

★ LESSONS 107 & 108: THE SOUND OF *ī* (AS IN *SIR*) & MEMORY LESSON

R-CONTROLLED VOWEL • /ɜːr/ • ORTHOEPEY • PENMANSHIP

1

Sound of “i” as in *sir*, marked *ī*: Copy each word carefully on the handwriting line. Place the tilde (~) over each *i*.

12 Words • 26px Standard Line • /ɜːr/

▶ 1. *dīrt* (-īrt)

▶ 2. *fīrst* (-īrst)

▶ 3. *gīrl* (-īrl)

▶ 4. *bīrd* (-īrd)

▶ 5. *skīrt* (-īrt)

▶ 6. *thīrst* (-īrst)

▶ 7. *whīrl* (-īrl)

▶ 8. *bīrth* (-īrth)

▶ 9. *fīrm* (-īrm)

▶ 10. *thīrd* (-īrd)

▶ 11. *mīrth* (-īrth)

▶ 12. *chīrp* (-īrp)

2

Phonogram Family Clinic: Group the 12 words by their r-controlled spelling patterns. Notice how *ir* blends with the final consonant.

7 Phonogram Patterns

-irt Family

dirt, skirt

-irst Family

first, thirst

-ird Family

bird, third

-irl Family

girl, whirl

-irth Family

birth, mirth

-irm / -irp

firm, chirp

3

Memory Lesson (Lesson 108): Read Margaret E. Sangster’s poem. Mark the tilde over each *i* with the sound of *sir*, then transcribe from memory.

Textbook Page 60 • Margaret E. Sangster

▶ “Oh, where are you going, my dear little **bird**?
And why do you hurry away?
Not a leaf on the pretty red maple has **stirred**,
In the sweet golden sunshine to-day.”

— MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

1. Lines 1–2: Transcribe the first two lines of the poem:

Mark *bīrd*

2. Lines 3–4: Transcribe the final two lines of the poem:

Mark *stīred*

3. Original Sentence: Compose an original sentence using at least two words with *ī*:

e.g., *girl*, *chirp*, *third*

1 Complete Phonics & Orthoepic Matrix (Lessons 107 & 108)

14 Target Words • Phonograms • Etymological Notes

Word	Part of Speech / IPA	Syllables	Family	Phonetic & Etymological Analysis
1. dirt	Noun /dɜ:ɹt/	dirt (1)	-irt	Base CVC. Voiced /d/ + /ɜ:ɹ/ + /t/. Etym. Old Norse <i>drit</i> (soil, earth).
2. skirt	Noun /skɜ:ɹt/	skirt (1)	-irt	Initial blend sk-. Etym. Old Norse <i>skyrta</i> (shirt/border).
3. firm	Adj. /fɜ:ɹm/	firm (1)	-irm	Unvoiced fricative /f/ + /ɜ:ɹ/ + bilabial nasal /m/. Latin <i>firmus</i> .
4. first	Adj. /fɜ:ɹst/	first (1)	-irst	Superlative of fore (*fore-est). Consonant cluster -rst.
5. thirst	Noun /θɜ:ɹst/	thirst (1)	-irst	Voiceless dental fricative th- (/θ/). Old English <i>thurst</i> .
6. third	Adj. /θɜ:ɹd/	third (1)	-ird	Voiceless th- (/θ/) + voiced dental /d/. From OE <i>thrida</i> (metathesis).
7. girl	Noun /gɜ:ɹl/	girl (1)	-irl	Hard g (/g/) before /ɜ:ɹ/ + liquid /l/. Middle English <i>girle</i> .
8. whirl	Verb /wɜ:ɹl/	whirl (1)	-irl	Initial digraph wh- (/w/ or /hw/). Etym. Old Norse <i>hvirfla</i> .
9. mirth	Noun /mɜ:ɹθ/	mirth (1)	-irth	Bilabial nasal /m/ + /ɜ:ɹ/ + voiceless -th (/θ/). OE <i>myrgth</i> .
10. bird	Noun /bɜ:ɹd/	bird (1)	-ird	Voiced bilabial /b/ + /ɜ:ɹ/ + voiced /d/. OE <i>bridd</i> (metathesis of r).
11. birth	Noun /bɜ:ɹθ/	birth (1)	-irth	Voiced /b/ + /ɜ:ɹ/ + voiceless -th. Etym. Old Norse <i>byrth</i> .
12. chirp	Verb /tʃɜ:ɹp/	chirp (1)	-irp	Voiceless palatal affricate ch- (/tʃ/) + /ɜ:ɹ/ + voiceless stop /p/.
13. stirred	Verb /stɜ:ɹd/	stirred (1)	-irred	Lesson 108: Base <i>stir</i> doubles final <i>r</i> before -ed (1-1-1 rule).
14. sir	Noun /sɜ:ɹ/	sir (1)	-ir	Textbook key anchor: "Sound of <i>i</i> as in <i>sir</i> , marked <i>ī</i> ."

2 Orthoepic Clinic: The Tilde Diacritic *ī* & The R-Controlled Vowel

Historical Orthography • 1-1-1 Doubling Rule

1. The Tilde Diacritic (*ī* as in *sir*)

- Acoustic Identity:** Wheeler marks *i* before *r* with a tilde (*ī*) to indicate the mid-central r-colored vowel (/ɜ:ɹ/), acoustically identical in modern standard English to *ē* in *her/earn* (Lessons 103–104) and *ū* in *fur/burn*.
- Historical Metathesis:** Words like *bird* (OE *bridd*) and *third* (OE *thrida*) underwent historical vowel-consonant transposition, placing *i* immediately before *r*.

2. The 1-1-1 Doubling Rule in *stirred* (Lesson 108)

- Morphology:** *stir* has 1 syllable, 1 short vowel (*i*), and ends in 1 consonant (*r*). Before adding vowel suffix -ed, the final consonant doubles: *stir* → *stirred*.
- Rhyme in Sangster's Lyric:** Sangster pairs *bird* with *stirred*, giving students concrete proof that -ird and -irred produce the exact acoustic cadence (/ɜ:ɹd/).

3 Standard Dictation Sentences (Administer Orally)

Strict Decodability • Lessons 107 & 108 Vocabulary

1. The pretty little bird sat upon the third branch and gave a cheerful chirp.

2. The girl was the first to see the sudden wind whirl the dry dirt across the lawn.

3. A firm purpose and an honest heart bring joy and innocent mirth to the home.

4. A cup of cold water quenched his burning thirst on a warm autumn morning.

5. Not a single leaf on the red maple stirred in the sweet golden sunshine to-day.

4 Evaluative Scoring Rubric (20 Points Total) & Socratic Discussion

Standards-Based Mastery Assessment

Four-Domain Scoring Criteria:

1. Tilde Placement Accuracy (6 pts): Correctly marks the tilde (*ī*) over the *i* in all 12 target words and in *bird* and *stirred*.

2. Phonogram Sorting (5 pts): Accurately associates each word with its phonogram family (e.g., *dirt/skirt* → -irt; *first/thirst* → -irst).

3. Memory Transcription & Penmanship (5 pts): Transcribes Sangster's stanza accurately on 26px lines; letters align cleanly with 13px midline.

4. Orthographic Conventions (4 pts): Capitalizes beginning of poetic lines and uses correct punctuation (question marks, commas, period).

Socratic Pedagogical Prompts:

- Diacritic Inquiry:** "What sound does the letter 'i' make in 'pin'? What sound does it make in 'sir'? What mark shows that 'i' is modified by 'r'?" (The tilde *ī*).
- Spelling Rule Application:** "Why do we double the 'r' in 'stirred' but not in 'chirped'?" (Rule: *stir* ends in a single consonant after a single vowel; *chirp* already ends in two consonants, *r* and *p*).
- Sangster's Lyric Reflection:** "Why is the bird hurrying away if the sunshine is still warm and sweet? What season is arriving?" (Autumn migration; leaves turning red).

Wheeler's Elementary Speller (1901) • Lessons 107 & 108 • Teacher Master Key & Guide

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