



Daily and Supporting Learning Targets

- Opening A: I can identify a keyword for the vowel “e.”
- I can identify the short sound for the vowel “e.”
- I can act out the events from the Letter Story: “e.”
 - I can identify the short vowel sound for every vowel letter.
- Work Time A and B: I can identify the name and sound for the letters “j,” “e,” and “z.” (RF.K.3)
 - I can identify the name of each uppercase and lowercase letter.
 - I can look at each consonant and say its sound.
 - I can identify the short vowel sound for every vowel letter.

Ongoing Assessment

- Observe students during Work Time. Determine whether they can say the sounds for each letter correctly. Refer to Articulatory Gestures chart as needed.
- Record students’ progress on the Snapshot Assessment.

Agenda

1. **Opening (5 minutes)**
 - A. Read-aloud: Letter Story: “e”
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
 - A. Getting to Know Letters (Part 1): “z,” “j,” and “e”
 - B. Letter-Sound Chant: “z,” “e,” and “j”
3. **Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**
 - A. Reflecting on Learning
4. **Differentiated Small Group Instruction and Rotations (40–45 minutes)**

Teaching Notes

In advance:

- Prepare:
 - Letter Story: “e” (wrapped in colorful paper or placed in a decorative container; wrapping and container are optional)
 - Snapshot Assessment (optional; one per student)
- Glue the Keyword Picture Card: “e” on colorful paper (see Cycle 1). This will distinguish the vowels from consonants as they are learned.
- Gather materials for differentiated small group instruction (see Differentiated Small Groups: Work with Teacher).

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

- high-frequency word, keyword (L)
- swayed, swished (T)

Materials

- ☑ Letter Story: “e” (wrapped in colorful paper or placed in a decorative container; wrapping and container are optional; see the Learning Letters Book)
- ☑ Keyword Picture Cards: “z,” “j,” and “e” (one of each for teacher to display)
- ☑ Letter Formation Guidance document (see K–2 Skills Resource Manual)
- ☑ Articulatory Gestures chart (to post)
- ☑ Snapshot Assessment (optional; one per student)

Opening

A. Read-aloud: Letter Story: “e”

- (Suggested transition song, sung to the tune of “I’m a Little Teapot”):

“Now let’s read a story, word by word. Get yourselves ready to repeat what you heard. When we hear the vowel sound, we will say: This is the sound the vowel made today!”
- Invite students to sit in a circle.
- Begin a read-aloud of the Letter Story: “e”:
 1. Teacher displays the wrapped **Letter Story: “e.”**
 2. Teacher says, with expression: “I have here, in my hands, a story to tell. Lis-ten carefully ... lis-ten well.”
 3. Teacher slowly unwraps and reveals the story.
 4. Teacher reads the story aloud expressively and without interruption, using movements to accompany what is happening in the story.
 5. Teacher invites students to stand and silently act out the story in place with him or her while he or she reads it aloud again.
 6. After the second read, teacher asks:

“Who did the children discover?” (elephant)
 7. Teacher invites students to turn to an elbow partner and asks:

“What can you tell each other about elephants from what you heard in the story?”
 8. Teacher invites one or two students to share with the group.
 9. Teacher says: “Let’s keep our eyes out for this /e/-/e/-/e/-lephant today.”

Meeting Students' Needs

- To heighten the anticipation and drama around the presentation of the Letter Story: "e," consider wrapping it in colorful paper or placing it in a decorative container and revealing it slowly.
- Consider having students lie on their stomachs with their heads oriented toward the circle's center while reading the story aloud the first time through. This, together with the unwrapping of the story and the language in step 2, develops a storytelling ritual for the vowel letter stories.
- Acting out the story the second time through not only engages students but also develops Vocabulary. Example:
 - When reading how the grass "swished and swayed," the teacher demonstrates swishing and swaying motions with hands and invites students to do the same.

Work Time

A. Getting to Know Letters (Part 1): "z," "j," and "e"

- (Suggested transition song, sung to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot"):

"Now we'll learn the letters, short and tall. Get your bodies ready to write them all. When we learn the letters, we will shout. We know their names, we figured it out!"
- Begin the Getting to Know Letters (Part 1) instructional practice:
 1. Teacher introduces three new letters: "z," "e," and "j."
 2. Teacher holds up **Keyword Picture Card: "z,"** showing only the picture (zebra).
 3. Student volunteer(s) name the object/animal. ("zebra")
 4. Students tell an elbow partner or whisper into their hand the sound they hear at the beginning of the word. (/z/)
 5. Teacher and students say the sound together: /z/.
 6. Students say the name of the letter. ("z")
 7. Teacher models skywriting the letter as he or she says the keyword ("zebra"), describing proper letter formation (referring to **Letter Formation Guidance document**): "z."
 8. Students skywrite the letter as they say the keyword ("zebra"): "z."
 9. Teacher invites student volunteers to share other words that begin with the /z/ sound.
 10. Teacher invites student volunteers to share words that end with the /z/ sound.
 11. Repeat steps 2–10 with the letter "j" and its keyword.
 12. Teacher holds up Keyword Picture Card: "e," showing only the picture, and asks:

"Who knows the name of this animal?" ("elephant")
 13. Teacher says: "That's right! There's that elephant we read about! I thought it might show up again! This is the letter 'e,' and it is a vowel, just like 'a,' 'i,' 'u,' and 'o'! Vowels have super-important jobs in words. Every word must have at least one vowel in it! We've finally met the fifth vowel!"
 14. Teacher displays the Keyword Picture Cards and shows how the vowels are all on colored paper to remind students that they are all vowels.

15. Teacher repeats steps 4–10 with “e” and its sound /e/.
16. Teacher says: “Now we’ve met ‘z,’ ‘e,’ and ‘j.’ In the next lesson, we’ll get to know them even better. We’ll learn how to write them!”

Meeting Students’ Needs

- Have students use their arm during skywriting rather than just their hand or finger. The large movement engages the physical connection to both the letter formation and phoneme.
- Consider inviting students to share what they notice about how their mouths move when making the /e/ sound.
- Remind students that the /j/ sound starts by bringing the tongue up to the roof of their mouths.
- Remind students that the /z/ sound is a continuous voiced sound. They can feel the vibrations in their throats.
- If students need help thinking of new words beginning or ending with the /j/ sound, offer clues. Example:

“What do you make when you squeeze an orange into a glass?” (juice)
- If students need help thinking of new words beginning with the /e/ sound, offer clues. Example:

“What do birds lay?” (eggs)
- If students need help thinking of new words beginning with the /z/ sound, offer clues. Example:

“What closes your coat when you go outside?” (zipper)
- Consider sharing with students that the /z/ sound can be made with a letters “s” and “z” (hose vs. maze)
- Consider sharing with students that “e” does not typically end words alone. “e” is usually paired as a double “ee” (bee). The sound heard is a long /e/ sound. (“e” says its name.)
- If students offer a word that begins with a different sound, remind them to notice the way /e/, /j/, or /z/ feels in their mouths when they say each keyword. Ask students to repeat the word and notice if the beginning sound of the word feels the same in their mouths.
- Encourage students to offer classmates’ names as an option for beginning sounds.

B. Letter-Sound Chant: “z,” “j,” and “e”

- (Suggested transition song, sung to the tune of “I’m a Little Teapot”):

“Now let’s say the alphabet, letter by letter. Here is the letter, here is the sound. When we chant together, we sound great. Listen up to the sounds we make!”
- Begin the Letter-Sound Chant instructional practice:
 1. Teacher models the Letter-Sound Chant for “z”: “z, zebra, /z/,” and repeats.
 2. Teacher asks students to join in the Letter-Sound Chant for “z”: “z, zebra, /z/,” and repeats.

3. Repeat steps 1–2 with “j” and “e.”
4. Teacher says: “Great job! When we learn new letters, we will also learn keywords to help us unlock the sound. Knowing the sounds for letters helps us become better readers.”

Meeting Students' Needs (continued)

- Refer to the Articulatory Gestures chart (see supporting materials) as needed to support students in producing sounds for each letter.

Closing and Assessment

A. Reflecting on Learning

- Emphasize that successful learners think about what they’ve learned and why it’s important. Consider using a metaphor, such as a baseball player learning to keep his or her eye on the ball to know exactly when to hit it.
- Ask:

“When we see the letter ‘e,’ how can we remember the sound it makes?” (Think of our keyword, “elephant,” and listen for the first sound or the sound that “e” makes at the beginning.)

“How will that help us with reading or writing?” (Responses will vary.)

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who need additional support organizing their ideas: Provide sentence frames. Example:
 - “When I said the word ‘elephant,’ I ____.”

Differentiated Small Groups: Work with Teacher

Suggested Plan: Teacher works with the Pre-Alphabetic and Early Partial Alphabetic groups. Teacher may meet briefly with the Late Partial and Early Full Alphabetic groups to get them started on independent work.

Note: Groups not working with the teacher at a given time should be engaged in purposeful independent rotation work. Refer to the Independent and Small Group Work guidance document (see K–2 Skills Resource Manual) for more details.

Pre-Alphabetic:

- Practice activity: Teacher guides students in sorting pictures sharing initial sounds with keywords (“j” and “z”) (“e” is optional). Pictures include:
 - “jar,” “jump rope,” “jaguar,” “jellyfish,” “jacket,” “jack-o-lantern,” “jeep,” “zebra,” “zigzag,” “zipper,” “zit,” “zero,” “escalator,” “egg,” “elf,” “elephant”

- Students cut apart Initial Sound Sort Pictures.
 - Teacher guides students in sorting pictures by initial sound (/j/ and /z/) (/e/ is optional).
 - Students paste pictures onto Initial Sound Sort sheet (2 column).
- Consider also reading the Letter Stories: “j” and “z,” found in the Learning Letters Book. After reading the stories, practice skywriting the letters.
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - Initial Sound Sort Pictures (one per student)
 - Initial Sound Sort sheet (one per student)
 - Scissors and glue sticks (one each per student)

Early Partial Alphabetic:

- Practice activity: Students sort pictures sharing initial sounds with keywords (“j,” “e,” and “z”). Pictures include:
 - “jar,” “jump rope,” “jaguar,” “jellyfish,” “jacket,” “jack-o-lantern,” “jeep,” “zebra,” “zigzag,” “zipper,” “zit,” “zero,” “escalator,” “egg,” “elf,” “elephant”
 - Students cut apart Initial Sound Sort Pictures.
 - Students sort and paste pictures onto Initial Sound Sort sheet (2 column).
- Consider also reading the Letter Stories “z” and “j,” found in the Learning Letters Book. After reading the stories, practice skywriting the letters.
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - Initial Sound Sort Pictures (one per student)
 - Initial Sound Sort sheet (one per student)
 - Scissors and glue sticks (one each per student)

Late Partial and Early Full Alphabetic:

- Practice activity: Students sort pictures sharing initial and final sounds with keywords (“j” and “z”). Consider writing the words on the back for students to check. Pictures include:
 - “sponge,” “orange,” “bridge,” “judge,” “garbage,” “badge,” “cage,” “jeep,” “jacket,” “jump rope,” “jar,” “jeep,” “zigzag,” “zipper,” “zero,” “zebra,” “sneeze,” “trees,” “rose,” “hose,” “maze”
- Students cut apart Initial and Final Sound Pictures.
- Students sort and paste pictures onto Sort sheet (4 column).
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - Initial and Final Sound Sort Pictures (one per student)
 - Initial and Final Sound Sort sheet (one per student)
 - Scissors and glue sticks (one each per student)