

New sound: ai

64

Lesson 64 of 83 (ages 3-6) / 58 of 77 (age 7+) · Vowel Teams & Tricky Words · Ages 3-7+ · about 10 min

GOAL

Your child can say /ai/ when they see "ai", and hear it in words like rain.

WHY IT MATTERS

"ai" is 2 letters that make ONE sound. Seeing them as one unit stops your child reading the letters separately, and unlocks words like rain, tail, pain.

YOU'LL NEED

- The practice sheet for this lesson (worksheet.pdf) and a pencil or crayon.
- The lesson page on a phone or tablet, for the sounds and games.

LESSON FLOW about 10 minutes

1 min

Warm up

Quick flash of the last sounds: write "nk", "ng", "th" on paper, point, and your child says each sound.

SAY

"What sound is this? And this one?"

2 min

Listen

Play /ai/ on the lesson page three times. Your child watches your mouth and copies.

SAY

"This is /ai/. Watch my mouth: long 'a' sound - ay."

2 min

Show how

Show the letters "ai" and the action: Cup hands to catch rain and say ai-ai-ai. Then tap the words on the lesson page.

SAY

"When I see ai, I say /ai/. rain: /ai/ rain!"
"Two letters, one sound. They're best friends: they always stick together."

2 min

Do it together

Sound hunt: find 3 things at home with /ai/. Then do the trace-and-write part of the practice sheet. Read together: rain, tail, pain, mail, wait, aim.

2 min

Play

Play the games on the lesson page: hear /ai/ and tap its letters.

1 min

Wrap up

Ask your child to teach the sound and action to someone else in the family.

SAY

"Can you show Grandma our new sound?"

USE WITH THIS LESSON

- **This lesson online (listening + games)**
phonicademy.com/plan/session/sound-ai
- **Printable: Vowel Teams Worksheet — Long A (ai/ay) (Free PDF)**
phonicademy.com/printables/vowel-teams-worksheet-long-a
- **Read: Vowel Teams List (Free PDF): ai, ay, ea, ee, oa, oo**
phonicademy.com/blog/vowel-teams-list
- **The “ai” sound — full page**
phonicademy.com/phonemes/ai
- **Printable: Vowel Sounds Chart (Free PDF)**
phonicademy.com/printables/abc-phonics-vowel-sounds-chart
- **Read: 20 Vowel Sounds Chart (Free PDF) with Examples**
phonicademy.com/blog/vowel-sounds-chart

HEAR IT, FIND IT

Say the sound (not the letter name). Your child points to the letters. Tick first-try answers.

#	SAY / SHOW	CHOICES	ANSWER	
1	Say /ai/	ai, a, nk	ai	☐
2	Say /nk/	nk, ai, ng	nk	☐
3	Say /ng/	ng, ai, nk	ng	☐

WATCH FOR common mix-ups and what to do

- | | |
|--|--|
| Says the sound too quickly to hear. | -> /ai/ can be stretched: hold it like a long note, aiaiaiai, then let go. |
| Reads the letters one by one (a-i). | -> Put one finger under both letters at once: "these two make one sound". |
| Mixes up /ai/ and /a/. | -> Same starting mouth shape — "ai" glides longer instead of stopping short. |

TOO HARD? MAKE IT EASIER

Only do the listening parts today: hear it, say it, find it in pictures. Save the writing for tomorrow.

TOO EASY? MAKE IT HARDER

Read these words and then write two of them from memory: rain, tail, pain, mail, wait, aim.

HOW DID IT GO?

MY CHILD CAN...

- ☐ Says /ai/ when shown "ai".
- ☐ Hears /ai/ in a word you say (rain).
- ☐ Writes "ai" as one sound unit.

Date: _____

Colour in the stars:



Notes: _____