

ILP ABCs and All of Me Teaching Guide

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HOW YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN—WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS

Critical learning takes place in the first six years of life. Early learning is all experiential. It's quite the opposite of sitting still and being quiet. One wouldn't teach a baby to crawl by holding him gently and carefully explaining how the body's motor mechanisms work. Young children learn through experience. No wonder "sitting still and being quiet" is so difficult and discouraging for many young learners. We are being asked to abandon approaches to learning with which we have had great success. (First Comes the Child, Carol Ann Goodson & Deborah Escalante, McKay Today Magazine, 2008).

Young children learn through play. They learn best through manipulation of materials and hands-on experiences, planned by knowledgeable teachers. This is play with a purpose. Three- four- and five-year olds are wigglers and doers. To help young children stay with tasks and learn important concepts and skills, teachers should work with, instead of against, their individual developmental styles. They should build on what children can do, and challenge them to try new things. (*Rigorous Academics in Preschool and Kindergarten?*, Gaye Gronlund, NAEYC journal, Young Children) <http://www.naeyc.org/>

A systematic approach allowing children to build on previously mastered skills is ideal.

Young children learn most effectively when they are provided with opportunities to work slightly above their current ability with the assistance of a caring adult. (*Rigorous Academics in Preschool and Kindergarten?*, Gaye Gronlund, NAEYC journal, Young Children) <http://www.naeyc.org/>

Children should experience a variety of ways to learn. They benefit from a variety of different activities. Three *critical* activities that contribute considerably to overall brain development are **music** (engages all aspects of the brain and stimulates multiple aspects of brain functioning), **art** (promotes emotional development, cognition, and memory) and **physical movement** (stimulates brain growth and facilitates key connections for learning. (Bright Beginnings #5, *Keys to Enhancing Brain Development in Young Children*, Sean Brotherson, North Dakota State University, July 2005) www.ag.ndsu.edu

When children are actively engaged, achievement increases. Engagement can be demonstrated through curiosity, effort, and persistence. An engaged child is busy and on task. They are using their minds, hearts, and even their bodies to learn. Strategies for promoting engagement are not present in the vast majority of school settings. (*Using Engagement Strategies to Facilitate Children's Learning and Success*, Judy R. Jablon and Michael Wilkinson, NAEYC Journal, *Young Children*, 2006)

We learn through our senses, and we have individual learning styles. Forty-six percent of people have visual learning preferences, 35 percent have kinesthetic (touch) learning preferences, and 19 percent have auditory learning preferences. Traditional school instruction comes through auditory means, ignoring the learning preferences of over 80 percent of all students. Establishing multiple pathways to data (multi-modality teaching strategies) ensures longer access to data and retention over time. (*How the Brain Learns: New Insights for Educators*, Dr. David Sousa, Davis School District, 1997)

Kinesthetic Learners learn best by doing. Learning takes place as they actually carry out a

physical activity rather than listening to a lecture (direct instruction) or watching a demonstration. Physical movement in learning and the manipulation of objects meet the needs of kinesthetic learners. Such activities benefit auditory and visual learners as well. (*Kinesthetic Learning*, Cuyamaca College, October, 2007)

The most effective teachers acknowledge individual learning styles. Some of us learn better hearing information, others from seeing, others from touching, and still others learn from combinations. It's important for parents and teachers to study a child to see his specific learning style. How does he learn best? Once you understand this critical element, you can begin to teaching the child with far more success. Every child, even one with the most modest capacity for learning, can be taught by using his individual style. Once you know a child's learning style his behavior begins to change because your behavior changed. The best way to change someone else's behavior is to change your behavior. (*Getting Rid of Ritalin*, Robert W. Hill, Ph.D. and Eduardo Castro, M.D., 2002)

Music enhances learning. It is an anxiety diffuser. What we learn to music, we never forget.

Listening to classical music

*improves test scores

*cuts learning time

*calms hyperactivity

*reduces errors

*improves creativity and clarity

*heals the body faster

*integrates both sides of brain for efficient learning

*raises IQ scores 9 points

(*The Mozart Effect*, by Don Campbell) www.howtolearn.com/Mozart.html

Children learn through repetition. A young child's brain is wired to encourage repetition of sounds, patterns, or experiences. Few things build a child's brain and open opportunities for learning more than the consistent repetition of healthy activities or experiences. (Singing helps a child forget that they are practicing). (*Bright Beginnings #5, Keys to Enhancing Brain Development in Young Children*, Sean Brotherson, North Dakota State University, July 2005) www.ag.ndsu.edu

All children can learn. Teachers and parents of young children must have high expectations each child. To meet the needs of all children, the strengths, experience, and competencies each child brings to school, must be built upon by encouraging and providing opportunities for them to utilize their multiple intelligences (and individual learning styles). **Differences in verbal interaction and narrative styles do not always indicate a deficit, but merely alert us that another teaching approach may be more appropriate.** (*Developmentally Appropriate and Culturally Responsive Education: Theory in Practice*, by Rebecca Novick, Ph. D.)

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ILP ABCs and All of Me Teaching Guide

All essential early literacy skills are built into the **The ABCs and All of Me Big Book and CD**. Each verse includes a letter name and sound, words that begin with the letter, and several high frequency sight words. If a child becomes very familiar with the song, he/she will

- master letter names and sounds
- recognize initial sounds of words
- become familiar with approximately 30 high frequency sight words
- write the capital and lowercase letters
- understand concepts of print, (left to right, top to bottom, and 'backsweep')
- recognize the difference between letters, words, and sentences in text
- compose sentences using sight words from the letter song
- blend letter sounds and recognize sight words to read 'kid appeal' stories based on each letter from the ABCs and All of Me Big Book

This is all done while enjoying fine art, classical music, and appropriate 'whole child' movement and sensory activities.

To Begin:

- Familiarize yourself with **The ABCs and All of Me** book and CD before school begins.
- Triple photographs on each page show you the actions representing each letter and sound. (The book will not be introduced to the class until Phase II)
- The CD is organized thusly:
 - Track 1: entire ABC song with lyrics
 - Track 2: entire song with accompaniment only
 - Track 3: introduction verse
 - Track 4: Letter A
 - Track 5: Letter B, and so on.
 - Track 30: Fast ABCs

Each short letter verse is played twice, once with voice and accompaniment, followed by accompaniment only.

You will need **The ABCs and All of Me** CD and the **ABC Picture Cards** to introduce the alphabet song, one letter a day, the first 26 days of school. The large ABC picture cards eventually become a classroom border. The small **ABC Picture Cards** are used at group time.

Phase I

Update: In many countries children are often taught to read English letters early on in their public (non-ilp) education system. In these countries, especially when teaching children 7 and older, you will want to speed the pace of how many letters you do each day. Instead of 1 letter each day, review as many as the children need to review. If they are well advanced, you may take only a week or two on phase one. Also, in some countries, older children (7 and up) don't relate well to the hand motions for each letter. If after

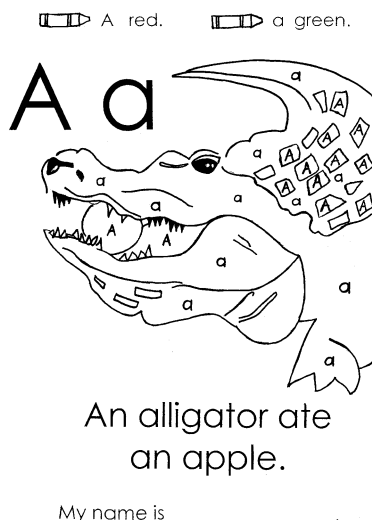
trying to get them interested, they still don't want to participate, you can phase out the hand motions. In China, older children have done much better with the hand motions than in other countries.

• Day 1: Letter Aa

- Draw a box on the board with a question mark inside.
- Write both upper and lower case Aa under the box.
- Say *"This is a letter. It has both a name and a sound. The name of the letter is 'A.' We call it big A, or capital A, because it is big. We call this little 'a' or lowercase 'a' because it is smaller than big A. How are big A and little A different or the same?"* Allow the children to respond. They may comment on the kinds of lines they see (capital A has straight lines, while lowercase 'a' has a curved and a straight line) or shapes they see in the letters (I can see a triangle in capital A, but I see a circle in lowercase 'a.')
- Continue: *"The letter Aa says /a/ as in 'aaalligator' and 'aaapple.'" Place the letter A picture card in the box on top of the question mark. "How would you move your body if you were an alligator? Let's move around the room like alligators while we sing a letter Aa song. When I ring the bell, we will come back to our places on the rug."*
- Select track 4 on the ABCs and All of Me CD and sing and move like an alligator with the children. Repeating the verse several times, then ring the bell and gather with the children at the rug.
- Say *"Moving our bodies to the music while we sing helps our brains remember the name and sound for letter Aa. Our class sign for letter A will be this."* Open and close your extended arms like an alligator as you sing to the children.
- Continue: *"When I move my arms like this you will remember letter A says /a/ as in alligator."*
- Reinforce the letter name and sound with activity sheets and sensory experiences while Classical A from the Classical ABCs CD is played. Two sets of activities sheets are available, Find the Letter Coloring Sheets and Find the Letter Writing Sheets. Choose the set you prefer, alternate the sets for variety, or use both sets at different times throughout the year. The activity sheets may be completed with the whole class or in small groups.

Find the Letter *Coloring* Sheets:

- Instruct children to fill in the first crayon at the top of the sheet with the designated color.
- Say *"Touch this crayon at the top of the page. It means 'color' capital A red. Find your red crayon and color it red, like this."* (Demonstrate)
- *"Now look for all the capital A's in the picture and in the sentence below the alligator. It says 'An alligator ate an apple.' These are the words to the letter A song we just learned. Circle or trace all of the capital A's on the paper with your red crayon, even the great big A above the alligator's nose."*
- Allow children time to find all the capital A's. Assist as needed.

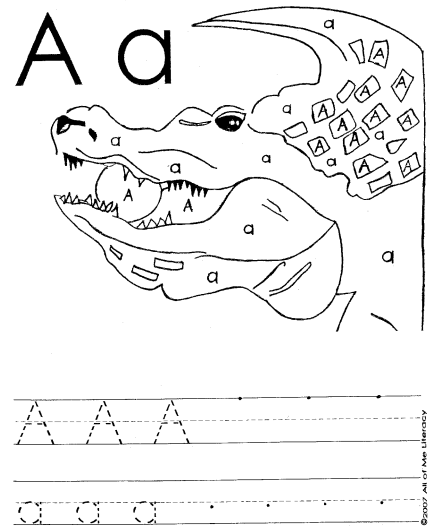


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- Continue: *"Now touch this crayon at the top of the page. It means 'color' lower case 'a' green. Find your green crayon and color it green, like this."* (Demonstrate).
- *"Now look for all the lowercase, or little, a's, in the picture and in the sentence below the alligator. Circle or trace all of the little a's with your green crayon."* Allow time to find all the lowercase a's.
- Say: *"Now you may finish coloring the spaces in the picture with the red and green crayons."*
- Play Classical A in the background while the children find all the Aa's and color the alligators.

Find the Letter Writing Sheets:

- Instruct children to find all the big A's and trace them with a red crayon.
- Instruct children to find all the little a's and trace them with a green crayon.
- Say: *"We start at the top of the letter as we write it. Slant down to the bottom, pick up your crayon, and go back to the top. Now slant down the opposite way, pick up your crayon, and cross the middle, like this."* Demonstrate as children follow along by writing the letter A with their fingers in the air.
- Children write the letter Aa on the lines below the alligator, tracing the dotted Aa's first, then writing more A's across the writing road. (Handwriting explanations are short and simple at this point. Formal writing of the letters will be introduced to the children in a few weeks).



Sensory Activities: Sensory activities may be offered at any point during the day. Small groups work best because of limited supply of materials. Divide your class into two groups. Choose two sensory activities from the Sensory Activity sheet. During sensory time, play Classical Letter A on the Classical ABC CD.

Classical ABCs: Take advantage of the Classical ABCs CDs. There are many times during the day to play them (as the children enter the classroom, at free time or clean up time, as the children leave). On A day, play Classical A. On B Day, play Classical B.

• Day 2: Letter B

- Review letter A verse from ABCs and All of Me CD and then
- Introduce letter B just as you introduced letter A.

• Day 3: Letter C

- Add the next letter of the alphabet each day until (on day 26) you reach Letter Z.

- **Day 27: Review Day**

- Review the entire alphabet on Day 27. Make the entire alphabet available for each sensory activity. Play track 1 of the ABCs and All of Me CD as well as “Fast ABCs”, track 30. The lyrics to the “Fast ABCs” are on the inside front cover of The ABCs and All of Me Big Book.

Phase II

- **Day 28:**

- Introduce the class to **The ABCs and All of Me** Big Book.
- Say: *“I have a surprise for you today.”* Pull out the big book and turn on the CD. Sing the introduction verse, then turn in the book to the A page and tap read the words as you sing along with the CD. The children will naturally join in.
- After finishing the song say: *“These are the words for our ABC song.”* Point to letter A on the first Aa page. *“They are the very same words we sing. They are written here to help us learn to read. The first two lines of our song say A a /a/ /a/ /a/. I tap each letter and “hop” over the white spaces as we sing.”* Demonstrate.
- Sing: *“A a /a/ /a/ /a/ (backsweep) Sing A a /a/ /a/ /a/.”*
- Say: *“When we get to the next line we tap the first letter of each word. A word is a group of letters that are close together and are separated by a space.”* Demonstrate how to “tap” read as you sing the rest of the verse.
- Say: *“Today you will each get a reading binder to help you practice tap reading, but first will sing our whole song with the book.”* Call a child up to use a pointer as you sing through the entire book.

Reading Binders:

Each child needs a 3-ring binder for Phase II. The children will use them daily in the classroom. Where possible, send them home on the weekends with the children so they can practice them with their families. Reward the children with a token for bringing their binders back on Monday.

Teacher may introduce the binders to the whole group or split the group in half. Move around the classroom assisting each child as needed.

- Instruct the children to open their binders and pop open the metals rings.
- Give each child the two letter Aa binder pages (the picture prompt page is first) and teach them to place the pages correctly in their binder and then carefully close the rings. Next,
- Introduce the children to a highlighter/tapper. Say: *“These are our tappers, and each of you will get to use one for our reading binder time. The tappers have a cap, but do not take it off unless I tell you to. We will use the tapper to tap letters and words on the papers in our reading binders. We will also use them to trace*

a A

an

apple

an

alligator



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letters or words when I tell you it is time to do it. I will show you how we “read” our binders.”

- Read the page now, in a chant like rhythm, \ as you tap letters across the page:

Teacher says:

“Little a, big A*
/a/ /a/ alligator”

Teacher does:

Teacher taps ‘a,’ then ‘A,’ and slides tapper across the page while making the sound for short ‘a’ twice, ending on the picture of the alligator at the same time as saying ‘alligator.’

“ an”

Teacher touches “an” with tapper and then slides the tapper all the way across and off the paper to the right demonstrating an exaggerated ‘backsweep’ to the next word at the beginning of the next line.

“apple”

Teacher touches “apple” with tapper and slides tapper across and off the paper to the right demonstrating exaggerated ‘backsweep’ to the next word at the beginning of the next line

“an”

(same as above)

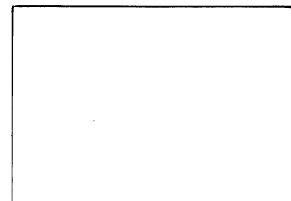
“alligator”

(same as above)

Teacher may

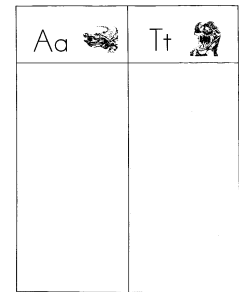
- Say : *“Let’s try it together. Everyone, put your tapper on the lowercase ‘a’ at the top of the page, like this. Here we go: Little a, big A . . .”* and so on.
- Repeat this several times assisting children as needed. Move from child to child, holding onto his/her hand as you chant, tap and backsweep.
- Ask, *“Who would like to read for the group?”* Children can be rewarded with a token for reading aloud to the group. Everyone will want a turn! Classmates tap and backsweep along with the “reader.”
- Say” *“In just a minute I will tell you to take the cap off of your tapper and trace all the letter ‘Aa’s on the page. I will show you how this is done.”*
- Take the cap off your tapper. Ask aloud *“is this a letter a? Yes. So I will trace the letter, starting at the top, like this. As I trace I will say ‘a,’ /a/. I will do this for each letter ‘a’ on the page, big or little, capital or lowercase.”* Demonstrate.
- Say: *“When you have found each letter ‘Aa’s on this page, turn to the next page and trace each letter on that page. There will be a lot of ‘a’s! Remember to say ‘A’ /a/ each time you trace an A.*
You may now take the caps off of your tappers and hunt for the ‘a’s!”
- Chant with the students as they trace their letters.
Some will finish faster than others. Tell them to go back and count all the ‘a’s on both pages until the rest of the group is ready to continue to the next step.

A a /a/ /a/ /a/
A a /a/ /a/ /a/
An alligator ate
an apple.
A a /a/ /a/ /a/ /a/






- Spend two days in the Reading Binder for each letter of the alphabet. (See teaching schedule). Spend less time if the children are older or more advanced with English reading.

Initial Sound Sort Sheets. These can be used with any initial sound pictures you have available. The picture cue from the ABCs and All of Me is included by each letter. For the S and M sound sort, provide pictures (to cut out), stamps, or objects that begin with S or M for the children to sort into the appropriate column. (See Sample DVD). LakeshoreLearning.com has wonderful initial sound sort tubs and stamps.



Name _____



A A A

O O O

A A A

O O O

Pond and trees are here.

An alligator ate an apple.

Journaling. Make ABC journals for the children to use during this rotation. A sentence strip (What begins with Aa?) is given to them to paste at the bottom of the page. Then they pick their favorite A words and draw them on the page.

Class Library: Children love the chance to go to the class library to “read” for pleasure. Providing highlighting tape for the children to mark the letter of the day is fun and engaging. Stick several strips to a dry erase board so children can freely remove it and then replace it when their rotation time is over.

Games: See Teaching Schedule.

Word Games. Games stimulate and motivate. Games turn work into play just like music does. Games can be played very quickly when time is limited. They are a great way to provide practice and review to ensure mastery.

Initial Sound or See It Say It Word Slap. For Initial Sound Slap, use pictures of objects. Children call out the beginning sound of the picture/object. Place the cards in front of you with your hand covering the front of the card. Tell the children you will move your hand and whoever says the beginning sound or reads the word on the card first wins it. “Slap” the card down on the table in front of that child. At the end of the round they count their cards. “Here we go.” Uncover the first card and slap it down in front of the child who responds first. The children get faster and faster at this game and it will be difficult at times to tell who is first. Try to evenly distribute the cards so each child feels success. Reward all children with a token giving an extra to the child with the most cards.

Tall Tower. Initial Sound or Word Slap can be extended on days when there is more time or when the children are extra motivated. After counting their cards at the end of the game, they then build “tall towers” with their cards. They place individual cards from their stack in a horizontal line in front of them, then place duplicate cards on top of its corresponding base card. Then they get to pick the word that wins, or the word that makes the tallest tower. When time allows, have the children combine their towers and see which initial sound or word wins. See example below. Then they get to “read” each floor of the tower. Example: “my” wins because it has the highest tower. For initial sounds, ‘S’ may win for having the most objects.

				my			
			this	my	see	an	
The	is		this	my	see	an	
The	is	a	this	my	see	an	said
The	is	a	this	my	see	an	said

Speed Reader. Give each child a stack of Initial Sound cards or See It Say It Sight Word cards. The child makes a race track on the floor by placing the cards side by side. The child then “drives” a small race car (matchbox size) over the “road” as he/she says the sounds or reads the words. I like to sing “go Speed Reader, go Speed Reader, go Speed Reader, gooo” from the old Speed Racer cartoon to start them off. Children can be paired off with one child driving the car while the other records the time it takes to “complete the race” with a stop watch. You can keep a record of the times to beat.

Around the World. Children sit in a circle or semi-circle with one child standing behind the first child. The teacher holds up a **See It Say It Sight Word** card. The standing child and the child sitting in front of him race to see who can read the word first. If the standing child wins, he moves to stand behind the next child. If the standing child continues to win, he moves from child to child “around the world.” At the point that the standing child loses he takes the chair of the seated child and that child stands behind the next child. This game can also be played with **Say the Sound** cards or can be played with letter names and/or sound cards.

Circle the Word. Explain to the children that a word is a group of letters separated one each side by a white space. Instruct children to circle words on the reading binder song pages. Say a word, have them listen for the beginning sound, find the word, and circle it.







Introduce Blending. If you have completed reading binder pages Ss, Mm, Aa, Ff, and Tt, there are many blending opportunities. Use your body to help write simple cvc words.

- Say: *“I am going to use my body to help us write a word. Watch carefully because I will need your help.”* Then make the sign for letter Aa (alligator) with your body. The children will say *“/a/.”* You say: *“Very good. I will write letter ‘a’ on the wipe board. Watch me now as I make the sign for our next letter sound.”*
- Make the sign for letter Mm (monster). When the children say *“/m/,”* write an ‘m’ on the board next to the ‘a.’
- Say: *“We have just written a word with our bodies. This is how we write it with letters. Let’s read it together. I will touch the first letter with my finger, say /a/, then slide my finger to the next letter, say /m/, then quickly “blend” the two together like this.”*
- Slide your finger quickly from the ‘a’ to the ‘m’ as you say “am.”
- Use your body to help write other words, like ‘mat,’ ‘fat,’ ‘sat,’ ‘at,’ ‘sam,’ etc. The children will be using their bodies to spell with you.
- Choose a child to come up and “body” spell a word. Other children may be the writers and write the letters down on the board as the spellers move.

Children may spell their names with their bodies. Some may spell nonsense words. Make this an enjoyable and successful experience for every child no matter what his/her skill level. Games can be played by having two children write at the same time as one ‘body spells.’ The whole class can be involved with writing using individual chalk or wipe boards. They write the letters as the “body speller” spells them and then hold their boards over their heads to be checked by the speller and teacher.

Differentiation: Children in your classroom will learn at different rates. You can differentiate your instruction in the reading binder rotation according to the needs of your group, which should be as homogeneous as possible. If your high group(s) clearly knows all their letter names and sounds, many of them will also be blending simple cvc words, so you can spend more time on sight word recognition. Instead of having the children highlight individual letters in the reading binder, have them search for “See It Say It” sight words and trace them instead.

See It Say It Sight Word Cards. Some words in our language do not follow the phonics patterns we would like them to. We cannot simply “Say the Sounds”

	
loves	that
	
with	the
	
your	an

and blend as we hear them. We just see the word and say it . . . quickly! . . . (“like lightening,” or “faster than a speeding bullet,” or “speedy quick”) These are sight words. A pair of eyes is in the corner of these cards for a picture cue.

- When doing the letter Cc reading binder pages, hold up the **See it Say it** card ‘the.’ Ask the children how many letters are in the word. Have them take turns spelling the word aloud. Demonstrate how sounding out the word does not help us say the word correctly. (Do not spend too much time on this. Simply make the point that we have to learn to say the word by sight). Then “hunt” for the word on each of the two Cc pages. Instruct the children to spell the word aloud as they trace it. Do the same for the sight word ‘here,’ only have the children choose a different colored marker so that each sight word has its own color. Then do the same for ‘comes.’

Phase III

Phase III is taught in the spring semester except where ILP has given approval for teaching in the fall semester. In Phase III the children begin to read real stories with real ‘kid appeal’ based on each verse of the alphabet song. The stories not only build sight word fluency, but also provide critical blending practice in a pleasurable way. The children even become a part of the story by writing their names or names of friends or family members in blanks making the stories very personal. They meet a talking alligator, a dog named Max who wants to play ball, a dragon that flies to Donut Land, elephants that do magic tricks with eggs, a frog with a real problem, and even help fill a gas tank at the end of a car race.

Now that you have completed Phase I and Phase II of the ABCs and All of Me early literacy program you are ready to integrate all of the individual skills the children have mastered into the actual reading of real stories. These stories have “kid appeal” and are based on the verses of our ABCs and All of Me alphabet song.

The **ABC Readers** allow young children to be actively involved in their own learning and create ownership of the books along the way. If Phase I and Phase II of the ABCs and All of Me early literacy program are followed with fidelity, your children will master the essential early literacy skills needed to read fluently. The **ABC Readers** and accompanying skill-building activities facilitate this passage into reading.

The **ABC Readers** Kindergarten set includes:

- **ABC Readers** (13 reproducible books based on letters A to M)
- **Rainbow Reading Sheets** (reproducible, one set per book)
- **Say the Sound Cards** (blacklines)
- **See It Say It Cards** (sight words)
- **Sight Word Writing Sheets**
- **Teaching Guide**

Preparing to Teach

The ABC Readers black-line masters are designed for easy reproduction.

- Place the **ABC Reader** in the copy machine set to the double-side setting
- Select the number of books needed and begin copying
- After copying, fold the books in half and staple down the fold (an extension stapler works best)
- Copy the corresponding **Rainbow Reading Sheets**, one set per child

Full color books are not available at this time, so **you will need to color and personalize your own book before you introduce it to the children.** Some books have pictures you'll need to complete to make them uniquely yours. The children will love to see what you have done with your books (hair, eye color, clothes, names, etc.) so enjoy them and take pride in your work. The children will follow your example.

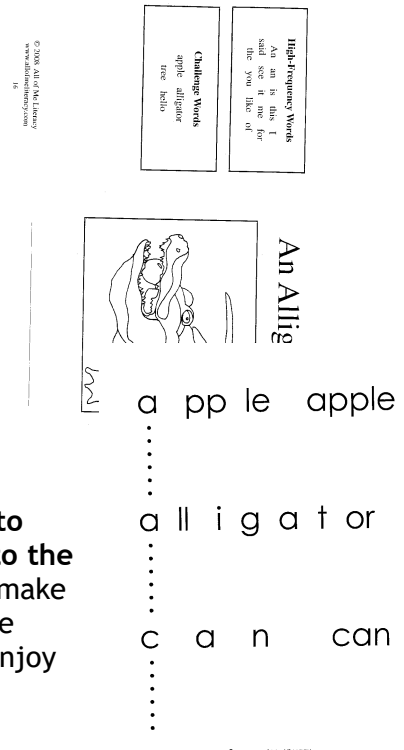
loves that
with the
your an

Prepare the **See It Say It Sight Word Cards** and the **Say the Sound Blending Cards**. They will be used throughout Phase III.

- Make 8 - 10 copies of the sight word black-line masters on colored cardstock
- Make 8 -10 copies of the blending word black-line masters on a **different color** of cardstock for easy identification
- With a paper cutter, cut the cardstock sheets into individual cards

Say the Sound Cards are included for Books A-M. Blank templates are also included so you and the children can make additional cards as needed.

Together with the **See It Say It Cards** you will have almost every word from the **ABC Readers**.



yes apples
hello lots
pick six

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Teaching Phase III

The components of the **ABC Readers** program are listed below. An explanation of each follows.

1. Review of Letter Name and Sound
2. Oral Language/Background Knowledge experience
3. Shared reading of the text by teacher and children
4. Rainbow Reading (of *Say the Sound* words)
5. Read Aloud
6. Coloring/Illustrating
7. See It Say It Sight Word Cards and Find the Word activity
8. Word Games
9. Comprehension
10. Sight Word Writing Sheets
11. Build a Sentence
12. Read on the Road!

1. Review of Letter Name and Sound: When introducing *An Alligator* (the first **ABC Reader**) to the children, start with a 2 - 3 minute review of the Letter Aa pages from the Reading Binder. Tap read the first page and tap and sing the second page with the **ABCs and All of Me CD**. (See "Reading Binder" chapter of DEMO DVD.) Research shows that reviewing each letter name/sound six times throughout the year ensures retention. Continue to review the Reading Binder pages corresponding each **ABC Reader** as it is introduced.

2. Oral Language and Background Knowledge. Oral language experiences are critical for young children. It is important to build /share background knowledge in a comfortable, risk-free environment. No formal lesson is necessary. A guided discussion of what the children already know with a few added bits of information is sufficient. Below are **examples** of oral language prompts. Use your own ideas and the interests of the children to your start your discussions.

To introduce *An Alligator* to the children I first:

- *read/sing the letter Aa reading binder pages; I then*
- *tell the children I have a surprise for them: a baby alligator head!*
- *I pass it around for the children to touch as we talk about it eyes, teeth, skin. Talk about how old it might be, what it eats, where it lives, etc. This can take 5 - 10 minutes.*

Keep the tone relaxed and unhurried so each child has time to express his/her thoughts and ideas.

- *I close the discussion with the question: "do you think an alligator would eat an apple?" and allow the children to respond.*
- *I then say "I am going to read a story to you. It is about an alligator. It is a book each of you will learn to read. Let's see what this alligator thinks of apples."*

To introduce Dragons and Donuts, I first

- *read/sing the Letter Dd reading binder pages; I then open a box with three glazed donuts inside. "It is a treat", I say, "because you are such great readers".*
- *They instantly recognized that there are not enough donuts for each to have one.*
- *"Hmm,." I say. "What are we going to do?"*

The children come up with all sorts of solutions. The unanimous decision is that we will cut them in pieces so each of us can have a taste. As they enjoy their bite of donut, I say

- *"We will now read a story about a dragon that has similar problem. "Let's see what this Dragon decides to do."*

To introduce Elephants Play with Eggs I first

- *Read and sing letter Ee pages from the reading binder; then*
- *Do a simple magic trick. I use the disappearing coin (purchased at the dollar store). The children love it!*
- *I perform the trick a few times while they try to figure out how it was done. "Abracadabra," I say, and then show them the solution.*
- *I give each a turn to perform the trick.*
- *I say: "Now we were going to read a story about two elephant friends who like magic, too."*

Upon mastery of the book I roll an egg down my arm ("trunk") and we watch it go "splat!" on the floor (I let the egg drop on a lap board line with paper towel for easy clean-up). The children are very surprised that I actually let the egg fall. Simple "hooks" such as these incite interest and provoke oral language opportunities. And because children learn through their senses, we often have food experiences upon mastery of a book. For Dragons and Donuts I bring each child the donut they chose to color in their book. I bring hard-boiled eggs after Elephants Play with Eggs, gummy frogs for Go, Frog, Go, a miniature gumball machine for Get a Gumball, jello for Jiggly Jello, etc. These experiences form yet another cognitive connection, maintain engagement, and assure mastery. But you are the teacher and you know your children. Create your own oral language/background knowledge experiences.

3. Shared Reading of the Text.

- *Now read the story to the group.*
- *As you read, **model concepts of print by tap reading:** top to bottom, left to right, and backsweep while hopping over white spaces.*
- *Simple conversation can take place during the shared reading, but do not let it detract from the story.*
- *At the conclusion, let the children share their reactions to the story.*

Complete the first three steps on **Day One**. It will take approximately 20 minutes. Work as long as the children are engaged. Then tell the children **“tomorrow you will get your very own book to learn to read.”**

4. **Rainbow Reading**. (Day 2). Say:

- *“Before I give you your books today I am going to teach you to Rainbow Read! First we need to know the colors of the rainbow.”*

Some of the children may already know the colors of the rainbow. Make a rainbow with their help using crayons, paint, etc. Hang the rainbow in the room for a reference. Rainbow colors (beginning with the outside arch): red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple. Singing the colors in order helps retention. The melody to *10 Little Indians* works well.

- *“Now I am going to teach you to read a rainbow.”* Hold up your **Rainbow Reading** sheet for all to see.
- *“What is the first color of the rainbow? Yes, red. I will put my red crayon on the first dot under the letter a, like this.”* Demonstrate.
- *“Now I will say the sound for each letter as I draw a line from one letter to the next. When I get to pp I’ll only say the /p/ sound only once because there is not a space between the letters. When I get to le I’ll only say the /l/ sound because the e at the end of apple is silent, or quiet, in this word. I’m going to draw a line right through it to help us remember.”* (Draw a slanted line through silent e).
- *“Now I say the sounds slowly as I start (aaaa pppppp lllll), but when I get to the word at the end of the line, I blend them quickly, like this . . . apple!”*

Model two or three times following the same process with ‘alligator’ and ‘can.’ (Draw a smiley face inside of the letter **a** in alligator because it “says its name”.) Ironically, the most difficult words in the book are listed first on the **An Alligator** Reading Rainbow pages, but don’t be concerned. The children have seen these words many times in the Reading Binder). Continue with the orange crayon on the second dot, the yellow on the third, etc. After blending the sounds while drawing the purple line, show the children how they have just “read a rainbow.”

Give each child the **Rainbow Reading** packet for **An Alligator**. Instruct children to choose a red crayon and write their names at the top of the packet. Say

- *“We will practice reading our rainbow words every day until we are able to read them very quickly. All of these words are in the alligator book we read yesterday. Today you will rainbow read with the red crayon only. Tomorrow we will use orange, then yellow the next day, and so on.”*
- *“Let’s put our crayons on the first dot. Here we go . . aaaa pppppp llllll apple!”*

Rainbow read orally together as the children draw their red lines under the letters saying the sounds. Monitor as needed. Continue until you have read all the words in the **An Alligator** Rainbow Reading packet together as a group.

The children rainbow read one color a day for six days until they have finished the rainbow. The children do this right as they come to group time—they get their

packets and crayons from their cubbies and bring them to the table. They rainbow read the color for the day while I observe and reinforce as needed.

5. **Read Aloud.** After Rainbow Reading, distribute the An Alligator book to each child.
Say:

- *“This is your very own book to keep when you have learned to read it. Pick a crayon and write your name on the line at the bottom of the front cover.”*

As you see, each book is interactive. Each child names and creates characters in his own book. This personalizes the story and allows for differences in ethnicity.

Whereas in my alligator book, I am the main character (Mrs. Herrmann), the children get to write their own names on the blanks in their books and color in the picture details to their liking. For the first reading have pencils or markers available so the children can fill in the blanks when they come to one.

Because the children have recently completed their **Reading Binder** pages they are very familiar with concepts of print. They have mastered letter names and sounds and are recognizing some sight words. Now all these parts are put together to make a story. For a review say:

- *“When we read we start at the top and touch the first letter of the word we are reading. We move left to right and hop over white spaces. We backsweep at the end of the line. Choose a ‘tapper’ to tap while we read.”*

The children choose a highlighter (I use Crayola brand colored markers) for a tapper just as they did when completing the **Reading Binder** pages.

- *“Put the tapper on the first word of your book and we will read aloud together.”*
- *“Touch the first letter of each word, say the sound and read the word. Then hop over the white space to the next word.”*

Read the story aloud modeling tap reading. Guide the children with your voice. Do not let the story bog down with questions or instruction. Just read with a natural flow. The children have blended most of the words on their **Rainbow Reading** pages so don't worry at this point if you are doing it for them. Periodically say *“that's a word from our rainbow reading!”*, but the flow of the story must be maintained. At this early stage you are reinforcing concepts of print and the initial sound of individual words, as well as teaching inflection and expression. As you model with your own book, be aware of where the children are in their books and guide them as needed.

Stop to fill in blanks.

The Read Aloud takes place **every day**. It always starts with **Rainbow Reading** and (on days 2- 6) a quick round of **See It Say It Word Slap** (see page 8 for explanation).

Because there are six **Rainbow Reading** days, spend at least six days on a book. Read aloud together for the first two to three days. Then the children ‘whisper read’ and tap on their own while you move from child to child to guide, reteach, and encourage as needed.

On day 4 do a quick assessment by turning the child's book to the back cover and asking the child to read the High Frequency and Challenge words. Circle or check the words they still need to practice. Provide extra practice with

- Word Games
- Sight word tracing (again) in the **ABC Reader** while spelling aloud
- Sight word writing in a salt box while spelling aloud
- Stamping or dot painting the word written in large font, etc.

My experience shows that children are able to fluently read each ABC Reader (while remaining engaged) in six to seven days. Sight words are repeated in the coming books, and this helps with retention. It is up to you as the teacher to decide when your group(s) is ready to move on to the next **ABC Reader**.

6. **Coloring and Illustrating.** Each day after the **read aloud** the children are rewarded with coloring time. Encourage careful work. They will be sharing their book with many people, so it is important they do their best. It will take several days for the children to finish their coloring.

Spend 20 to 30 minutes each day for the reading segment. Continue the next day where you left off.

Begin your literacy block the next day by Rainbow Reading with an orange crayon (and so on).

7. **See It Say It Words and Find the Word Activity.**

After **Rainbow Reading** on Day 2 of **An Alligator**, re- introduce sight words (**See It Say It** words) to the children. They have seen most of these words in the **Reading Binder** in Phase II. Upon completion of the **ABC Readers Kindergarten Set**, they will have mastered 30 - 40 sight words.

Introduce two to three sight words a day. For **An Alligator** start with the words *an*, *this* and *is*. Say:

- *"We are now going to review some See It Say It words. They are words that we see so often we need to know them so we can read them really fast. Many don't make sense when we say the sounds anyway, so we teach our brains to read them the second we see them. Speedy quick."*

Say the sounds to blend the word *t h i s* for example. The children will hear that blending the individual sounds does not work. Say:

- *"This is the word 'this.'" (Hold up the word card). When t and h come together in a word they make the sound /th/. Watch my tongue when I read this. See how it comes forward between my teeth? Read it now with me and feel your tongue between your teeth."*
- *"I am going to draw a 'tongue' connecting letter t with letter h to remind us of the sound they make together, like this: **th**"*
- *"When we see this mark we will remember to move our tongues forward to make the /th/ sound."*
- *"Now let's spell 'this' together five times: t h i s, t h i s, etc."*

Have the children mark all the th diagraphs in their books and on the **See It Say It** cards as you read over the next several days.

- Pick up the word card 'is.' Say:
- *"This is the word **is**. Let's spell **is** together five times: i s, i s", etc.*

Repeat the same steps with the word **am**.

Say:

- *"You will see these words in our story, An Alligator. You will find them and trace them with your highlighter after we read the story together. (Add a few more words each day until you have taught all of the high frequency words in the book)."*

Begin your daily **Read Aloud**. You can sit with the children in a semi-circle in front of you so you can easily guide the tap reading. Or you can walk around behind them.

Remind the children to hop over white spaces and touch their tapper on the first letter of each word. Periodically point out the words **this**, **is**, and **am** as you come to them, or have the children raise their hands to show they recognize them.

Again, expression is so important. Exaggerate! The children will learn to read a book with expression from you. Give the characters their own voice and personality, and the children will want to read the book over and over again.

At the end of the reading, give each child a **this** card from the **See It Say It** card deck. Say:

- *"We are now going on a word hunt! Find each word that says 'this' in your book. When you find the word, trace it with your tapper as you spell it out loud. Be sure to find each one."*

As each child finishes, give him an **is** card, (and then an **am** card) and ask him to do the same using a different colored marker for each sight word. Any remaining time can be used for coloring in their books.

8. **Word Games**. Games stimulate and motivate. Games turn work into play just as music does. Games can be played very quickly when time is limited. They are a great way to provide practice and review to ensure mastery.

See It Say It Word Slap. Each day you will be adding sight words to the stack of words children already know or are mastering. Having ten copies of each word provides repeated practice. Be sure to shuffle the cards well.

Hold the stack of cards in front of you with your hand covering the front of the card.

Tell the children you will move your hand and whoever reads the word on the card first wins it. You will "slap" the word down on the table in front of that child. At the end of the round they count their cards. "Here we go."

Uncover the first card and slap it down in front of the child who reads it first.

Continue until you have gone through all the words in the deck. (If you play the game

the first day after introducing **an**, **this**, and **is**, you will have thirty cards in the deck, ten of each word). The children get faster and faster at this game and it will be difficult at times to tell who is first. Try to evenly distribute the cards so each child feels success. Reward all children with a stamp, sticker, or penny giving an extra to the child with the most cards (see REWARDS at end of teaching guide).

As your stack of sight words grows, you may need to thin it down by putting fewer of the mastered words along with 10 of the newly introduced words.

Tall Tower. Word Slap can be extended on days when there is more time or when the children are extra motivated. After counting their cards at the end of the game, they then build “tall towers” with their word cards. They place individual cards from their stack in a horizontal line in front of them, then place duplicate cards on top of its corresponding base card. Then they get to pick the word that wins, or the word that makes the tallest tower.

Sometimes you may want to give the children time to extend the game further by combining their towers and then seeing which word wins. Then they get to “read” each floor of the tower. Example: “my” wins because it has the highest tower.

				my				
			this	my		an		
The	is		this	my	see	an		
The	is	a	this	my	see	an	said	
The	is	a	this	my	see	an	said	

Speed Reader. Give each child a stack of See It Say It Sight Word cards. They make a race track on the floor by placing the cards side by side. The child then “drives” a small race car (matchbox size) over the “road” as he/she reads the words. I like to sing “go Speed Reader, go Speed Reader, go Speed Reader, gooo” from the old Speed Racer cartoon to start them off. Children can be paired off with one child driving the car while the other records the time it takes to “complete the race” with a stop watch. You can keep a record of the times to beat.

Around the World. Children sit in a circle or semi-circle with one child standing behind the first child. The teacher holds up a **See It Say It Sight Word** card. The standing child and the child sitting in front of him race to see who can read the word first. If the standing child wins, he moves to stand behind the next child. If the standing child continues to win, he moves from child to child “around the world.” At the point that the standing child loses he takes the chair of the seated child and that child stands behind the next child. This game can also be played with **Say the Sound** cards or can be played with letter names and/or sound cards.

Stop and Go. This is a fun review activity for pairs of children. Give each pair a red circle and a green circle cut from construction paper. One child is the reading patrol the other is the reader. This can be played using **See It Say It** cards, **Say the Sound** cards, or the **Rainbow Reading** sheets. The reading patrol holds up the “green light” as long as the reader correctly blends or reads his words. If he misses a word, the patrol holds up the “red light” and says “stop and check!”

9. **Comprehension.** It is important to check comprehension as you move through the series of activities. If a child can answer who?, what?, when?, where? and why? questions you can feel pretty confident of their comprehension. One engaging way to do this is to make a die from cardstock and label the sides who?, what?, when?, where?, why?, and how?. The children take turns rolling the die. If they land on who?, the teacher asks the child a who? question. If the child cannot answer it they choose a friend to help them. After a few weeks of the teacher asking the questions, change the rules so that the child rolling the die asks the question and chooses another child to answer it. Here are some sample questions for **An Alligator:**

Who is the story about?

What does the alligator ask (child's name) to do for him?

When does the alligator say "yum, yum?"

Where does (child's name) get the apples?

Why doesn't the alligator pick the apples himself?

How do you think (child's name) feels at the end of the story? The alligator?

These are just examples. There are endless questions you can ask. It is good to have a mix of fact questions (where does the child get the apples?) and interpretive questions (How do you think the child feels at the end of the story?).

It is also fun to play a "think quick" game as the children have mastered the book.

Flip through the book and ask question after question in rapid succession. Slap a penny down in front of the child who is able to answer the question first.

Like all good teachers do, assess the children's skill levels regularly. With a group of two to six children this is very easy to do. Just remember to record important data to help you choose the skills that need more practice.

10. **Sight Word Writing Sheets:**

Model how to complete the sheets for the children. Say:

- "Take the caps off your tappers. Put the highlighter on the first letter of the first word, like this. (Demonstrate). What is this letter? Let's trace the letters as we spell the word."
- "The word says "an." Now we will write 'an' three more times on the lines here. Let's spell it out loud as we write it. (Observe and help children as needed).
- "Can you see the word 'an' in the sentence above? Find it and trace it."
- "At the bottom of the page you will write your own sentence using this (these) See It Say It word (s)."

At first, the children may simply copy the sentence from our song: *An alligator ate an apple.* As they gain more confidence, guide them into writing their own sentences. Some examples for the Letter B sheet (Play Ball) are *I see _____* (friend's name), *I see books, I see teacher,* etc.

You may have an illustrated word wall in your classroom or labels identifying different items in the room (door, table, books, wall, cubbies, toys, etc). The children can use these words for ideas in sentence building. When they are more

confident they can write their own words by “stretching” them out and writing down the sounds to spell the words and then form sentences.

I use a second word wall for high frequency (See It Say It) words. Post the words alphabetically under our **ABCs and All of Me Picture Cards** (large) that are posted on the wall as a border. If this was not done during the Reading Binder segment post the words as you introducing them with the **ABC Readers**.

Children who finish writing the words and sentences more quickly may illustrate their sentences on the back of their paper. Or they may use the time to color in the current **ABC Reader**.

11. **Build a Sentence.** You have already copied several sets of **See It Say It** cards on one color of cardstock and **Say the Sound** cards on another. I use vinyl pocket charts (I like Carson Dellosa’s word card pocket chart) to store the cards in alphabetical order, one chart for **See It Say It** word cards on one chart for **Say the Sound** cards.

Select the words for a particular sentence from the **ABC Reader** you are currently reading and place the cards on the table in front of the children in random order.

Together build sentences from the story. Examples: *I like apples.* (easy) or *Can you pick six off the tree for me?* (difficult). Use scaffolding (I do, we do, you do) until the children are confident in the process. They may work in pairs or individually. They may build many sentences or just a few. Instruct them to tap read the sentences to the group or to their partner when they have finished building them.

If time allows, they may copy their sentences onto lined paper. The children will also enjoy creating their own sentences with the cards. As you finish the activity guide the children in sorting the cards into stacks and placing them back in the pocket chart.

12. **Read on the Road.** At the end of six or more days of work with each book (aka engaging, guided play), the children are ready to **Read on the Road!** They have mastered the **Rainbow Reading** packets and can blend **Say the Sound** words very quickly. They have mastered the basic sight words and simply **see them and say them**. They have done their most careful coloring and illustrating and now they are ready to share! And they love this!

If you are in a public or private school setting, take the children and their treasured books outside of the classroom to share! Let them choose any enthusiastic listener they can find. And there will be many. The principal, secretary, custodian, librarian, reading aid, etc., will love this day, too.

You may also pair your students with readers from another class and let them read the books to their partners.

The children collect the signatures of each person they read their book to, so they will need to take a pencil or marker with them. They ask each person who listens to their story to sign the back of the book.

The children get to take their books home on this day, too. Instruct them to read it to as many people as they can. Each time they do, they get another signature. Many

of my students have read their books to over 15 people in one night—some even reading to out-of-town grandparents on the phone. Others have read their books to their pets, returning with a paw print signature from the dog. The children earn a penny for each time their book is signed.

As with Phase I and Phase II of the **ABCs and All of Me** early literacy program, the children are so engaged each step of the way they do not realize they are working very hard to master critical early literacy skills. And their love for reading has just begun!

The three phases of the **ABCs and All of Me** will provide you with enough literacy materials and learning activities for the entire kindergarten year. (Books N through Z will encompass the 1st grade literacy core and are in progress). As they master ABC Reader Books A - M, provide opportunities for them to read many different books. Their skills will transfer to other early readers. Book baskets, classroom libraries and free reading time will provide the opportunity. And read good children's literature aloud to your class every day!

Happy Learning, Happy Child!

Addendum:

Rewards. I reward the children with pennies every step of the way . . . pennies for rainbow reading, for sight word writing, for signatures on reading books. Every other Friday the children trade their pennies for larger coins (a math lesson in and of itself), buy small toys/treats/books, or turn them in for special privileges such as a sensory activity day or an extra read on the road day, etc.

Diagraphs. These are other visual cues I use for diagraphs:

sh represents finger over lips when quieting (*shhhhhh*) someone

ch represents horn on a choo choo train (make a choo-choo signal)

Writing Component.

I give the children the opportunity to write their own stories after finishing four or five of the **ABC Readers**. I copy blank books for them to use. We discuss character, setting, plot (or problem), and resolution (of the problem). The children illustrate their books. When finished, I laminate them and the children take these books to "**read on the road.**" They write some pretty amazing stories!