

Week 1: short a

Chapter 1 · The Bag

Term 1 · autumn · for the parent



Story so far: it starts here. On Monday, Dad pulls his old school bag off the top shelf and something falls out.

a

as in **map**

One vowel between two consonants usually says its short sound. This week: **a**, the sound at the start of **apple**.

First list · K to 1st · 8 words

had	sad
bag	tag
map	nap
sat	hat

In rhyming pairs for Tuesday's sort. The yellow four are the four-word list.

Stretch · 6 more

2nd, and older kids catching up

black	grass
plan	snack
hand	camp

Tricky word

the Learn it by heart. It's in Friday's chapter.

Have ready

- This week's cards, cut out on Sunday
- Letter tiles, or letters on squares of paper
- A lap whiteboard and marker, or scrap paper
- A pencil, an eraser and a binder clip

Trying this week free? These nine pages are all you need.

Not clicking? Four words

Use the yellow four: **had, sad, bag, tag**. Same days, four cards. Friday: those four, the two comeback words and line 1 of the chapter. You write lines 2 and 3 on their lines while they watch.

Too easy? Stretch

All 14 words and the regular-lines pages (7 and 8). Check first: say **hill, fish, chick, catch, thing, when, stamp, pink**. All right on the whiteboard? Stretch.

The script, week 1

Read the bold lines out loud.

Everything else is for you.

Monday

Build it

About 10 minutes



Hear it, 5 min. "This week's sound is /ă/, the sound at the start of apple. Say it with me: /ă/. Open wide, like the dentist is looking."

"Thumbs up if you hear it: map... pin... bag... sun... hat."

Read the eight cards together. "Every one has the same a in the middle. That's our pattern." Show the:

"This one doesn't play fair, so we learn it by heart: t, h, e, the."

Build it, 5 min. Put out the tiles m, a, p. "Let's build map." Your kid touches each tile and says what it says, then slides a finger under the word to read it. Change, add or take away one tile at a time, and read each new word:

map mat sat hat had sad sag bag tag nag nap

Four words: read just the yellow four cards, then the same chain. **Stretch:** build black, grass and camp too.

Tuesday

Sort it

5 minutes



Lay down **had, bag, map, sat** as the tops of four piles. Hand over **sad, tag, nap, hat**. Your kid reads each one and puts it on the pile it rhymes with. "Read me each pile. Hear how they match at the end?" Mix them up and go again, faster.

Four words: two piles, had and bag; hand over sad and tag. **Stretch:** sort the six stretch cards by where two consonant sounds crowd together. At the start: bl, gr, pl, sn. At the end: nd, mp.

Wednesday

Write it

5 minutes



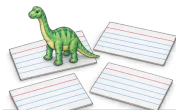
"I say it, you say it, tap it, write it." Say a word. Your kid says it back, taps one finger per sound (not per letter), writes it on the whiteboard, then turns the card over to check. All eight (four words: the four; stretch: all fourteen).

Comeback words, one minute: the two oldest words in the word bank without a star, and no more than two (fewer than two? **the**, then **Dad**: the bank starts empty). Say each in a short sentence (the one it was missed in is best); your kid writes it from memory. Wrong? Look, say the letters, cover, write again. A word missed three times gets you beside them today: say it, tap it, write it together, then alone. Then add **one** word to the bank: one they got wrong in their own writing this week, or a list word missed last Friday. Running this week again, or the bank page full? The new word waits. No start pack yet? Write it on the back of the Friday words page, with three circles and a star beside it.

Thursday

Use it

5 minutes



Slap it. Lay the cards face up. Say a word; the first hand flat on that card keeps it. (The little one may slap any card at all. Let them.) Then your kid writes three of the cards from memory, and one silly phrase you say: **a sad hat**, or **a bag nap**.

Four words: play with the four cards and say **a sad bag**. **Stretch:** play with all fourteen cards, and the three from memory are stretch cards.

Friday

Test it

About 10 minutes



1 **Test it, 5 min. List words.** Say each one twice: 1 had, 2 sad, 3 bag, 4 tag, 5 map, 6 nap, 7 sat, 8 hat. Stretch goes on: 9 black, 10 grass, 11 plan, 12 snack, 13 hand, 14 camp. Four words: 1 to 4 only.

2 **Comeback words** on the two ★ lines: the same two as Wednesday, each in its sentence. For **Dad**: "Dad, like his name, so it gets a capital."

3 **Write it, 5 min. The chapter.** Read each line twice; your kid says it back, then writes it, running on like a book. Everything in it uses patterns and tricky words they've had. Asked how to spell a word? Say its sounds slowly. A tricky word from before they started? Write it on the whiteboard to copy.

Read aloud: Chapter 1, The Bag

1. Dad had a bag.
2. The bag had a map.
3. The map had an X.

Four words: line 1 only.

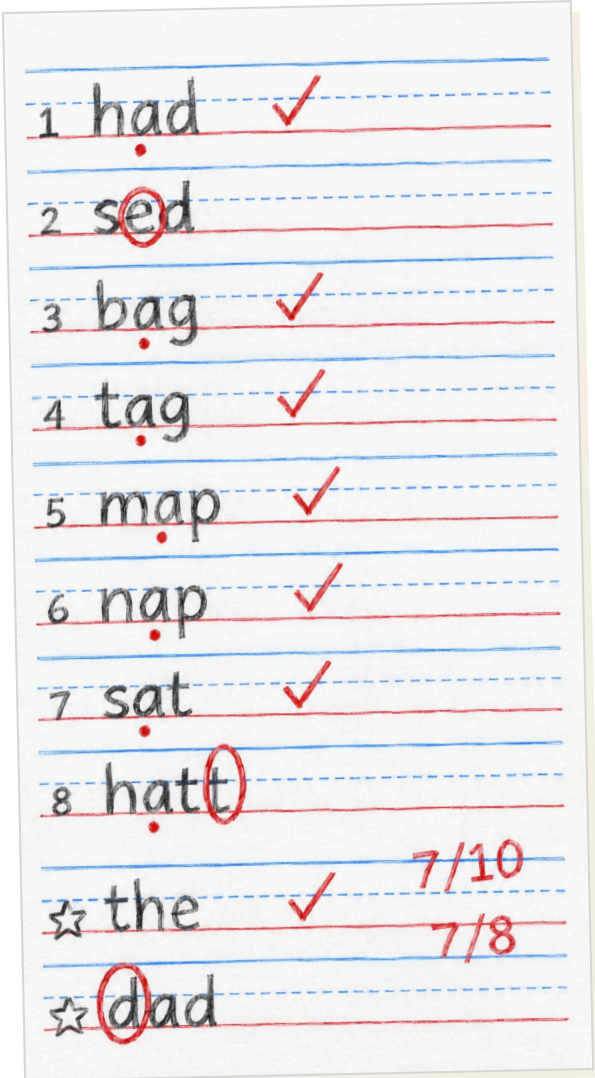
Stretch, two more:

4. Dad had a plan.
5. Grab a snack and a hat!

After: mark it (next page), scores on the tag. Pattern at the mark? Your kid colours spot 1 on the map strip.

Marking Friday, week 1

This is June's test, marked.
Mark yours the same way.



Ticks are words all right: count them for **Words**. **Dots** under the a mean the pattern was right, even where another letter slipped (hatt): count the words with dots for **Pattern**. **Circles** show what to fix.

Three scores

Words Every word all right, comeback words too. Out of 10 (stretch 16, four words 6).

Pattern First-list words with the pattern right. Out of 8 (four words 4). This is what the week taught.

Stretch Stretch words all right, out of 6. Stretch kids only.

Sound-alikes count. A real word that sounds the same, spelled right (son for sun), is right in all three scores, on Wednesday and in the word bank.

June: Words 7/10, Pattern 7/8.

This week's usual slips

- ① **sed for sad.** Short e and short a sound close. Say both with a hand under the chin: the jaw drops further for /ă/.
- ② **dag for bag.** Make a bed with two fists, thumbs up: the b comes first, the d comes last.
- ③ **hatt for hat.** These short words end with one letter. Doubles (ll, ss, ff) come in week 6.
- ④ **dad for Dad.** A name gets a capital, wherever it sits.

The chapter

Lines 1 to 3: look for a capital at the start of each line, a full stop at the end, finger spaces, and **the** spelled right. Any capital X counts.

Stretch, 4 and 5: both sounds of the blend in **plan**, **Grab** and **snack**. Four words: line 1 only. The chapter isn't scored.

Answer key

had sad bag tag map nap sat hat

black grass plan snack hand camp

★ the two comeback words: check them against the word bank, or the and Dad for a top-up

After Friday

- **Pattern 6 of 8 or more** (four words: 3 of 4). Colour spot 1. On to week 2 (after four words, on the first list).
- **Stretch under 4 of 6?** Week 2 on the first list only. Stretch again in week 3.
- **Pattern under the mark?** Spot 1 waits. Monday starts with a three-minute retest: Slap it with these cards (lay them face up, say a word, the first hand flat on it keeps it), then the list words.
 - At the mark now: colour spot 1, on to week 2.
 - Under again, on any list: run week 1 again on four words, with Monday's thumbs-up listening daily. Spot 1 waits, and so does Wednesday's new bank word; the chapter goes on a fresh page.

Reading the numbers

Pattern 8/8, Stretch 3/6. The a is in. Look at the stretch circles: a lost blend letter, or the ck and ss? Week 2 on the first list, stretch again in week 3.

Words low, Pattern high. The pattern is fine; other letters slipped. Look at the circles.

Word bank: a missed list word can be the next new bank word. On the bank page, fill a word's circle only when it's right first time, from memory, on a new day. The rewrite after a fix doesn't count. Three filled circles earn the star: colour it. From the next Wednesday it stops coming back, and the next oldest without a star takes its turn.

Word cards, week 1

Cut on the dashed lines. Clip them and keep them in the card box: some come back in later sorts.

• first list •• stretch ♥ tricky word 4 four-word list



WK 1 • had 4	WK 1 • sad 4	WK 1 • bag 4
WK 1 • tag 4	WK 1 • map	WK 1 • nap
WK 1 • sat	WK 1 • hat	WK 1 ♥ the
WK 1 •• black	WK 1 •• grass	WK 1 •• plan
WK 1 •• snack	WK 1 •• hand	WK 1 •• camp

Friday words

Week 1 · big lines · first list or four words

Name _____

Date _____



Words ____ /10 or /6

Pattern ____ /8 or /4

Circle the total you used: 6 and 4 for four words.

THIS WEEK'S WORDS · 1 to 4 for four words

1	_____

2	_____

3	_____

4	_____

5	_____

6	_____

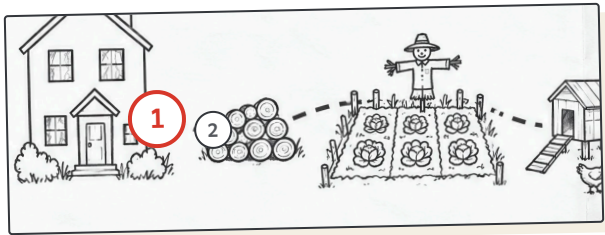
7	_____

8	_____

COMEBACK WORDS

★	_____

★	_____



CHAPTER 1

The Bag

written by _____



Colour spot 1 when the Pattern score reaches 6 of 8 (four words: 3 of 4).

Draw what happened.

Write the chapter here. Keep going onto the next line, like a book.

Handwriting practice lines for the chapter text. Each line set consists of a solid red top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid blue bottom line.

Friday words

Week 1 · regular lines · stretch

Name _____

Date _____



Words ____ /16

Pattern ____ /8

Stretch ____ /6

FIRST LIST

1	_____

2	_____

3	_____

4	_____

5	_____

6	_____

7	_____

8	_____

STRETCH

9	_____

10	_____

11	_____

12	_____

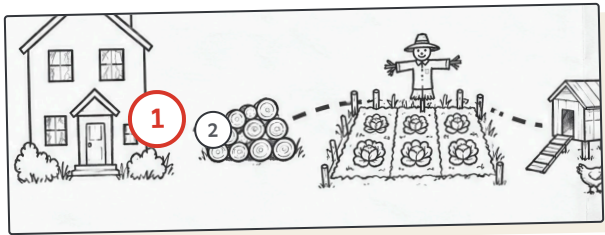
13	_____

14	_____

COMEBACK WORDS

★	_____

★	_____



CHAPTER 1

The Bag

written by _____



Colour spot 1 when the Pattern score reaches 6 of 8 (four words: 3 of 4).

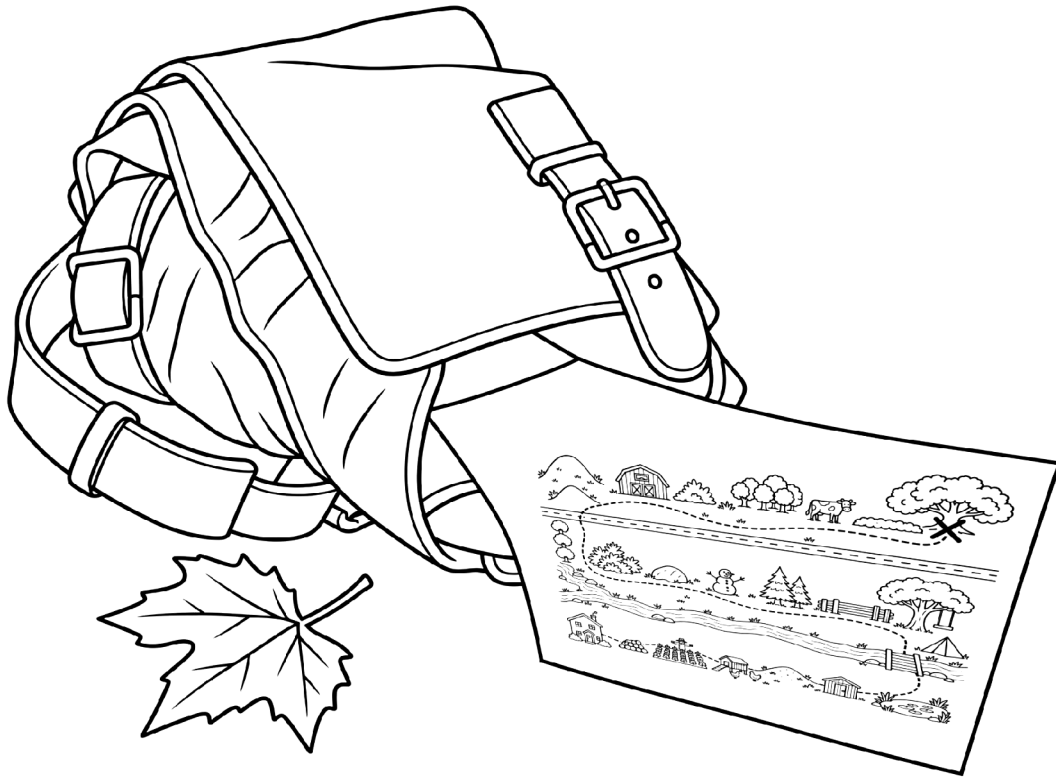
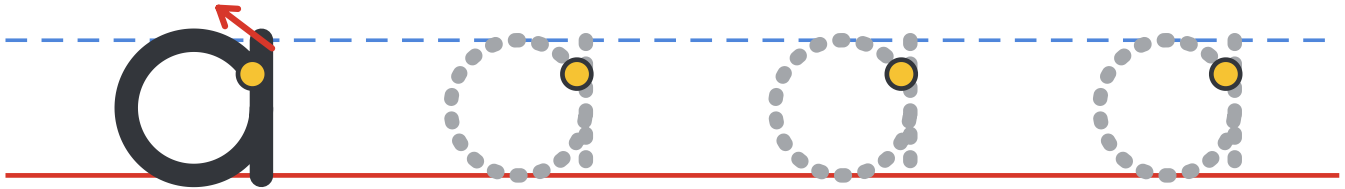
Draw what happened.

Write the chapter here. Keep going onto the next line, like a book.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid red top and bottom lines and a dashed blue middle line. There are ten sets of these lines for writing practice.

A test for the little one

Teddy wants a test too. Yours might. Start at the yellow dot and trace the letter **a**.



Colour Dad's old bag. What fell out of it?

My own test (scribbles count):
