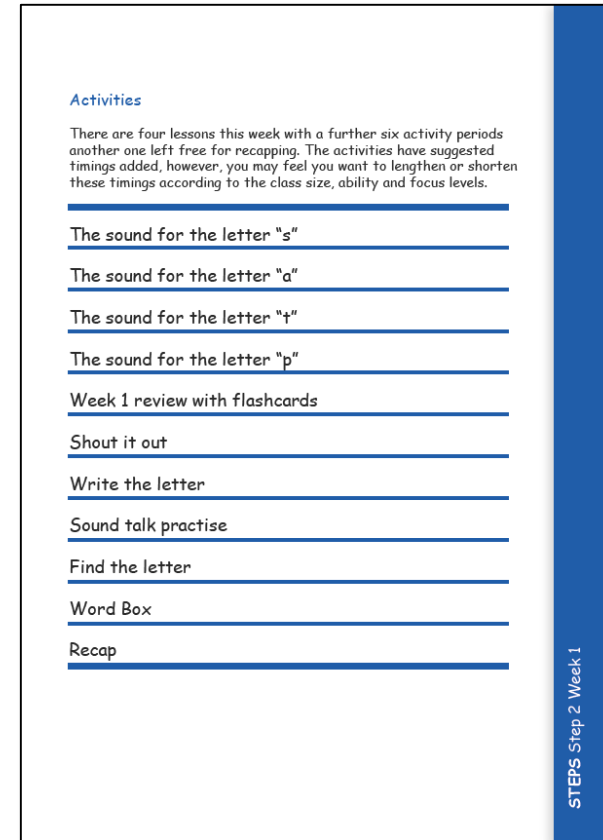


Teaching Tools Step 2

Inside the Step Two Teaching Guide are clear helpful hints for the teacher.



All of the activities are listed



Teaching Tools Step 2

Each lesson in Step Two has a lesson plan ready to be used.

Lesson objectives are here

Suggested timing and Title for the lesson are here

The actions to prepare for the lesson are shown here

Shapeys Teaching English Phonics System
Step: 2 Week: 1 Lesson: 1

Learning objectives for this activity
To learn to say a letter sound, recognise and write the letter that represents that sound.

Teachers preparation for the activity:
Prepare the story card one "s".
Prepare the STEPS A4 flashcard showing, on one side, a picture of a snake in the shape of the letter 's' and on the other side the letter 's', small whiteboards, pens and wipes (or paper and pencils) and the activity book.

Suggested Timing
15-20

Activity Title
Teaching the sound S

Introduction: Use story card number one "S" and tell the story.

Part 1: Do it (Action)
1. Show the picture of a snake.
2. Move your hand like a snake making an 's' shape, encouraging the children to do the same.

Part 2: Sound it out
1. If any children in the room have names with the s sound in them, say their names, accentuating the ssssss (e.g. Sssssarah, Ssssssimon, Sssssteven).
2. Do the same with other words (e.g. sssssand, sssss) accepting suggestions from the children if they offer, but not asking for them.

Part 3: See it and say it
1. On the card with the picture of the snake, move your finger down the snake from its mouth, saying sssss and saying ssnake when you reach its tail.
2. Repeat this a number of times. Encourage the children to join in on their activity sheets.
3. Write s on a surface and say sssssssssss.
4. Ask the children to repeat sssssssssss.
5. Point to the snake and say ssssssnake and to the s and say sssssssssss.
6. Repeat with the children joining in.
7. Put the card behind your back and explain that when you show the snake side of the card, the children should say snake and when you show the s side of the card, they should say s.
8. Explain that whenever they see "ss," the sound is extended. Also explain that "ss" is only in the middle or at the end of a word.

Part 4: See it, say it and write it
1. Move your finger slowly down the snake from its mouth, this time saying the letter formation patter: Round the snake's head, slide down his back and round his tail.
2. Repeat a couple of times.
3. Repeat a couple more times with the children joining in the patter as they watch you.
4. Ask the children to put their 'writing finger' or 'pencil' in the air and follow you in making an s shape, also saying the patter. Repeat a couple of times.
5. Ask them to do the same again, either tracing s in front of them on the floor or sitting in a line and tracing s on the back of the child in front.
6. Ask the children to write s on whiteboards or on paper at tables.
7. Complete the activity pages for s and repeat the actions for the letter. Read out the words on the activity page.

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STEPS Step 2 Week 1

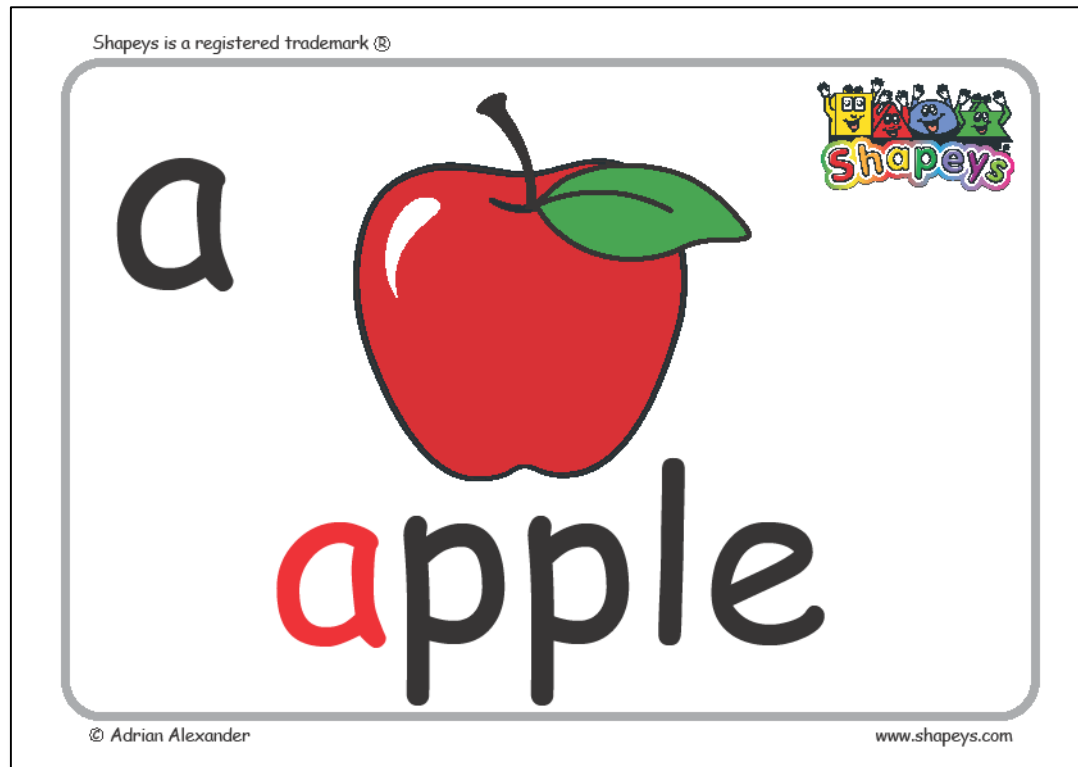
Each lesson is split into four sections

1. Do it (Action)
2. Sound it out
3. See it and say it
4. See it, say it and write it.

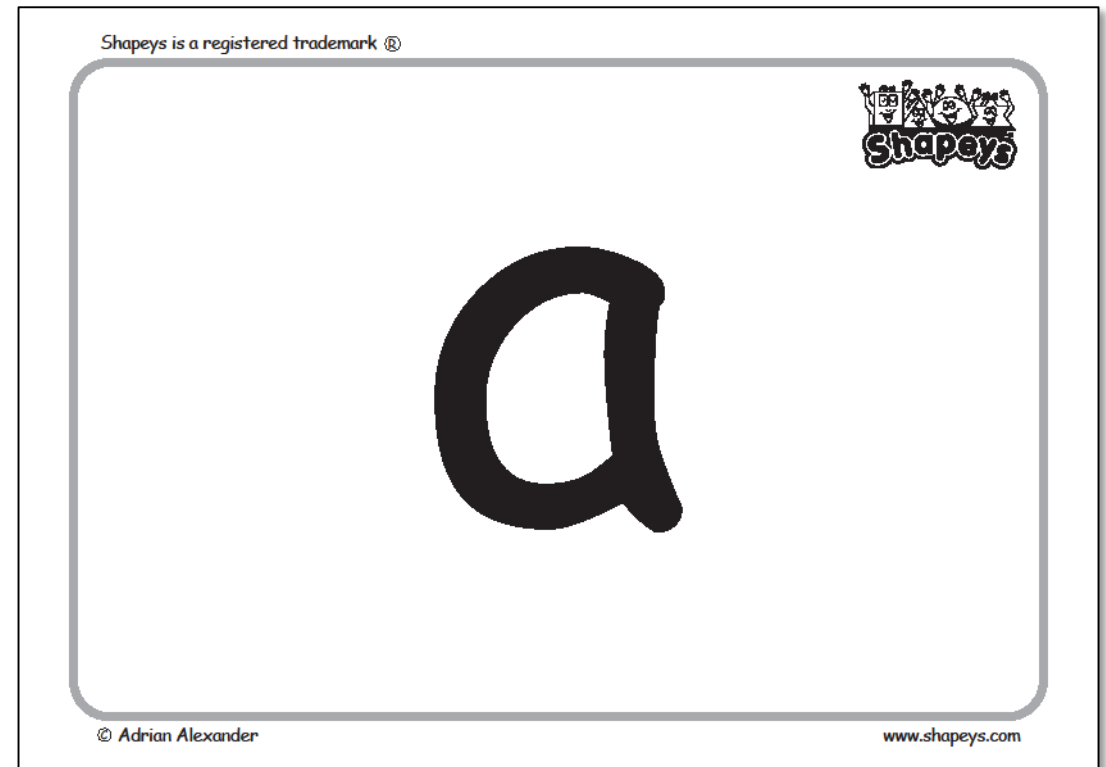
Teaching Tools Step 2

Step Two lessons also have double sided picture cards for each letter being taught.

Front View



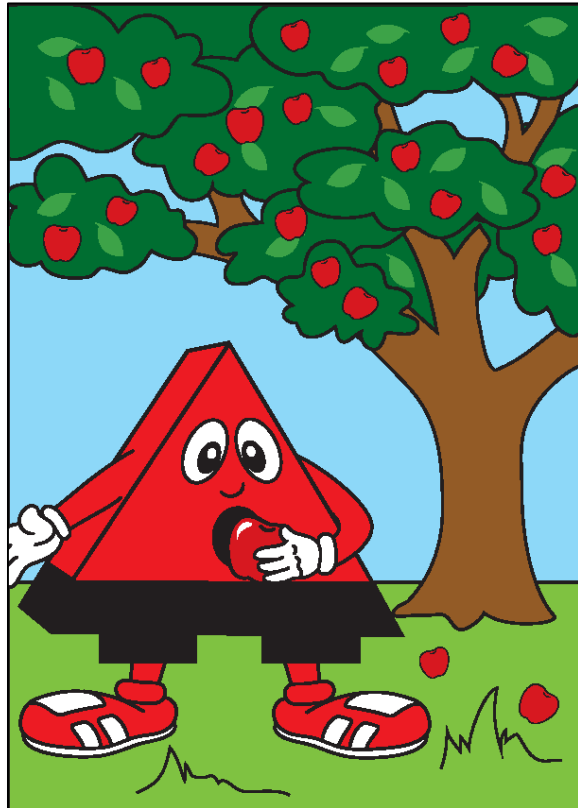
Rear View





Teaching Tools Step 2

Step Two lessons have double sided story cards for each letter being taught. The front shows a picture, the back gives the story and instructions.

Front View



Rear View

 Story Card 2 Week 1
Letter "a" 

TEACHERS NOTE: HOLD THIS CARD UP FOR THE STUDENTS TO SEE, WITH THE PICTURE FACING OUT

READ THE STORY OUT LOUD:-

Boo is in the garden.

He has an apple from the tree in his hand and he is going to take a big bite.

As he opens his mouth he says "aaaaaaaaa".

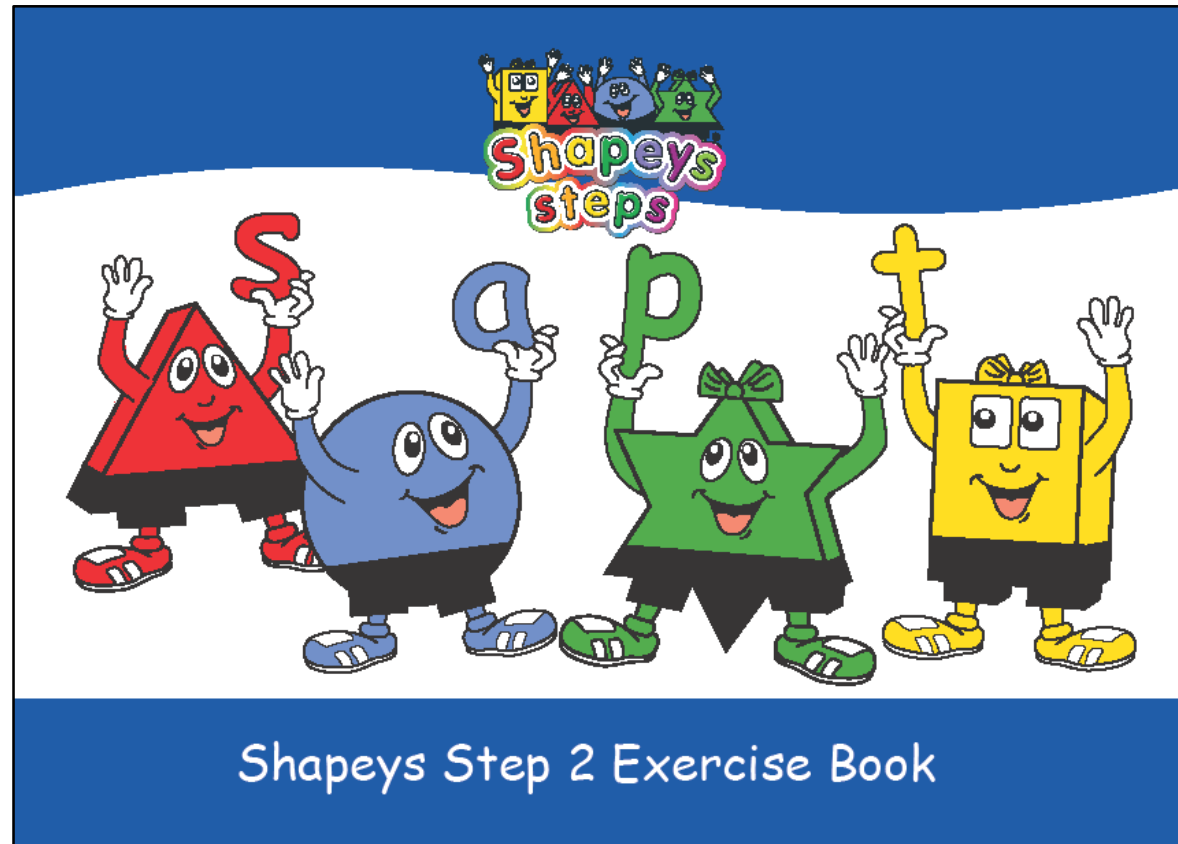
Lets pretend we are going to take a bite out of a big apple and say "aaaaaaaaa".

TEACHERS NOTE: NOW CONTINUE WITH LESSON PLAN

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Teaching Tools Step 2

Step Two has an exercise book with an exercise for each letter taught.

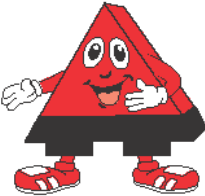
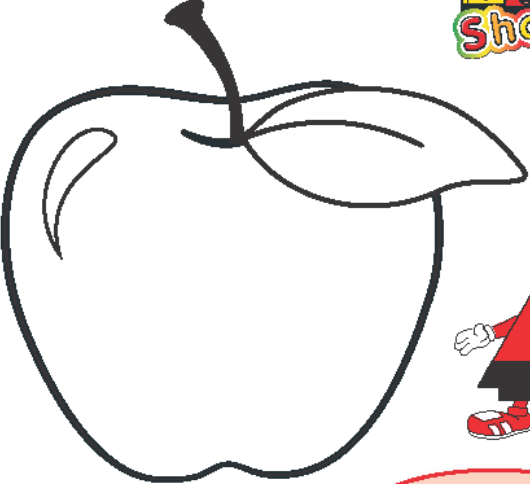


Teaching Tools Step 2

Step Two exercise book internal pages match the pictures on the flash cards.

Exercise

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Shapeys


Please colour my apple red.

© Adrian Alexander Week 1 www.shapeys.com

The exercise page features a large outline of an apple for coloring. To the left, the letter 'a' is shown in a red font inside a rounded square. Below the 'a', the word 'apple' is written in a red font, followed by a list of words: 'ant', 'art', 'hat', 'bat', and 'mat', each with a red letter 'a' highlighted. A small red triangle character with arms and legs is standing next to the apple. A speech bubble from the character says 'Please colour my apple red.' The page includes the 'Shapeys' logo, a copyright notice for Adrian Alexander, 'Week 1', and the website 'www.shapeys.com'.

Writing – example of the practise page

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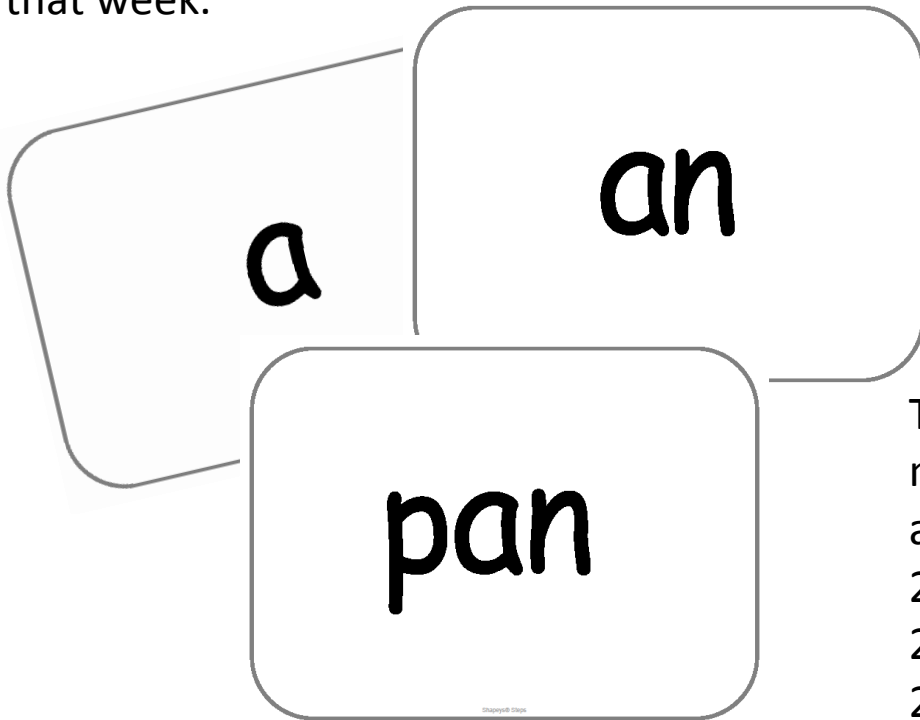
Shapeys

© Adrian Alexander www.shapeys.com

The writing practice page shows two rows of the letter 'a' on lined paper. The first row contains four 'a's: the first is black with red arrows indicating the stroke order (a counter-clockwise curve for the top and a vertical line down for the stem), and the following three are grey. The second row contains four grey 'a's for tracing. The page includes the 'Shapeys' logo, a copyright notice for Adrian Alexander, and the website 'www.shapeys.com'.

Teaching Tools Step 2

Step Two has a full set of flash cards displaying words that can be made from the letters taught during that week.

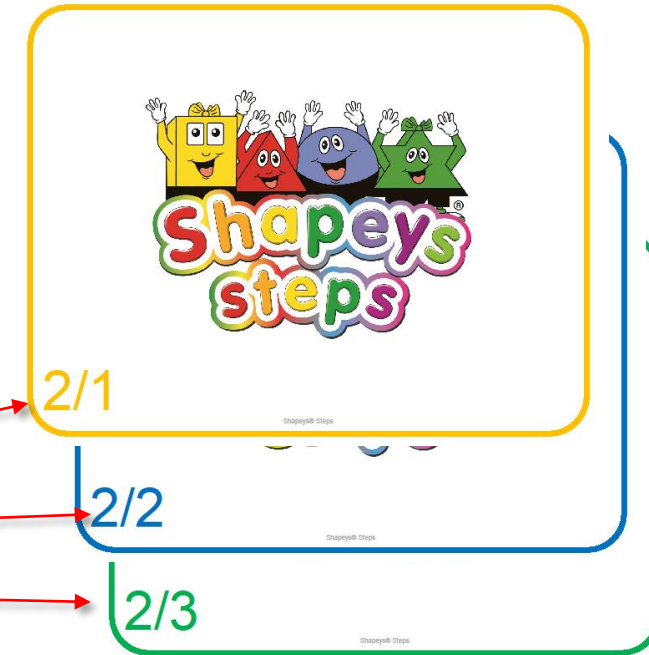


The back of the flash cards are coloured and numbered to show the week they apply to. In this example:-

2/1 = Step 2/ Week 1. (Yellow)

2/2 = Step 2/ Week 2 (Blue)

2/3 = Step 2/ Week 3 (Green)



This makes it much easier to collect and sort the cards at the end of the lessons.

Teaching Tools Step 2

Sentences and Progress Sheets

Sentence sheets are provided for each week. These provide a good measure of progress. The sentences target the new letters learned each week. These should be used on a personal basis with each student.

The words are all decodable. There are no capital letters or punctuation used, just the letters. This is designed to help the recognition of the letters and increase the students confidence.

Shapeys Steps
STEP TWO
Simple Sentences By Week

Week 1	
READ THE SENTENCE	WRITE THE SENTENCE
a tap	
pat papa	
papa sat	
papa at a tap	
pat as a tap	

Top 100 words learned this week
a, as, at

Shapeys Steps
STEP TWO
Simple Sentences By Week

Week 2	
READ THE SENTENCE	WRITE THE SENTENCE
an ant	
it is sad	
it is mad	
it is in a pan	
a pin in a pan	
mama and papa	
dad is a man	
an ant is in a tin	
a sad ant is in a pit	
sand is in a sand pit	
it's damp in a sand pit	
sit on a mat and tap a tin	

Top 100 words learned this week
and, dad, is, in, it, it's, an

Shapeys Steps
STEP TWO
Simple Sentences By Week

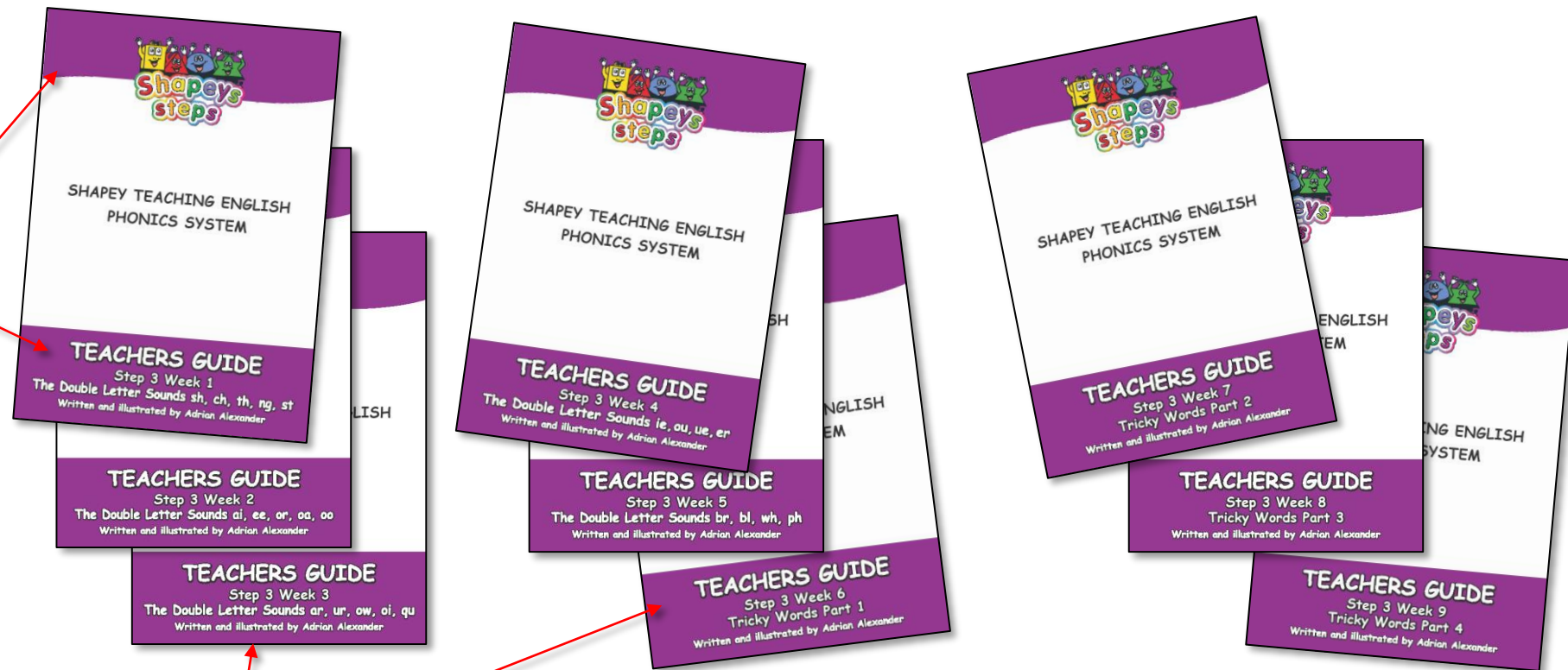
Week 3	
READ THE SENTENCE	WRITE THE SENTENCE
a dog and a cat	
dad got an ink pot	
act in a mask	
a tap is on a sink	
it is odd to camp in a pot	
dad can nod at a man	
dad asks a man in a mask	
cans and tins on a top	
an ant got on my skin	
a dog and a pig in a gap	
a spot is not on my skin	
a dog digs in a pit	

Top 100 words learned this week
can, got, not, on

Teaching Tools Step 3

Step three has a Teachers Guide book for each of the next nine weeks.

Step three Teaching Guides have a purple colour scheme for ease of identification



Step three Teaching Guides have the Step, the Week and Letter Sounds or Tricky Words to be taught, clearly marked on the base of the guide.

Teaching Tools Step 3

Inside the front cover of Step three Teachers Guide there is a clear grid showing the teaching focus by week.

Week	Teaching Focus	Top 100 Words Learned
1	sh ch th ng st	that, with, this, then, them, they, children.
2	ai ee or oa oo	see, look, looked, too.
3	ar ur ow oi qu	down, now.
4	ie ou ue er	out, about, house.
5	br bl wh ph	when
6	Non Decoding Tricky Words	i, the, he, she, we, me, be, so, no, go, old, oh, to, do, into.
7	Non Decoding Tricky Words	are, have, little, some, come, like, time, make, made, came, people.
8	Non Decoding Tricky Words	was, what, all, called, were, here, her, very, you, your, could.
9	Non Decoding Tricky Words	saw, said, one, put, they, their, there, I'm, don't, Mr. Mrs. my, by day

The objective of STEP 3 is to introduce a sound for various double letter combinations, introduce the top 100 non-decoding tricky words, the alphabet and capital letters.

© Adrian Alexander

All of the activities are listed on the first pages

Activities

There are five lessons this week with seven activity periods. The activities have suggested timings added, however, you may feel you want to lengthen or shorten these timings according to the class size, ability and focus levels. Alphabet practise should be used in every week of Step 3.

The sound for the double letters "sh"

The sound for the double letters "ch"

The sound for the double letters "th"

The sound for the double letters "ng"

The sound for the double letters "st"

Week 1 review with flashcards

Shout it out

Write the double letters

Sound talk practise

Find the double letters

Word Box

Recap

Alphabet Practise

STEPS Step 3 Week 1

A recap chart on the back cover shows the progress against the Top 100 words by week.

Words That Can Be Decoded (50)											
a	as	at	and	dad	is	in	it	it's	an		
can	got	not	on	get	had	him	his	mum	asked		
up	back	big	but	from	help	if	of	off	for		
went	will	just	they	that	with	this	then	them	children		
see	look	looked	too	down	now	out	about	house	when		

Words That Cannot Be Decoded - Tricky Words (50)											
I	the	he	she	we	me	be	so	no	go		
old	oh	to	do	into	are	have	little	some	come		
like	time	make	made	came	people	was	what	all	called		
were	here	her	very	you	your	could	saw	said	one		
put	their	there	Mr	Mrs	don't	I'm	my	by	day		

Teaching Tools Step 3

Each lesson in Step Three has a lesson plan already prepared.

Lesson objectives are here

Suggested timing and Title for the lesson are here

The actions to prepare for the lesson are shown here

Shapeys Teaching English Phonics System

Step: 3 Week: 1 Lesson: 1

Learning objectives for this activity To recognise and say the sounds of certain double letter combinations.	Teachers preparation for the activity: For review, the previously learnt letters A4 flash card(s). Prepare the story card "sh." Prepare the STEPS A4 flashcard with the letters sh, small whiteboards, pens and wipers (or paper and pencils) as well as the activity book. Prepare the flashcards that have "ck, ll, zz, ff, ss" in them such as "clock", "tall." Have the flashcards for some single letter sounds available.
Suggested Timing 1 hour	Activity Title Teaching the sound for the double letters sh

Review
Show the flashcards for the previous *single* letter sounds learnt. Ask the children, in chorus, to say each letter-sound (with the action if used). If the children do not respond, turn the card over to show the picture.

Introduction: Use story card "sh" and tell the story. Say the double letters sound (e.g. putting your fingers to your lips though telling everyone to be quiet).

Part 1 (Do It Action) Invite the children to join in. Repeat a number of times.

Part 2 Sound It Out
1. If any children in the room have names with the sh sound in them, say their names, accentuating the shshshsh (e.g. ShshSharon, Mishshsha)
2. Do the same with other words (e.g. shsheep, shshell) accepting suggestions from the children if they offer them but not asking.

Part 3 See it and say it
1. Display sh and explain that this sound needs two letters that the children already know. To show that two letters stand for one sound we draw a line under them.
2. Recall that the children have already seen two letters being used such as ck and the double letters ll, zz, ff and ss at the ends of some words and show them the flashcards for these.
3. Write some sh words on a surface and others as foils (e.g. ship, wish, shop, lash, shell, rushed, hiss, stop, such, dash, mash).
4. Ask six children to come to the surface where the words are written and one at a time to find the word with the sh double letters and underline the double letters.

Part 4 See it, say it and write it
1. Ask the children to put their 'writing finger' or 'pencil' in the air and follow you in making the "s" shape and the "h" shape and underline saying "sh." They must say "sh" as they underline.
Repeat a couple of times.
2. Ask them to do the same again, either tracing sh in front of them on the floor or sitting in a line and tracing sh on the back of the child in front. Each time they underline they say "sh."
3. Ask the children to write sh on a surface, whiteboard or on paper.
4. Repeat the actions for the double letters. Complete the activity pages for sh and read out the words on the activity page.

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STEPS Step 3 Week 1

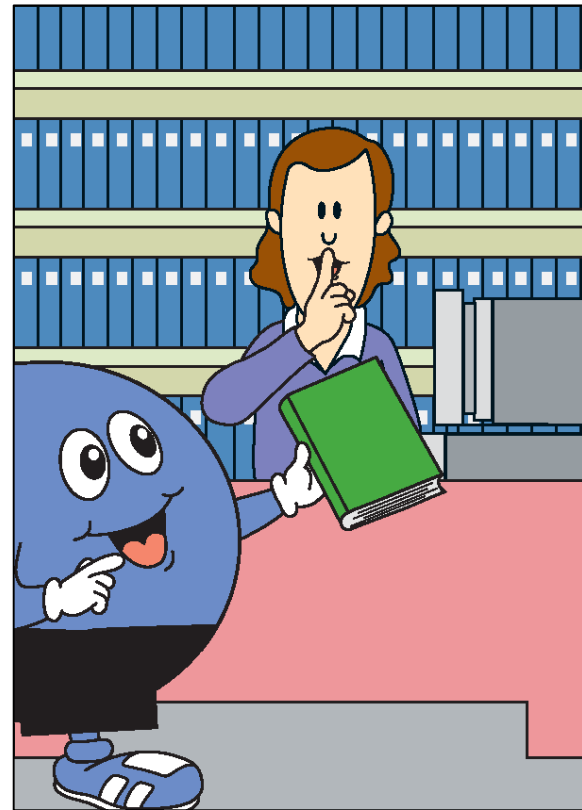
Each lesson is split into five sections

1. Review
2. Introduction
3. Sound It Out
4. See It and Say It
5. See it, Say It and Write It.

Teaching Tools Step 3


Step Three lessons have double sided story cards for each double letter sound being taught. The front shows a picture, the back gives the story and instructions.

Front View



Rear View

Number 1
Double letter Sound "sh"



Library Story

TEACHERS NOTE: HOLD THIS CARD UP FOR THE STUDENTS TO SEE, WITH THE PICTURE FACING OUT

READ THE STORY OUT LOUD:-

Baw is taking his books back to the library.

He is vey excited. He says "Hello!" in a big loud voice to the lady behind the counter. The lady puts her finger to her lips and says, "ssshhhh."

She explains that in the library, everyone must be quiet.

When we want someone to be quiet we say, "Sssshh".

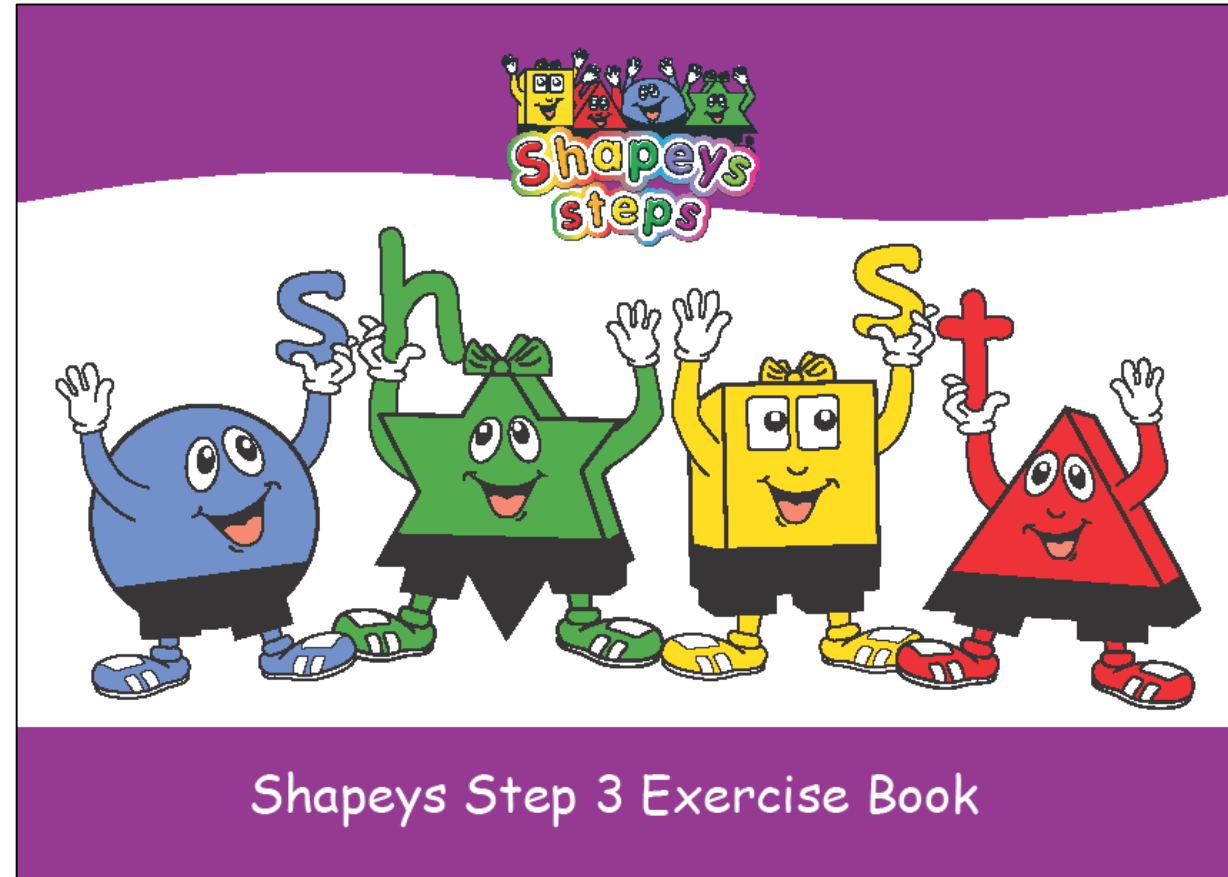
Can you day SSSHhh? Lets try, SSSHhh.

TEACHERS NOTE: NOW CONTINUE WITH LESSON PLAN

Teaching Tools Step 3

Step Three has an exercise book with an exercise for each Double Letter sound or Tricky Word taught.

The front page of the Step Three Exercise book



Teaching Tools Step 3


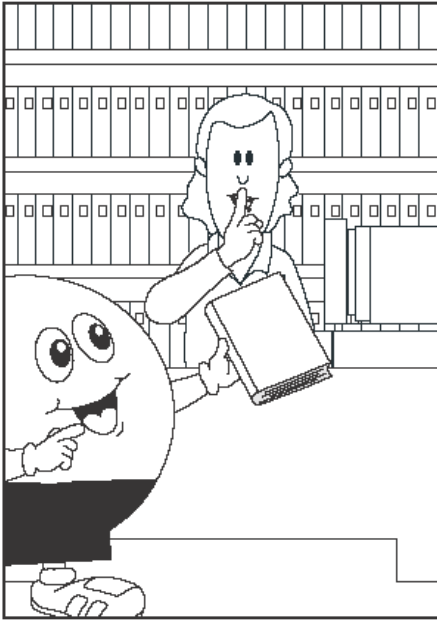
Step Three exercise book - internal pages

Example of an Exercise

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sh

shut
ship
mash
mesh
lash
fish



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Teaching Tools Step 3

Sentences and Progress Sheets

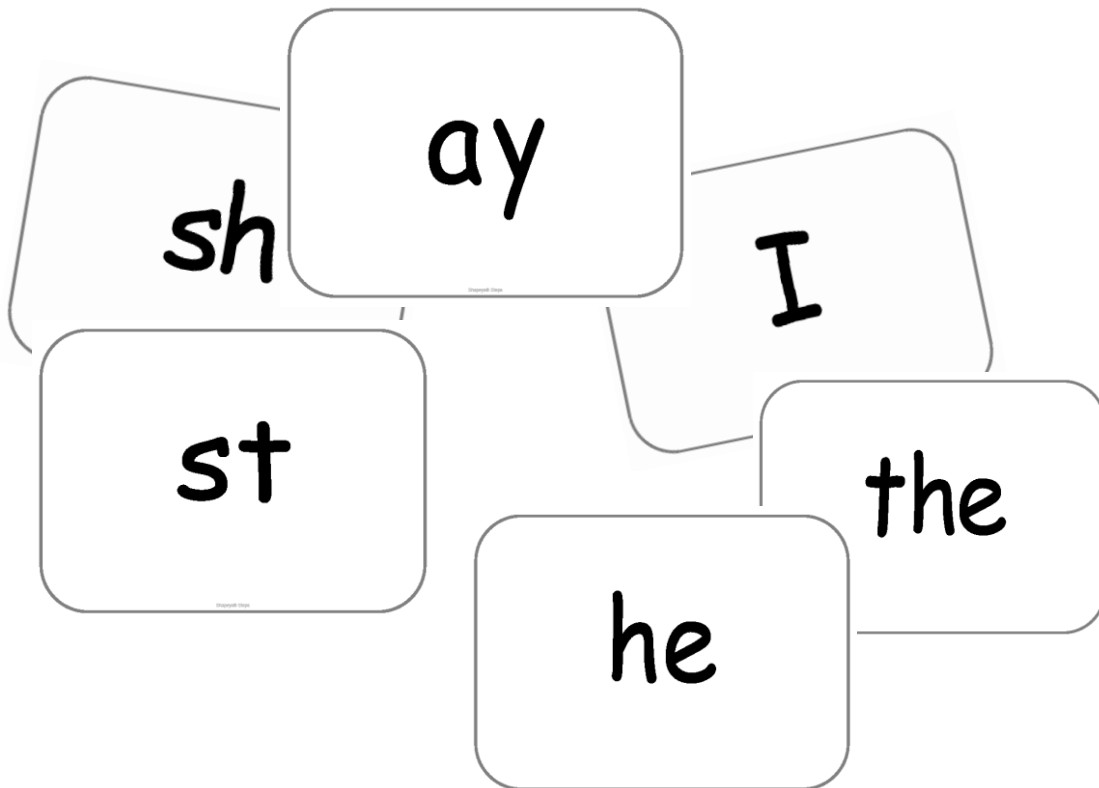
Sentence sheets are provided for each week. These provide a good measure of progress. The sentences target the new letters learned each week. These should be used on a personal basis with each student.

The words are all decodable. There are no capital letters or punctuation used, just the letters. This is designed to help the recognition of the letters and increase the students confidence.



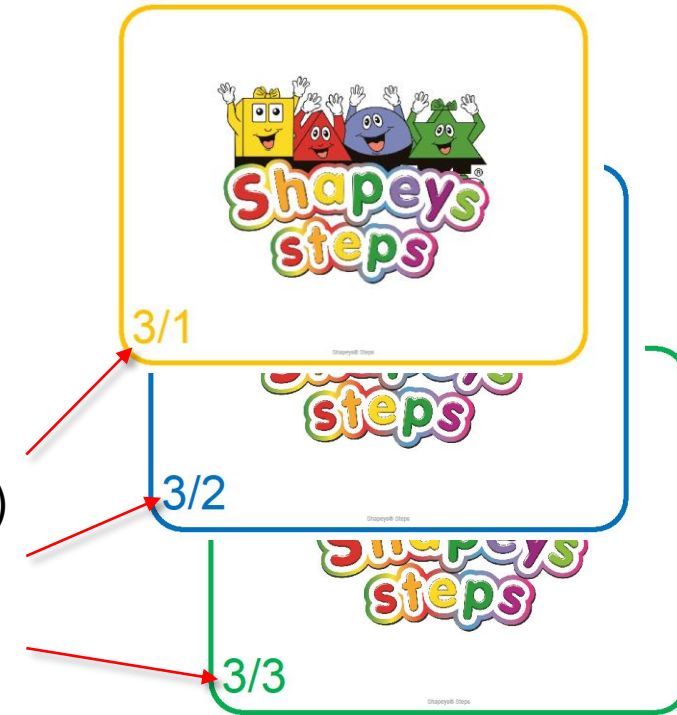
Teaching Tools Step 3

Each Double letter sound and Tricky Word in Step 3 has a flash card



For ease of sorting the back of the flash cards are coloured and numbered to show the week they apply to. In this example:-
3/1 = Step 3/ Week 1. (Yellow)
3/2 = Step 3/ Week 2 (Blue)
3/3 = Step 3/ Week 3 (Green)

Flash Cards – Rear view



Why choose Shapeys® Steps:-



1. Comprehensive
2. Easy to use
3. Engaging for children
4. Clear objectives
5. Portable



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