

SAMPLE ACTIVITY ON INITIAL R-BLENDS

Goal:

- Improve decoding skills

Background:

- This activity is intended for a group that has been working on decoding skills, has studied all the consonant sounds and long and short vowel sounds, has worked with onsets and rimes, and knows many of the common patterns (**ay, ill, ip, at, am**, etc.). In this activity they are introduced to initial consonant blends. The activity is narrowly focused (one blend only) and should be explicitly taught, including several opportunities for learners to say, read, and write the letter combination and words being taught.

Focus:

- Introduce or review the initial consonant blend **tr**

Materials:

- Curriculum materials

Grouping:

- Small groups and/or one-to-one

Directions:

1. Review the /r/ sound by asking the learner(s) to read flash cards with words beginning with **r**.
2. Explain that **r** often combines with another consonant sound at the beginning of words, and give several examples of words beginning with **br, cr**, etc. Be sure to say and write the words, and point out the **r**-blends.
3. For this activity, focus on **tr** words only, so the learners hear several similar examples. Write several **tr** words on the board and point to each as you read them. Examples: **tree, try, truck**
4. Pronounce the words carefully, perhaps exaggerating the initial sounds. Ask what the words have in common. Then have the learners pronounce the **tr** blend and each of the words several times.
5. Using letter cards and/or an overhead transparency, do a visual and oral demonstration, blending the two sounds as you speak, while putting the two letters together.
6. Ask the learners to copy the words, writing each one three times, underlining the **tr** at the beginning, and reading each word aloud, running a finger under the letters as the sounds are spoken.
7. Add the **tr** onset to several rimes the group has studied: **ay, ip, ick, ap, ail, ain**. Begin by reviewing a series of words in one of the patterns, and adding the **tr** onset last.

Example	may
	lay
	pay
	say
	tray

Then introduce the other rimes, having the learners work with the words in various ways: reading aloud, writing them, building words with letter cards, etc. Monitor and help as needed with this practice.

8. Give the learners a paragraph or story that includes several examples of **tr** words, and have them read it silently, and then aloud.

Next steps:

The remaining **r**-blends (**br, cr, dr**, etc.) would be taught at another time, to be followed perhaps by the **l**-blends (**bl, cl, fl**, etc.) and the blends that begin with **s** (**sc, sk, sp, st**, etc.).