



Tricks and Strategies

The ALLITERATION TRICK & GAME

Objective

- To develop phonemic awareness of initial sounds.

Teaching point

The alliterative 'logic' of Letterland adds an engaging discovery factor to phonemic awareness activities. In Letterland, the characters love things that start with their sounds.

The activity of searching for alliterative words enables children to have creative input as they build up a bigger picture of each character. Children feel like they are discovering new things about their Letterland friends. This element of discovery has proved a real strength of the Letterland programme, making the children highly motivated to learn more about their Letterland friends.

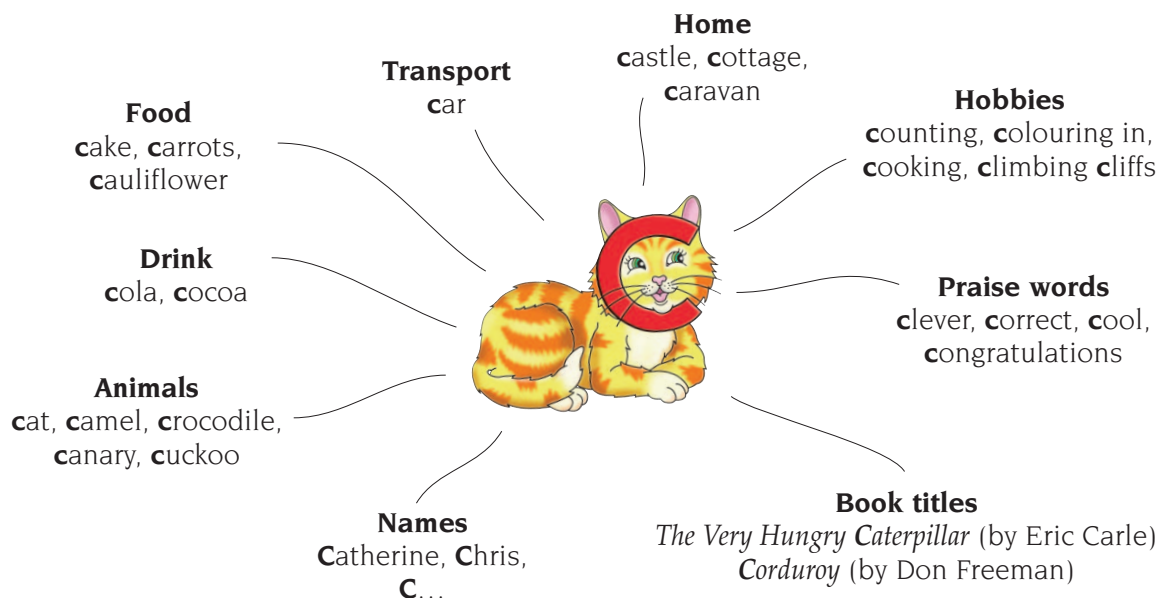
The TRICK

Do you know how you can tell what each Letterland character likes? Let me give you a clue. Listen carefully... Firefighter Fred's **ff**avourite **ff**ood is **ff**resh **ff**ish. **M**unching **M**ike likes **mm**mushrooms and **mm**melons. **L**ucy **L**amp **L**ight loves **ll**ettuce **ll**eaves and **ll**emon **ll**ollipops. Can you guess what the Letterland ALLITERATION TRICK is? How can we tell what each character likes?

Each Letterlander likes things that start with his or her sound.

The ALLITERATION GAME

- Children supply their own alliterative information about a Letterlander. You can help them with hints, for example: *I'm thinking of a long, thin, crunchy, orange vegetable (carrot) that Clever Cat likes to eat.*



The 'I LIKE ...' GAME

- Each child thinks of their own favourite food and tells the class who in Letterland is sure to like it too. *I like _____ and so does _____!*

Cross-Curricular Opportunities

Objectives

- To make conceptual links between target sounds and other subjects.
- To broaden the learning experience.

Procedure

- Relate the Letterlanders to arts and craft, e.g. make masks or puppets of the Letterlanders out of card or papier mâché. Alternatively, use modelling dough with thick letters in one colour and the characters' features in other colours.
- Make large murals of the imaginary place called Letterland. Encourage the children to plan where each character might live and add appropriate alliterative landmarks or objects around them.
- Organise a Letterland day or event. For example an assembly, a Letterland dressing-up day, a Letterland Olympics or a Letterland fête, bringing in artwork, crafts, puppetry and storytelling.
- Incorporate Letterland into any Science and Technology lesson, e.g. study light or electricity with Lucy Lamp Light or magnetism with Munching Mike.
- Relate individual Letterlanders to other activities that begin with their sound, e.g. count with Clever Cat or do sums with Sammy Snake.



Picture-coding



Objectives

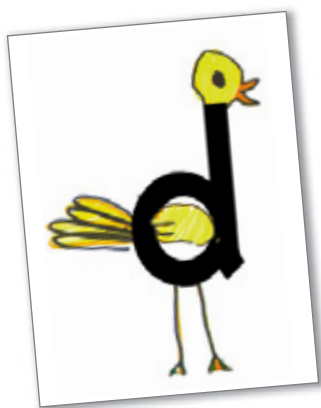
- To draw attention to the shape and orientation of individual letters.
- To draw attention to target sounds in selected words.
- To draw attention to all the sounds in selected words.

Teaching point

Picture-coding is the process of adding Letterland pictogram details to a letter shape. It can be done by teachers and children. It can be used for arts and craft, for board work and for object labels.

Procedure

- Children add pictogram details to plain letters. They can draw individual pictogram characters or picture-code whole words.
- To begin with, you may like to provide the plain letter shapes for children to picture-code.
- The children can also make spelling pictures by selecting regular words that can also be illustrated, e.g.. cat, red, sun.
- You can also use picture-coding to draw attention to target sounds in words. You don't have to be an artist - simple 'hand-code' the letters by adding stick figures of simple details to the target letters.



The RHYMING WORDS TRICK

Objective

- To spell and read by analogy.

The TRICK

If I can read ___ I can also read ___, ___, ___, and ___.

If I can spell ___ I can also spell ___, ___, ___ and ___.

Teaching point

One of the strategies children should consciously use when attempting to read or write a new word is to identify a spelling pattern in a word they already know. (You will need to control the use of this strategy, so that children are not making incorrect analogies.)

Section 2 focuses on developing reading and spelling by analogy, using three main resources:

1 Rhyming chants

For example:

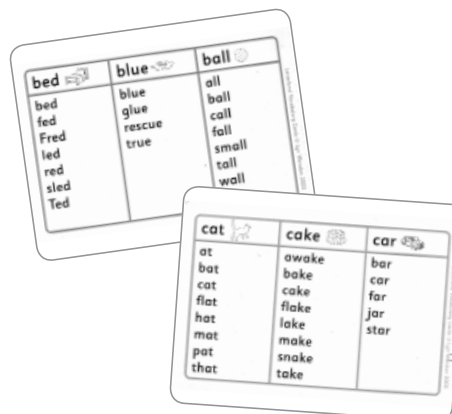
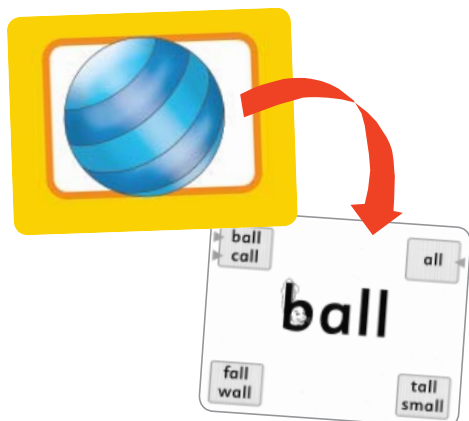
I am happy saying 'ă...' in at.
I am happy saying 'ă...' in bat.
I am happy saying 'ă...' in cat,
and lots of words like that.



2 Vocabulary Cards

You will find rhyming words on the backs of most of these 78 picture cards. Help children to read these rhyming words by analogy, first using the *Vocabulary Cards* and then the 6 photocopiable *Rhyming Words Lists* on the insert accompanying the *Vocabulary Cards* pack which contains all 256 rhyming words.

Rhyming Words Lists



The ROLLERCOASTER TRICK

Objective

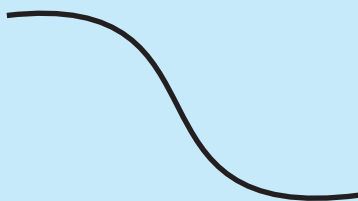
- To blend individual sounds into words.

Teaching point

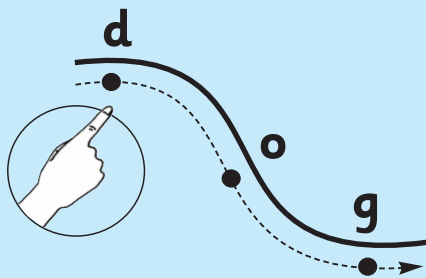
The **ROLLERCOASTER TRICK** is a multi-sensory strategy to help children to blend sounds together all through a word, so the word becomes meaningful.

The TRICK

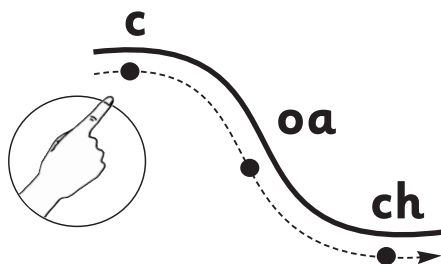
- Write down a regular word on the board, but don't read it aloud, e.g. **dog**.
- Draw this 'rollercoaster' shape on the board.



- Next, write the letters **d**, **o** and **g** on the rollercoaster as shown.



- Finger-trace the shape of the rollercoaster as you all say each sound.
(The children can use a hand action miming a rollercoaster gaining speed as it rushes down the tracks.)
 - ✓ On the first ride, say each individual sound; **d... o... g...**
 - ✓ On the second ride, pick up speed as you blend the sounds together to make a word; **do... g.**
 - ✓ Finally, take a fast ride down the rollercoaster and blend the whole word; **dog.**
- The children can use this blending trick any time they are having trouble reading a phonically regular word. They might like to use one arm (from shoulder to hand) as the rollercoaster, using the other hand to 'ride' the rollercoaster as they blend the sounds smoothly through the word.
- Later on, they can use the same strategy to blend more advanced words, e.g. **c...oa...ch, coach.**



The SYLLABLE TRICK

Objective

- To develop children's phonemic awareness of parts of words by segmenting them into syllables as an aid to reading and spelling.

The TRICK

- Call for complete silence, all ears listening and hands ready to clap. Ask the children to tell you which word is longer: **Sammy** or **Snake**? Help them to discover how many parts (or syllables) each word has by clapping them.
- Explain that clapping is going to be their own special 'trick' for breaking down lots of words into syllables.
- Practise the same pattern of clapping with Dippy Duck, then Talking Tess. Explore the number of syllables in a few of the children's own names. Help them to decide each time, one syllable or two? Or more? Whose is the longest? How many syllables does it have?
- Why do we call this activity Sammy Snake's Syllable Game? Because **syllable** is one of Sammy Snake's favourite English words!

Make this a regular, but brief, fun activity 1) when studying a new Letterlander, and 2) whenever you introduce a new important word, or a long one crops up in a topic, eg. al-li-ga-tor.

Here are some other useful words you could work with:

- hat, acrobat
- butter, butterfly
- cat, caterpillar
- dinner, dinosaur
- egg, elephant
- fish, finish
- green, grapes
- hen, helicopter
- in, insect, invention
- jacket, racket
- king, kangaroo
- lamp, lighthouse, Letterland

and so on.

Longer words:

- aquarium
- celebrating, conversation, congratulations
- dictionary, differences
- hippopotamus
- identify, invitation
- magnificent
- necessary



hat



a- cro- bat



hip- po- pot- a- mus

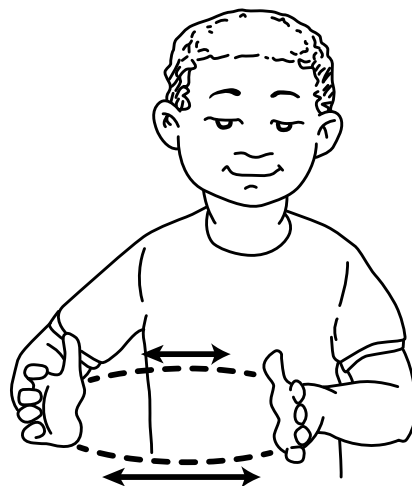
The SLOW-SPEAK TRICK

Objective

- To segment words into individual sounds.

Teaching point

The **SLOW-SPEAK TRICK** helps children to break up spoken words into their individual phonemes, in order to aid spelling.



The TRICK

- Teach children to stretch out any word by saying it so slowly that they can hear each sound. Slow down your voice to emphasise each sound in a word, e.g. **hhha...t, hhha...mmm, mmma...t, sssa...d, sssa...t**
- Children might like to accompany this stretching-out technique with a hand movement. Start with hands together and move the right hand further and further away with each new sound, as if stretching out a giant rubber band.

