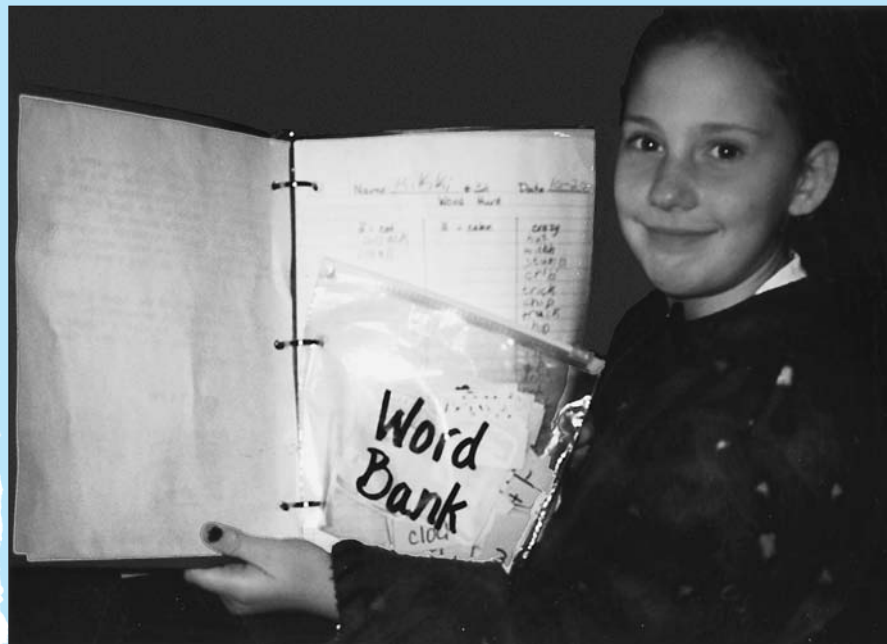


5

Word Study for Beginners in the Letter Name–Alphabetic Stage


















The letter name–alphabetic stage of literacy development is a period of beginnings. Students begin to read and write in a conventional way. That is, they begin to learn words and actually read text, and their writing becomes more readable to themselves and others. However, this period of literacy development needs careful scaffolding, because students know how to read and write only a small number of words. The chosen reading materials and activities should provide rich contextual support. In word study, the earliest sorts are pictures; later, students work with words in families or words known by sight. In the following discussion of reading and writing development and instruction, we look closely at the support teachers provide and the way word knowledge develops during this stage. We suggest instructional practices that help teachers plan word study programs for beginners. Word study for letter name–alphabetic spellers helps beginners (a) acquire a sight vocabulary through reading and **word banks**, (b) construct phonics generalizations through picture and word sorts, and (c) create ever more sophisticated, if not completely accurate, spellings as they write. Before we examine this stage of word knowledge and provide guidelines for word study instruction, let us visit the first-grade classroom of Mr. Richard Perez.

TABLE 5-1 Invented Spellings of Three First Graders			
Word	Cynthia	Tony	Maria
fan	VN	FAN	FAN
pet	PD	PAT	PET
dig	DK	DKG	DEG
wait	YT	WAT	WAT
chunk	JK	HOK	CHOK
stick	CK	SEK	STEK

During the first weeks of school, Richard observed his first graders as they participated in reading and writing activities and he used an inventory described in Chapter 2 to collect samples of their spelling for analysis. Like most first-grade teachers, Richard has a range of ability in his classroom, so he manages three instructional groups for reading and word study and uses students' spellings as a guide to appropriate phonics instruction. Richard meets with each group daily for guided reading. Some days he uses part of that group time for teacher-directed word study.

Cynthia is a typical student of the early letter name–alphabetic group who writes slowly, often needing help sounding out a word and confusing consonants such as *v* and *f* and *s* and *c*. The results of their writing efforts are limited primarily to consonants with very few vowels, as shown by Cynthia's spellings in Table 5-1. Cynthia has memorized the words to jingles such as "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed," but frequently gets off track when she tries to point to the words as she reads. Richard decides to take a step back with this group and plans a review of beginning sounds. Each Monday he introduces a set of four initial consonants such as *b, m, r,* and *s*. After modeling the sort and practicing it in the group, he gives each student a handout of pictures to be cut apart for individual sorting practice, as shown in Figure 5-1A. The next day the students sort the pictures again and Richard observes how quickly and accurately they work. On subsequent days of the week during seat work time or center time, the students draw and label pictures beginning with those sounds, cut and paste pictures, and do word hunts (follow-up routines described in Chapter 3).

A. Beginning Consonant Sort

Bb	Mm	Rr	Ss
			
			
			
			
			

B. Word Family Sort

cat	man	can
rat	fan	hat
pan	sat	pat
that	tan	bat
van	mat	than
fat	ran	

C. Short-Vowel Sort

cap	pig	hot
sit	hat	shop
ship	stop	fast
camp	fish	lock
mad	job	will
him	trap	not
got	that	pin

FIGURE 5-1 Word Study Handouts for Letter Name–Alphabetic Spellers in Three Different Instructional Groups

Each day when Richard meets with Cynthia's group, they read chart stories, jingles, and big books with predictable texts. To help the students in this group develop a sight vocabulary, Richard started a word bank for each child. He wrote words the students could quickly identify on small cards for their collection. The students add a few new words several times a week and review their words on their own or with classroom volunteers.

Tony is part of a large group in the middle letter name–alphabetic stage who has beginning and ending consonants under control, but shows little accuracy when spelling digraphs and blends or short vowels. Tony points to the words as he reads "Five Little Monkeys" and self-corrects if he gets off track on words with more than one syllable such as *jumping* and *mama*. Richard decides to introduce the digraphs *sh*, *ch*, *th*, and *wh* using picture sorts, and then begins the study of word families such as *at* and *an* using word cards. He knows that Tony and the other students in that group can read words such as *cat*, *can*, and *man*, and that these words serve as the basis for the study of other words in the same family. Richard spends 10 minutes in group word study several times a week introducing new word families, modeling how to sort them into categories, and leading discussions which help the students focus on the features common to the words in each column. The children then receive their own set of words (Figure 5-1B) to cut apart for sorting, and work alone and with partners to practice the sort, write and illustrate the words, and play follow-up games.

Maria represents a third group of students in the late letter name–alphabet stage who use single consonants accurately, as well as many digraphs and blends, as shown in Table 5-1. This group uses vowels in most words, but the short vowels are often incorrect. Maria can read some books independently and is quickly accumulating a large sight vocabulary simply from doing lots of reading. Mr. Perez works with word families for several weeks, making an effort to include words with digraphs and blends, but he soon discovers that word families are too easy and thus decides to move to the study of short vowels in nonrhyming words. Each Monday he introduces a collection of words that can be sorted by short vowels into three or four groups. This group also receives a list of words, as shown in Figure 5-1C, to cut apart and use for sorting. They learn to work in pairs for buddy sorts, writing sorts, word hunts, and games on other days of the week.

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT OF LETTER NAME–ALPHABETIC STUDENTS

Letters have both names and sounds. Students typically learn the names of the letters first and then use them to spell. This phenomenon accounts for the name of the letter name–alphabetic stage. Spellers in this group operate in the first layer of English—the alphabetic layer. They understand that words can be segmented into sounds and that letters of the alphabet must be matched to these sounds in a systematic fashion. At first these matches may be limited to the most salient or prominent sounds in words, usually the beginning and ending consonants. By the middle of this stage, students include a vowel in each stressed syllable and they spell short vowels by matching the way they articulate the letter names of the vowels. By the end of the letter name–alphabetic stage, students have learned how to spell words with short vowels and they can read most single-syllable words in their reading.

Letter name–alphabetic spelling develops in synchrony with the beginning stages of reading and writing. As shown in Figure 2-1, spelling development matches reading and writing behaviors. The next section describes how students read and write during this stage.

READING AND WRITING IN THE LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC STAGE

Students who are in the letter name–alphabetic stage of spelling have recently acquired a **concept of word**—the ability to track or fingerpoint read a memorized text. Students who have a concept of words can read familiar rhymes and pattern books and their own dictations. Beginning readers read slowly, except when they read well-memorized texts, and are often described as word-by-word readers (Bear, 1991b). Students' fluency is constrained by their lack of word knowledge. They do not remember enough words, nor do they know enough about the orthography to read words quickly enough to permit fluent reading or writing. Often beginning readers' reading rates are painfully slow. For example, a beginning reader may reread a familiar text, either a dictation or a pattern book, at fewer than 50 words per minute compared with mature readers who average 250 words per minute.

Most beginning readers fingerpoint the words when they read, and they read aloud when reading to themselves. This helps them to keep their place and to buy processing time. While they hold the words they have just read in memory, they read the next word, giving them time to try to fit the words together into a phrase. Silent reading is rarely evidenced. If you visit a first-grade classroom during "sustained silent reading" (SSR) or during "drop everything and read" (DEAR), you are likely to hear a steady hum of voices. Disfluency, fingerpointing, and reading aloud to oneself are natural reading behaviors to look for in beginning readers. There is a similar pattern of disfluency in beginning writing, because students usually write slowly, and they often work through spelling words sound by sound (Bear, 1991a). As in reading, orthographic knowledge makes writing easier and more fluent. The more students know about how words are spelled, the more easily and fluently they can write. Consequently, they can give more time to working with and expressing ideas.

In the previous, emergent stage of development, writers are often unable to read what they have written because they lack or have limited letter-to-sound correspondences. Students in the letter name–alphabetic stage can usually read what they write depending on how completely they spell, and their writing is generally readable to anyone who has worked with students in this stage and understands the logic of their letter-to-sound matches.

SUPPORTING BEGINNING LITERACY LEARNING

Letter name–alphabetic spellers are beginning readers who need support to make reading happen. Support can come from two sources: the text and the teacher. Support from the text comes from its degree of predictability and familiarity. Predictability means a student can predict what is coming up next because of certain recurring elements. A rhyming pattern may repeat: "Five little monkeys jumping on the bed, one fell off and bumped his head." A refrain may reoccur: "Have you seen my cat?" (Carle, 1987). A cumulative sequence may reoccur: "This is the cat that caught the rat that ate the malt that lay in the house that Jack built." Or specific words and spelling patterns may reoccur: "The cat sat on the mat. The dog sat on the mat. The goat sat on the mat" (Wildsmith, 1982).

Familiarity makes the text predictable as well. Familiarity with the subject, the language, and the words supports students as they read. Text becomes familiar when students have heard it many times before, or because they have read it many times. Texts also become familiar when the words are about an event experienced firsthand by the students, as in dictated stories.

Support from the teacher comes from the many ways a teacher may scaffold the reading experience. For example, the teacher may provide an oral book introduction (Clay, 1991) before the reading. Book introductions use the language of the text and anticipate difficult words and concepts. A teacher may also scaffold the reading experience by modeling the reading process and by encouraging students to reread the

same text many times. Asking students to read in unison (**choral reading**) or immediately after the teacher reads (**echo reading**) are additional methods of scaffolding. The teacher can also provide support by recording a student's experiences in print (language-experience stories).

A tension lies between these two forms of support. The more predictable a text is, the less support is needed from the teacher. Conversely, the less support provided from recurring elements of text, the more scaffolding is needed from the teacher. Because early letter name–alphabetic spellers require support to make reading happen, we often call these beginners “*support readers*.” As students develop as readers, they need less support from either teacher or text and they benefit from reading text that is not so predictable.

Support readers do not recognize many words by sight, and their letter-sound knowledge is not enough to sound out words. Word recognition must be supported by offering students text that is predictable and memorable. As students read and reread these beginning texts, they gradually remember words out of context as **sight words**. Rhyming books, nursery rhymes, simple decodable texts, group experience stories, and individual dictations support beginning readers as they rely on their memory and their limited knowledge of letter sounds to track their way through text. The redundancy provided by recurring letter sounds, rhymes, or refrains helps beginners feel successful. Textual support of this nature is necessary until students acquire a corpus of words they recognize automatically at first sight. For example, in the familiar rhyming book *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* by Eileen Christelow (1989), beginning readers can point to the words using their memory for the rhyming pattern and their knowledge of beginning sounds /f/, /l/, /m/, /j/, and /b/. The words *fell* and *bed* might even be recognized out of context by virtue of their beginning and ending sounds alone. In another context, however, partial phonetic cues alone will not suffice. *Fell* might be confused with *fall* or *fill*, and *bed* might be confused with *bead* or *bad*. Partial information about the alphabetic code is not enough to support unerring word recognition.

Support reading must be accompanied by word study—the systematic categorization of known words by letter-sound correspondences. Students in the letter name–alphabetic stage learn about letter-sound correspondences needed for reading and spelling by working first with picture cards and then with words they know. We emphasize the use of known words, because it is difficult for students to study the orthography when they have to work hard at simply reading the word. Learning to read and spell is the process of matching the mother tongue to the spelling patterns that represent it. To facilitate that process, it helps to be able to pronounce the words under study. This chapter provides detailed instructions on how to use support reading materials to create word banks, a collection of known words that form the corpus of words to be studied. Students who do a lot of reading and writing and who examine words carefully in word study will gradually acquire the orthographic knowledge to remember words out of context, to recognize words fully, and to read and spell them quickly and automatically.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ORTHOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT

Students in the letter name–alphabetic stage provide a wonderful example of how learners construct knowledge in an attempt to make sense of the world of print. Without a mature knowledge of orthography, students carefully analyze the sound system more vigorously than do adults, and they make surprisingly fine distinctions about the way sounds and words are formed in the mouth. They match segmented sounds to the letter names of the alphabet in ways that may seem curious and random to the uninformed adult.

The letter name–alphabetic stage describes students who use their knowledge of the actual names of the letters of the alphabet to spell phonetically or alphabetically. For example, to spell the word *jeep*, students are likely to select *g* as the first letter because

TABLE 5-2 Names of the Letters of the Alphabet

A	a	H	aich	O	oh	V	vee
B	bee	I	eye	P	pee	W	double you
C	see	J	jay	Q	kue	X	ecks
D	dee	K	kay	R	are	Y	wie
E	ee	L	ell	S	es	Z	zee
F	ef	M	em	T	tee		
G	gee	N	en	U	you		

of its name (gee) and *p* for the final letter because its letter name (pee) offers a clear clue to the sound it represents. GP for *jeep* is a typical spelling of the early letter name–alphabetic stage. According to letter name logic, there is no need to add the vowel because it is already part of the letter name for *g*. Sometimes early letter name–alphabetic spellers include vowels, especially when they spell long vowels that “say their name.” For example, students might spell *jeep* as GEP. Using a strategy of letter names, students can luck out and include the correct long vowel, but early letter name–alphabetic spelling is largely consonantal. During the middle part of this stage, students’ spellings gradually include more vowels.

Some letter names do not cue students to the sounds they represent. For example, the letter name for *w* is “double u,” which offers no clue to its /wuh/ sound. Consequently, early letter name–alphabetic spellers may spell *when* as YN. Why do students use a *y*? When you say the letter name for *y*, you can feel your lips moving to make the shape of the /wuh/ sound. *Y* is the letter whose pronounced name is closest to the sound at the beginning of *when*. Table 5-2 shows what the letter names offer students in terms of sound matches.

HOW CONSONANT SOUNDS ARE ARTICULATED IN THE MOUTH

Letter name–alphabetic students rely not only on what they hear in the letter names, but also on how the letters are **articulated**, or formed in the mouth, when they spell. For example, consider how students spell the blend *dr* in *drive*. Students are misled in their spelling by the similarity between *dr* and *jr*, and they may spell *drive* as JRV. Test this yourself. Say *drive*, and then say *jrive*. Do they sound and feel alike? Linguists call these sounds **affricates**, made by forcing air through a small closure at the roof of the mouth to create a feeling of friction (*friction*, *affricatives*—see the meaning connection?). English has several other letters and letter combinations that create the affricate sound and these are often substituted for each other: *j*, *g* (as in *gym*), *ch* (as in *chip*), *dr* (as in *drive*), *tr* (as in *trap*), and the letter name for *h* (aich). In their writing, students use the consonant digraphs and blends they know best. For example, students who are familiar with words that begin with *ch* may spell *train* as CHRAN.

There are several other ways in which students relate sounds to the ways the sounds are made. Basing a decision on the way a sound feels, students may spell *brave* as BRAF, or *oven* as OFN. What is the difference between the consonant sound spelled by *v* and that spelled by *f*? Both sounds feel exactly the same, but one is voiced and the other is unvoiced. When voiced phonemes are created, the vocal chords vibrate. You can feel this if you place your fingers on your larynx as you say them. Compare the way *v* and *f* feel in the words *van* and *fan*. There are similar voiced and unvoiced pairs listed in the pronunciation chart in Table 4-1 on page 108. One implication for instruction is that students in the letter name–alphabetic stage benefit from saying the words they are sorting so that they can feel the shape of their mouth as they say the words and can compare sound differences and the vibration in their vocal cords.

THE ISSUE OF VOWELS IN THE LETTER NAME–ALPHABETIC STAGE

Vowels pose special problems for letter name–alphabetic spellers who rely on the name of letters and how a sound feels in the mouth. Try saying the word *lip*. You can feel the initial consonant as your tongue curls up toward your palate and you can feel the final consonant as it explodes past your lips, but did you feel the vowel? Unlike the consonants—articulated by tongue, teeth, lips, and palate—the vowels are determined by more subtle variations: the shape of the mouth and jaw, the opening of the vocal tract, the force of air from the lungs, and the vibration of the vocal cords.

Vowels are elusive but central to every syllable humans speak. When consonants are electronically separated from vowels, they sound like noise, a click, or a snap of the fingers, and nothing like speech. Try to say a consonant such as *b*. What vowels did you attach to the *b*? If you said the letter name (bee), then you would have said the long *-e* vowel. Now say the sound associated with *b*: /buh/ or /ə/. The vowel this time is the **schwa**, a vowel made in the middle of the mouth. Now try to say a /b/ sound without a vowel. Try to whisper *b* and cut your breath short in a whisper. The whisper is as close as you come to separating a vowel from a consonant.

Studies in acoustical phonetics have demonstrated that vowels are like musical tones, and without the music of the vowel, the consonants become just noise. Because vowels are so closely wedded to the consonants around them, spellers in the early letter name–alphabetic stage have difficulty separating vowels from consonants in order to analyze them and make letter matches. It is as if the consonant were the proverbial squeaky wheel; at first, the consonants seem to demand more attention than the vowel and are more easily examined.

Talking About Vowels

Linguists refer to the distinctive sound within a given vowel according to its tenseness or laxness. The vocal cords are tense when producing the long *-a* sound in the middle of the word *shake*. Conversely, the vocal cords relax a bit in producing the short *-a* sound in the middle of *shack*. The difference in the medial vowel sounds in the words *shake* and *shack* can be described linguistically as **tense** and **lax**.

In phonics instruction, teachers have traditionally taught students the differences between long vowels (which say their name) and short vowels. This distinction between five long and five short vowels may be derived from the 10 central long and short vowels of classical Latin (*a, e, i, o, and u*). Supposedly, long-vowel sounds are longer in duration than short-vowel sounds, but this is not always the case. Even short-vowel sounds vary in duration. For example, the vowel in *bad* is different than the vowel sound in *bat*. In the first case, did you notice that the short *-a* in *bad* was longer than the short *-a* in *bat*? As a matter of fact, in many dictionaries you can find *bad* written as *ba:d*, meaning that the *a* has a longer duration than expected.

Although **long vowels** and **short vowels** may not be the most accurate terms linguistically, they are more common than *tense* and *lax* and teachers understand each other when these terms are used. The simplest way to talk about vowels is probably the best. For example, teachers can talk about the beginning and middle sounds in words: “Find a picture of a word that sounds like *ball* at the beginning” or “*Bet* and *best*—Do they sound alike in the middle?” Descriptions like “in the middle” may suffice to draw students’ attention to the vowels at first, but students have no trouble learning such terms as **vowel** and **consonant**. Teachers need to establish a common language in word study discussions and such terms make it easier.

Students may be taught to use terms to describe sounds, but the important thing is their ability to read and write words quickly and easily enough to create meaning in the process. What students can do with words is certainly more important than mastering terms about words. Orthographic knowledge should come forward easily and tacitly. Experience has shown that the long–short distinction provides an adequate description for initial discussions with students about vowels.

How Vowels Are Articulated in the Mouth

Over the course of the letter name–alphabetic stage, students become adept at segmenting words into phonemes, even the vowel, and they use the alphabetic principle to represent each sound with a letter. Long-vowel sounds are easiest to distinguish because they say their name and the choices are obvious. Students spell *line* as LIN, *rain* as RAN, and *boat* as BOT. Perhaps what is most interesting about the invented spelling in the letter name–alphabetic stage is the way students spell the short vowels. They turn to the names of the letters but find no clear letter–sound matches for the short-vowel sounds. For example, there is no letter name that says the short *-i* sound in *bit* or the /uh/ sound in *cup*. They might use *f* (ef) or *s* (es) for short *-e*, but they seldom do. How do students choose a letter name for a short vowel? They use their knowledge of the alphabet to find the letter name closest to the place of articulation of the short-vowel sound they are trying to write.

Because you have probably never analyzed sounds at this level, take a moment to consider the vowels and where they are made in the vocal tract. The position of the words in Figure 5-2 illustrates some of the basic contrasts among vowels in English. The vowels are drawn in this space to mimic the general area where speakers can feel the articulation of the vowel. To talk about articulation is to describe the shape of the mouth, the openness of the jaw, and the position of the tongue while the word is being said. Compare the vowels in this figure by feeling the air pass through the oral cavity and the position of the mouth as the following words are said in a sequence from *beet* to *boot*:

beet bit bait bet bat bite but bah ball boat book boot

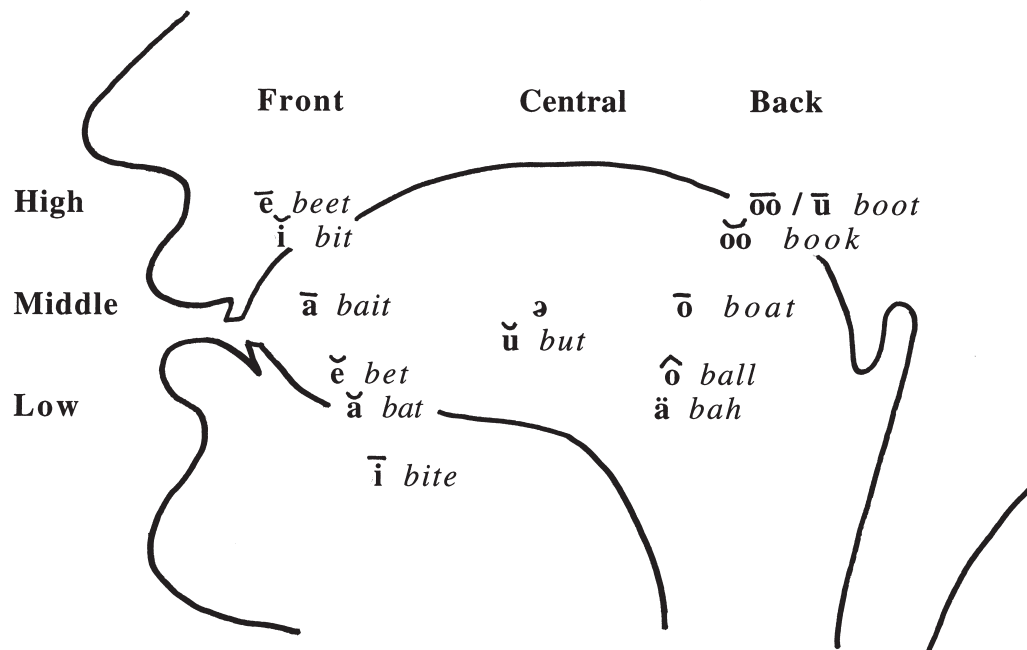


FIGURE 5-2 Vowels in the Mouth

Try saying this string several times, saying only the vowel sounds in each word. Feel how the production of the vowels moves from high in the front of the oral cavity (*beet*) to low in the oral cavity (*bite*) to the back of the oral cavity (*boat*), down the front, back, and up (*boot*). As you read the words *boot*, *foot*, and *boat*, do you feel how the vowels are rounded? Feel how the tongue is raised in the back and how the lips are pursed as the words are pronounced. Contrast the rounded vowel in *boot* with the way your lips feel when you say the high front vowel sounds in *beet* or *bit*.

The way a word is pronounced may vary by dialect. For example, many people say *caught* and *cot* the same way. Some native speakers of English pronounce *bought*, *bore*, *roof*, and *stalk* with different vowels. Teachers must be aware of dialectical differences when students sort and talk about words. These differences do not interfere with word study and learning to spell, but an awareness of these differences enhances word study. Everyone speaks a dialect.

A Letter Name Strategy to Spell Short Vowels

How do students choose a letter name to represent a short vowel? Without being consciously aware that they are doing this, letter name–alphabetic spellers spell short vowels with the letter name closest in articulation to that short vowel. There are five letter names from which to choose: *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*. How would an alphabetic speller spell the word *bed*? What letter name is closest to the short *-e* sound in *bet*? Try saying *bed-beet* and *bed-bait* to compare how the short-vowel sounds and the long-vowel or letter names feel in your mouth. Repeat the pairs several times and pay attention to how the mouth is shaped. The long *-a* or letter name for *a* is closer in place of articulation to the short *-e* sound than to the letter names for *e*, *i*, *o*, or *u*.

Students in the letter name–alphabetic stage use their knowledge of letter names and the feel of the vowels as they are produced in the vocal tract to spell *bet* as BAT. What letter name is closest to the short *-i* sound in *ship*? Compare the vowel sound in the middle of *ship* with the letter names for *i* and *e*. Students often spell *ship* as SHEP, because the letter name for *e* is closer in place of articulation to the short *-i* sound than the letter name for *i*. The wondrous aspect of these letter name substitutions for short vowels is that they are so predictable. Read (1975) found that nearly all students go through a period of time when they substitute the short vowels in this way. Note that short *-a* poses little problem for spellers, because the short *-a* sound and the letter name for *a* are already close in place of articulation. Say *bat* and *bait* as an example. The following chart will help you remember how the letter names of vowels are substituted for the short-vowel sounds beginning readers try to spell.

Invented Spelling	Logical Vowel Substitution
BAT for <i>bat</i>	None, short <i>-a</i> is closest to <i>a</i>
BAT for <i>bet</i>	<i>a</i> for short <i>-e</i>
BET for <i>bit</i>	<i>e</i> for short <i>-i</i>
PIT for <i>pot</i>	<i>i</i> for short <i>-o</i>
POT for <i>put</i>	<i>o</i> for short <i>-u</i>

Through word study in the letter name–alphabetic stage, students learn to spell short-vowel words correctly and they see that short vowels follow a specific pattern, a **consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC)** pattern. This CVC pattern stretches across all short vowels from the short *-a* in *pat* to the short *-u* in *stuck*. In their study of short vowels, students notice that, regardless of how many consonant letters are on either side of the single vowel, one vowel letter in the pattern signals the short-vowel sound. Students' sight words—their known words—provide a base for studying the CVC pattern. In reading and directed word study, these known words provide the tension between what is and what they think about the orthography. The CVC pattern provides a basis for learning about vowel patterns.

As they mature and learn more sight words, students face the ambiguities of the **homographs**, words that are spelled the same but pronounced differently. For example, students in the letter name–alphabetic stage may spell *bent*, *bet*, *bat*, and *bait* the same way: BAT. The burden of so many homographs is a catalyst for change, which is a good problem. Letter name–alphabetic spellers are also readers, and when they reread their own spelling of *bait* as BAT, a word that they know spells something else, they experience disequilibrium. This forces them to find other ways to spell a word like *bait*. When students are able to spell these basic short-vowel patterns, and they begin to experiment with long-vowel patterns, they have entered the next spelling stage, within word pattern.

OTHER ORTHOGRAPHIC FEATURES

In addition to vowels, students work through four other features during this stage:

1. Consonant digraphs
2. Consonant blends
3. Influences on the vowel from certain consonants
4. Preconsonantal nasals

Although these features are usually studied toward the middle and end of this stage, they can be studied whenever students have enough known sight words in their word bank. For example, the influence of the letter *r* on the short-vowel sounds is profound and may become a topic of study when students realize that a word like *car* does not fit with other short *a* sounds even though it follows the CVC pattern.

Consonant Digraphs and Blends

Letter name–alphabetic spellers take some time to learn consonant digraphs and blends. A **digraph** is two letters that make a new sound or a single sound. The word *digraph* ends with a digraph, the *ph* that stands for the single sound of /f/. Digraphs are easier than blends and can be taught right along with other beginning consonants because they represent a simple phoneme. The most commonly recognized digraphs have an *h* as the second letter of the pair. Digraphs include the bold letters:

thin, fish, each, when, phone

A **consonant blend** is slightly different. A blend is a spelling unit (sometimes called a consonant cluster) of two or three consonants that retain their identity when pronounced. The word *blend* contains two blends: *bl* and *nd*. Each of the sounds in a blend can still be heard, but they are tightly bound and not easily segmented into individual phonemes, which makes blends difficult for students to spell accurately. The *st* blend in *stick* may be spelled simply as SEK or SEC. Blends can occur at the beginning or end of words and are represented by the bold letters in the following words.

Beginning Blends

black, clap, flash, glad, plug, slip, plus (*l* blends), **brag, crash, dream, frog, great, prize, tree** (*r* blends), **scout, skip, small, sneeze, spell, stem, sweet, splash, street, square** (*s* blends), **twice, quick**

(Note: In the *qu* blend, the *u* represents the consonant sound of *w*.)

Ending Blends

just, lisp, mask, gift, swept, melt, shelf, help

(Note: *mp, nt, nd, nk*, and so forth, are special ending blends we will consider under preconsonantal nasals.)

Throughout the letter name–alphabetic stage, students become more consistent in their spelling of consonant digraphs and blends. In their reading, they recognize words with consonant digraphs and blends with greater accuracy and fluency (Bear, 1992). Students' tacit understanding of consonant blends and digraphs grows with their sight vocabularies and their understanding of the basic CVC patterns that contain consonant digraphs and blends.

Influences on the Vowel

The letters *r, w,* and *l* influence the vowel sounds they follow. For example, the vowel sounds in words like *bar, ball,* and *saw* are not the same as the short-vowel sounds in *bat* and *fast*. They cannot be called short *-a*, yet all of these words have the CVC pattern. The

consonant sounds /r/ and /l/ are known in linguistics as **liquids**. Both can change the pronunciation of the vowel they follow. These spellings are often known as *r* influenced or *r* controlled and *l* influenced or *l* controlled.

R-influenced vowels can be difficult to spell by sound alone. For example, *fur*, *her*, and *sir* have the same vowel sound yet are spelled three different ways. *R*-influenced vowels that follow a CVC pattern are examined during the late letter name–alphabetic stage and can be compared with short vowels in word sorts. Students might also contrast consonant **blends** with an *r* (*fr*, *tr*, *gr*) and *r*-influenced vowels (e.g., *from–farm*, *grill–girl*, *tarp–trap*) as a way to compare exactly where the *r* falls.

Preconsonantal Nasals

Some blends are more subtle than others. Nasal sounds, associated with *m*, *n*, and *ng*, are made by air passing through the nasal cavity in the mouth. The **preconsonantal nasals** are nasal sounds that come right before a final consonant such as the *m* in *jump* or the *n* in *pink*. In the pronunciation of preconsonantal nasals, it is as if the second consonant dominates and absorbs the nasal. Try saying *ban* and then *band*. You can not feel both the *n* and the *d* in *band*. Preconsonantal nasals are often omitted during the letter name–alphabetic stage (*bump* may be spelled BOP and *pink* may be spelled PEK). When students begin to spell words with preconsonantal nasals correctly, they are usually at the end of the letter name–alphabetic stage.

WORD STUDY INSTRUCTION FOR THE LETTER NAME–ALPHABETIC STAGE

The focus for word study in the letter name–alphabetic stage begins with initial consonants and continues through consonant digraphs, blends, and the study of short vowels. Word study during this stage makes use of pictures and known words from students' reading and word banks. This section discusses the sequence of word study throughout the letter name–alphabetic stage, presents ways to use word banks, and offers some tips for how to lead group sorting activities.

Sequence of Word Study

The sequence of word study is based on the alphabet, pattern, and meaning principles that have been observed in students' spelling. During this stage of development, students focus primarily on the alphabetic principle of matching sounds to letters. Consider the invented spellings in Table 5-1 and what they reveal about how students experiment with the orthography. Teachers can take the lead from their students' invented spellings in designing word study instruction. The sequence of word study instruction is designed to complement the natural course of learning.

Initially, students use beginning consonants in their writing, so this is the place to begin word study. After students have learned to use most of the consonants, they add vowels in each stressed syllable. When they start placing a vowel in each syllable, it is time to study short vowels. When students begin to use long-vowel patterns in their spelling, they are ready to examine long-vowel word patterns and move on to the next stage. Table 5-3 summarizes how students' spellings should be used to make instructional decisions.

Although there is a predictable pattern of development, the exact sequence and pace will not be precisely the same for every student. There are three factors that impact the sequence and the pace of the word study:

TABLE 5-3 Using Spelling Errors to Plan Word Study in the Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage

Spelling Samples	Characteristics of Spellings	Appropriate Word Study
<i>fan</i> = F <i>pet</i> = PSLD <i>dig</i> = DK <i>wait</i> = YT <i>junk</i> = GK	Some consonant sounds are represented but incomplete or confused.	Picture sorts of beginning sounds.
<i>fan</i> = FN <i>pet</i> = PT <i>dig</i> = DG <i>rope</i> = ROP <i>shine</i> = CIN <i>sled</i> = SD	Single beginning and final consonants correct for the most part. Blends and digraphs not correct. Few, if any, vowels in middle.	1. Picture sorts of digraphs and blends. 2. Compare word families with the same vowel using words and pictures.
<i>dig</i> = DEG <i>pet</i> = PAT <i>junk</i> = JOK <i>sled</i> = SLAD <i>dream</i> = JREM <i>shine</i> = CHIN	Single beginning and final consonants correct. Blends and digraphs may still be confused. Short vowels are used but confused. Long-vowel markers are absent or rare. Missing preconsonantal nasals.	1. Compare word families with mixed vowels using word sorts. 2. Compare short vowels. 3. Include words with blends, digraphs, and preconsonantal nasals in word sorts.

From *Bookbuddies: Guidelines for Volunteer Tutors of Emergent and Beginning Readers* by F. R. Johnston, M. Invernizzi, & C. Juel, 1998, New York: Guilford Press. Reprinted by permission.

1. *Utmost is the students' development.* Although the general sequence will be the same, the pace varies and teachers need to vary the length of time they spend on word study activities with different students. For this reason, membership in word study groups must be fluid.
2. Because word study always works with known words, *word study during this stage is constrained by students' sight vocabularies.* Students at this level seldom have enough sight words for the study of initial consonants, digraphs, or blends so picture sorts are most effective.
3. The third factor is the *curriculum.* Some school districts and schools specify through their curriculum guides what orthographic features should be studied. The developmental outline presented in this book provides clear guidelines for what features to study in what order. Teachers can use the following sequence and still cover the features specified in most curricula.
 - a. Review beginning sounds with picture sorts.
 - b. Introduce consonant digraphs and blends with pictures.
 - c. Introduce short vowels in word families.
 - d. Continue to study consonant digraphs and blends in word families.
 - e. Study short vowels as CVC patterns outside of rhyming families.
 - f. Integrate the study of digraphs, blends, and preconsonantal nasals with short vowels.



For a sequence of printable picture sorts appropriate for Letter-Name Alphabetic Spellers, visit the Letter Name-Alphabetic section on the accompanying CD-ROM.

The following discussion focuses on each of these areas of word study instruction.

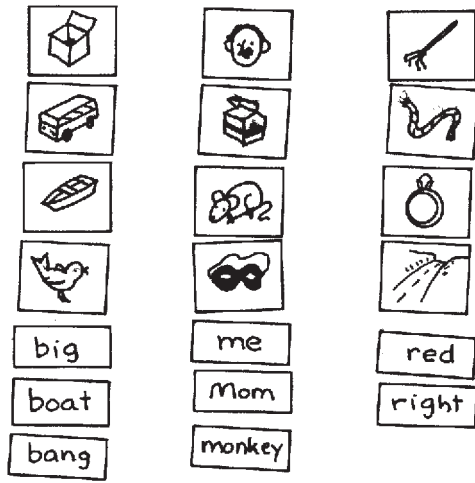


FIGURE 5-3 Initial Consonant Picture and Word Sort

The Study of Beginning Sounds

Word study starts with the study of initial sounds for students in the early letter name–alphabetic stage. Simple picture sorts give students an opportunity to compare pictures based on how they “sound at the beginning.” Pictures are sorted and contrasted, starting with frequently occurring initial consonants where the contrasts or differences are clear both visually and by sound. Figure 5-3 is an example of a sort that started with pictures and then included sight words from the students’ word banks.

Richard, whom we met at the beginning of this chapter, was wise in deciding to take a step back to firm up Cynthia’s understandings of consonants. Many students benefit from a fast-paced review of consonants at the beginning of first grade to clear up lingering confusions or to secure tentative letter-sound matches. There is no particular order to the sequence of sounds, but starting with frequently occurring initial consonants where the contrasts or differences are clear both visually and by sound is recommended.

Many teachers have found the following sequence to be effective. Chapter 4 offers suggestions for how to plan and carry out picture sorts for initial consonants.

B	M	R	S
T	G	N	P
C	H	F	D
L	K	J	W
Y	Z	V	

Modify this sequence if there are connections you can make to reading materials or classroom themes of study. In October you might want to focus on *h*, *j*, *p*, and *g* to tie in with words like *Halloween*, *jack-o-lanterns*, *pumpkins*, and *ghosts*. Picture sorts with initially occurring short vowels can also be included here as a way to introduce those letter-sound correspondences. Pictures for these beginning short vowels can be found in the Appendix, after the beginning consonant pictures.

A few final consonants might be introduced and studied, but once students have learned the frequently occurring initial consonants and phonemic segmentation, most of them can easily use their knowledge of letter-sound matches to spell final consonants. When students consistently omit final consonants in their writing, you can draw their attention to them through word study activities that are similar to the initial consonant sorts. For example, your students could hunt for words and pictures of words that end like *bat*. However, the study of final consonants is covered when the students examine word families, which is probably enough for most students.

Some students may have a few lingering confusions even when they are in control of most consonant matches. Do not hesitate to move on to other features since consonants will be reviewed again in word family comparisons. However, you may want to address occasional confusions in sorts that contrast what students are using with what they are confusing. If a student spells *fan* as *VN*, you may want to pull out pictures of words that start with *v* and *f* to help work out the correct associations. Such close comparisons should not, however, be the student’s first introduction to those letter sounds.

Word banks. Word banks play a special role for beginning readers, helping them learn specific words as well as how words work in general. What students know about particular words during this time may only be partial. For example, as they read, they may substitute *leopard* for *lion* in a story of big cats at the zoo. From such errors, it ap-

ELL Students who speak Spanish may spend more time examining final consonants.

pears that they are attending to the beginning letters for cues. This is also evident in the way they spell during this time. *Lion* is often spelled as LN. Ehri (1997) has described these readers as “partial alphabetic,” because they use partial letter-sound cues—usually consonant cues—to identify and spell words. Students will acquire sight words, or words they know out of context, slowly during the early letter name–alphabetic period and they will need frequent exposure to those words. Examining words out of context makes a difference in how well they learn those words (Ehri & Wilce, 1980) and how many words they learn over time (Johnston, 1998).

Acquiring a sight vocabulary is critical for progress in reading. Automatic word recognition makes it possible to read fluently and to devote attention to comprehension rather than to figuring out words. A sight vocabulary also provides a corpus of known words from which students begin to discover generalizations about how words work.

A word bank is a collection of words chosen by the students (not the teacher) that they remember well enough to identify in isolation (Stauffer, 1980). The words are written on small cards and collected over time. They are reviewed regularly and words that have been forgotten are discarded. Sometimes we are asked why students need to review words they already know. The answer is, they do not know them the same way more mature readers do; they know them only partially and tentatively. Students reviewing their word bank may confuse *ran* and *run*, *stop* and *ship*, *lost* and *little*. They may get *gingerbread* every time because it is the only long word they have that starts with *g*, but when you ask them to spell it (GNRBRD) you get a better idea of what they really know about that word. Regular review of word bank words encourages students to look more thoroughly at words and to note individual letter-sound correspondences.

For students in the early letter name–alphabetic stage, word banks support their growing knowledge of sight words and letter-sound correspondences. As they study initial sounds, students can be asked to find words in their word bank that have those same sounds. This will help them make connections between the pictures they sort and the words they read. Later in the letter name–alphabetic stage, the word bank becomes a source of known words to be used in word sorts. It is crucial that students work with known words because it is easier to look across words for similarities and differences in sounds and letters than to figure out unknown words. There is an added burden in word study if students must labor to pronounce words before analyzing their features and relationships to other words.

Developing and using word banks and personal readers. The words in a word bank come from many sources: dictations, small group experience charts, rhymes, poems, and the simple books and preprimers that they read. Words can come from students’ names and from labels (like Wendy’s, or BUM Equipment), but it is best if the words in the word banks can be traced back to meaningful and familiar text. By using words that come from familiar readings and by numbering the stories and rhymes and the word cards, students can be encouraged to return to the primary source to find a forgotten word and to match the word bank card to its counterpart in print.

Personal readers, as shown in Figure 5-4, are individual student copies of group experience charts, rhymes and jingles, individual dictations, and selected passages from simple books that students can read independently or with some support from a teacher or partner. Students are enormously proud of their personal readers and they reread them many times before taking them home to read some more. Except for the individual dictations, many of the selections in personal readers are the same among many students. The stories in the personal readers are numbered, and the date they are introduced is recorded. Personal readers are an ideal place for students to collect words from their word banks. They can simply underline the words they know best and these words can then be transferred to small cards. A number can be written on each word card that matches the numbered stories.

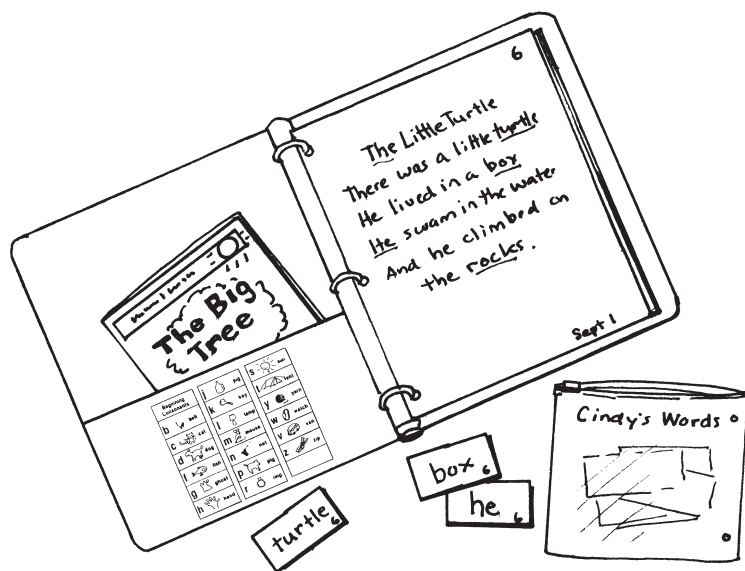


FIGURE 5-4 Personal Reader with Word Bank

In Figure 5-4, the student's word bank is a plastic bag that can be stored in the personal reader. You can also see that simple pattern books can fit inside the front pocket. The personal reader also contains a page that lists the words in the student's word bank. A reduced sound board of consonant sounds is included for a student reference in word study and writing.

Word banks increase slowly and steadily. At first, students do not have enough words in their banks to use them much for sorting. Gradually, word banks increase to 50 words, and then there are plenty of words for many sorts. Once the word banks grow to between 150 to 250 words, they become clumsy to manage. It takes students too long to hunt through their banks for examples of a particular short vowel. The

three signs to indicate when it is time to discontinue word banks are as follows:

1. The student is at the end of the letter name–alphabetic stage of spelling.
2. The word bank contains at least 200 words.
3. It is possible to create word sorts in which students recognize nearly all of the words easily.

Word banks take extra work but are well worth the effort, particularly for students in the beginning of this stage. Word banks support students' sight word development and growing word knowledge. They are also motivating for students because they offer tangible evidence of their word learning and literacy growth (Johnston, 1998). Guidelines for making and using word banks, individual dictations, and group experience charts can be found in the first part of the activities section of this chapter.

The Study of Digraphs and Blends

After students study beginning consonants, they are ready to learn about initial consonant digraphs and blends.

The goal of word study of consonant digraphs and blends is to not only master letter-sound correspondences but also to help students see these two-letter combinations as single units in CVC patterns.

Beginning digraphs. The first digraphs to be studied are *ch*, *sh*, *th*, and *wh*. Sorts for digraphs compare words "that do" with words "that don't." What contrasts are best? The answer lies in students' invented spellings. Some students substitute *j* for *ch* as they spell words like *chin* as JN or they may confuse the letter name of *h* (aich) with *ch* and spell *chin* as HN. These confusions suggest that a good sort to study *ch* would include words that start with *ch*, *h*, or even *c* and *j*. *Th* might be compared to single *t*; *sh* to single *s*, and *ch* to single *c*. Note, however, that it would be difficult to sort pictures by *w* and *wh*, because many words beginning with *wh* do not have a distinctive sound. (Which witch is which?) You might compare *wh* to *th*, *sh*, and *ch* in a culminating digraph sort. Possible contrasts for digraphs include:

1. *c / ch / h*
2. *s / sh / h*
3. *t / th / h*
4. *ch / sh / th*
5. *j / ch*
6. *wh / sh / th / ch*

Beginning blends. Beginning consonant blends come in three major groups: the *s* blends (*sn, sm, st, sk*), the *r* blends (*br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr*), and the *l* blends (*bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl*). The easiest group of blends is the *s* blends, because *s* is a continuant (the /s/ sound continues), and because with the exception of *sl*, the *s* blends do not contain the “slippery” *l* or *r*.

The study of beginning consonant blends starts with the easiest contrasts of single initial consonants with a blend. For example, pictures that begin with *st* may be contrasted with pictures that begin with *s* for spellers such as Tony who spell *stick* as SEK. After studying several blends in this fashion, it is best to pick up the pace and introduce other blends in groups. Some suggested contrasts are listed as follows, but as always, modify these in accordance with the kinds of words students are encountering in their reading. Once students catch on to how blends work and learn to segment the sounds in blends, they may move quickly through a sequence of study or skip some contrasts altogether. Possible contrasts for beginning blends include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <i>s / st / t</i> | 7. <i>t / tr / r</i> |
| 2. <i>sp / s / p</i> | 8. <i>d / dr / r</i> |
| 3. <i>st / sp / sk / sm</i> | 9. <i>gr / tr / dr / pr</i> |
| 4. <i>sl / sn / sc / sw</i> | 10. <i>bl / br / gl / gr</i> |
| 5. <i>bl / b / l</i> | 11. <i>cl / cr / fl / fr</i> |
| 6. <i>gl / pl / bl / cl</i> | 12. <i>k / qu / tw</i> |

The procedures and routines for the study of digraphs and blends are the same as for other beginning sound sorts described in Chapter 4. Composite sheets of pictures can be created for individual practice at desks or students can work in centers with pictures for additional practice. Pictures needed for the study of digraphs and blends can be found in the Appendix. Chapter 3 describes follow-up activities such as cut and paste and draw and label, which are appropriate for digraphs and blends. Many of the games described for beginning consonants in Chapter 4 and in this chapter can be easily adapted to review digraphs and blends.

Unlike initial consonants, students in the early part of the letter name–alphabetic stage are not expected to acquire great fluency or accuracy in spelling and sorting consonant blends and digraphs, because they will be revisited throughout the stage. The study of blends can be alternated with the study of word families. Final blends are not studied with pictures due to the lack of examples, but should be included with beginning blends and digraphs in the study of word families and short vowels when words are used. Knowledge of blends and digraphs will help students understand the CVC as the basic short-vowel pattern. Even a word like *flash* is a CVC word in which *fl* is the first unit, *a* is the medial vowel, and *sh* is the final unit. Students also work through sorts in which they consider features such as the double *l* in *ball* and the *nd* in *blend* or *stand*.



For more materials on digraphs and blends, as well as sorts for studying short vowels, visit the Letter Name–Alphabetic section on the accompanying CD-ROM

The Study of Word Families to Introduce Short Vowels

Once letter name–alphabetic spellers have a firm, if not complete, mastery of beginning and ending consonant sounds, and a stable concept of word, they are ready to examine the medial vowel. The study of vowels begins with word families or **phonograms** when vowels are still missing or used only occasionally in students’ invented spellings. Once students are using short vowels consistently, they can be asked to compare short vowels in word sorts that examine the CVC pattern across a variety of vowels. This will happen toward the end of the stage. Refer again to Table 5-3 to see how to use student’s spellings for planning instruction during this stage.

Word families offer an easy and appealing way to introduce the issue of vowels. Students are supported in their first efforts to analyze the vowel, because the vowel and the ending letter(s) are presented as a chunk or pattern. In linguistic terms, the **rime** consists of the vowel and what follows (Henderson, 1990). What comes before the vowel is the **onset**. Examples of onset-rime breaks are *m-an*, *bl-and*, *m-at*, and *th-at*. Dividing words into onsets and rimes is easier and more natural for students than dividing them into individual phonemes (Treiman, 1985).

The study of word families makes sense for several other reasons. First, 37 rimes can be used to generate 500 different words which students encounter in primary reading materials (Wylie & Durrell, 1970). In addition, these same rimes will be familiar chunks in thousands of multisyllabic words; the *an* chunk can be found in *canyon*, *incandescent*, and *fantastic*. Second, vowel sounds are more stable within families than across families (Adams, 1990; Wylie & Durrell, 1970). For example, the word *dog* is often presented as a short *-o* word in phonics programs; but in some regions of the United States, it is pronounced more like *dawg*. If you say it that way, then you probably pronounce *fog* as *fawg*, *frog* as *frawg*, and *log* as *lawg*. In the study of word families, the actual pronunciation of the short vowel does not matter; it is the *-og* chunk that is examined and compared.

There is no particular order to the study of word families, but starting with short *-a* families (*at*, *an*, *ad*, *ap*, *ack*) seems to be a good choice, because these words abound in early reading materials, and students are likely to already know several words from these families by sight. In addition, short *-a* is the least likely short vowel to be confused when students try to make matches based on letter names and place of articulation. Knowing that students initially have trouble isolating and attending to the medial vowel, it is a good idea to compare word families that share the same vowel before contrasting different vowels. This supports students' first efforts to read and spell those words. What they really must attend to are the beginning and ending consonants in order to sort and spell the words. The study of same-vowel word families serves to review those features. In sorting words like *mat* and *man*, for example, students must attend to the final consonant more than any place else. Move quickly, however, to comparing words that have different vowels. The difference between *mitt*, *met*, and *mat* lies in the medial vowel and it is through such contrasts that students are forced to attend to the vowel sound itself.

Table 5-4 offers a suggested sequence for the study of word families, but it is offered only as a model from which to plan your own course of study. Each of the words listed is intended to be an example of a particular word family and you would need to collect additional words to create the sorts. You will find lists of words for each family in the Appendix. As always, consider the words that your students have in their word banks and the kinds of words they encounter in their reading.

Word Sorting to Compare Two or More Word Families

In the following procedure for sorting two or more word families, the phonograms for *ig*, *ag*, and *og* are used as examples.

1. Make a collection of word cards to model the sort on a tabletop, pocket chart, or overhead projector. Students should be able to read two or more words in each family.
2. Begin by laying down a known word as a header for each family. Choose words you are sure the students can read such as *big*, *dog*, and *bag*. Explain that the rest of the words are to be sorted under one of the headers.
3. Pick up another word such as *frog* and say, "I am going to put this word under *dog*. Listen: *dog*, *frog*." Continue to model one or two words in each category, always sorting first and then reading down, starting with the header.
4. Invite students to try sorting the next word. They should sort first and then read from the top of each column. They are not expected to sound it out first and then

TABLE 5-4 Possible Pace and Sequence of Word Family Study

Introductions	Moderate Pace	Fast Pace / Review
Use single initial consonants and some digraphs in words chosen.*	Use some blends and digraphs in words chosen for sorts.	Use plenty of blends and digraphs in words chosen for sorts.
Same-Vowel Word Families		
<i>at</i> family with pictures and words <i>an</i> and <i>ad</i> with pictures and words <i>ap</i> and <i>ag</i> with pictures and words <i>ot</i> and <i>og</i> with pictures and words <i>ip</i> , <i>ig</i> , <i>ill</i> with pictures and words <i>ug</i> , <i>ub</i> , <i>ut</i> <i>ed</i> , <i>et</i> , <i>eg</i> , <i>ell</i>	<i>at</i> and <i>an</i> <i>ag</i> , <i>ad</i> , <i>ap</i> <i>ip</i> , <i>ig</i> , <i>in</i> , <i>ill</i> <i>ot</i> , <i>og</i> , <i>ock</i> <i>ug</i> , <i>ub</i> , <i>uck</i> , <i>unk</i>	<i>at</i> , <i>an</i> , <i>ad</i> , <i>ap</i> <i>in</i> , <i>ip</i> , <i>ick</i> , <i>ing</i> <i>ub</i> , <i>ug</i> , <i>ush</i> , <i>unk</i>
Mixed-Vowel Word Families		
<i>at</i> , <i>ot</i> , <i>it</i> <i>ag</i> , <i>og</i> , <i>ap</i> , <i>op</i> <i>ill</i> , <i>ell</i> , <i>all</i> <i>ap</i> , <i>ip</i> , <i>op</i> , <i>up</i> <i>an</i> , <i>un</i> , <i>en</i> <i>all</i> , <i>ell</i> , <i>ill</i> <i>ag</i> , <i>eg</i> , <i>ig</i> , <i>og</i> , <i>ug</i> <i>ack</i> , <i>ock</i> , <i>ick</i> , <i>uck</i> <i>ish</i> , <i>ash</i> , <i>ush</i>	<i>at</i> , <i>ot</i> , <i>ag</i> , <i>og</i> <i>an</i> , <i>en</i> , <i>un</i> <i>ip</i> , <i>ap</i> , <i>op</i> , <i>up</i> <i>ack</i> , <i>ock</i> , <i>ick</i> , <i>uck</i> <i>ing</i> , <i>ish</i> , <i>ang</i> , <i>ash</i> <i>ang</i> , <i>ing</i> , <i>ung</i> , <i>ong</i> <i>ink</i> , <i>ank</i> , <i>unk</i>	<i>an</i> , <i>in</i> , <i>et</i> , <i>ot</i> <i>ag</i> , <i>ig</i> , <i>eg</i> , <i>ug</i> , <i>og</i> <i>ink</i> , <i>ank</i> , <i>unk</i> <i>all</i> , <i>ell</i> , <i>ill</i> <i>ack</i> , <i>ock</i> , <i>ick</i> , <i>uck</i> , <i>eck</i>

*Add blends and digraphs to sorts as they are studied, especially to later sorts.

sort. Instead, their sense of rhyme will support them as they read the new word by simply changing the first sound of a word they already know. The final sort might look like this:

big	dog	bag
dig	frog	wag
pig	hog	flag
wig	bog	rag
	fog	tag
	log	

5. After all the words have been sorted, lead a discussion to focus your students' attention on the common features in each word: "How are the words in each column alike?"
6. Reread the words in each column and then lead the students in sorting a second time. Any mistakes should be left until the end and checked by reading down the columns.
7. Students should be given their own set of words to sort (see Figure 5-1B). Appropriate follow-up routines include buddy sorting, writing sorts, and word hunts. These are described in Chapter 4 in the primary schedule.

Word family sorts can be made easier or harder in a number of ways. The study of word families can begin with the matching of words to pictures. Some of the short-vowel pictures in the Appendix may be useful, although pictures are not really necessary; you can create sheets of word cards or sorting folders. Sample word family sorts are presented in the Appendix. During the study of word families, it is appropriate to modify 1 of the 10 principles of word study described in Chapter 3—*use words students can read*. Since the words are in rhyming families, students are supported in their reading of the words, as long as the guide

word and the first few words are familiar. Students will read unknown words by blending different onsets with the familiar rime. Be sure to include words with digraphs and blends as a review of those features and a chance to see them in another context. The *ack* family can grow to be quite large when you include *black, track, shack, quack, stack, snack, and crack*.

With the publication of research on onsets and rimes and renewed interest in word families, there has been a recent flood of reading materials designed around phonograms. Little phonics readers have been created that feature a particular family or short vowel. Some of these little books are engaging and well written, offering students support in the form of patterned or rhyming text. Such books can be used as a starting point or as a follow-up for word study, and students can use them to go on word hunts for additional words that follow the same phonics feature. However, choose these books carefully. Stories featuring sentences such as, “The tan man ran the van,” change reading from the making of meaning into exercises in word calling. Some phonics readers are better done than others and should never constitute the sole reading materials used at this level.

There are lots of activities and games to use in connection with the study of word families. Board games designed to study beginning sounds can be adapted to word families. Sound wheels, flip charts, and the Show Me game are favorites and are included in the activities to follow. From this point on, students are expected to spell the words they sort in their entirety. Word study notebooks can be used to record writing sorts and the results of word hunts or brainstorming sessions.

The study of word families can take a long time if you feel compelled to study every one in a thorough fashion, but this should not be the case. Some students quickly pick up the notion that words that sound alike probably share similar rimes and are spelled alike. They will also be able to use this knowledge to figure out new words by analogy; noting the *and* in *stand*, they quickly decode it. However, these students may still make errors in spelling short vowels.

The Study of Short Vowels

Once students are using but confusing short vowels on a regular basis in their invented spelling and working with word families easily and accurately, they are ready for the study of short vowels in nonrhyming words outside of word families. This study will ask them to look at words in a new way, not as two units with various rimes (*m-ad, fl-ag, tr-ack*), but as three units with the same CVC pattern (*m-a-d, fl-a-g, tr-a-ck*) and the same short-vowel sound. This ability to see words as patterns is the key feature of the next stage, within word pattern. Over the course of studying the short vowels, students come to see that CVC is the basic pattern for all short vowels.

When beginning the study of short vowels, plan contrasts that are fairly distinct from each other. We recommend that students compare short *-a* to short *-i* or short *-o*. Do not try to move directly from a short *-a* to a short *-e* or from a short *-e* to a short *-i*, because those are the very sounds students are most likely to confuse. Pictures for sorting can be found in the Appendix.

During the study of short vowels is a good time to establish the **oddball** or miscellaneous category, to accommodate variations in dialect and spelling. Some students may hear a short *-o* in *frost*, but others will hear a sound closer to /aw/. Some students hear a different vowel in *pin* and *pen*, but others consider them homophones. Rather than forcing students to doubt their own ear, the oddball category offers an alternative and acknowledges that people do not all speak quite the same way nor does spelling always match pronunciation. Some words, which initially go in the oddball category, will become regular categories of their own after enough words are accumulated. Good words to include are high frequency words students may already know as sight words such as *was, said, for, from, and put*.

Be prepared to spend some time on short vowels as they pose special problems for young spellers and persist as problems beyond first grade. However, short vowels will be reviewed when they are compared to long vowels in the next stage, so do not expect 100% accuracy.

ELL Students who learn English as another language may not pronounce English consonants and vowels in the same way that you do and they may omit sounds that do not fit the syllable structure of their first language. Word study helps students to focus on pronunciations and syllable structures that are unfamiliar. Refer to the next section for a discussion of specific differences and teaching strategies during the letter name-alphabetic stage.

Word Sorting to Compare Two or More Short Vowels

Most sorting for short vowels will be done with words. Consider what words your students already know from familiar texts and word banks. Lists of CVC and CVCC words spelled with short vowels can be found in the word lists in the Appendix. These lists can be used to create handouts similar to those used by Mr. Perez in Figure 5-1C. Additional short-vowel words can be selected from the word family lists. Following is the basic procedure for sorting words by short vowels.

1. Make a collection of word cards to model the sort on a tabletop, pocket chart, or overhead projector.
2. Model the sort with a group of students. Begin by laying down a well-known word as a header for each vowel. Read each word and isolate the vowel by saying, "Here is the word *cap*. Listen: *cap, ap, a*. We will listen for other words that have the same vowel sound in the middle." Repeat for each category.
3. Pick up a new word such as *fast* and say, "I am going to put this word under *cap*. Listen: *cap, fast*." Continue to model one or two words in each category, reading each new word and comparing it to the header. Hold up an oddball like *for* or *was*. Ask students if they have the same vowel sound in the middle. Model how to place it in the oddball category because it does not have the same vowel sound.
4. Invite students to try sorting next. Correct any errors made during the first sort. The final sort might look something like this:

cap	pig	hot	oddball
fast	ship	stop	for
camp	fish	lock	ball
hat	sit	shop	
mad	hill	job	
trap	him	not	

5. After all the words have been sorted, discuss the common features in each word: "How are the words in each column alike? How are the oddballs different?"
6. Reread the words in each column and then lead the students in sorting a second time. Any mistakes should be left until the end and checked by reading down the columns.
7. Students should be given their own set of words to sort at their seats, with partners, or for homework.
8. Appropriate follow-up routines include buddy sorting, writing sorts, word hunts, and games. Because it is easy to sort the words visually by attending to the vowel letters, the buddy sort described in Chapter 4 is particularly important as a follow-up activity. Model this sound sort first in the group and then let partners work together. One partner reads each word aloud while the other partner indicates where it goes without seeing the word.

If students are still making errors in the spelling of digraphs and blends, which is likely, include words that have those features in the short-vowel sorts. At this time, they have many more sight words that contain beginning and ending consonant digraphs and blends. Preconsonantal nasals can also be included in this study. You might even plan a two-way sort—first by vowel sounds and second by digraphs or blends:

First Sort by Vowel

trap	trick	drug
crack	trip	crumb
drag	trim	truck
crash	drip	drum
track	crib	crush
crab	drill	

Second Sort by Blends

trap	drag	crack
track	drip	crash
trick	drum	crumb
trim	drill	crab
truck		crib
		crush

Sorts such as the preceding one help students see that the CVC pattern encompasses two-letter consonant units that work the same way as single consonants. Lead discussions that help students see that these words have a similar pattern—a single vowel surrounded by one or more consonants. This pattern will be more fully understood as students begin to contrast it with long-vowel patterns in the next stage. Following is a sort that focuses on the expanded idea of the CVC pattern across these consonant units.

Single Consonant

hot
job
rob
top

Double Initial

shop
stop
chop

Double Final

lost
pond
sock

Double Initial and Final

block
clock
stomp
soft

FURTHER STUDY OF VOWELS AT THE END OF THE LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC STAGE

Words like *car* and *ball* look as though they follow the CVC pattern, but they do not have the short *-a* sound. Because words spelled with *ar* and *all* are common in beginning reading materials, it is worthwhile to spend some time with them. *R*-controlled vowels form a major subcategory of vowels that will need to be examined closely during the next stage. For now these words can be treated as word families and added to short-vowel sorts as oddballs that challenge students to listen carefully for the sounds and not just attend to the letters they see. Following is a special sort that might examine words with a single *a* in the middle.

Short -a	ar	all	Oddballs
clap	car	ball	saw
jam	star	hall	was
black	park	fall	
sand	yard	stall	
camp	jar	call	

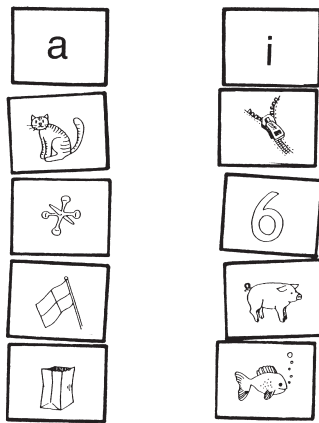


FIGURE 5-5 Picture Sort by Short *-a* and Short *-i*

This chapter has presented many examples of teacher-directed sorts or **closed sorts**. The teacher selects the words and leads a group sorting activity accompanied by a discussion of the features of interest. Student-centered sorts or **open sorts**, as described in Chapter 3, allow students to establish their own categories and offer the teacher diagnostic information which will help to determine how much students understand about the orthography.

Figure 5-5 is an open sort by a student in the late letter name–alphabetic stage. Jeff was asked to go through his word bank, find the word cards that had an *a* in them, and sort them into categories. His first sort resulted in three categories: short *-a*, long *-a*, and a large pile of miscellaneous words. He was then challenged to take the miscellaneous words and sort them into a number of piles. His new categories include short *-a*, *l* controlled, broad *-a*, *r* controlled, schwa, and long *-a*. Figure 5-6 shows that Jeff has developed quite a good ear for vowel sounds and understands that *a* is used to represent a variety of sounds.

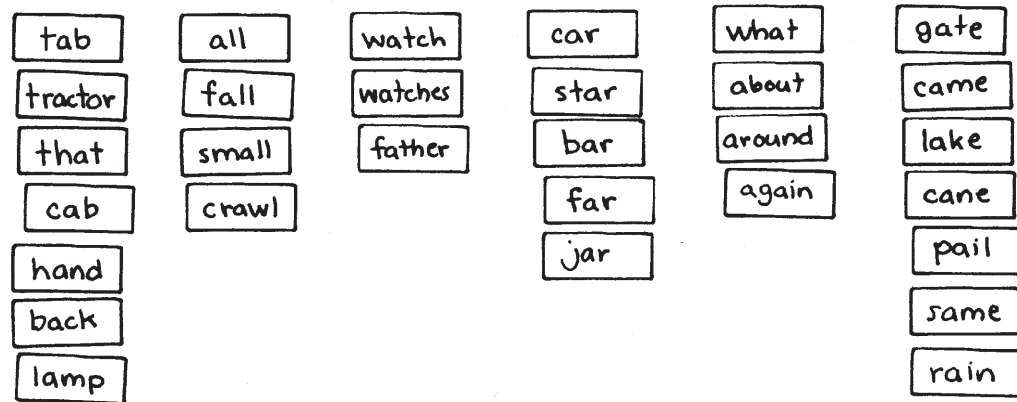


FIGURE 5-6 Jeff's Open Sort

WORD STUDY AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC STAGE

In Chapter 2, we began the discussion of the influences students' primary languages and dialects have on their spelling. The spelling inventories in English can be examined for particular features. For example, we discussed the logical substitutions students make when their first language is Spanish.



Visit the *Words Their Way* Companion Website at www.prenhall.com/bear to find a variety of spelling substitutions of English Language Learners.

For students who are literate in their first language, we recommend looking at their writing in that language, and then considering how this may show up in the English spelling. The Spanish spelling inventory in Chapter 2 and the Appendix can be used for elementary levels of literacy.

The two important areas of study to consider in the letter name-alphabetic stage when you work with English Language Learners are the comparisons of consonants and vowels. The difficult consonant sounds in English for Spanish speakers are presented in Table 5-5. Here you can see the sounds that students may mispronounce, and upon mispronouncing them, they may misspell the feature with a substitution or an omission. For example, it is common for students to omit the ending consonant sounds in words like *hard* that may be spelled HAR, or *test*, which may be spelled TES.

Spanish-speaking students may confuse words that begin with *d* and *th*, but at what level? For easy sight words, like the word *dog*, students know the beginning letter of *dog*, but in pronunciation they may pronounce *dog* with a *th* sound, more like *thog*. In sorting, students will begin to see the differences between these sounds when they have ample sight words that begin with *d* and *th*. In instruction this means that it will be worthwhile to include sorts that make these comparisons once the primary features are established. For Spanish speakers, you can use Table 5-5 and choose the features that are within students' grasps and sight vocabularies. Picture and word sorts that contrast *j* and *ch* can be undertaken once the students can read at least five or six words and pictures and words that begin with these sounds. Working on ending blend omissions is worthwhile when students in the middle of the letter name-alphabetic stage have enough sight words to match the pattern and to make the contrasts.

TABLE 5-5 Difficult Consonant Sounds in English for Spanish Speakers

Difficult Consonant Sounds for Spanish Speakers Learning English:	May Be Pronounced:
<i>d</i> as in <i>dog</i>	<u>th</u> og
<i>j</i> as in <i>jump</i>	<u>ch</u> ump
<i>r</i> as in <i>race</i>	(rolled <i>r</i>) <u>r</u> ace
<i>v</i> as in <i>very</i>	<u>b</u> ery
<i>z</i> as in <i>zoo</i>	<u>s</u> oo
<i>sh</i> as in <i>shine</i>	<u>ch</u> ine
<i>th</i> as in <i>think</i>	<u>t</u> ink
<i>zh</i> as in <i>measure</i>	me <u>ach</u> ure
Beginning <i>s</i> blends <i>st-</i> , <i>sp-</i> , <i>sc-</i> , <i>sk-</i> , <i>sm-</i> , <i>sn-</i> , <i>scr-</i> , <i>squ-</i> , <i>str-</i> , <i>spr-</i> , <i>spl-</i>	es <u>p</u> ace, es <u>q</u> irt, es <u>pl</u> ash
Ending blends with <i>r</i> : <i>-rd</i> , <i>-rt</i> , <i>-rl</i> , <i>-rs</i>	har (hard), cur (curl), tar (tarp)
<i>-ng</i> as in <i>sing</i>	sin (g)
Ending blends with <i>s</i> : <i>-sp</i> , <i>-st</i> , <i>-sk</i>	was (wasp), pos (post), as (ask)

From the *Words Their Way CD*, Spanish Word Study, Emergent Stage, Beginning Consonants, p. 2.

ELL Spanish spelling influences the way students spell short vowels.

The vowels in English and Spanish differ in several ways. Spanish does not have vowels for short *-a*, *-e*, *-i*, or *-u*. The short *-o* in *pot* in English is spelled often with the letter *a*. When students sort their words they will see that words like *cab*, *mad*, and *ham* have the letter *a* in the middle. When students read the words, they may read them with the vowel sound that they would use in reading Spanish words spelled with an *a*, for example, *ajo*. It may sound to you that they are saying a short *-o* when they are checking their sort. While we read the words with students so that they can hear the differences, we do not turn this lesson into a speech lesson. Students focus on the CVC pattern. Over time, and by the time students are solidly in the next stage of spelling, they see that the short *-o* in English is pronounced one way (*hot*, *clot*, *stop*) and that there are a variety of ways to pronounce the short *-a* sounds; there are several different short *-a* sounds students will learn during this stage, such as *fat*, *far*, *father*, and *fall*.

WORD STUDY ROUTINES AND MANAGEMENT

Word study during the letter name–alphabetic stage begins with picture sorts for initial sounds and ends with word sorts for short vowels. During this transition there are a variety of routines and generic activities to help students explore features of study in depth (see Chapter 3). Betty Lee’s schedule is particularly appropriate for students who are doing picture sorts, but once students are sorting words rather than pictures, other routines that involve word study notebooks can begin with activities like writing sorts.

In the letter name–alphabetic stage there is much to cover, so you might want to create 2- or 3-day cycles. For example, you might introduce two word families on Monday, another two on Wednesday, and then combine them both for several days. Pacing is an important issue. There are many blends and many word families and if every one were studied for a week, it could take many months. Be ready to pick up the pace by combining a number of blends or families into one sort (up to four or five) or by omitting some features. Only your own observations can dictate the particular pace appropriate for your students.

The letter name–alphabetic stage easily spans kindergarten through second grade as students master the reading and spelling of beginning sounds, blends and digraphs, and short vowels. While most achieving students will be through the stage by at least the middle of second grade, a handful of students in third grade and even a few students in fourth through sixth grade will still need to work on the features that characterize this stage. It may be tempting to rush through this stage, but word study in the letter name–alphabetic stage helps to build a solid foundation for the study of long vowels and other vowel patterns in the next stage.

Word study schedules at the group and classroom levels were discussed in Chapter 3. Figure 3-16 shows two schedules, the one that Betty Lee developed for first graders and another to use throughout the elementary grades. A routine to use throughout the letter name stage would follow these 5 days of activities:

Day 1: Group sort. This time is part of the regular reading group that you conduct daily with students. Take students through the four steps of a word study lesson plan as discussed in Chapter 3: demonstrate, sort and check, reflect, and extend. The extending step is an overview of the activities and the schedule for word study for the coming days.

Day 2: Buddy sort. Students use the same sorts, and with a photocopy of the correct sort, they check their work.

Day 3: Draw and label or word hunt. For early letter name–alphabetic spellers, use draw and label-type activities. Once students' sight vocabulary allows (when they study short-vowel patterns), turn to word hunts. Use the materials in personal readers for hunting for words.

Day 4: Games and activities. Choose from the plethora of activities in this chapter and in *Book Buddies* (Johnston et al., 1998). The Concentration, Bingo, Follow the Path, and Go Fish games presented in this chapter are adaptable and enjoyable throughout this stage of development.

Day 5: Repeated sorts and writing sorts. These activities help to cement the knowledge students have acquired. When they can sort fluently and correctly, we know that students' knowledge has begun to crystallize. The writing sorts are the beginnings of the word study notebooks, as discussed in Chapter 3.



We have been able to share many activities with parents on our websites and in handouts that go home to families. Link to these activities from our Companion Website at www.prenhall.com/bear

Activities for Beginning Readers in the Letter Name–Alphabetic Stage

In this section specific activities for students in the letter name–alphabetic stage have been organized into the following categories.

1. Development and use of personal readers and word banks
2. Review of initial sounds including digraphs and blends
3. Study of word families
4. Study of short vowels

These categories begin with ideas for supporting beginning readers and continue with word study games and activities that correspond to the hierarchy of features students study through picture and word sorts. Some of the games and activities are adaptable to a variety of features at different stages. These are indicated by the adaptable symbol.

Adaptable
for Other
Stages



For many more activities appropriate for Letter Name–Alphabetic readers, visit the accompanying CD-ROM.

DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF PERSONAL READERS AND WORD BANKS

Harvesting Words for Word Banks 5-1

Students need to have a stock of sight words that they can read with ease. The following activities help students develop and maintain a word bank. Through the use of familiar rhymes and small group and individual dictations, students begin to harvest sight words.

Materials

1. You will need copies of personal readers, dictations, familiar books, and so on.
2. Gather blank word cards. Tagboard and index cards can be cut to a size that is large enough to hold easily, yet small enough so that students can work with them on a desktop when sorting (1¼ by 3 inches is about right). Teachers can also create a sheet of words for a particular story or poem read by a group of students. These sheets can be reproduced and cut apart. And the words can then be quickly handed out as students identify them.
3. Each student will need to store his or her words. The word bank can be kept in a manila envelope, box, small margarine container, can, or fast-food container. Plastic and metal index card file boxes also work well, if available. When file boxes are at a premium, you can start with margarine containers for the first 50 words and then move to a box.

Procedures

Following are ways to harvest words for the word bank.

1. *From personal readers.* If students have an individual copy of dictations, jingles, parts of stories, and so on, they can simply be asked to underline the words they know. Many students will be tempted to underline every word, but over time they will begin to understand the procedure and realize they need to be selective and underline only words they really know. Suggesting that they scan through the text backwards can help some students find known words more accurately.

A teacher, assistant, or classroom volunteer points to the underlined words in a random fashion to check if the student can indeed name the word quickly. Known words are then written on word cards. Having an adult write the word will ensure that it is neat and accurate. The student can be asked to spell it aloud as the adult writes. On each card write the number of the page in the personal reader. This will make it possible for the students to go back and use context clues to name the word if they forget it. The students can be asked to write their initials on the back of each card in case words get mixed up during word bank activities.

2. *From familiar books.* Students can also collect sight words independently from books they have read. Some of the words from the book are put on word cards that are stored in a library pocket in the back of the book. After reading the text, students are taught to read through the words in the pocket to see which ones they know at sight. Students write the words they know onto their own cards and place them in their word banks. Unknown words are matched back to their counterpart in the text.
3. *From any text.* The easiest procedure for harvesting words is to simply ask the students to point to words in a book or from a chart that they would like to put in their word bank. After several words have been written on cards, the teacher or helper can hold them up to check for recognition.

Variations

To ensure that unknown words do not enter students' word banks, a **short-term word bank** can be developed as a holding spot for words students want to harvest into their permanent or long-term word banks. A short-term word bank can be made from a 6-by-8-inch envelope or small plastic bag stored inside students' personal readers (see Figure 5-4). These envelopes are for words that students recognize from the latest stories and dictations. Periodically, sometimes once a week or when new materials are added to students' personal readers, teachers work with students in small groups to have them read through the words in their short-term word banks. Words they know from memory go into the permanent word bank.

Collecting Individual Dictations and Group Experience Stories 5-2

Recording students' individual or group dictations as they talk about personal or group experiences is a key feature of the language experience approach, or LEA (Stauffer, 1980). The text created makes especially good reading material for beginning readers because it is inherently familiar and easy to remember. When dictations are collected in groups, up to 10 students contribute one or two sentences, but dictations need to be kept to a reasonable length to be sure beginning readers will be able to read them back. This activity is divided into a 4-day sequence, but it can be accomplished in fewer days with smaller groups.

Materials

You will need chart paper, an overhead projector, a computer, or another way to record dictation so that students can observe as the teacher writes.

Procedures

Day 1: Share an experience and collect dictations.

Find a stimulus (a box turtle, fall leaves, parts of a flashlight) or experience (a trip to the bakery, a classroom visitor, the first snowfall) to share with students. It should be an interesting and memorable experience that encourages students to talk. For some individual dictations, students can be prompted to tell a personal experience without a prop or special event.

After a discussion that stimulates ideas and vocabulary, ask each student to tell you something to write down. Say each word as you write it and invite the group to help decide some of the letters or spellings you need. Talk about conventions such as capitals and punctuation. Reread each sentence and make any changes the speaker requests. Decide on a title at the end as a kind of summary of the ideas. Then reread the entire dictation. Reread it again as the students read along with you in a choral reading fashion. Then have them repeat after you, sentence by sentence in the manner of echo reading, as you point to each word.

Before day 2, make a copy of the dictation for each student in the group. Computers make it easy to create these copies. Select a font that has the type of letters easily recognized by young readers and enlarge it as much as possible. Without a computer it is still easy to make copies by writing neatly in your best manuscript handwriting. These copies will go into each student's personal reader and should be numbered.

Day 2: Reread dictations and underline known words.

Choral read the dictation again and encourage the students to follow along on their own copies, pointing to words as they read. Individual students can be called on to read a sentence. Once students can read the dictation successfully, they are invited to underline known words for their word bank. You can point to the underlined words randomly to make sure they know the words they underline. Students might also make an illustration to go with the dictation.

Day 3: Choral read and make word cards of known words.

Students can work together or individually to read the dictation again. Make word cards for underlined words that are recognized accurately and quickly.

Day 4 and on: Choral read and review new word cards.

Students continue to reread their dictations, review the words in their word banks, and complete their pictures. A new dictation or story cycle is begun when students can read their new readings with good accuracy and modest fluency.

In our Reading Buddies tutoring programs, students have personal readers that they take with them back and forth from the tutoring sessions to their classrooms. Students also take the personal readers home, where they reread the stories, review their word banks, and sort words and pictures. (Caserta-Henry, Bear, & Del Porto, 1997). In *Bookbuddies*, tutors store the personal readers in their tutoring boxes (Johnston et al., 1998).

Bilingual entries in the personal readers are particularly useful during the early part of the letter name–alphabetic stage (Bear & Barone, 1998). These bilingual stories are written in both the first and second languages. Often these dictations are based on language experience activities conducted in class. These dictations are usually just one or two sentences long. A school aide or parent can help with the translations.

Support Reading with Rhymes and Pattern Stories 5–3

Rhymes and jingles and predictable patterned texts make good reading materials because they provide support for beginning readers and can then be used to harvest known words for word banks.

Materials

Find a rhyme, jingle, or predictable story that students will find memorable and readable. You can focus on one major pattern or verse. Find a big book or make a chart or overhead of the text for group work, and make copies of the rhymes and patterns for students' personal readers.

Procedures

Day 1: Introduce and read the text.

Talk about the title and cover and look at the pictures (if applicable) with the students for information about the rhyme or pattern story. Read the rhyme or story to students while fingerpointing the text. Read fluently and with expression but not too fast. Stop periodically to discuss and enjoy the story. Lead students to reflect on the story by asking general questions, such as "What do you think of the story? What is your favorite part?" Ask students to help you return to a few favorite pages. Reread these parts of the text and point to a few words to see if some students are able to recognize words at sight. Invite students to choral or echo read the entire text if it is short or read parts of the text. Decide which parts of the text will be compiled for personal readers. Type the text onto a single page or two that can be duplicated for each student. Number and date this entry.

Days 2, 3, and 4: Reread the rhyme or story and harvest words for word bank.

The same procedures described in activity 5-2 for dictations can be done as follow-ups for rhymes and predictable text. Sentences from the text can also be written on sentence strips, and the students can work to rebuild the text in a pocket chart.

In Figure 5-7 you see a sample of a rhyme taken from the story *Caps for Sale*. In this figure, Kari has made a tick mark each time she reread the rhyme. It is interesting to see that she has used a base-4 marking system. Kari has underlined a number of words that she harvested into her word bank for her personal reader.

The Grand Sort with Word Bank Words 5-4

This is an important sort in which students review their individual word banks. In this sort, students simply go through their word cards, saying the words they know, putting them in one pile, and placing the unknown words to the side. The student tries to move quickly through the pile. The words that students put in the "I know" pile can be used in subsequent sorts.

The unknown words can be discarded, but this can be a touchy point for some students who are hesitant to throw away words. There is no harm in letting a few temporarily unknown words remain, but the big mistake is when a student proceeds to another word study activity with a number of unknown words. Working with so many unknown words makes students' work hesitant, prone to errors, and frustrating. Students in the early letter name–alphabetic stage do not have the word knowledge they need to sound out unknown words, so the teacher should show them how to figure out an unknown word by using context. Referring to the number on the back of the card, the students return to their personal reader and find the word. Their familiarity with the story and the context usually ensures that they can figure out the unknown word. Because this procedure can be time consuming, it is important that only a small percent of words in a word bank are unknown.

Caps for sale
 Caps for sale
Red and white and blue and green
 The finest caps you have ever seen.

Caps for sale
 Caps for sale
 Red and white and blue and green
 The finest caps you have ever seen.

FIGURE 5-7 Caps for Sale
 Source: *Caps for Sale*, by Esphyr Slobodkina © 1940 and 1947,
 © renewed 1968 by Esphyr Slobodkina. Used by permission of
 HarperCollins Publishers.

Variations

Students can do this sort under the teacher’s supervision, with a partner or classroom volunteer, or independently. This is a good opportunity for heterogeneous groups.

Reviewing Word Bank Words 5-5

There are other ways to review and work with words in the word bank.

1. *The pickup game.* Lay out a collection of 5 to 10 words faceup. Those words that the student does not know or frequently confuses are good candidates. A teacher, assistant, classroom volunteer, or another student calls out the words randomly for the student to find and pick up.
2. The *“I am thinking of”* game. This activity is similar to the pickup game, but the student is given clues instead of words: “I am thinking of a word that rhymes with *pet*” or “I am thinking of a word that starts like *play*.”
3. *Concentration.* Make a second set of words and play this classic game as described in activity 4-24.
4. *Word hunts.* Students look through their word banks for words that have a particular feature, for example, words that start with *t*, words that end in *m*, or words that have an *o* in them.
5. *Concept sorts.* Students look through their word banks for words that fit given semantic categories, for example, words that are animals, words that are people, color words, or things in a house.

Note: You might want to keep a supply of low-tension rubber bands or library card envelopes to wrap or store selected words. In this way, word sorts can be started on one day and continued on the following day.

Alphabetizing Word Banks 5-6

Materials

Make and laminate a large alphabet strip up to 6 feet long.

Procedures

Ask a student to lay out the alphabet strip and, using his or her word bank words, place the words under the beginning letter. Pictures can be sorted by beginning sounds as well.

REVIEW OF BEGINNING SOUNDS INCLUDING DIGRAPHS AND BLENDS



Spanish speakers use the Spanish picture and word sorts on the CD to have enough examples to make generalizations about beginning sounds.

A number of activities or games in Chapter 4 are appropriate for students in the letter name–alphabetic stage who are working to master single consonants, digraphs, and blends: Soundline (4-29), Letter Spin for Sounds (4-30), Object Sorting by Sounds (4-31), and Follow-the-Path Games (4-32). Concentration is another adaptable game. Any two pictures that begin with the same sound(s) make a match that can be claimed.

Sound Boards 5-7

Sound boards are references for letter-sound features (beginning consonants, digraphs and blends) and can be found in the Appendix. They provide a key word and picture for each letter-sound match, helping students internalize the associations.

Procedures

1. Place a copy of the sound boards at the front of students’ writing folders. These boards make it easy for students to find letters to stand for the sounds they want to use. Reduced copies of relevant sound boards can be taped to students’ desks.

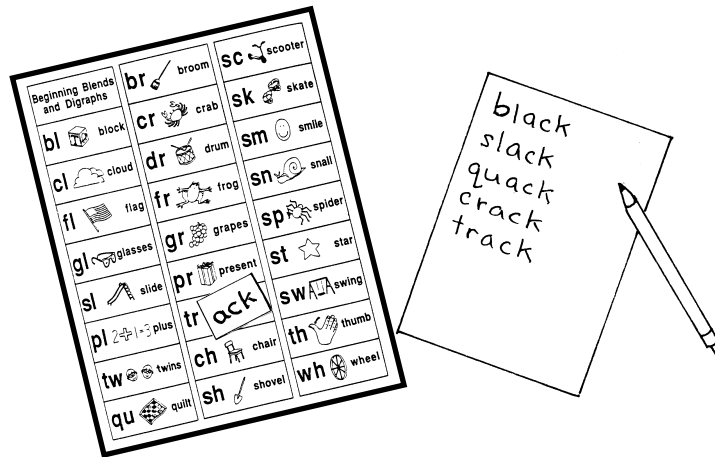


FIGURE 5-8 Expanding a Word Family Using a Sound Board

2. Teachers often post charts of various letter-sound features. Recently, the new technology of chart printers has made it possible to take the individual sound boards and enlarge them to poster size. The sound board posters can be displayed in a prominent place in primary classrooms. This gives beginning writers the opportunity to refer to the enlarged sound boards for the letters of a word they want to write.
3. A sound board can serve as a word study record. In Figure 5-8, a sound board is part of a student's word study folder. Students can indicate which features they have studied by coloring the boxes lightly.
4. Sound boards can be used to generate more words to add to a word family. The rime of the family is written on a small card and slid down beside the beginning sounds. In Figure 5-8 the word family *ack* has been expanded by adding many different blends and digraphs.

**Adaptable
for Other
Stages**

Word Hunts 5-9

Word hunts are conducted several different ways and at different times in the letter name–alphabetic stage.

Procedures

1. In the early letter name–alphabetic stage, students hunt for words that begin with the particular initial consonants, blends, or digraphs they are studying. They should look for words they know in familiar reading materials such as their personal reader or by going through their own word banks. Word hunts can be done independently, with a partner, or in small groups.
2. Students can also hunt for pictures that correspond to beginning sounds. Pictures can be cut from magazines or catalogs and pasted onto individual papers, group charts, or into alphabet books. When hunting for pictures, it helps if the teacher, aide, or student helper rips out pages on which there are pictures that contain the feature being hunted. Students can be asked to label the pictures they find by spelling as best they can.
3. Students can also hunt for words or pictures that sound like the short vowel they are studying. For example, a student could be asked to find words that sound like *red* in the middle.
4. Word hunts can be made into a game when teams of two or three students hunt for words in a given time period. Students read the words to the teacher or group.
5. One to three students can roam the room hunting for words they know. Students write down the words they find that are in their word banks.

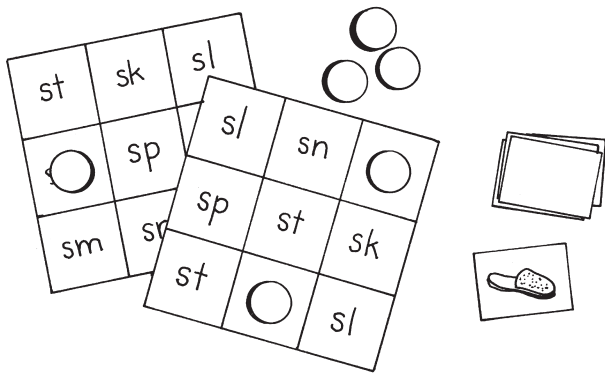


FIGURE 5-9 Blend Bingo Boards

Adaptable
for Other
Stages

Letter Name-Alphabetic Stage

Initial Sound Bingo 5-10

In this version of Bingo, students discriminate among the initial sounds. This is another activity that can be adapted to consonant blends, digraphs, and vowels.

Materials

Make Bingo cards with 9 or 16 squares. In each square, write a letter(s) that features the sounds students have been studying in sorts (Figure 5-9). You also need Bingo markers and picture cards to match sounds.

Procedures

Work in a center or with small groups of two to four students. Each student gets a Bingo card and markers. Students take turns drawing a card from the stack and calling out the picture name. Students place a marker on the corresponding square. Play continues until someone gets Bingo.

Gruff Drops Troll at Bridge 5-11

This activity is a special version of the basic follow-the-path game that reinforces *r* blends.* It was developed after reading Paul Galdone’s *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, which was part of a class study of books about monsters. Many of the books yielded a great crop of consonant-plus-*r* words such as *growl*, *groan*, and *fright*. These were sorted into categories by beginning blends.

Materials

Provide manila folders with a game path filled in with consonant-plus-*r* blend letters (as shown in Figure 5-10), four button markers, and picture cards of the features being stud-

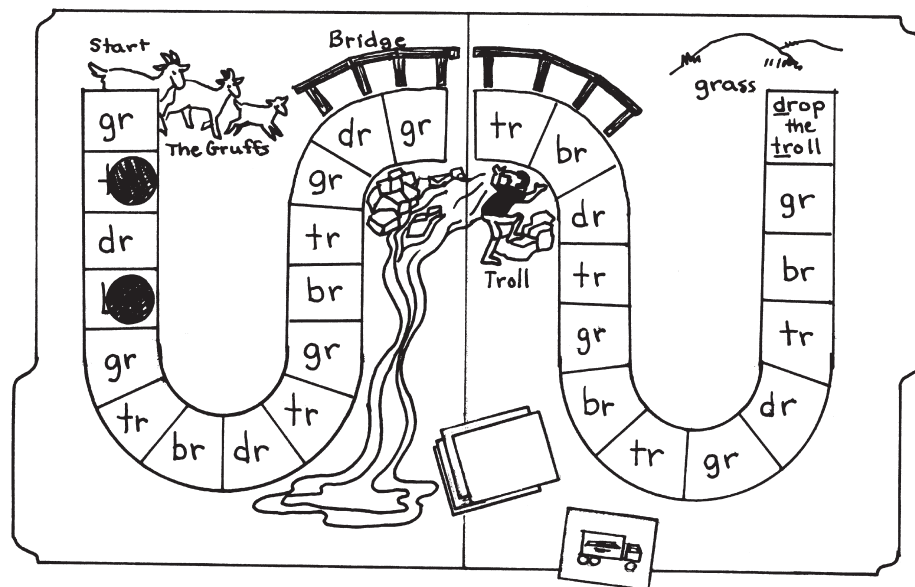


FIGURE 5-10 Gameboard for Gruff Drops Troll at Bridge

*Esther Heatley developed this board game as a literature extension.

ied. Follow-the-path templates and directions for preparing the boards can be found in the Appendix.

Procedures

1. Each player selects a button for a marker. Students turn over picture cards containing the consonant-plus-*r* blend pictures. Players take turns moving the marker to the correct space.
2. The winner drops the troll from the bridge by drawing a picture that begins with *dr* (for *drop*) or *tr* (for *troll*) for the last space.

Sea World Diorama 5-12

Students create a sea world diorama while they study the *sh* digraph.

Materials

You will need pictures and items that begin with *s* and *sh*. To make a diorama, students will need a shoe box, construction paper, colorful tissue paper, glue, scissors, markers, sand, and tiny shells or cut-up natural sponges.

Procedures

1. After sorting pictures that begin with *s* and *sh*, have students think of animals and things in the sea that begin with those sounds and make a list of them (e.g., starfish, seals, sea horses, sunfish, swordfish, scuba divers, sunken ships, sea snakes, sharks, sea anemone, seaweed, sponges, shrimp, and shells).*
2. Introduce students to how a diorama is constructed.
3. Students find or draw and cut out pictures of things that belong in the sea beginning with *s* and *sh*. Students might work in groups to glue, tape, or hang these items in their shoe boxes. Small shells or some natural sponges add decoration. Cover the bottom of the “sea” with sand.

Variations

Expand the sea diorama with sea blends (e.g., *st*, *sc*, *sw*) or create other types of dioramas. Similar books can be used. Elizabeth Schuett recommends *Sheep on a Ship* (by N. Shaw).

Adaptable
for Other
Stages

Match! 5-13

In this game, similar to the card game War, students look for matches of the beginning sounds they have recently studied.

Materials

Create a set of cards that feature pictures with four to eight different beginning sounds. Include at least four pictures for each sound. Pictures can be copied from the Appendix, glued on cardstock, and laminated.

Procedures

Each student has half the deck of pictures. Students turn a picture card faceup from their deck at the same time. If the pictures begin with the same sound, the first person to recognize and say “Match!” gets the pair. If the pictures do not match, another set is turned over until a match occurs. There can be penalties for calling out “Match” carelessly.

*Cindy Booth developed this activity.

Variations

This game can be played with word families, short vowels, and long vowels.

Beginning and End Dominoes 5-14

This activity is a picture sort to match initial and final consonants (e.g., *lamp* matches *pig*).

Materials

Pictures for these matches can be found in the Appendix. Wendy Brown put together a list of pictured words. Divide a 2-by-4-inch card in half and paste a picture from each of the following pairs on each side.

ghost-tub	book-leg	gate-pin	nurse-goat	ten-log
dishes-map	pencil-bed	desk-mop	pig-nut	tent-bed
rain-dog	goat-zip	pin-sit	tie-mad	door-pear
two-hat	toes-road	doll-sick	key-lips	seal-boat
pen-bug	gas-sun	net-belt	tail-sink	kite-jeep

Procedures

Students are given a set of five pairs mixed up and challenged to match the pairs as in the traditional game of dominoes.

Variations

Students compete to make the longest string they can with a collection of pictures (e.g., tub/book-kite/toad-doll/lip-pig/game-mad/door-rope/pen).

THE STUDY OF WORD FAMILIES

Once students begin the study of word families, they are expected to read and spell the words they sort. Many word games can be adapted as follow-up activities for word sorting. Some activities are especially designed to enhance students' understandings of how families work.

Building, Blending, and Extending 5-15

This series of teacher-led activities is designed to reinforce phoneme segmentation, phoneme blending, and the use of analogy as a spelling strategy (if I can spell *cat*, then I can spell *fat*.) as students work with onsets and rimes. This should follow sorting lessons in which students have worked with a collection of word families.

Materials

Prepare a set of cards to be used in a pocket chart. Write the targeted onsets and rimes on these cards, keeping the letters of the rime together. For the *at* family you would have cards with *at*, *b*, *c*, *f*, *h*, *m*, *p*, *r*, and *s*. As students study digraphs and blends those can be added as well, such as *th*, *ch*, and *fl*.

Procedures

1. *Building*. This procedure reinforces the spelling of word families. The teacher should model how to make the words in the family by putting up two cards such as *m* and *at*. Then the students are asked what letter would be needed to make the word *sat*. The teacher would model how to replace the *m* in *mat* with the *s* to make the new word.

Students could then be invited to make additional words in the family by substituting beginning letters.

2. *Blending.* This activity reinforces the reading of word families. It is similar to building except that the teacher starts with a word the students all know, such as *cat*, and then substitutes a different beginning letter. The teacher models how to blend the new onset with the familiar rime to read the word: "Mmmmmm, aaaaaaat, mat. The new word is *mat*." Students are then asked to use the two parts of the onset and rime to sound out the word just as the teacher has modeled.
3. *Extending.* During the extending part of this activity, the teacher selects words that are not included in the sort to demonstrate to students that they can read and spell many more words once they know how to spell several words in a family. This is a time when you might demonstrate using unusual words like *vat* or challenging words with digraphs and blends such as *chat*, *flat*, or *scat*.

Variations

Students can work with small cards at their seats as the teacher leads the activity.

Add more digraphs and blends as they are studied. There will be many words you can make with families such as *ack* and *ick*.

For the study of short vowels and the CVC pattern the vowel is separated from the rime (*at* is cut apart into *a* and *t*).

After working with the cards, students can be asked to write the words on paper, small white boards, or chalk boards.

Word Family Wheels and Flip Charts 5-16

Wheels and flip charts, as shown in Figure 5-11, are fun for students to play with independently or with partners. The wheels and flip charts are used to reinforce the patterns. Prior to using the wheels and charts, students have worked in small groups to sort words from the various families.

Materials

To make word family wheels, follow these three steps:

1. Cut two 6-inch circles from tagboard. Cut a wedge from one circle and write the vowel and ending consonants or rime to the right of it. Make a round hole in the center.
2. On the second tagboard circle, write beginning sounds that form words with that family. For example, the *op* family can be formed with *b, c, h, l, m, p, s, t, ch, sh, cl, and st*. Space the letters evenly around the outside edge so that only one at a time will show through the "window" wedge.
3. Cut a slit in the middle of the circle. Put the circle with the wedge on top of the other circle. Push a brass fastener through the round hole and the slit. Flatten the fastener, making sure the top circle can turn.

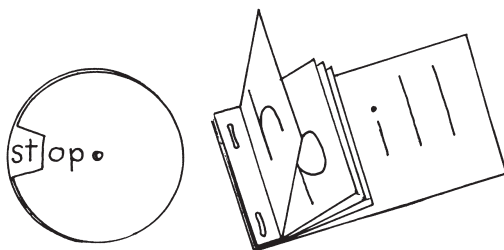


FIGURE 5-11 Word Family Wheel and Flip Chart

To make flip charts, the steps are as follows:

1. Use a piece of tagboard or lightweight cardboard for the base of the flip book. Write the family or rime on the right half of the base.
2. Cut pages that are half the length of the base piece and staple to the left side of the base. Write beginning sounds or onsets on each one.

Variations

Students can draw a picture to accompany each word.

Show Me 5-17

This activity is a favorite with teachers who are teaching word families and short vowels.*

Materials

Make each student an individual pocket to hold letter cards. To make a pocket, cut paper into rectangles about 7×5 inches. Fold up 1 inch along the 7-inch side, then fold the whole thing into overlapping thirds. Staple at the edges to make three pockets (see Figure 5-12). Cut additional paper into cards 1.5×4 inches to make 14 for each student. Print letters on the top half of each card, making sure the entire letter is visible when inserted in the pocket. A useful assortment of letters for this activity includes the five short vowels and *b, d, f, g, m, n, p, r, and t*. Too many consonants can be hard to manage.

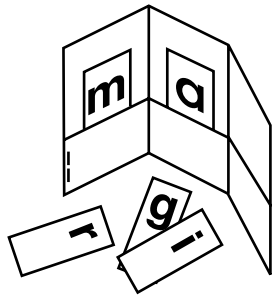


FIGURE 5-12
Show Me Game

Procedures

Each student gets a pocket and an assortment of letter cards. When the teacher or designated caller names a word, the students put the necessary letters in the spaces and fold up their pockets. When “show me” is announced, everyone opens their pocket at once for the teacher to see. The emphasis is on practice, not competition, but points for accuracy could be kept if desired.

Start with words having the same families such as *bad, sad, or mad*, where the students focus primarily on changing the initial consonants. Move on to a different family and different vowels. For example, you could follow this sequence: *mad, mat, hat, hot, pot, pet*.

Variations

1. The Show Me pockets are used for beginning sounds and/or ending sounds. Put digraphs or blends on cards to spell words such as sh-i-p or f-a-st.
2. Long-vowel patterns are spelled using a four-pocket folder.

Word Maker with Beginning Consonants, Digraphs, and Blends 5-18

Students match blends and digraphs with word families to make words.**

Materials

Create a collection of cards that have onsets on half (single consonants, blends, and digraphs) and common short-vowel rimes on the other. For students in the later letter name–alphabetic stage, include rimes with ending blends, digraphs, and preconsonantal nasals such as *ish, ash, ush, ing, ang, ast, ust, ank, ink, ump, amp, ack, ell, and all*.

Procedures

1. Each student begins by drawing five cards from the deck. With the five cards faceup, each student tries to create words as shown in Figure 5-13.
2. Once the students have made one or two words from their first five cards they begin taking turns drawing cards from the deck. Every time they make a word they can draw two more cards. If they cannot make a word they draw one card.
3. Play continues until all the letter cards are used up. The player with the most words is the winner.

*This excellent activity is attributed to Margery Beatty who taught in the Waynesboro, Virginia, Public Schools many years ago.

**Katherine Preston contributed to this activity.

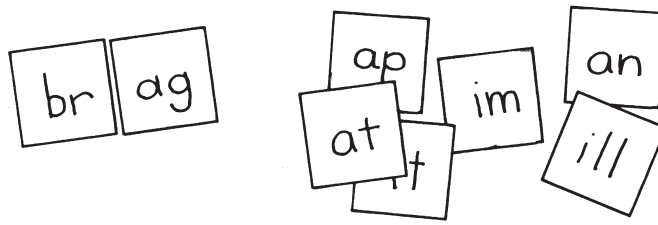


FIGURE 5-13 Word Maker Cards

Variations

Students can work independently with the word maker cards to generate and record as many words as possible.

Read It, Find It 5-19*

This simple but fun game for two players reinforces the identification of words students have been studying in word family sorts.

Materials

You will need 30 pennies. Prepare a game board by writing words from familiar word families onto a 5×6 grid or a path. Prepare a set of word cards that have the same words as those on the board and place these facedown. Words can be duplicated, so it is okay if there are two or three of the same word on the board. Be sure that there are the same number of word cards as words on the board.

Procedures

1. One player flips a penny for heads or tails position. Each player chooses 15 pennies. One student will be heads and turn all his or her pennies to the heads side. The other will be tails and turn the pennies to the tails side.
2. The player who did not flip will begin by taking a card from the pile and reading it. The player then finds the word on the board and covers it with a penny. If the player cannot read the word or reads it incorrectly, he or she cannot cover the word.
3. The next player repeats, each player drawing one card per turn.
4. The first player to cover 15 words, using up all the pennies, is the winner.

Variations

This game can be adapted for short-vowel words and word families.

Roll the Dice 5-20

This game is for two to four players. It reinforces word families and builds automaticity.

Materials

You need a cube on which to write four contrasting word families, (e.g., *an*, *ap*, *ag*, and *at*). A blank side is labeled "Lose a Turn," and another is labeled "Roll Again" (see Figure 5-14). You will also need a blackboard or paper for recording words.



FIGURE 5-14
Cube for Roll the Dice Game

*This game was created by Liana Acevedo of Greensboro, North Carolina.

Procedures

Students roll the die. If it lands on a word family space, the student must come up with a word for that family and record it on the chalkboard or paper. Students keep their own lists and can use a word only once, although someone else may have used it. If a player is stumped or lands on Lose a Turn, the die is passed to the next person. If the student lands on Roll Again, he or she takes another turn. The person who records the most words at the end of the allotted time wins.

Variations

1. Play with two dice and have two teams for a relay. Each team has a recorder. The first person of each team rolls the dice and quickly calls out an appropriate word. The recorder writes the word on the board. The player hands the dice to the next player and play goes quickly to the end of the line. With this variation you would not need to lose a turn or roll again.
2. This game can also be used with vowel patterns, beginning consonants, or blends.

Rhyming Families 5-22

Materials

Adaptable for Other Stages

Prepare a follow-the-path gameboard as shown in Figure 5-15. You will also need a single die or a spinner, pieces to move around the board, pencils, and paper for each player. Directions for making gameboards and spinners as well as gameboard templates are in the Appendix. Write a word from each word family you have been studying in each space on the board. You can also write in special directions such as again Roll Again, Free Space, Go Back 2 Spaces, and Write Two Words.

Procedures

The object is to make new words to rhyme with words on the gameboard that do not match the other players' words.

1. Spin to determine who goes first. Play proceeds clockwise.
2. The first player spins and moves the number of places indicated on the spinner.

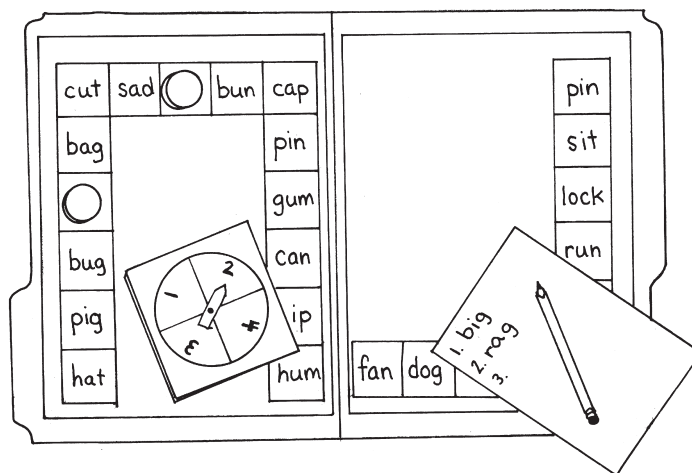


FIGURE 5-15 Gameboard for Word Families

3. The player reads the word in the space where he or she lands. All players write a rhyming word by changing initial letter(s). Players number their words as they go. Play continues until someone reaches the end of the path.
4. Beginning with the player who reaches the end first, each player reads the first word on his or her list. Players who have a word that does not match the other players' words get to circle that word. For example, if players have *cat*, *bat*, *cat*, and *splat*, only the players having *bat* and *splat* would circle their words. Continue until all words have been compared.
5. Each circle is worth one point, plus the player who reaches the end first receives two extra points. The student with the most points wins the game.

Variations

Label each space on the gameboard with the rime of a family you have studied (*at*, *an*, *ad*, *ack*). Use no more than five different rimes and repeat them around the path. Prepare a set of cards that have short-vowel pictures that correspond to the families. Students move around the board by selecting a picture and moving to the space it matches. For example, a student who has a picture of a hat would move to the next space with *at* written on it.



Go Fish 5-23

This classic game has been adapted to word study and can be played by two to four players. This version can be used as a review of word families.

Materials

Create decks of blank cards with four words from different word families written on them. (e.g., *that*, *bat*, *fat*, and *hat* are written on four cards). Write each word at the top of the card so that the words are visible when held in the hand, as shown in Figure 5-16.

Procedures

1. Five cards are dealt to each player and the remainder are placed in the middle as a draw pile. The first player asks any other player for a match to a card in his or her hand: "Give me all your words that rhyme with *hat*." If the player receives a matching card, he or she may put the pair down and ask for another card. If the other player does not have the card requested, that player tells the first player to "Go fish," which means that the first player must draw a card from the "fish pond." The first player's turn is over when he or she can no longer make a match.
2. Play continues around the circle until one player runs out of cards. Points can be awarded to the first person to go out and to the person who has the most matching cards.

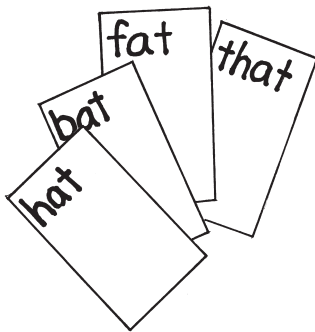


FIGURE 5-16 Playing Cards for Go Fish

Variations

Go Fish can be adapted for beginning sounds and blends using pictures, or it can be used with vowel patterns.*

*Janet Bloodgood adapted this word study game from the familiar game of Go Fish.

STUDY OF SHORT VOWELS

Once students are automatic with word families, it is time to study short vowels in non-rhyming CVC words. After this feature has been explored through word sorts and weekly routines, games can provide additional practice.

Adaptable
for Other
Stages

Hopping Frog Game 5-24

This game for two to four players reviews the five short vowels.*

Materials

1. Use a gameboard or make your own course with a manila folder. Cut green circle lily pads for each space and write CVC words students have used in word sorts on each one (e.g., *pin, get, hot, bad, leg, run, bug, wish*).
2. You will need four frog markers. The spinner is marked into five sections, with a vowel and illustrating picture in each (*a, apple; e, ten; i, fish; o, frog; u, sun*). See the Appendix for directions on how to make a spinner. Figure 5-17 shows a sample board for the game.

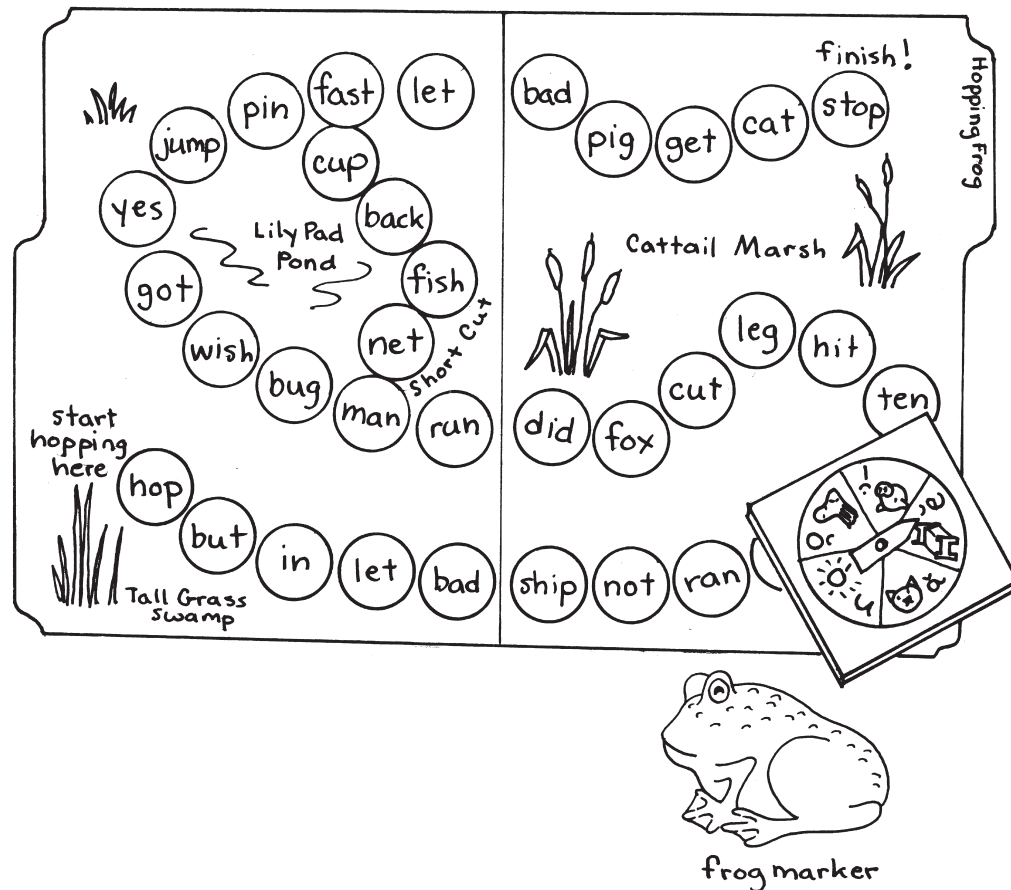


FIGURE 5-17 Frog Marker and Hopping Frog Game

*This game was developed by Janet Bloodgood and has become a favorite.

Procedures

Each student selects a frog marker. Players take turns spinning and moving their markers to the first word that matches the vowel sound on which they land (e.g., *e*, *get*). They then pronounce this word and must say another word with the same vowel sound to stay on that space. The next player then spins and plays. The first player who can finish the course and hop a frog off the board wins.

Variations

1. Students can write the words they land on and organize them in columns by short vowel.
2. The same game plan could be used for long-vowel patterns and inflected endings.



Making-Words-with-Cubes Game 5-25

Short-vowel words are built with letter cubes in this game. It can be used for other vowels as well.

Materials

Letter cubes that can be found in many games (Boggle and Perquackery) are needed. Playing pieces can also be made from blank wooden cubes. Write all the vowels on one cube to be sure that a vowel always lands faceup. Put a variety of consonants on five or six other cubes. (Pairs like *qu* and *ck* might be written together.) The students need a sand clock or timer, paper and pencil, and a record sheet such as the one shown in Figure 5-18.

Procedures

1. In pairs, students take turns being the player and the recorder. The recorder writes the words made by the player.
2. A player shakes the letters and spills them out onto the table, and then starts the timer.
3. The word maker moves the cubes about to create words and spells them to the scribe. The letters can be moved around to make more words. Errors should be ignored at this point. Write the words in columns by the number of letters in the words.
4. When the time ends, the students review the words and check for accuracy. Words are then scored. Count the total number of letters used. Students soon realize that the bigger the words they make, the greater their score.

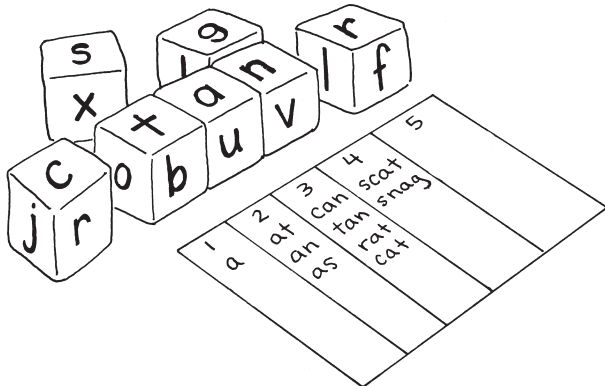


FIGURE 5-18 Making-Words-with-Cubes Game

Variations

Students in the within word pattern stage should work with two vowel cubes. On a second cube, write vowel markers such as *e* (put two or three), *a*, *i*, and *o*. By this time, students may be able to use multiplication to total the letters (e.g., four 3-letter words is 12).

The Bug Race 5-26

This is a variation of the basic follow-the-path game and reviews combinations of short vowels. This example uses a bug theme, but it can be adapted to many other themes such as the zoo, space travel, comic characters, or vehicles. Use stickers and cutouts to add interest to the basic path templates found in the Appendix.

Materials

Use one of the follow-the-path gameboards and label the spaces with *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, or *u*. Add pictures of leaves, grass, and so on, to make it resemble a bug's world. Make copies of short-vowel pictures on tagboard and cut them apart or paste paper copies of the pictures onto cards. It is important that the pictures do not show through the card. On several additional cards write commands such as Skip a Turn, Go Back 2 Spaces, and Move Ahead 3 Spaces. Make buglike playing pieces from bottle caps by drawing in eyes, antennae, and spots with a permanent fine-tip marker.

Procedures

1. Shuffle the picture and command cards and turn them facedown in a pile. The players move around the board by turning over a picture and moving their playing piece to the next free space on the board that has the corresponding short vowel.
2. The student who reaches the end first is the winner.

Variations

Long-vowel pictures can be used for students in the within word pattern stage.

Follow the Pictures 5-27

This variation of the basic follow-the-path game works as a follow-up to word sorts for short-vowel words.

Materials

Use one of the follow-the-path templates in the Appendix. Make reduced copies of short-vowel pictures (about half size or 50% should work). Cut the pictures out and paste them in the spaces on the game path. Use two, three, four, or five short vowels. You will also need playing pieces to move along the path and a spinner or single die. In some spaces you can write Roll Again, Go Back 2 Spaces, and other directives. Include a card on which all the words are written in the same order they are pasted to settle any arguments about spelling.

Procedures

1. Students take turns spinning for a number. Before they can move to the space indicated by the spinner, they must correctly spell the word pictured. If they cannot spell the word, they must stay where they are for that turn.
2. The student who reaches the end first is the winner.

Variations

Any pictures can be pasted on the gameboard. Long-vowel pictures can be used for students in the within word pattern stage.

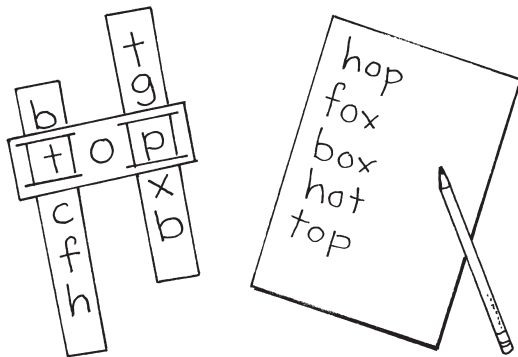


FIGURE 5-19 Slider for Slide-a-Word

Slide-a-Word 5-28

Students can be asked to list and then read all the CVC words they are able to generate using the slider created by Jeradi Cohen (Figure 5-19). As different short vowels are studied, the central vowel letter can be changed.

Materials

Supplies include tagboard or posterboard, ruler, marker, single-edge razor blade, and scissors.

Procedures

1. Cut a piece of tagboard or posterboard into strips 8.5 by 2.5 inches. Using the razor, cut a pair of horizontal slits on each end 1.5 inches apart. Write a vowel in the center.
2. Cut two 12-by-1.5-inch strips for each slider. Thread them through the slits at each end and print a variety of consonants, blends, or digraphs in the spaces as they appear through the slits. Turn the strips over and print additional beginning and ending sounds on the back.

Put in an M or N 5-29

Materials

Create word pairs on word cards for sorting:

rag	rang	rig	ring	sag	sang	tag	tang
cap	camp	rap	ramp	trap	tramp	bag	bang
dig	ding	pup	pump	hag	hang	lip	limp
rug	rung	gag	gang	bet	bent	wig	wing
sprig	spring	pin	ping	hug	hung	lap	lamp
swig	swing						

Procedures

Three or four students can play. Students read the words, shuffle the deck, and deal all of the cards out to players. Students dealt pairs throw them down and replace the pair before the first round of play. Students take turns putting down a word from their hand. The student who has the match to the pair takes the card and throws down one of the cards from his or her hand. The student with the most cards is the winner.

Variations

Nonsense words can be inserted to see if students lose a turn for putting in a nonword such as thim, stanp, or rang.