Snap and Stretch Vowels

Teacher		**Class**	Kindergarten
Subject	ELA	**Topic**	Short and long vowel sounds
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United States

> We learn short and long sounds for a, e, i, o, u. We snap for short, stretch for long, and match sounds to letters.

Curriculum links

- Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.
- Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes). [1]

Learning objectives

- Students will match short and long sounds to the letters a, e, i, o, u.
- Students will tell if a word has a short snap or a long stretch sound.
- Students will write the vowel letter for short-vowel words they hear.

Success criteria

- I can point to a, e, i, o, u and say its short and long sound.
- I can show snap for short and stretch for long.
- I can write the vowel I hear in a short word.

What students already know

Show large a card. Ask: Who knows this letter? What sound does it make in cat? Listen for ah.

Key words

vowel	the letters a, e, i, o and u
short sound	a quick little sound, like ah in cat
long sound	a stretched singing sound that says the letter name, like ay in cake
letter	a written shape that stands for a spoken sound [2]

Materials

- large vowel cards for a, e, i, o, u
- open floor space for moving
- Slides 1-5, 9, 11-12
- Worksheet page 5 copies: Label the pictures: Say each picture and write the vowel letter.
- pencils and crayons

Before the lesson

- Print large a, e, i, o, u cards and Worksheet page 5 copies, one per student
- Load Slides 1-5, 9, 11-12 and check they show
- Clear desks and bags to make open floor space for crouch and stretch moves
- Place pencils and crayons on tables

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Lesson outline

0–10 min **Starter** 10 min · Whole class

To hook students with snap and stretch moves and recall the five vowels.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 1 Hello Vowels! Short and Long A E I O U, then Slide 2 5 Friends! We sing and learn five vowels today.
2. Say the hook and model: Short sounds are quick like a snap. Show quick crouch. Long sounds stretch like bubble gum. Show slow arm stretch.
3. Hold up large a card, say cat then cake, and do snap then stretch with voice change.
4. Lead class to copy both moves and sounds together twice.

STUDENTS DO

1. Copy the snap crouch for cat and the stretch for cake.
2. Say a, e, i, o, u together and show the five fingers for 5 vowels.
3. Tell a partner: show me your snap and your stretch.

Say: Short sounds are quick like a snap. Long sounds stretch like bubble gum. Watch me, then do it with me. Cat is quick. Cake stretches long.

Worked example: Listen to cat. I hear ah in the middle. That is short a, so I snap and crouch fast. Listen to cake. I hear ay, it says its name. That is long a, so I stretch my arms wide and sing it long.

Ask: Is cat quick like a snap or stretched long? (Quick like a snap, short a.) · Is cake quick or stretched? What do you hear? (Stretched long, ay says its name.)

Check understanding: All show snap or stretch on cat vs cake. If mixed, model again slowly and have class copy mouth and move.

Support: Let your partner do the move first and copy, just watching and listening before saying the sound.
Stretch: Name another quick a word like hat to test the group.

Use: Slides 1-2

10–20 min **Teaching** 10 min · Whole class

To model short and long sounds for each of a, e, i, o, u.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 3 Short Sounds: a says ah like cat, e says eh like bed, i says ih like pig. Have class repeat each short sound.
2. Show Slide 4 Say It! a - cat, cake, e - bed, she, i - pig, bike, o - hot, home, u - cup, cute. Point to each letter as you say it.
3. Model one pair slowly: pig short ih with snap, bike long eye with stretch. Explain letters are used to represent speech sounds [2].
4. Model o and u pairs the same way: hot-home and cup-cute, with snap and stretch.

STUDENTS DO

1. Echo each pair after teacher in short quick voice then long singing voice.
2. Show snap crouch for short words and stretch arms for long words.
3. Point to the large vowel card that matches each word.

Say: The same letter can make two sounds. Phonics teaches the relationship between spoken sounds and letters [2]. Listen: pig is short and quick. Bike is long and sings eye.

Worked example: Listen to bed. I hear eh in the middle. That is short e, so snap. Listen to she. I hear ee, it says its name. That is long e, so stretch. The letter e stands for both sounds, short eh and long ee.

Ask: Bed or she - which is short e? (Bed is short e, eh.) · Hot or home - which says its name and stretches long? (Home stretches long o.) · Pig or bike - which is short i? (Pig is short i, ih.)

Check understanding: Hold up o card and say hot, then home. All show snap then stretch. Reteach any vowel pair that is mixed.

Support: Watch the teacher's mouth, just repeat the two words and clap only for the long one. **Stretch:** Suggest another short or long word for the chart, like sun for short u.

Use: Slides 3-4

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20–40 min **Main activity** 20 min · Whole class

To practise hearing and showing short and long vowels for all five letters by moving.

YOU DO

1. Move class to open space and hold up large vowel cards one at a time.
2. Show Slide 9 Your task: Teacher says cat, cake, bed, she. You crouch for short, stretch for long. Tell your partner short or long.
3. Call words in pairs: cat-cake for a, bed-she for e, pig-bike for i, hot-home for o, cup-cute for u. Do snap or stretch with students first, then without the move.
4. Use Slide 5 Think, pair, share question: Cat or cake - which is short a? Have partners tell each other and then show the move.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen to each word, crouch fast for short or stretch wide for long and say the vowel sound.
2. Turn to your partner and say short or long, pointing to the vowel card.
3. Two students take turns being the caller for a and o words while the group moves.

Say: Listen and move! Crouch low for short, reach high for long. I will say the word. You show snap or stretch and say the vowel sound. Then tell your partner short or long.

Worked example: I hold up i and say pig. I hear ih, short and quick, so I crouch fast and snap. I hold up i and say bike. I hear eye, it says its name, so I reach high and stretch long. Same letter i, two different sounds.

Ask: I say cup. Snap or stretch? Short or long u? (Snap, crouch, short u.) · I say cute. Snap or stretch? Why? (Stretch, long u, it says you.)

Check understanding: Call a word without the move and scan all moves. If many miss, repeat that vowel pair slowly and have them echo before moving again.

Support: Pair students so your partner can copy the move first, focusing on hearing the spoken sounds before writing [2]. **Stretch:** Students take turns being the caller for two vowels.

Use: Slides 5, 9

40–50 min **Practice** 10 min · On their own

To write the vowel letter heard in short and long picture words.

YOU DO

1. Hand out Worksheet page 5: Label the pictures: Say each picture and write the vowel letter.
2. Model first picture: say the word slowly, stretch or snap, decide the vowel, write a, e, i, o or u underneath.
3. Send students to tables to say each picture, show tiny snap or stretch in their seat, and write the vowel.
4. Remind them in kindergarten we write a letter for most consonant and short-vowel sounds [1].

STUDENTS DO

1. Say each picture quietly, do a small snap or stretch to decide.
2. Write the vowel letter a, e, i, o or u under each picture.
3. Read the page to a partner, pointing to the letter and saying short then long.

Say: Say the picture slowly. Is it snap-short or stretch-long? Find its vowel letter and write it. Say it again to check.

Worked example: Picture of cat. I say c-ah-t. I hear ah, short a, snap. I write a under the picture. Picture of cake. I say c-ay-k. I hear ay, long a, stretch. I write a.

Ask: You said bed. What vowel do you write? (e for short eh.) · You said she. Short or long? What vowel? (Long, stretch, write e.)

Check understanding: Collect pages and look for correct vowel letters. Pull small group to re-say and write a and o words if needed.

Support: Do only a and o pictures first with vowel cards to match, then try the rest. **Stretch:** Try to spell the whole simple word phonetically under the picture by sounding out.

Use: Worksheet page 5

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50–60 min **Plenary** 10 min · Whole class

To check all five vowels and celebrate short and long sorting.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 11 What could this be? I say my name! I fly high! Reveal kite - long i. Have all stretch and say eye.
2. Show Slide 12 Quick quiz: Cat - short or long? short. Cake - short or long? long. She - short or long? long. Pig - short or long? short. Class shows move for each.
3. Ask each table to hold up one short and one long picture from Worksheet page 5 and say both sounds.
4. Close by pointing to a, e, i, o, u and having class sing short then long for each.

STUDENTS DO

1. Answer quiz by crouching for short or stretching for long and saying the vowel.
2. Hold up worksheet and read one short and one long word to the class.
3. Sing back short then long sounds for a, e, i, o, u together.

Say: Let us check. Show me snap or stretch. Cat? Cake? She? Pig? Tell me the vowel letter too.

Worked example: Kite. I hear eye in the middle. It says the letter name i. That is long i, so I stretch. I point to i on the card. Pig is ih, short i, snap.

Ask: Cake - short or long? What letter? (Long, stretch, letter a.) · Pig - short or long? What sound? (Short, snap, ih.) · Kite says its name. Short or long i? (Long i, stretch.)

Check understanding: Use Slide 12 answers to tally hands for each. If kite or she is missed, model mouth shape again and echo.

Support: Point to the picture chart while singing to connect the spoken sound and letter [2]. **Stretch:** Say a new short or long word for the class to sort quickly.

Use: Slides 11-12

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Thinking long means loud, not stretched.	Student shouts short words loudly for long.	Model quiet long stretch vs quick snap. Practise she in singing voice, not loud voice, to hear ee says its name [2].
Mixing up same letter with two sounds, e.g., bed and she both short.	Student snaps for both bed and she.	Say the pair slowly side by side. Show the same spelling can represent different sounds [2]. Clap only for the one that says its name.

Support

- Pair students so your partner can copy the move first, focusing on hearing the spoken sounds before writing [2].
- Start with only a and o with 4 pictures total, then add e, i, u.

Stretch

- Students take turns being the caller for two vowels.
- Students spell simple words phonetically under pictures by sounding out [1].

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with the copy-first pairs during moving and at tables. Model mouth shapes for eh/ee and ih/eye, and help form the vowel letters on Worksheet page 5.

Safety

- Clear desks and bags from the moving space, keep feet still when stretching, no jumping into others.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Cat - short or long? What vowel?	short, a
Cake - short or long? What vowel?	long, a
She - short or long? What vowel?	long, e

Homework

Tell someone at home one snap-short and one stretch-long word for a.

Sources

1. English Language Arts Standards » Language » Kindergarten · thecorestandards.org · https://www.thecorestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/K/
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