

- For students reading at  
**Literacy Level C/3**, including:
- English-language learners
  - Students reading below grade level
  - Kindergarten emergent readers

## Objectives at a Glance

### COMPREHENSION

Students will:

- Identify unstated main idea and supporting details
- Ask questions
- Utilize text and graphic features
- Summarize the information in the book
- Answer text-dependent questions

### VOCABULARY

Students will:

- Recognize high-frequency words
- Develop Tier Two vocabulary
- Develop Tier Three vocabulary

### GRAMMAR AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Students will:

- Recognize the sentence structures  
A    is not    and A    is
- Use negatives

### PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Students will:

- Listen for short /o/

### PHONICS

Students will:

- Use first-letter cues to solve words
- Recognize words with short "o"

### FLUENCY

Students will:

- Stop at the end of each sentence

### CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT

Students will:

- Read a page top to bottom

### WRITING

Students will:

- Write to a picture prompt

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early  
**Explorers™** TEACHER'S GUIDE

# Soft and Hard

## Theme: Matter

- Soft and Hard (C/3)
- Three Kinds of Water (E/7)

## Science Big Idea:

Readers categorize a variety of objects as soft or hard.



# Before Reading

## Related Resources

The following Benchmark Education resources support this lesson.

### Other Early Explorers Books

- Looking at Matter (G/11)
- Food Is Matter (I/15)

### Fluency and Language Development

- *Soft and Hard* Audio CD

### Comprehension Resources

- *Soft and Hard* question card
- Power Tool Flip Chart for Teachers
- Student Bookmark
- Main Idea and Supporting Details poster

### Assessment

- *Early Explorers Overview & Assessment Handbook*
- *Grade K Comprehension Strategy Assessment Book*

## Make Connections and Build Background

- **Use Realia** Gather objects that are soft or hard, such as a pencil, ruler, sweater, and cotton ball. **Say:** *We will read a book about soft things and hard things.* Choose one soft item. Touch and squeeze it, pass it around the group, and put it to one side **saying:** *The \_\_\_ is soft.* Repeat the process with a hard item. Ask students to sort the remaining items by soft or hard. Finally, invite them to name other objects that are soft or hard.

- **Use a Graphic Organizer** Write the words **Soft** and **Hard** on the board. Underline each word. Read the words and ask students to help you list things that are soft or hard. As students respond, write the words under the appropriate heading. Then read each word and ask students to echo-read.

<u>Soft</u>	<u>Hard</u>
pillow	pencil
cotton ball	ruler
feather	rock

## Introduce the Book

- Give each student a copy of the book. Remind students they will read about things that are soft or hard. Preview the book, encouraging students to interact with the pictures and text on each page as you emphasize the elements from the page 3 chart that will best support their understanding of the book's language, concepts, and organization. (Items in bold print include sample "teacher talk.")
- **Cover Graphic Feature** *The cover has a photograph. Photographs are pictures that show us what the book is about. What is on the cover of this book? What items do you see in the photograph?* Allow time for students to respond.
- **Pages 2–3 Words to Discuss** Ask students to point to each photograph as you say its matching label. Repeat the process, inviting students to echo-read. After students Think/Pair/Share what they know about each word, fill in any missing details. **Say:** *We will see these words in the book.*

Pages	Text and Graphic Features	Words to Discuss	English/Spanish Cognates	Sentence Structures
Cover	title, author, photo			
1	title page, photo			
2–3	photos, labels	<b>bat, key, pillow, teddy bear</b>		
4–5	photo	pillow, hard, soft		A __ is not __. A __ is __.
6–7	photo	teddy bear		
8–9	photo	towel		
10–11	photo	bat	<b>bat/bate</b>	
12–13	photo	rock	rock/roca	
14–15	photo	key		
16	photo	nail, sock	too/tu (false cognate)	

- Page 4 Sentence Structure** Write *A \_\_\_ is not \_\_\_* on the board. Read this sentence structure aloud and ask students to repeat it several times.  
**Say:** *We use this sentence structure to tell about something.* Model using the sentence structure to tell about the something in the room, such as *A desk is not soft or A sweater is not hard.* Then assist students in forming their own sentences using the structure.  
**Say:** *This sentence structure is in the book. Can you find the structure on page 4? Frame the sentence. Let's read the sentence together.*

- Page 10 Spanish Cognate Say:** *Does **bat** sound like a word you know in Spanish? (Allow time for students to respond.) The English word **bat** sounds like the Spanish word **bate**. **Bat** and **bate** mean the same thing. What is a **bat**? (Allow students to respond.) Write the word **bat** on the board and ask students to locate it on page 10 in the book.*

### Rehearse Reading Strategies

- Say:** *One word in this book is **not**. Say the word **not**. What letter do you expect to see at the beginning? Allow time for students to respond, assisting as needed. Then ask them to find the word **not** on page 4. **Say:** *Use first-letter sounds to help you when you read.**
- Remind students to use other reading strategies they are learning as well, such as checking the pictures and returning to the beginning of the sentence if something doesn't sound right.

### Set a Purpose for Reading

- Direct students' attention to the soft and hard lists. **Say:** *Now it's time to whisper-read the book. Read to learn about things that are soft or hard.*

Cue Source	Prompt	Example	Page
Graphophonic	Look at the first letter.	towel	8
Syntactic	Think about the sentence structure.	A teddy bear is not hard.	6
Semantic	Check the picture.	bat	10

## During Reading

### Observe and Prompt Reading Strategies

- After the supportive introduction, students should be able to read all or most of the book on their own. Observe students as they read. Take note of the graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic cues they use to make sense of the text and self-correct. Prompt individual students who have difficulty problem-solving independently, but be careful not to prompt English-language learners too quickly. They may need more time to process the text as they rely on their first language for comprehension.

## After Reading

### Use the Graphic Organizer to Summarize

- Ask students to think about their reading. **Say:** *Look at our lists. Which items did we read about in the book?* Put a ✓ beside any matching response. Then ask students to name other things they read about in the book. Add these words to the appropriate list and put check marks beside them. Choral-read the checkmarked words. Then ask students to use the graphic organizer to tell a partner about the book.

<u>Soft</u>	<u>Hard</u>
pillow✓	pencil
cotton ball	ruler
feather	rock✓
teddy bear ✓	bat ✓
towel ✓	key ✓
sock ✓	nail✓

## Reading Strategy Mini-Lesson: Ask Questions

- **Reflect Ask:** *Did you understand what you read? What parts were hard to understand? How did you help yourself?*
- **Model Say:** *I want to understand what I read. One way is to ask questions about the book. Ask students to turn to page 3. Say: I had a question about the top photograph. What does the photograph show? I read the word beside the photograph. Now I know the photograph shows a pillow. Ask students to turn to page 4. Say: I read: A pillow is soft. I ask myself another kind of question. How do I know a pillow is soft? The book doesn't answer the question. I will have to find the answer another way.*
- **Guide** Invite students to read page 10 with you. Ask the following questions, allowing time for students to respond after each one. *Did you ask yourself a question when you read the page? Did the book answer your question? How did you find the answer? Did you have a question about this page that wasn't answered in the book? What was it? How can you look for an answer to your question? After students share any additional questions, invite them to tell a partner how asking questions helped them better understand page 10.*
- **Apply** Ask each student to turn to his or her favorite page. Ask students to read the page to a partner and share any questions they have. The partner may then find the answer in the book or help think of another way to find the answer. Observe students as they ask questions, providing assistance if

needed. See the *Early Explorers Overview & Assessment Handbook* for an observation chart you can use to assess students' understanding of the monitor-reading strategy. Then **say:** *You can ask yourself any questions any time you read. Remember to ask questions to help you understand.*

## Answer Text-Dependent Questions

- **Explain** Remind students they can answer questions about books they have read. **Say:** *We answer different kinds of questions in different ways. I will help you learn how to answer each kind.* Tell students today they will practice answering *Vocabulary* questions. **Say:** *The answer to a Vocabulary question is in the book. You can define the word if you know what to look for.*
- **Model** Use the first *Vocabulary* question on the question card. **Say:** *I will read the question to figure out what to do: What does the word **soft** mean in this book? Look for clues on pages 4 to 8. This question asks me to figure out what the word **soft** means. I will look for clues in the book. Read the text on page 4 aloud. Then direct students' attention to the photograph on page 5. Say: I read that a pillow is not hard. A pillow is **soft**. The pillows in the photograph are not hard. The pillows are **soft**. Now I know the word **soft** means "not hard." This definition answers the question. The answer makes sense. I have found the answer in the text.*
- **Guide** Ask students to answer the other questions on the question card. Use the Power Tool Flip chart and Student Bookmark to provide

additional modeling as needed. Remind students to ask themselves: *What is the question asking? How can I find the answer? Does my answer make sense? How do I know?*

## Build Comprehension: Identify Unstated Main Idea and Supporting Details

- **Explain** Create an overhead transparency of the “Soft and Hard” graphic organizer on page 12 or draw it on the board. **Say:** *Nonfiction books have main ideas and supporting details. The main idea is the most important thing we learn. Details tell about the main idea. Sometimes the author states the main idea. Other times readers use details to figure out the main idea.*
- **Model Say:** *We know from the title that the book is about soft things and hard things. The author does not state the main idea, though. We will use details to figure out the main idea. Ask students to turn to page 4. **Say:** On this page we read that a pillow is soft. A soft pillow is a detail in this book. Write **A pillow is soft** in the first Detail box on the graphic organizer. Ask students to turn to page 6. **Say:** On this page we read that a teddy bear is soft. A soft teddy bear is another detail in the book. Write **A teddy bear is soft** in the second Detail box on the graphic organizer.*
- **Guide Say:** *Let’s find some more details. Look on page 8. What do we learn about a towel? (A towel is soft.) What detail do we read about on page 10? (A bat is hard.) What detail do we read about on page 12? (A rock is hard.) What detail do we read about*

*on page 14? (A key is hard.)* As students call out responses, add the statements to the Detail boxes on the graphic organizer.

- **Apply** Review the supporting details, and then ask each student to work with a partner to figure out the book’s main idea. Remind them that the main idea is the most important thing they learned in the book. Once each partnership has shared, agree on how to word the main idea and add it to the graphic organizer. Finally, read the completed graphic organizer aloud and invite students to echo-read.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Soft and Hard**

<b>Main Idea:</b> Some things are soft and some are hard.	→	<b>Detail:</b> A pillow is soft.
	→	<b>Detail:</b> A teddy bear is soft.
	→	<b>Detail:</b> A towel is soft.
	→	<b>Detail:</b> A bat is hard.
	→	<b>Detail:</b> A rock is hard.
	→	<b>Detail:</b> A key is hard.

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## Home Connection

- Give students the take-home version of *Soft and Hard* to read to family members. Encourage students to work with a friend or family member to make a list of soft things and hard things they find at home. Invite them to bring their lists to share with the group.

## Reader Response

Invite students to respond to the book in a way that is meaningful to them. Model and use think-alouds as needed to scaffold students before they try the activities on their own.

- Draw a picture of one soft thing and one hard thing. Label each picture.
- Tell something you learned. Use the sentence frame *A \_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_.*
- Act out using something that is soft or hard. Ask a partner to guess what you are using.
- Rate the book with a 1 (don't like), 2 (okay), or 3 (like a lot). Tell why you chose that rating.
- Make up a story about one of the photographs.
- Write a question you would like to ask the author.

## Write to a Picture Prompt

- **Write a Description** Tell students they will talk about a picture from the book. Then they will write about the picture. Ask them to turn to page 5. **Say:** *I can describe this picture in my own words: Two girls are on a bed. The girls hug their pillows. Now I will write my idea.* Model writing your sentences on the board. Ask students to choose a picture and describe it to a partner. Allow time for students to share their descriptions, providing assistance as needed. Then **say:** *You described a picture in a book. Now write your idea. After you are finished, read your writing to a partner.*

## Concepts About Print

- **Read a Page Top to Bottom** Point out that some pages in the book have words on more than one line. **Say:** *We read the top line first. Then we read the next line or lines. We always read a page from top to bottom.* Turn to page 4. Without reading the words aloud, model how to move your finger under the top line and then the second line. Invite students to mimic your actions.

## Phonemic Awareness: Short /o/

- Tell students you will read a sentence from *Soft and Hard*. Ask them to listen for a word that has the short **o** sound: *A teddy bear is not hard* (page 6). Reread the sentence if needed so students can identify the word **not**.

- **Say:** I will say name some things that are soft or hard. Some have the short **o** sound and some do not. Please listen carefully. Hop on one foot if you hear a word with the **short lol** sound: **box, log, cap, jet, doll, bed, lock.**

## Phonics: Short “o”

- Ask students to locate the word **rock** on page 12. Write **rock** on the board and underline the “**o**” in the middle. **Say:** I see the letter “**o**” in the word **rock**. I hear the short **lol** sound in the word **rock**. Slowly draw your finger under the word as you blend the sounds. Then ask students to do the same in their books. Repeat the process with **not** and **soft** on page 4 and **sock** on page 16.
- Ask students to brainstorm words with the short **lo** sound. Make a list on the board. Then read each word, inviting students to echo-read.
- **Say:** I will make up some rhymes. You may call out a word from the list to help me finish each rhyme. I will underline the “**o**” in the word. Then you will know you guessed correctly. Use simple rhymes such as: *I heard a sound “tick-tock, tick-tock.” I looked on the wall and saw a \_\_\_\_.* (clock)

## Vocabulary

- **Tier Two Vocabulary** Pronounce the word **traits** and ask students to repeat it. **Say:** **Traits** are special things about a person or object. A pillow has **traits**. A pillow is big and soft. A key has **traits**. A key is small and hard. Discuss other **traits** people or objects can have, such as being kind and helpful (a friend) or curved and colorful (a rainbow). Then model your own sentences, such as *An elephant has **traits**. An elephant is large, gray,*

*and strong.* Invite students to share their own sentences, providing assistance as needed. **Ask:** *What word have we been talking about? Yes—**traits**. Let’s try to use the word **traits** many times today. We can use the word at school and at home.*

- **Tier Three Vocabulary** Review the book with students and write the words **soft** and **hard** on the board. Then record the words **rock, pillow, bat, nail, sock, towel, teddy bear,** and **key** on index cards. Ask students to read the words with you. Mix the word cards and place them facedown on the table. Choose a card, read the word, and model an oral sentence using that word and either **soft** or **hard**. Finally, invite students to take turns making their own sentences. Continue the game until each student has had several turns with different word pairs. For additional practice students may work as a group or in pairs to complete the vocabulary activity on page 11.

## Grammar and Language Development

### Negatives

- **Model** Explain that authors sometimes use words that mean **no**. Ask students to read the first sentence on page 4 with you: *A pillow is not hard* **Ask:** *Is a pillow hard? No, it is **not**.* Then ask students to read the first sentence on page 6 with you: *A teddy bear is not hard.* **Ask:** *Is a teddy bear hard? No, it is **not**. I use the word **not**, too.* Point to various classroom items as you share **not** sentences, such as:  
*My book is **not** on my desk.*  
*The door is **not** closed.*  
*The books are **not** on the floor.*

- **Guide** Invite students to read page 8 with you. **Ask:** *Is a towel hard? (no) How do you know?* (The author uses the word **not**.) Invite students to name things they do not do at school, such as sleep, walk the dog, or ride on a boat.
- **Apply** Pair students. Ask them to make up sentences using the words **not**. As they share their sentences with the group, write them on the board and underline the negatives.

### **Fluency: Stop at the End of Each Sentence**

- **Say:** *Each sentence in a book is a complete thought. We stop at the end of each sentence.*
- Ask students to turn to page 4. First, read the sentences without stopping. Discuss how this makes the listener feel. Then read the page again, stopping at the end of each sentence. Ask students to echo-read.

- Ask students to turn to page 8. Choral-read the page with them, stopping at the end of each sentence.
- Invite students to take turns rereading *Soft and Hard* with a partner. Remind them to stop at the end of each sentence.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary

**Read each sentence. Write the correct word on the line. Reread to check.**

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is soft.  
(teddy bear, bat)

2. A \_\_\_\_\_ is not soft.  
(towel, key)

3. A \_\_\_\_\_ is hard.  
(pillow, rock)

4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is not hard.  
(towel, bat)

5. A rock is not \_\_\_\_\_.  
(soft, hard)

6. A pillow is not \_\_\_\_\_.  
(soft, hard)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Soft and Hard

**Main Idea:**

**Detail:**



**Detail:**



**Detail:**



**Detail:**



**Detail:**



**Detail:**

