

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class / Grade: _____ Score: _____

LESSON 3.

Poetry & Phonics

1. Copy the following carefully.
2. Put the proper mark over each *a* which has the short sound.
3. Find two words in which *a* has neither the short sound nor the long sound.

SELECTION 1

And they ran, hand in hand,
Where the ripple meets the land.

— James Whitcomb Riley.

SELECTION 2

And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.

— Sir Walter Scott.

- 1 Copy the following carefully.

Directions: Transcribe both poetic passages onto the handwriting guidelines below. Pay careful attention to capitalization, punctuation, and author names.

Selection 1 (James Whitcomb Riley):

Selection 2 (Sir Walter Scott):

- 2 Put the proper mark over each *a* which has the short sound.

Directions: Read the lines below aloud. Write the short sound mark (the breve: *˘* as in *ă*) directly above every letter *a* that makes the short sound.

And they ran, hand in hand,
Where the ripple meets the land.

— James Whitcomb Riley

And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.

— Sir Walter Scott

- 3 Find two words in which *a* has neither the short sound nor the long sound.

Directions: Look closely at Selection 2. Identify and write the two words where the letter *a* is neither short (*ă* as in *hat*) nor long (*ā* as in *hate*).

Word 1: _____ Word 2: _____

LESSON 3: Short a (ă), Long a (ā) & Vowel Variants — Master Key

100% Mastery

Answers, Linguistic Explanations & Literary Context

Task 2: Short Sound Mark Locations (The Breve: ă)

Official Key

Students should place the breve symbol (ă) above the letter **a** in the following **8 occurrences** across the two poems:

Selection 1 (5 words):

- **Ănd** (/æ/)
- r **ă** n (/æ/)
- h **ă** nd (first occurrence) (/æ/)
- h **ă** nd (second occurrence) (/æ/)
- l **ă** nd (/æ/)

Selection 2 (3 words):

- **Ănd** (/æ/)
- s **ă** nd (/æ/)
- l **ă** nd (/æ/)

Note: The word **trace** has long a (ā /eɪ/) and must NOT be marked with a breve.

Task 3: The Two Words with Neither Short Nor Long 'a'

Phonics Master Solution

Word 1: Marks

- **Vowel Sound:** Broad Italian a / R-controlled vowel (IPA: /ɑ:/ or /ɑ:r/).
- **Phonics Rule:** When a is followed by the liquid consonant r, the vowel sound is lengthened and retracted toward the back of the mouth, historically marked with a dieresis (ä as in arm, star, mark).

Word 2: water

- **Vowel Sound:** Broad rounded a (IPA: /ɔ:/ or /ɒ/).
- **Phonics Rule:** Preceding bilabial glide w causes rounding of the lips, shifting the vowel a into the open-mid back rounded sound (historically marked ă or ô as in ball, fall, wash, water).

Supplemental Note: The unstressed indefinite article **a** in "just a trace" is phonetically reduced to a neutral schwa (/ə/), which also qualifies technically as neither short nor long.

SCIENCE OF READING: LINGUISTIC & ARTICULATORY INSIGHTS

- **R-Controlled Modification (/ɑ:r/):** The rhotic approximant /r/ lowers the second formant frequency (F2), completely neutralizing the distinction between short /æ/ and long /eɪ/. In English orthography, 'ar' functions as an indivisible phonogram.
- **Labial Influence of /w/ (/ɔ:/):** The voiced labio-velar approximant /w/ exerts anticipatory co-articulation on following low vowels. Lip protrusion roundness transforms what would historically be /æ/ into /ɔ:/ (e.g., water, wander, watch).

LITERARY & BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT FOR TEACHERS

- **James Whitcomb Riley (1849–1916):** Celebrated as the "Hoosier Poet" and the "Children's Poet" of America. His lyrical verses are renowned for their musical rhythm, cadence, and vivid depiction of childhood nature scenes.
- **Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832):** Renowned Scottish historical novelist and poet (author of *Ivanhoe* and *The Lady of the Lake*). His lines evoke dramatic coastal landscapes with crisp romantic imagery.

Instructional Steps & Scoring Rubric

Scoring Guide

Activity	Instructional Standard	Scoring Points
1. Copy carefully	Accurate transcription of lines, indentation, commas, periods, dashes, and author names.	10 pts (Penmanship, spelling, punctuation).
2. Mark short a (ă)	Accurately placing the breve (ă) above all 8 short 'a' words without marking 'trace'.	8 pts (1 pt per correctly marked word).
3. Find two words	Correctly identifying Marks and water (or article a).	4 pts (2 pts per word identified).