

# LESSON PLAN GUIDE

PictureBook English Reading Series — Phonics

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<b>Category</b>	Phonics	<b>Title</b>	Phonics Book 8 – The Big Red Box
<b>Ages</b>	4-7	<b>Theme</b>	All Five Short Vowel Sounds in a Story

## INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK

Your child is ready to read their first phonics story! In this book, all five short vowel sounds come together in a charming story about a little boy named Ted and his five pets — Bug, Hen, Cat, Pig, and Dog. When the pets end up in the wrong spots, Ted carefully moves them to the right places. Then he discovers a big red box on his bed — and children get to help him guess what is inside!

This is a landmark moment in the phonics journey. Children who can read this story independently have successfully mastered CVC decoding with all five short vowels. Encourage them to sound out each word, enjoy the suspense, and celebrate every page they read.

## SHORT VOWEL REVIEW

/a/	/e/	/i/	/o/	/u/
cat, bag	hen, net	bin, pig	dog, fox	bus, cup

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

*Children will be able to:*

- Decode and read CVC words containing all five short vowel sounds
- Read simple sentences in a connected story with confidence
- Use illustrations to support understanding of the story
- Recognise and read common sight words — my, back — that do not follow CVC rules
- Complete a Ladder Game matching quiz using CVC words from the story

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### 1. Look at the illustrations first

Before your child reads any words, encourage them to look carefully at each illustration and talk about what they see. Ask: 'What is happening on this page?' and 'Where are the pets?' The pictures tell the story and support understanding of every sentence — this is always the best starting point for young readers.

### 2. Sound out and decode each sentence

Be patient as your child sounds out each word and reads each sentence. It may take time at first, but fluency and confidence will grow with every read. Encourage them to blend each CVC word carefully — for example: 'b-u-g, Bug!' Praise every word they decode successfully.

### **3. Help with sight words**

This story contains two words that do not follow short vowel rules and cannot be easily decoded: 'my' and 'back'. When your child hesitates at these words, simply tell them what the word is and move on. Explain gently that some English words have their own special sounds which they will learn over time.

### **4. Point to pictures and connect meaning**

After your child reads each sentence, point to the matching picture and help them connect the words to their meaning. Ask: 'Which pet is this?' or 'Where did Ted put the dog?' This strengthens both reading comprehension and phonics skills at the same time.

### **5. Complete the Ladder Game quiz**

At the end of the book, children complete a Ladder Game matching activity. After reading the whole story, children will feel confident recognising all the CVC words. An answer sheet is provided for easy checking.

### **6. Read the story again and again**

This charming story has a little bit of suspense — children will want to know what is in the big red box! The more your child reads it, the more fluently and confidently they will read. Encourage repeated reading until they can read it smoothly from start to finish.

## **FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES**

Ask your child to retell the story in their own words — where were the pets, where did Ted move them, and what was in the big red box? Then ask them to draw their own 'big red box' and decide what is inside it. Encourage them to write the word for what is inside using their CVC phonics knowledge. This creative activity reinforces both reading and early writing skills.

Try the fun online learning activities for this book on our website!

[Click here to try the online learning activities](#)

## **TEACHER'S NOTES AND TIPS**

Book 8 is a significant milestone — it is the first connected reading text in the phonics series. Children who have worked through Books 3 to 7 should be able to decode most words independently. The two sight words 'my' and 'back' are the only words that fall outside the CVC pattern — point these out proactively rather than waiting for children to struggle. For classroom settings, a shared reading of the story as a group before individual reading works well, as it builds familiarity with the text and reduces anxiety. The 'what is in the big red box?' suspense is a wonderful discussion starter before the final reveal!