



Daily and Supporting Learning Targets

- Opening A: I can identify the name and sound for the letters I have learned so far (“a” and “t”). (RF.K.3)
 - I can look at each consonant and say its sound.
 - I can look at each vowel and say its short sound.
- Work Time A: I can follow along in a shared text (poem). (RF.K.1)
 - I can point to the first word in a sentence.
 - I can point to the last word in a sentence.
 - I can move my finger under the words as I read them on a page, left to right and top to bottom.
- Work Time B: I can search for letters in a familiar text (poem). (RF.K.3)
 - I can recognize uppercase and lowercase “a” and “t” in a printed text.
 - I can identify the names of the letters “a” and “t.”

Ongoing Assessment

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can sing the names of the letters in order and also name and make the sounds for “a” and “t.”
- Observe students during Work Time A. Determine whether they can orient left to right and top to bottom while exploring written text.
- Observe students during Work Time B. Determine whether they can find upper- and lowercase letters “a” and “t” in words in the poem.

Agenda

1. **Opening (2 minutes)**
 - A. The Alphabet: “a” and “t”
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
 - A. Poem Launch: “Alligator and Tern”
 - B. Poem Letter Search: “a” and “t”
3. **Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**
 - A. Reflecting on Learning
4. **Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)**

Teaching Notes

In advance:

- Prepare enlarged poem: “Alligator and Tern” (see supporting materials).
- Gather materials for independent work rotations (see Independent Work Time).

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

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

Materials

- ☑ Alphabet anchor chart (introduced in Lesson 5)
- ☑ Keyword Picture Card: “t” (to display; from Lesson 4)
- ☑ Keyword Picture Card: “a” (to display; from Lesson 6)
- ☑ Enlarged poem: “Alligator and Tern” (to display)
- ☑ Pointer (optional)
- ☑ Poem: “Alligator and Tern” (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, the 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, and those letters are called vowel letters. ‘T’ is a really important letter, but it isn’t one of those five vowel letters. We have met one of those extra-special letters called vowel letters.”
 7. Teacher points to the **Keyword Picture Card: “a”** on the anchor chart and asks:

“What is the name of the vowel letter we’ve met?” (“a”)
 8. Teacher says: “‘a,’ alligator, /a/.”
 9. Teacher invites students to repeat: “‘a,’ alligator, /a/.”

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.
- When saying "'a,' alligator, /a/," draw out the /a/ sound at the beginning of "alligator" to help students isolate and commit the sound to memory.

Work Time

A. Poem Launch: "Alligator and Tern"

- (Suggested transition song, sung to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot"):
 - "Now let's learn a poem line by line. Get your body ready, we're feeling mighty fine. When we learn the words, we'll play a game. We'll find our letters and say their names."*
- Display the **Enlarged poem: "Alligator and Tern."**
- Introduce the Poem Launch instructional practice:
 1. Teacher says: "These words written right here tell a story about an alligator and a tern."
 2. Teacher invites two students to hold the **Keyword Picture Card: "a"** and **Keyword Picture Card: "t."**
 3. Teacher says: "Listen closely as I read this poem. Touch your nose if you hear anything about our alligator or tern. Each of our volunteers will hold up their Keyword Picture Card when they hear their character mentioned."
 4. Teacher reads the poem aloud once with expression, pointing at each word on the enlarged poem with a finger or **pointer** while students listen.
 5. Teacher invites students to extend their arms toward the enlarged poem and follow left to right and top to bottom as he or she reads the poem aloud again, pointing at each word as students listen.
 6. Teacher invites the student volunteers to rejoin the group.
 7. Teacher says: "Now let's learn the poem. I'll say the first line and you'll repeat. We'll do that for each line in the poem."
 8. After teacher says each line and students echo them, teacher and students recite the poem aloud together once or twice more with expression.

Meeting Students' Needs

- Starting in Cycle 2, students will follow along with their own copies of poems when they are formally introduced to the Poem Launch instructional practice. In this lesson, having students extend their arms and move them from left to right and top to bottom while the teacher reads the poem begins a foundation for learning directionality (RF.K.1) when "reading" text.
- Consider skipping step 2 if management is a concern.

B. Poem Letter Search: “a” and “t”

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

“Now we’ve learned our poem, line by line. We got our our bodies ready, and we’re feeling mighty fine. Now that we know the words, we’ll play a game. We’ll find our letters and say their names.”
- Introduce the Poem Letter Search instructional practice:
 1. Teacher asks:

“What game are Alligator and Tern playing at the end of this poem?” (They look for an “a” or “t” in more than just their name.)
 2. Teacher writes: “alligator” and “tern” on the board and says: “These are the words ‘alligator’ and ‘tern,’ and each of these words is made up of letters.”
 3. Teacher invites students to count the number of letters in each word. (eight and four, respectively)
 4. Teacher underlines the initial “a” in “alligator” and “t” in “tern” and says: “We know that ‘alligator’ starts with the vowel letter ‘a’ and ‘tern’ starts with the letter ‘t.’”
 5. Teacher invites a student volunteer(s) to identify any other “a” or “t” letters in the words.
 6. Teacher explains that they will play the game that Alligator and Tern play in the poem. They will “look for an ‘a’ or ‘t’ in more than just their name.” They will look for those letters in words in the poem.
 7. Teacher distributes individual copies of **poem: “Alligator and Tern” (optional)**.
 8. Teacher invites students to look through their copies of the poem on their own to find as many “a” and “t” letters as they can.
 9. Teacher invites three or four individual students (or as many as time allows) to find and circle the letter “a” in words in the enlarged poem. As each letter is found, the teacher asks:

“Is that a lowercase ‘a’ or uppercase ‘a’?”
 10. Teacher draws students’ attention to the uppercase “A” letters, noting their role in showing the first word in a sentence.
 11. Teacher repeats steps 9–10 with the letter “t.”
 12. Teacher circles any remaining letters “a” and “t” in the poem.
 13. Teacher says: “We did a great job finding the letters ‘a’ and ‘t’ in the words in our poem!”

Meeting Students’ Needs

- If time or management is a concern at this early point in the year, consider skipping steps 7–8 and working with just the enlarged poem to search for the letters “a” and “t.”
- To deepen word analysis, as students find an “a” or “t” in a word, consider asking them to identify where in the word the letter is (beginning, middle, or end). Also consider saying the word aloud and inviting them to listen for the /a/ or /t/ sound in the word. Some words, such as “the,” do not contain the sound associated with the individual letter, giving rise to opportunity for discussion about “Why might this be?”

- Consider counting the number of uppercase vs. lowercase “a” and then “t” letters there are in the poem. This supports students in seeing that lowercase letters are used more frequently.

Closing and Assessment

A. Reflecting on Learning

- Before moving to Independent Work Time, consider asking one or more of the following questions as appropriate for your students’ needs:

“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,’” “is in a lot of words.”)

“What do we know about the letter ‘t’?” (Responses will vary. Examples: “straight lines,” “shows the /t/ sound,” “is at the beginning of the word ‘tern,’” “is in a lot of words.”)

“What do we know about uppercase and lowercase letters?” (Responses will vary. Example: “Uppercase letters are used at the beginning of a sentence or a name.”)

“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. Examples:
 - “When I see the letter ‘a,’ I think (of) ____.”
 - “When I see the letter ‘t,’ 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 circle the letters “a” and “t” on their individual copies of the poem: “Alligator and Tern.”
- Students practice making lower- and uppercase “a” and “t” letters using the handwriting paper.
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - Pencils (one per student)
 - Individual copies of the poem: “Alligator and Tern” (one per student)
 - “a” and “t” handwriting paper (one per student)

Responding to Text:

- Students build poetry notebooks and tape or glue their copies of the poem: “Alligator and Tern” into them and then illustrate the poem.
- Additional Supporting Materials:
 - A spiral or composition notebook (one per student)
 - Individual copies of the poem: “Alligator and Tern” (one per student)
 - Tape or glue sticks (to tape or glue the poems into the notebooks)