



ALPHABETICS

Teacher Guide

Overview

This small group instructional program uses a structured set of routines to teach phonological awareness, letter recognition, and letter-sound knowledge with fun and engaging activities.

- The primary place **phonological awareness** and **alphabet knowledge** is taught is in the Alphabetics small group.
- This is a stand-alone small group (not connected to any specific theme). Children should be **grouped based on skill level** and these groups are fluid with children moving based on their mastery of skills or need for extra practice.
- A **scope and sequence** following research-based recommendations for teaching preschool children phonological and letter skills was developed (NELP, 2008; Paulson & Moats, 2018; Phillips & Piasta, 2013; Piasta & Wagner, 2010).
- There are two forms of practice built in to the program.
 - **Review Lessons:** Each lesson that introduces a new letter has 2 optional review lessons (A & B) for students who need additional practice with the same letter. These lessons vary slightly and provide more opportunities for student mastery.
 - **Practice & Play:** These cumulative review lessons are done after a set of 4 new letters are taught. All children participate in these lessons.

*Small groups meet for approximately 15 minutes and consist of a phonological component (five minutes) and a letter component (10 minutes).

Phonological Awareness

The sequence includes four levels of phonological skill games and the introduction of letters based on their frequency in language and ease of learning.

- As students are introduced to new letters, phonological awareness skills will increase in complexity. The focus is on student exposure to each of the new PA skill levels.
 - **Level 1:** Introduction to PA *for students to get acclimated to small group expectations and exposure to vocabulary needed for future PA activities
 - **Level 2:** Blending and segmenting compound words and syllables
 - **Level 3:** Segmenting and isolating syllables, blending onset and rime, identifying words that rhyme
 - **Level 4:** Initial phoneme isolation, blending 2-3 phonemes, segmenting 2-3 phonemes



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Instruction

The Alphabetics Group is designed to teach children critical foundational skills to support reading readiness.

- Lessons should occur 3-5 times per week in small groups of 3-5 children.
- Children with similar skill levels should be grouped together.
- Children with more needs (less skills) should meet 4-5 times per week.
- Instruction lasts approximately 15 minutes (5 min of PA component and 10 min letter component).

Lesson Outline

All lessons are scripted and follow a similar sequence. Students are provided multiple opportunities to practice new skills and review previously learned letters. The first six lessons focus just on Phonological Awareness (Level 1). These lessons are designed as a warm-up and help children learn how to work in small groups, follow directions, learn simple vocabulary, and tune in to sounds in their environment.

- **Phonological Awareness**
 - Name activity
 - PA Game/Activity
- **Introduce a New Letter**
 - Discuss the letter name and sound using the target picture and read the poem
 - Review picture words that share the initial letter sound
 - Letter formation with modeling & practice
- **Review Known Letters**
 - Quick review (name, sound, formation)
 - Review game
- **Make the Letters** - students practice making the letters (writing boards, wikki stix)

Letter Order: T O C M A S H Z I D N L E B W U X F V R J K P Q G Y

Student Placement

It is recommended, but not necessary, that ALL students begin with phonological awareness level 1

ALL students start with lesson #1: letter T

1st year students, and those who need extra practice, complete all lessons: #1, 1A, 1B

All students complete the Practice & Play lessons

Practice & Play Lessons

Letters are taught in groups of 4 with three cumulative review lessons done after the 4 new letters are introduced (every 5th lesson). Review lessons, called practice & play, use a set of 3 games. These lessons are meant for ALL students to provide opportunities for spaced practice.

#1 Letter Statues Game

Students make letter shapes using gross motor movements while saying letter names

#2 Seek and Find Letters Game

Teacher hides letters around the classroom and students seek them out

#3 Bean Bag Toss Letter Game

Teachers name a letter and students toss a bean bag onto the space that contains the letter

Lesson Progression

Lesson #1: Full lesson: new letter introduction, complete with all students

Lesson #1A: Review of lesson 1, use with students who need more review

Lesson #1B: Review of Lesson #1 & 1A, use with students who need more review

**after completing Lesson #1, 1A, and 1B, move on to the next lesson (even if student has not mastered lesson #1)*

After 4 new letters have been introduced, there are 3 lessons that incorporate practice and play with the new letters. All students complete each of the 3 Practice & Play lessons as part of a cumulative review.

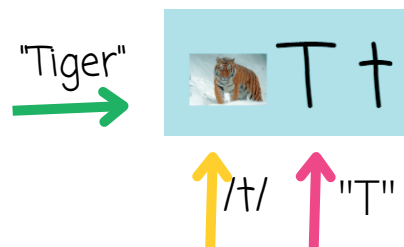
Practice & Play #1: cumulative practice for ALL students

Practice & Play #2: cumulative practice for ALL students

Practice & Play #3: cumulative practice for ALL students

New Letter Introduction

Focus on connecting speech to print. Begin with the name of the target picture, then identify the first sound, and finally connect the first sound to the symbol (the letter) and give its name.



1. point to the picture and says its name

2. point to the picture and identify the initial sound

3. trace the letter and say its name

**Use lots of repetition (model as many times as needed and have students repeat the letter name multiple times)*

Criteria for Letter Mastery

The focus of student mastery is on letter names, and a letter is considered to be mastered when a student can correctly identify a letter name on 3 occasions without modeling or support. Letter sounds and letter formations* are taught to support letter learning, but letter naming is the focus and used to determine when a letter is mastered.

A letter is considered to be mastered when:

- A student can say the name of the letter when prompted without modeling first. ("What letter is this?")
- A student can point to the letter when prompted without modeling first. ("Point to the letter A.")
- Capital and lowercase letters that do not look similar are considered separate letters (i.e. T, t, G, g). Mastery is reached when the capital form can be identified 3 times, and the lowercase form can be identified 3 times.

**independent letter formation is not expected in preschool*



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Supporting Students Who Need More Practice

- Review Lessons are built-in to provide additional practice for students who need more support:
 - **2 Review Lessons** for each new letter introduced
 - **3 Practice & Play Lessons** which are cumulative and build as new letters are introduced

Determine WHO Needs More Practice

After 4 new letters have been introduced, the Practice & Play lessons will provide an opportunity for you to track additional student mastery data through the visual drill at the end of each lesson.

Use the Student Mastery Sheet and Group Lesson Progress Sheet (on the next pages) to identify who has NOT mastered the letters introduced.

- **Ask yourself the following questions when determining how to provide more practice:**
 - Has the student completed the review lessons? Would they benefit from completing the review lessons again?
 - Should I change groups to put all students together who need more practice on a specific letter or group of letters?

Playful Interventions

If all previous review lessons have been completed, the teacher can provide additional support through the use of playful interventions. These are fun, inviting, self-correcting activities for students who might benefit from additional practice with letters. These take place in addition to the alphabetics group time and should only be used for students who need more intensive support.



Student Progress Monitoring

Use the **Student Mastery Sheet** to track observational data for all students. Use a checkmark or color in 1 box each time a student identifies the letter correctly. After 4 new letters have been introduced, and the Practice & Play lessons have been completed, use this sheet to determine who may need extra support through the use of Playful Interventions. .

**an editable word document is available for you to download*

[illegible]

Track Lesson Progress



Use the **Group Lesson Progress** form to keep track of which lessons were taught to each group. You can use this sheet to make decisions regarding student interventions.

Example: Your student has not mastered the letter t. Use the Group Lesson Progress sheet to see if they completed all of the review lessons. If so, repeat the review lessons with other students who need additional support and/or move the student into a playful interventions group. If not already completed, circle back and complete the review lessons.

**an editable word document is available for you to download*

Group Lesson Progress						
	Group 1:	Group 2:	Group 3:	Group 4:	Group 5:	Comments:
L1: Tt						
L1A						
L1B						
L2: Oo						
L2A						
L2B						
L3: Cc						
L3A						
L3B						
L4: Mm						
L4A						
L4B						
P&P1						
P&P2						
P&P3						

L1: Lesson #1

L1A: Lesson #1A

L1B: Lesson #1B

P&P1: Practice & Play #1

P&P2: Practice & Play #2

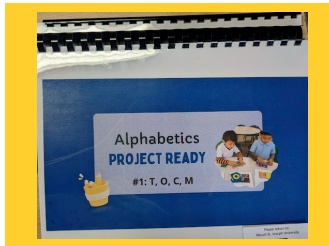
P&P3: Practice & Play #3



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Materials



Alphabetics Books

Letters are introduced in addition to PA skills practice in this set of 8 books. There are 4 new letters per book, 2 review lessons per letter, and 3 Practice & Play lessons at the end.



Letter Cards

These cards are used for student practice with letter identification and formation.



Dog Finger Puppets and Hand Puppet

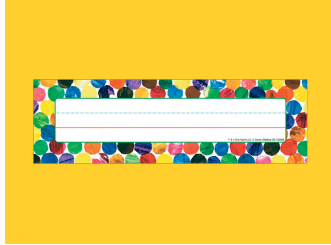
The puppets are used throughout the phonological awareness activities.



Letter Posters

The letter posters are hung in the classroom during the Seek & Find review game in the Practice & Play lesson #2.

Materials



Name Cards

Use the name cards during the *My name is* activity of the phonological awareness portion of the lesson..



Wikki Stix

These are used during the *Make the Letters* portion of the lesson.



Monkey Noodles

These are used during the *Make the Letters* portion of the lesson.



Magic Paintbrush

These are used during the *Make the Letters* portion of the lesson.



Doodle Boards

These are used during the *Make the Letters* portion of the lesson.

Materials



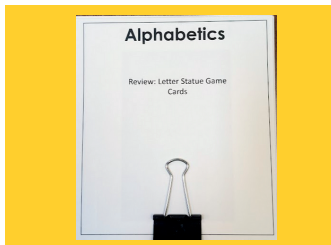
Card Deck

The card deck is used for the wrap-up activity in all Practice & Play lessons.



Bean Bag Toss Game

This review game is used during Practice & Play lesson #3



Letter Statue Cards

The deck of letter statue cards are used during the review game in the Practice & Play lesson #1

