



Grade Level: K-2

Skill: Blending & segmenting phonemes

Game Setup: 3 Splats per group or whole class

Unruliness: Stomping and sliding

Elkonin Splats

Students use Splats like the traditional phonics tool Elkonin sound boxes to blend and segment phonemes.

Preparation

Before the lesson, the teacher creates a list of 3-sound words. Words can include a focus sound being studied in class. Students should already have an understanding of phonemes (individual sounds made with one letter or a group of letters) and how they make up words.

What are Elkonin Sound Boxes?

Elkonin sound boxes consist of a series of boxes or squares drawn on a piece of paper or whiteboard. Each box represents one phoneme in a word. When using Elkonin sound boxes, a teacher or tutor will say a word and then ask the child to say the word and to identify the individual phonemes in the word. The child then places a counter, such as a small cube or chip, in each box to represent each phoneme.

For more info you can watch this short [Youtube video on Elkonin sound boxes](#) .

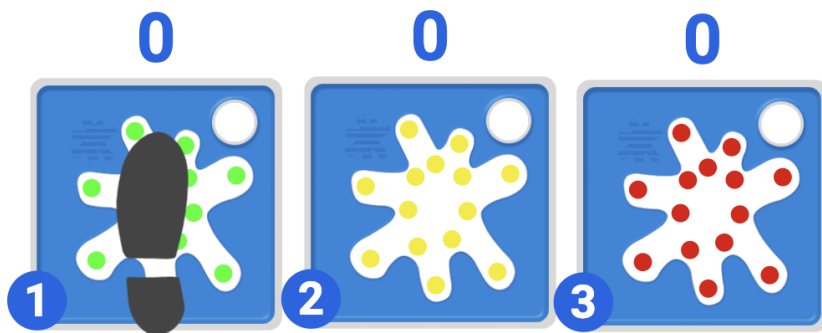
Playing Elkonin Splats

- 1:** Set up 3 splats next to each other in a horizontal row. Each splat represents the beginning, middle, or ending sound in a 3-sound word.
- 2:** When the program starts, Splat 1 on the left is green, Splat 2 in the middle is yellow, and Splat 3 on the right is red.
- 3:** When pressed, the Splats lights fade, then all Splats return to their original color 2 seconds after the third Splat is pressed, to reset for the next word.

Part 1: Blending

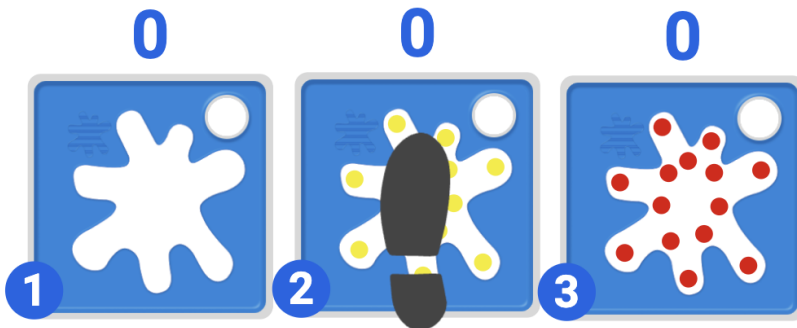
Most students grasp blending more easily than segmenting, so it should be introduced first

- 1:** Teacher models how to blend a word with the Elkonin box handout using their finger.
 - Say each sound (beginning, middle, and ending) one at a time, tapping each corresponding box.
 - Then, slowly drag their finger under the boxes and blend the sounds together to say the word.
- 2:** Students practice blending a word with the Elkonin box handout using their fingers.
- 3:** Then, students are called up to stomp on the Elkonin Splats one at a time.
- 4:** The teacher says three sounds separately (e.g. /ch/a/t/)
- 5:** The student stomps on each Splat and says the sounds one at a time (e.g. Stomps on Splat 1 and says /ch/, stomps on Splat 2 and says /a/, and stomps on Splat 3 and says /t/) - see *image below*
- 6:** Then the student slides their foot across underneath but not touching the Splats and blends the sounds together (e.g. "chat") – see *image below*
- 7:** Then the Elkonin Splats will reset for the next word/student. The other students can follow along using their handout.



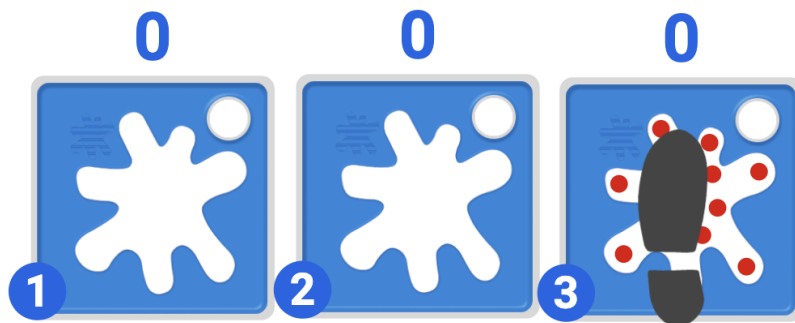
Beginning Sound

Student stomps on Splat 1
says /ch/



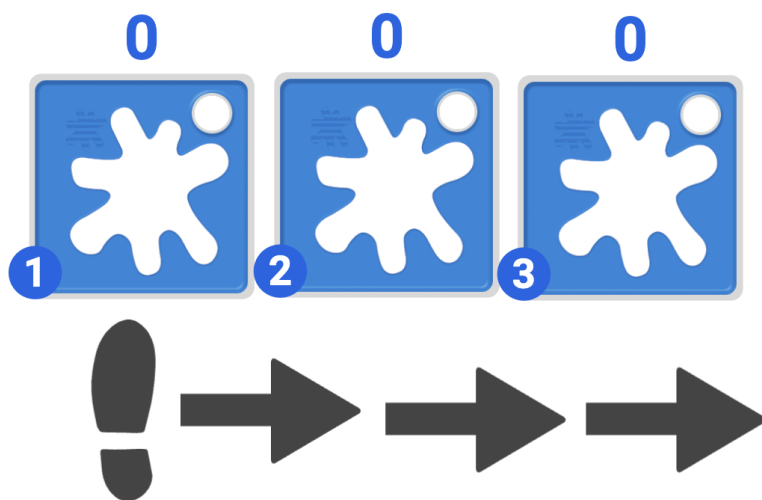
Middle sound

Student stomps on Splat 2
and says /a/



Ending Sound

Student stomps on Splat 3
and says /t/



Blending

Student slides foot across bottom and says “chat”

Part 2: Segmenting

Segmenting should be introduced after blending.

The teacher models how to segment a word with the Elkonin box handout using their finger.

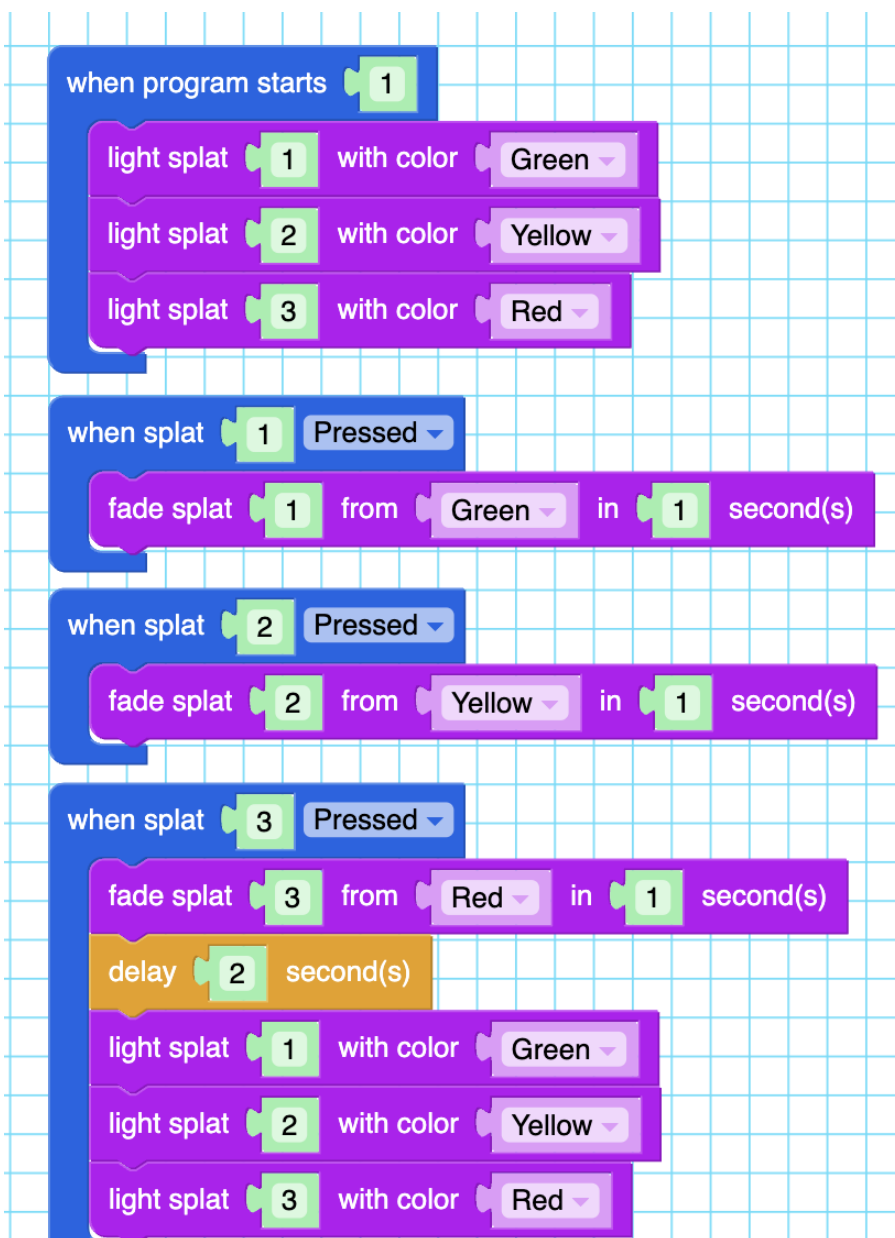
- The teacher says a full word first (e.g. “with”)
- The student repeats the full word first, then stomps on each Splat and says each sound (e.g. /w/i/th)

Notes and Variations

- The number of Splats can be adjusted for two-sound (use just Splats 1 and 3) and four-sound words (add Splat 4 and use a unique color, or match the color of either Splat 1 or 3 depending on the location of the fourth sound).
- **As an extension**, students can spell the word on a whiteboard after blending or segmenting using the Splats, if it uses sounds that they have learned the spelling pattern(s) for.
- Once taught the game, students can play independently or in small groups without a teacher with a stack of three-sound picture cards. Students pick a card and say the word aloud, then stomp and slide.

- Students can keep their handout to use as a tool during writing time to help with encoding, and the Splats can be left out to use at that time independently as a tool as well.
- **For remote play**, Teacher records a video, provides a picture slideshow, or reads words live via video. Students click on the Splats on the web-app to segment and drag their cursor to blend.

The Code



Example student handout pages are on the next 2 pages
Half sheets to print and cut for class set

