

Reading: The First Chapter In Education

No other skill taught in school and learned by school children is more important than reading. It is the gateway to all other knowledge. If children do not learn to read efficiently, the path is blocked to every subject they encounter in their school years.

The past five years have brought major breakthroughs in our knowledge of how children learn to read and why so many fail. These new insights have been translated into techniques for teaching reading to beginning readers, including the many students who would otherwise encounter difficulties in mastering this fundamental skill. Researchers have come to appreciate that early identification and treatment of such students can make all the difference. Researchers have also documented the problems — personal, social, and educational — that too often result when early attention and intervention do not occur.

Reading to Learn

Students who do not “learn to read” during the first three years of school experience enormous difficulty when they are subsequently asked to “read to learn.” Teaching students to read by the end of third grade is the single most important task assigned to elementary schools. During the first three years of schooling, students “learn to read.” That is, they develop the capacity to interpret the written symbols for the oral language that they have been hearing since birth. Starting in fourth grade, schooling takes on a very different purpose, one that in many ways is more complex and demanding of higher-order thinking skills. If efficient reading skills are not developed by this time, the English language, history, mathematics, current events, and the rich tapestries of literature and science become inaccessible.

In addition, a strong body of evidence shows that most students who fall behind in reading skills never catch up with their peers and become fluent readers. They fall further and further behind in school, become frustrated, and drop out at much higher rates than their classmates. They find it difficult to obtain rewarding employment and are effectively prevented from drawing on the power of education to improve and enrich their lives. Researchers speak of this syndrome as the “Matthew Effect” — the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

Most Americans know how central reading is to education. According to a 1994 poll conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, nearly 70 percent of teachers believe that reading is the “most important” skill for children to learn. Two years earlier, the same polling firm reported that 62 percent of parents believed that reading was one of the most important skills for their children to master. Both teachers and parents ranked reading as more critical than mathematics and computer skills. In other words, there is general agreement among researchers and the public that all children must learn to read early in their academic careers.

The Challenges of Illiteracy

More students fail to learn to read by the end of the third grade than many people imagine. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that all schools encounter students who fall into this category and that all schools should have plans for addressing the special needs of these students.

In its 1994 Reading Assessment, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), a federally supported program that tracks the performance of American students in core academic

Lesson 1 - Short a

Overview:

- Introduce the alphabet through the Alphabet Story
- Use child's name to emphasize the importance of letters in forming words
- Learn to follow directions for marking pictures
- Introduce the letter **a**—its name, sound, and shape—through pictures
- Identify words that begin with the sound of **a**
- Print both capital and lower-case **a**

Materials and Supplies:

- Teacher's Guide & Student Workbook
- Alphabet Story (page 147)
- White board
- Alphabet flow-chart
- Reader 1: *Ann's Cat*

Teaching Tips:

Introduce and demonstrate the words **top**, **bottom**, **left**, **right**, **circle** and **x**; paper **top to bottom**, **left to right**.

Emphasize auditory skills for correct reproduction of letter sounds. Identify child's hand preference, proper position of holding a pencil, and proper position of holding hands on the paper.

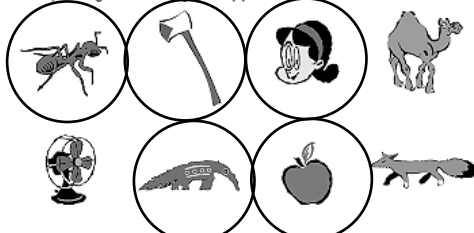
Introduction to Workbook Activities:

Read the alphabet story on page 147 and explain the need for letters to make words. Explain how letters are used to make names. The alphabet is necessary in learning to read.


Each day recite the alphabet through all 26 letters. The emphasis is on the letter name rather than sequence. Recognition of both capital and lower-case letters is more important at this time.

LESSON 1
Letter a

① Put a circle around the pictures that start with the sound of **a** as in Andy Alligator eating an apple.




② Look at the pictures of words with the sound of short **a** in the middle of the word. Say the words.



Māx fān bǎt mǎd

③ Underline the short **a** in the middle of the word. Say the sound of short **a** as in Andy Alligator.



bǎt dǎd pǎn rǎn

2

Discuss **Rule 1**: Every word must have a vowel in it. Discuss **Rule 2**: If there is only one vowel in a word, it is usually used as a short-vowel sound. Teach the letter **a**—the recognition of the letter, its name, its sound, and its printed form. Study the pictures used to identify the short sound of the letter **a**.

Pictures: **apple, add, alligator, astronaut, anteater**

Emphasize the short **a** sound, and have the child imitate as a single sound and as it is used at the beginning of each of the picture words.

Lines on the board should be noted as **top**, **middle**, and **bottom**. Point out the starting and ending lines for the letter **a**.

Activity 1. Do these activities together. Have the student recognize the pictures and repeat so the beginning sound is distinct. Student will put a circle around the pictures that start with the sound of **a**.

Pictures: **ant, ax, Ann, camel fan, anteater, apple, fox**

Activity 2. Student is to identify the short **a** sound in the MIDDLE of the word.

Pictures: **Max, fan, bat, mad**

Activity 3. Student will underline the short **a** in the middle of the word. Say the sound of short **a**. Refer to original words if necessary for comparison.

Pictures: **bat, dad, pan, ran**

Activities 4&5. Review the letters of the alphabet. Begin printing of capital **A**. Use the board for demonstration of all printing. Have the student note beginning strokes and each additional stroke. They need to be aware of the letter's placement on the lines.

Activity 6. Begin printing of lower-case **a**.

Activity 7. Identify the difference between the capital **A** and lower-case **a**.

Activity 8. Practice in printing capital and lower-case **a**.

Activity 9. Print an **a** under the pictures that start with the sound of **a**


Pictures: **ant, anteater, alligator, bear ax, fox, dog, astronaut**

Activity 10. Creative drawing using words with short **a**. Directions are to print the letter and color specific parts. Color words: **black, red.**


LESSON 1
Letter a

4 Review the alphabet.


5 Look at the capital A. Trace over the lines. Follow the numbers and lines to make the letter.




6 Look at the lower case a. Trace over the lines. Start at the top of the curve and circle around. Lift the pencil to start the straight line down.



7 Put a circle around the capital A. Put an x on the lower case a.




8 Practice printing the capital A and lower case a on the lines below.




3

LESSON 1
Letter a

9 Print an a under the pictures that start with the short a sound.

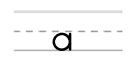


a a a



a a

10 Draw a picture of an ant eating an apple. Print an a under the picture. Color the ant BLACK. Color the apple RED.



4

Lesson 22 - Letter v

Overview:

- Review the names and sounds for the alphabet studied
- Review the Vowel Rule
- Introduce the letter **v**—its name, sound, and shape

Materials and Supplies:

- Teacher's Guide & Student Workbook
- White board
- Alphabet flow-chart
- Flash cards
- Reader 1: *The Vests*

Teaching Tips:

Encourage the student to read words and sentences silently at first. Try to make it a puzzle or game to figure out the answers. Keep an enthusiastic attitude at all times.

Introduction to Workbook Activities:

Review the alphabet. Introduce the letter **v**—its name, sound, and shape. Point out that the **v** has a sharp point at the bottom in contrast to the curved **u**. Have the students recognize the pictures and repeat the word so the beginning sound is distinct. Study the pictures used to identify the consonant sound of **v**.

Pictures: **vest, veil, volcano, vacuum, vet, van**

LESSON 22
Letter v

1 Review the alphabet.

2 Practice printing the capital V and lower case v on the lines below.

3 Put a circle around the picture that starts with the sound of v. Write the letter under each picture that starts with the sound of v.

4 Read the words that start with the consonant v. Then print the words on the lines below.

violin vat veil

102

Activity 1 & 2. Review the alphabet. Discuss the formation of the letter **v**—its beginning and sharp point at the bottom. Practice printing the capital **V** and lower case **v** on the lines below.

Activity 3. Identify the pictures so the sound of **v** is distinct. Monitor it closely so there is not the sound of **b** in its place. Student will put a circle around the pictures that start with the sound of **v**. Print the letter under each picture with that sound.

Pictures: **vegetables, wagon, vulture, violin**

Activity 4. Discuss the words and the pictures. Indicate that some of the vowels cannot use the short vowel sound. Have the student read the words under the pictures. Then print the entire word on the lines below.

Activity 5. Spell the words to match the pictures.

Pictures: **vest, van, vet**

Activity 6. Draw a line from the picture to the word it matches.

Pictures: **tub, vet, van, vest**

Activity 7. Encourage the student to read each sentence silently, then discuss it with you. Read the sentences aloud. Draw a line to the picture that tells about the sentence. Underline words that begin with the letter **v**.


Pictures: **Jim has a big video.**
Dad has a tan van.
The man had a red vest.
The vet had a cat.

Activity 8. On the board have the student practice printing the letter **v** with the **a, e, i, o,** and **u** vowel sounds. In the workbook, the student will put a circle around each word that starts like the given beginning letters. Print the word on the lines below the picture.

Pictures: **van, sat, vat**
vest, jet, vet
video, vinegar, village
volume, volcano, vulture

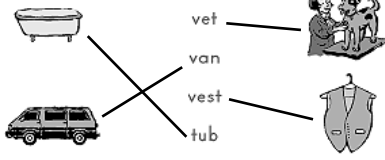
LESSON 22
Letter v

5 Spell the word to match the pictures.

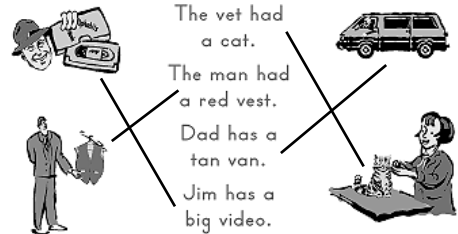


vest van vet

6 Draw a line from the picture to the word it matches.



7 Read the sentences. Draw a line to the picture that tells about the sentence. Underline the words that begin with the letter **v**.

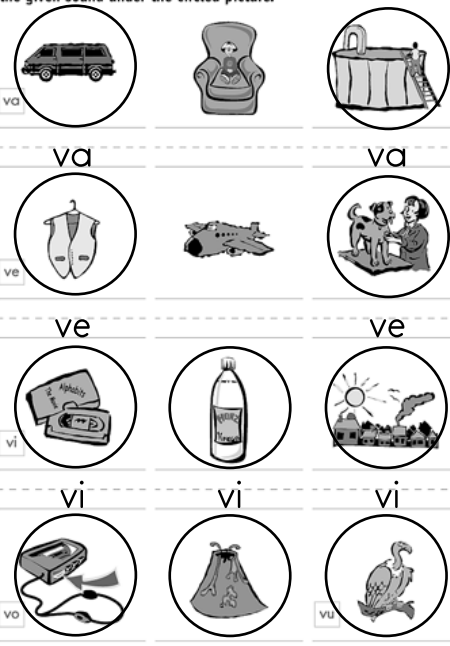


The vet had a cat.
The man had a red vest.
Dad has a tan van.
Jim has a big video.

103

LESSON 22
Letter v

1 Put a circle around the picture that starts with the given sound. Print the given sound under the circled picture.



va va

ve ve

vi vi vi

vo vo vu

104

