



Daily and Supporting Learning Targets

- Opening A: I can sing the “ABC Song” to name the letters of the alphabet in order.
- Work Time A: I can show letter-sound correspondence for “a.” (RF.K.3)
 - I can identify the name of each uppercase letter.
 - I can identify the name of each lowercase letter.
 - I can look at each consonant and say its sound.
- Work Time B: I can follow directions for writing letters. (L.K.1)
 - I can print lowercase “a.”
 - I can print uppercase “A.”

Ongoing Assessment

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can sing the names of the letters in order.
- Observe students during Work Time A and B. Determine whether they can identify the sound for the letter “a” and use the handwriting paper to print lowercase and uppercase “a.”

Agenda

1. **Opening (5 minutes)**
 - A. The Alphabet: “ABC Song”
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
 - A. Getting to Know Letters: Reviewing the Picture Keyword for “a”
 - B. Getting to Know Letters: Printing Lowercase and Uppercase “a”
3. **Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**
 - A. Reflecting on Learning
4. **Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)**

Teaching Notes

In advance:

- Prepare:
 - A place in the classroom to display each letter of the alphabet as it is learned (see Lesson 5) (examples: on chart paper, poster paper, or a series of cards placed in order on a wall). This should contain empty spaces/cards/boxes for all of the letters of the alphabet, with the exception of “t,” which was added in Lesson 6, but clearly show two empty spaces/cards/boxes where the lowercase and uppercase “t”s would be. This allows students to see that there are 26 total letters. As they learn each letter, the Keyword Picture Card will go into one of the spaces. This is the Alphabet anchor chart.
 - Colorful paper to place the Keyword Picture Card: “a” on to distinguish it as a vowel. This will be continued each time a new vowel is introduced in a cycle.

- Review Letter Formation Guidance document (see K–2 Skills Resource Manual).
- Gather materials for independent work rotations (see Independent Work Time).

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

- curve, letter, vowel, word (L)
- alligator (T)

Materials

- ✓ Alphabet anchor chart (see Teaching Notes)
- ✓ Keyword Picture Card: “t” (on Alphabet anchor chart)
- ✓ Keyword Picture Card: “a” (one to display; from Lesson 6)
- ✓ Colorful paper on which to display the Keyword Picture Card: “a”
- ✓ Letter Demonstration Board (one for teacher)
- ✓ Letter Formation Guidance document (standalone document for teacher reference; see K–2 Skills Resource Manual)
- ✓ “a” handwriting paper (one per student)
- ✓ Writing utensils (one per student; optional)

Opening

A. The Alphabet: “ABC Song”

- (Suggested transition song: “ABC Song,” sung to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”):
“A b c d e f g (pause) h i j k l m n o p (pause) q r s (pause) t u v (pause) w x (pause) y and z. These are the letters we use to read and write. (Pause.) Let’s get to know them by sound and by sight.”
- Begin the Alphabet instructional practice:
 1. Teacher shows students the **Alphabet anchor chart** and invites them to sing the song again.
 2. As students sing the name of each letter, the teacher points to each spot on the Alphabet anchor chart in turn.
 3. After students finish the song, teacher points to the **Keyword Picture Card: “t”** on the anchor chart and says: “‘t,’ tern, /t/.”
 4. Teacher invites students to repeat: “‘t,’ tern, /t/.”
 5. Teacher says: “There are 26 letters in the alphabet. Every one of them is important because each one of them shows a sound.”
 6. Teacher says: “There are five letters that have extra-special jobs in words; those letters are called vowels. ‘T’ is a really important letter, but it isn’t one of those five vowel letters. Over the next several weeks, as we meet new letters, we need to be on the lookout for those extra-special letters called vowels.”

Meeting Students' Needs

- Consider inviting students to stand and move in a circle while singing the transition song. Model how they can take a step on each letter. When they sing the lyrics "by sound," they can cup their hands behind their ears to illustrate careful listening. When singing the lyrics "by sight," they can make "binoculars" around their eyes with their hands to illustrate careful observing. This helps establish the idea that learning letters involves knowing the shape, name, and sound.

Work Time

A. Getting to Know Letters: Reviewing the Picture Keyword for "a"

- (Suggested transition song: "I'm a Little Teapot"):
"Now we'll learn the letters, short and tall. Get your body 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 instructional practice:
 1. Teacher displays the **Keyword Picture Card: "a"** and asks:
"Who knows the name of this animal?" (alligator)
"What sound do we hear at the beginning of the word 'alligator'?" (/a/)
 2. Teacher says: "Let's all say that sound together: /a/."
 3. Teacher invites students to feel how their mouths move as they make the sound /a/.
 4. Teacher invites the students to make the /a/ sound again.
 5. Teacher says: "This is the letter 'a.' This letter 'shows' the sound /a/. When we see it, we automatically think /a/."
 6. Teacher says: "We know that 'alligator' begins with the sound /a/. I wonder if we can think of any more words that begin with that sound."
 7. Teacher asks:
"Who can share a word that begins with /a/?"
 8. Teacher records word on the board and asks:
"What letter is making our /a/ sound in this word?" ("a")
 9. Teacher says: "Right! The letter 'a' says /a/. I'm going to circle the letter 'a' in the words we share."
 10. Teacher invites students to share two to three more words that begin with /a/.
 11. Teacher displays the Keyword Picture Card: "a" and says: "We have met the letter 'a' and we know that it shows the sound /a/. The picture of the alligator helps us get the letter and sound in our memories. When we see this card, we can say: 'a,' alligator, /a/."
 12. Teacher invites students to repeat: 'a,' alligator, /a/."
 13. Teacher says: "But before we can place it on our Alphabet anchor chart, we need to know something else about the letter 'a': it is a vowel letter! We should put it on some special paper so that when we look at it, we remember that it's one of those letters that has an extra-important job in words."

14. Teacher invites students to sing the “ABC Song” while he or she points to each empty box or space for each letter, stopping right away at “a” and placing the Keyword Picture Card in that place.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- If students need help thinking of new words beginning with the sound /a/, offer clues. Example:
 - Point to an apple and ask:

“What is this called?”
- If students offer a word that begins with a different sound, remind them to notice the way /a/ feels in their mouths when they say the keyword. Ask them to repeat the word they offered 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. Getting to Know Letters: Printing Lowercase and Uppercase “a”

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

“Now we’ll write a letter, line by line. Get your hand ready to start on time. When we write a letter, we start on top. Pull down until it’s time to stop.”
- Begin the Getting to Know Letters instructional practice:
 1. Teacher says: “We learned the name and the sound of the vowel letter ‘a.’ Now we’re going to learn how to write the letter.”
 2. Teacher traces the hidden “a” in the picture of the alligator on the Keyword Picture Card and invites students to articulate the shape (curved lines) as they did in Lesson 6.
 3. Teacher says: “Now I will say the sound and skywrite the letter ‘a,’ and then you can do the same.”
 4. Students echo the sound and say the letter while skywriting: “/a/, ‘a.’”
 5. Teacher invites students to watch while he or she models proper letter formation on the **Letter Demonstration Board**:
 - “a” is a belly line letter. It starts on the belly line.
 - Point to the belly line.
 - Pull around toward the mouse and curve down to the feet line.
 - Curve up and around to end up back where you started.
 - Pull straight back down to the belly line.
 - Teacher says: “‘a,’ alligator, /a/,” and invites students to repeat.
 6. Teacher distributes “a” handwriting paper and writing utensils (optional).
 7. Teacher invites students to put the tip of their fingers or writing utensils on the belly line and guides them to work through the formation as described in step 5.
 8. Teacher circulates to assist students as needed, checking for proper grip.
 9. Students repeat letter formation twice more.
 10. Repeat steps 3–9 with uppercase “A.”

11. Teacher says: "Great job writing the letter 'a.' Remember, to make the lowercase letter 'a,' (repeat letter formation directions). And when we make the capital letter 'A,' (repeat letter formation directions)."

Meeting Students' Needs

- It can take time for students to understand when to use the lowercase version of a letter and when to use the uppercase version. When introducing letter formation for lowercase "a," explain that this is the "a" that is most often used in reading and writing. When introducing the formation of the uppercase "A," put it into the context of a name (e.g., "Now we will write uppercase 'A,' like at the beginning of the names Anthony and Ariel"). It is ideal to use the name of a familiar student or character whenever possible; this makes the function of uppercase letters to indicate proper names more direct and meaningful.

Closing and Assessment

A. Reflecting on Learning

- Before moving to Independent Work Time, consider asking one or more of the following questions:

"What is a letter?" (Responses will vary. Examples: "It shows a sound," "It helps write words.")

"What do we know about the letter 'a'?" (Responses will vary. Examples: "curved lines," "vowel letter," "shows the /a/ sound," "is at the beginning of the word 'alligator.'")

"What will you do today during Independent Work Time that allows you and your classmates to be successful?" (Responses will vary. Examples: "use kind language," "be careful with materials," "take turns.")

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who need additional support organizing their ideas: Provide sentence frames. Example:
— "When I see the letter 'a,' I think (of) ____."

Independent Work Time

Suggested Plan: This first cycle provides time for students to practice what it means to work independently. A brief introduction is made to materials, and expectations for work habits and social interactions are established.

Note: Three suggestions for independent activities are given. Consider using any or all of these. For example, you may want to have all students working on the same activity, or you may want to have two or three activities happening simultaneously for a set time and then rotate students through. By Cycle 2, 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.

Book Browsing:

- Students spend time looking at their own individual book(s).

Word Work:

- Students practice making lower- and uppercase “a” letters using the handwriting paper.
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - “a” handwriting paper (one per student)
 - Pencils (one per student)

Responding to Text:

- Students draw a picture representing the Letter Story: “a.” They should include some details from the story and try to show the “a” hidden in the shape of the alligator.
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - Blank paper (one per student)
 - Drawing supplies