

**Grade K:** Module 1: Cycle 1

# Overview

## Phonemes Introduced in This Cycle

/t/, /a/

## High-Frequency Words

N/A

## Cycle Word List

In Modules 1 and 2, Kindergarteners work with spoken words and sounds as they learn the primary sound for each consonant and short vowel. The following lists provide examples of spoken words that contain sounds taught in this cycle, found in the initial or final position of the word.

The last five are spoken words with two and three phonemes. Students who are able to segment individual sounds within written and spoken VC (vowel, consonant) and CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words can use words from this list (or similar). Note that this list may contain some sounds that have not yet been introduced.

apple	tire	cat	at
animal	turtle	foot	am
ant	tape	goat	sat
alligator	table	light	rat
ambulance	toe	nut	tap



## Cycle-at-a-Glance

### Lesson 1

#### RF.K.1, RF.K.1b

#### Agenda

1. **Opening (5 minutes)**
  - A. Word Game: What's the Word?
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
  - A. Name Game: The Word We Heard
  - B. Read-aloud: "The Search for Names" (Part 1)

**3. Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**

A. Reflecting on Learning

**4. Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)****Daily Learning Targets**

- I can tell the word for an object or action I see. (RF.K.1)
- I can say the name of a classmate and “read” his or her name. (RF.K.1)
- I can listen to the story “The Search for Names.”

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can name the objects and actions they see.
- Observe students during Work Time B. Notice any connections students make between spoken names and their written representation (on Name Cards).

**RF.K.1, RF.K.1b****Agenda****1. Opening (5–7 minutes)**

A. Words and Letters: The Word We Heard

**2. Work Time (10–15 minutes)**

A. Distinguishing between Letters and Words: Letters and Words Rocks (optional)

B. Read-aloud: “The Search for Names” (Part 2)

**3. Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**

A. Reflecting on Learning

**4. Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)****Daily Learning Targets**

- I can say the name of a classmate and “read” his or her name. (RF.K.1)
- I can find (written) words and letters and tell the difference between them. (RF.K.1)
- I can listen to the story “The Search for Names” and answer questions about what I heard.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can move from left to right and top to bottom when tracking print.
- Observe students during Work Time A. Determine whether they can distinguish between a word and a letter.

Lesson 3

**RF.K.1, RF.K.1a, RF.K.1d, RF.K.3, RF.K.3a**

**Agenda**

1. **Opening (5 minutes)**
  - A. Read-aloud: “The Search for Names” (Part 3)
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
  - A. Skywriting: Curved and Straight Lines
  - B. Introducing Handwriting Paper
3. **Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**
  - A. Reflecting on Learning
4. **Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)**

**Daily Learning Targets**

- I can listen to the story “The Search for Names” and make connections to what I’m learning.
- I can tell what I notice about the letters in my name.
- I can make curved and straight lines with my hands in the air and on handwriting paper.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can make connections between the message in the story (everything has a name) and their learning (words/ names can be written and read).
- Observe students during Work Time A and B. Determine whether they can go from the top down while making curved and straight lines in the air and on handwriting paper.

Lesson 4

**RF.K.3, RF.K.3a**

**Agenda**

1. **Opening (5 minutes)**
  - A. Read-aloud: Letter Story: “t”
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
  - A. Showing the Sound: The Letter “t”
  - B. Handwriting: Vertical and Horizontal Lines
3. **Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**
  - A. Reflecting on Learning
4. **Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)**

**Daily Learning Targets**

- I can listen to and act out the events in the Letter Story: “t.”
- I can show letter-sound correspondence for “t.” (RF.K.3)
- I can write vertical lines from the top down and horizontal lines from left to right.

### Ongoing Assessment

- Observe students during Work Time A. Determine whether they can say the sound for the letter “t” correctly.
- Observe students during Work Time B. Determine whether they can make vertical lines from the top down (head line to the feet line) and horizontal lines from left to right along the belly line.

**RF.K.1, RF.K.1d, RF.K.3, RF.K.3a, L.K.1, L.K.1a**

### 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 “t”

B. Getting to Know Letters: Printing Lowercase and Uppercase “t”

#### 3. Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)

A. Reflecting on Learning

#### 4. Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)

### Daily Learning Targets

- I can sing the “ABC song” to name the letters of the alphabet in order.
- I can show letter-sound correspondence for “t.” (RF.K.3)
- I can follow directions for writing letters.

### 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 “t” and use the handwriting paper to print lowercase and uppercase “t.”

**RF.K.3, RF.K.3a**

### Agenda

#### 1. Opening (5 minutes)

A. Read-aloud: Letter Story: “a”

#### 2. Work Time (10–15 minutes)

A. Showing the Sound: The Letter “a”

B. Handwriting: Curved and Diagonal Lines

#### 3. Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)

A. Reflecting on Learning

#### 4. Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)

Lesson 5

Lesson 6

### Daily Learning Targets

- I can listen to and act out the events in the Letter Story: “a.”
- I can show letter-sound correspondence for “a.” (RF.K.3)
- I can write curved and diagonal lines.

### Ongoing Assessment

- Observe students during Work Time A. Determine whether they can say the sound for the letter “a” correctly.
- Observe students during Work Time B. Determine whether they can make curved lines starting from belly line and diagonal lines starting from the head line.

## Lesson 7

### RF.K.1, RF.K.1d, RF.K.3, RF.K.3a, L.K.1, L.K.1a

#### 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)**

### Daily Learning Targets

- I can sing the “ABC Song” to name the letters of the alphabet in order.
- I can show letter-sound correspondence for “a.” (RF.K.3)
- I can follow directions for writing letters. (L.K.1)

### 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.”

## Lesson 8

### RF.K.1, RF.K.1a, RF.K.1b, RF.K.1d, RF.K.3, RF.K.3a, RF.K.3b

#### 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)****Daily Learning Targets**

- I can identify the name and sound for the letters I have learned so far (“a” and “t”). (RF.K.3)
- I can follow along in a shared text (poem). (RF.K.1)
- I can search for letters in a familiar text (poem). (RF.K.3)

**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.

**RF.K.1, RF.K.1a, RF.K.1b, RF.K.1d, RF.K.2, RF.K.2b, RF.K.3, RF.K.3a, RF.K.3b****Agenda****1. Opening (2 minutes)**

A. Letter-Sound Chant: “a” and “t”

**2. Work Time (10–15 minutes)**

A. Rhythm and Beats in the Poem: “Alligator and Tern”

B. Shared Text: Tracking Print in the Poem: “Alligator and Tern”

**3. Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**

A. Reflecting on Learning

**4. Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)****Daily Learning Targets**

- I can identify the name and sound for the letters “a” and “t.” (RF.K.3)
- I can feel and count the syllables (beats) in the words of a poem. (RF.K.2)
- I can follow along in a shared text (poem). (RF.K.1)

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can identify the name and sound for the letters “a” and “t.”
- Observe students during Work Time A. Determine whether they can identify the number of “beats” (syllables) in a spoken word.
- Observe students during Work Time B. Determine whether they can move left to right and top to bottom while following text with their fingers.

**RF.K.2, RF.K.2a, RF.K.3, RF.K.3a, RF.K.3b****Agenda**

1. **Opening (2 minutes)**
  - A. Letter-Sound Chant: “a” and “t”
2. **Work Time (10–15 minutes)**
  - A. Exploring Rhyme: “I’m a Little Teapot”
  - B. Exploring Rhyme: “Alligator and Tern”
3. **Closing and Assessment (2 minutes)**
  - A. Reflecting on Learning
4. **Independent Work Time (40–45 minutes)**

**Daily Learning Targets**

- I can identify the name and sound for the letters “a” and “t.” (RF.K.3)
- I can identify and produce words that rhyme. (RF.K.2)

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Observe students during Opening A. Determine whether they can sing the names of the letters in order and identify the name and sound for the letters “a” and “t.”
- Observe students during Work Time A and B. Determine whether they can identify and produce words that rhyme.

**Lesson 1 Teaching Notes****Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- In this first cycle, whole group lessons are designed to establish a culture of inquiry around spoken words, written words, sounds, and letters while familiarizing students with some of the materials and structures used in the first two modules of Kindergarten. Following the lesson, Independent Work Time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work and to administer any Benchmark Assessments that may not have been completed before the beginning of the module.
- Over the course of this cycle’s ten lessons, students are introduced to the relationship between spoken and written words, individual sounds (phonemes) within spoken words; their visual representation through letters (graphemes); and rhythm, beats, and rhyme in spoken language. Lessons 1–3 develop the knowledge that words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters and that the letters within words “show” (represent) individual sounds in words. Over the course of Lessons 4–6, students work through a carefully designed set of experiences (precursors to formal instructional practices introduced in Cycle 2) to develop letter identification (name, sound, and formation) that result in key-words for the letters “t” (/t/) and “a” (/a/). Finally, Lessons 7–10 provide opportunities for students to identify the newly learned letters in print; become familiar with directionality when “reading” text; and explore rhythm, beats (syllables), and rhyme. The practices used in these four lessons lay the foundation for related instructional practices that are introduced formally in Cycle 2.



- In Opening A of this first lesson, students are guided to identify spoken words that name objects and actions.
- During Work Time A, students play a game that begins to build understanding that their own name (spoken word) can be “shown” by a consistent set of letters.
- Work Time B introduces the first of three parts of a story: “The Search for Names.” In this story, a village chief is visited in a dream by the stars, who share with him the secrets they have placed in all things on Earth. He wakes and draws what he has seen, and then decides to explore the world to find those things. Over the course of the first three lessons, the story reveals a connection between “names” and the ability to communicate about the world we experience. In the process, it also allows for opportunities to highlight habits of character, including collaboration, perseverance, and growth mindset, that support successful student learning within a classroom community. In this first lesson, the first part of the story is simply read for enjoyment.
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

**Down the road:**

- In the Closing, students reflect on habits of character, thinking about what they will do to allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time. As students move into Cycle 2, they need to be able to work independently while the teacher meets with one small group at a time.

**Lesson 2 Teaching Notes****Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- In this first cycle, whole group lessons are designed to establish a culture of inquiry around spoken words, written words, sounds, and letters while familiarizing students with some of the materials and structures used in the first two modules of Kindergarten. Following the lesson, Independent Work Time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work and to administer any Benchmark Assessments that may not have been completed before the beginning of the module.
- Over the course of this cycle’s ten lessons, students are introduced to the relationship between spoken and written words, individual sounds (phonemes) within spoken words; their visual representation through letters (graphemes); and rhythm, beats, and rhyme in spoken language. Lessons 1–3 develop the knowledge that words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters and that the letters within words “show” (represent) individual sounds in words. Over the course of Lessons 4–6, students work through a carefully designed set of experiences (precursors to formal instructional practices introduced in Cycle 2) to develop letter identification (name, sound, and formation) that result in keywords for the letters “t” (/t/) and “a” (/a/). Finally, Lessons 7–10 provide opportunities for students to identify the newly learned letters in print; become familiar with directionality when “reading” text; and explore rhythm, beats (syllables), and rhyme. The practices used in these four lessons lay the foundation for related instructional practices that are introduced formally in Cycle 2.

- In Opening A of this first lesson, students revisit the game The Word I Heard from Work Time A in Lesson 1. This time, they are guided to match spoken words to printed words in the chant. In addition, they examine their names to discover that they are made up of letters (RF.K.1).
- During Work Time A (optional), students play a game, Letters and Words Rocks, that helps them differentiate between letters and words, reinforcing the work in Opening A (RF.K.1). This game is optional, as Opening A may run long to accommodate several student volunteers. Consider introducing and playing this game at another time.
- In Work Time B, the story “The Search for Names” is revisited and the second part is read aloud. In this part, the village chief (Jeffi), who is ready to explore all the wonderful things he has seen in his dream, is stopped by a selfish wizard who wants the chief to give him the secret of the stars. The chief refuses, and the wizard casts a spell that prevents the chief from going out to search the world. At the end of this part, we meet two young children and discover that they have each had a dream about the chief. In this second lesson, students consider questions about the story that have them think about the importance of words in naming the world around us. While the RL standards are not explicitly taught in the Reading Foundations Skills Block, the purpose for developing foundational skills is to be able to access printed words. The story supports development of this conceptual understanding. Over the course of the first three lessons, the story reveals a connection between names and the ability to communicate about the world we experience. In the process, it also allows for opportunities to highlight habits of character including collaboration, perseverance, and growth mindset that support successful student learning within a classroom community.
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

### **How it builds on previous work:**

- In Lesson 1, students explored the relationship between spoken words and written words. In this lesson, students learn that words are made of letters. They examine the difference between a letter and a word and begin to articulate that difference.

### **Down the road:**

- In the Closing, students begin to articulate what they have learned. This becomes a regular reflection routine starting in Cycle 2. In addition, students also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time. As students move into Cycle 2, they need to be able to work independently while the teacher meets with one small group at a time.

## **Lesson 3 Teaching Notes**

### **Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- In this first cycle, whole group lessons are designed to establish a culture of inquiry around spoken words, written words, sounds, and letters while familiarizing students with some of the materials and structures used in the first two modules of Kindergarten. Following the lesson, Independent Work Time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work and to administer any Benchmark Assessments that may not have been completed before the beginning of the module.

- Over the course of this cycle’s ten lessons, students are introduced to the relationship between spoken and written words, individual sounds (phonemes) within spoken words; their visual representation through letters (graphemes); and rhythm, beats, and rhyme in spoken language. Lessons 1–3 develop the knowledge that words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters and that the letters within words “show” (represent) individual sounds in words. Over the course of Lessons 4–6, students work through a carefully designed set of experiences (precursors to formal instructional practices introduced in Cycle 2) to develop letter identification (name, sound, and formation) that result in keywords for the letters “t” (/t/) and “a” (/a/). Finally, Lessons 7–10 provide opportunities for students to identify the newly learned letters in print; become familiar with directionality when “reading” text; and explore rhythm, beats (syllables), and rhyme. The practices used in these four lessons lay the foundation for related instructional practices that are introduced formally in Cycle 2.
- Opening A completes the story “The Search for Names.” In this final part of the story, the young children go out into the world to discover the secret the stars have placed in things (their names). Students participate in a brief discussion about how people communicate with each other (words). In addition, they consider habits of character, including collaboration and perseverance, demonstrated by the young children. This supports their own growth toward becoming collaborative learners.
- During Work Time A and B, students are introduced to a precursor to letter formation: “sky-writing” (feeling shapes through moving the arm) and making curved and straight lines. In the process, they are also introduced to handwriting paper.
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

**How it builds on previous work:**

- In Lesson 1, students explored the relationship between spoken words and written words. In Lesson 2, they learned that words are made of letters. In addition, they examined the difference between a letter and a word and began to articulate that difference. In this lesson, they examine lines in the letters in their names and experiment with making similar lines as they orient themselves to handwriting paper.

**Down the road:**

- In the Closing, students begin to articulate what they have learned. This becomes a regular reflection routine starting in Cycle 2. In addition, students also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time. As students move into Cycle 2, they need to be able to work independently while the teacher meets with one small group at a time.
- The story “The Search for Names” ends with the young boy and girl going out into the world to discover animals and return to Jeffi to tell him what they’ve seen. In Lesson 4, students hear of the first animal the children encounter, which becomes a keyword mnemonic for the letter “t.” In Lesson 6, they hear of another animal the children encounter, which becomes a keyword mnemonic for the letter “a.” As letters are introduced in these first two modules, an accompanying story that continues the children’s journey is provided. Not every story is included in a lesson. A collection of all stories can be found in the Learning Letters Book.

**Lesson 4 Teaching Notes****Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- This lesson introduces students to the knowledge that a letter represents or “shows” a sound. In other words, when we see a particular grapheme (letter), our minds automatically think of the phoneme (sound) associated with it. This particular lesson begins the important process of identifying the letter “t.” Letter identification includes knowing the name of a letter, recognizing and producing its sound, and being familiar with its shape. Research demonstrates that letter identification, along with phonemic awareness (the ability to manipulate sounds in spoken words), is essential to early reading and spelling development. Over the course of this and the next lesson, a keyword, “tern,” is used to support students in learning the graphophonemic connection “t” = /t/.
- During Opening A, students begin their introduction to the letter “t” via a story. The young boy and girl from the stories in Lessons 1–3 meet a wondrous animal (tern) and learn much about it. However, when they return, they are unable to name what they saw—they can only describe it. Jeffi listens to their description and shows them a picture of what he thinks they may have seen. The children confirm the image, and he names the animal. Jeffi then shows them how the shape of the animal contains the shape of the letter that represents the first sound in its name. He explains that this helps them remember the name of the animal they saw. The story serves multiple purposes. First, it engages students in learning about the world while introducing them to a unique animal that will eventually become a mnemonic, or keyword, for “t.” In addition, it continues to develop the important concept that words are an efficient way to communicate. By knowing the word that names what we experience, we can communicate an image or idea to someone else who may have shared that experience.
- In Work Time A, students find that the first sound in the name of the animal that the children in the story encountered (tern) is represented by the letter “t.” They discover the letter “hidden” in the image of the tern.
- In Work Time B, students explore the shape of the letter “t” hidden in the picture of the tern. They were introduced to skywriting in Lesson 3 by extending their arms and reaching out to practice making the vertical and horizontal lines they noticed in the letter shape. This provides an important physical connection that helps students cement the letter in their memory.
- The letter “t” is one of several letters that contains its sound in its name. When pronouncing the name of the letter “t” (/tee/), the /t/ sound is heard at the beginning. Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

**How it builds on previous work:**

- In the first three lessons of this first cycle, students were introduced to the story “The Search for Names,” learning that the young boy and young girl were eager to explore the world, seek out knowledge, and communicate that knowledge with others. In this lesson, the young boy and girl meet the first real-world character that will eventually become the letter-sound keyword for the letter “t.”

- In the first three lessons in the cycle, students also learned that spoken words, such as their own names, can be represented in print. In this lesson, they learn that words are made of letters and letters represent sounds in words.

#### Down the road:

- In the Closing, students reflect on their understanding of a “letter.” They also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

## Lesson 5 Teaching Notes

### Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- This lesson continues to build letter identification for “t.” Letter identification includes knowing the name of a letter, recognizing and producing its sound, and being familiar with its shape. Research demonstrates that letter identification, along with phonemic awareness (the ability to manipulate sounds in spoken words), is essential to early reading and spelling development.
- During Opening A, students sing the “ABC Song” while the teacher points to each empty spot in a class Alphabet anchor chart as each letter is sung. This reveals that there are 26 letters of the alphabet and each letter represents or “shows” a sound.
- During Work Time A, students are introduced to the Keyword Picture Card for the letter “t”: the tern from the story in Lesson 4. This keyword serves as a mnemonic for the name, sound, and formation of the letter “t.” Students then (with support) generate new words that represent the phoneme /t/ at the beginning or end of a word (RF.K.3a).
- In Work Time B, students work with the shape and formation of lower- and uppercase “t,” practicing first with their bodies and then on handwriting paper. If materials management is a concern, consider working up to the use of writing utensils, possibly asking students to form the letters by tracing on paper with their fingers (L.K.1a).
- The letter “t” is one of several letters that contain their sound in their name. When pronouncing the name of the letter “t” (/tee/), the /t/ sound is heard at the beginning.
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

### How it builds on previous work:

- Lesson 4 began developing the mnemonic for learning the graphophonemic connection “t” = /t/ through a story that provided the name of a unique animal (the tern) and the shape of the letter that represents the first sound in its name (“t” for /t/). This lesson continues that development by providing students with a Keyword Picture Card that they place on the alphabetic chart to refer to when working with the letter “t” and sound /t/.
- In Lesson 4, the vertical and horizontal lines in the letter “t” hidden in the picture of the tern were examined and practiced using handwriting paper. This lesson continues to build familiarity with the letter formation as well as with the handwriting paper used throughout the kindergarten year.

- In the first three lessons, students learned that spoken words, such as their own names, can be represented in print. In this lesson, they learn that words are made of letters and that letters represent sounds in words.

### Down the road:

- In the Closing, students reflect on what they know about the letter “t.” They also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

## Lesson 6 Teaching Notes

### Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- This lesson continues to build the understanding that a letter represents or “shows” a sound. In other words, when we see a particular grapheme (letter), our minds automatically think of the phoneme (sound) associated with it. This particular lesson begins the important process of identifying the letter “a.” Letter identification includes knowing the name of a letter, recognizing and producing its sound, and being familiar with its shape. Research demonstrates that letter identification, along with phonemic awareness (the ability to manipulate sounds in spoken words), is essential to early reading and spelling development. Over the course of this and the next lesson, a mnemonic is built to help support students in learning the graphophonemic connection “a” = /a/. The development of this mnemonic over these two lessons is similar to that of “t” in Lessons 4 and 5.
- During Opening A, the letter “a” is introduced with a story. The young boy and girl from the story “The Search for Names” in Lessons 1–4 meet a new animal (alligator) and learn much about it. However, when they return, they are unable to name what they saw; they can only describe it. Jeffi listens to their description and shows them a picture of what he thinks they may have seen. The children confirm the image, and he names the animal. He then shows them how the shape of the animal contains the shape of the letter that represents the first sound in its name. He explains that this helps them remember the name of the animal they saw. The story serves multiple purposes. First, it engages students in learning about the world while it introduces them to an animal that will eventually become a letter mnemonic keyword for “a.” In addition, it continues to develop the important concept that words are an efficient way to communicate. By knowing the word that names what we experience, we can communicate an image or idea to someone else who may have shared that experience.
- In Work Time A, students find that the first sound in the name of the animal the children in the story encounter (alligator) is represented by the letter “a.” They discover the letter “hidden” in the image of the alligator.
- In Work Time B, students explore the shape of the letter “a” hidden in the picture of the alligator. They continue to develop skywriting by extending their arms and reaching out to practice making the curved lines they noticed in the letter shape. This provides an important physical connection that helps students cement the letter in their memory. They also continue to become familiar with the handwriting paper they will use throughout the Kindergarten year and learn how to navigate it. Notice that the transition song has changed; it is now the song that students sing for this instructional practice for the remainder of Modules 1 and 2.
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures

and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

**How it builds on previous work:**

- In the first three lessons of this first cycle, students were introduced to the story “The Search for Names.” They learned that Anak and Watota were eager to explore the world, seek out knowledge, and communicate that knowledge with others. In Lesson 4, Anak and Watota met the first real-world character that eventually became the letter-sound keyword for the letter “t.” In this lesson, they meet the second real-world character that eventually becomes the letter-sound keyword for “a.”
- In the first three lessons of the cycle, students also learned that spoken words, such as their own names, can be represented in print. In Lessons 4 and 5, they learned that words are made of letters and that letters represent sounds in words. This lesson continues to develop that knowledge.

**Down the road:**

- Lesson 7 will introduce the idea to students that letters can be categorized as consonants and vowels. They will learn that every word has at least one vowel in it, and that five of the 26 letters they will learn over the first two modules are vowels. In Lesson 7, they will identify “a” as the first of those five vowels they will eventually meet.
- In the Closing, students reflect on their understanding of a “letter.” They also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

## Lesson 7 Teaching Notes

**Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- This lesson continues to build letter identification for “a,” which includes knowing the name of a letter, recognizing and producing its sound, and being familiar with its shape. Research demonstrates that letter identification, along with phonemic awareness (the ability to manipulate sounds in spoken words), is essential to early reading and spelling development.
- During Opening A, students sing the “ABC Song” while the teacher points to each empty spot in a class Alphabet anchor chart as each letter is sung. Students are reminded that there are 26 letters of the alphabet and each letter represents or “shows” a sound. They review the letter “t” and the sound it shows (/t/). They learn that while all letters are important (because they show sounds), there are five letters that have special jobs in words and have a special name; they are called “vowels.” Over the next several weeks, as they meet new letters, students will be “on the lookout” for vowel letters.
- During Work Time A, students are introduced to the Keyword Picture Card for the letter “a”: the alligator from the story in Lesson 6. This keyword serves as a mnemonic for the name, sound, and formation of the letter “a.” In addition, it is revealed that this is the first of the vowels students meet! Students then (with support) generate new words that begin with the phoneme /a/ (RF.K.3a).
- In Work Time B, students work with the shape and formation of lower- and uppercase “a,” practicing first with their bodies and then on handwriting paper. If materials management

is a concern, consider working up to using writing utensils, possibly asking students to form the letters by tracing on paper with their fingers (L.K.1a).

- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

### **How it builds on previous work:**

- Lesson 6 began developing the mnemonic for learning the graphophonemic connection “a” = /a/ through a story that provided the name of an animal (the alligator) and the shape of the letter (“a”) that represents the first sound in its name (/a/). This lesson continues this development by providing students with a Picture Keyword Card that they place on the alphabetic chart to refer to when working with the letter “a” and sound /a/.
- In Lesson 6, the curved and diagonal lines in the letters “a” and “A” hidden in the picture of the alligator were examined and practiced using handwriting paper. This lesson continues to build familiarity with the formation of the letter as well as with the handwriting paper used throughout the Kindergarten year.
- In the first three lessons of the cycle, students learned that spoken words, such as their own names, can be represented in print. In this lesson, they learn that words are made of letters and that letters represent sounds in words.

### **Down the road:**

- This lesson introduces the idea that there are five letters (called “vowels”) that have some unique role in words. Consider presenting this with an air of mystery (examples: “What could this unique role be?” or “I wonder when we will meet these letters?”). Knowledge of the role of vowels and the difference between vowels and consonants is not expected at this point. This lesson names the letter “a” as a vowel and simply starts the process of inquiry that leads to eventual word analysis. By the beginning of Module 3, students will have met all of the letters (consonants and vowels) and start examining the role of vowels in words. As students “meet” and become comfortable with more letters, consider when to use the term “consonant.”
- In the Closing, students reflect on what they know about the letter “a.” They also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

## **Lesson 8 Teaching Notes**

### **Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- This lesson continues to build knowledge of the relationship between letters and words (RF.K.1) and letter identification (name, sound, and shape) for “a” and “t” (RF.K.3) by exploring a poem involving the keywords for those letters.
- During Opening A, students sing the “ABC Song” while the teacher points to each empty spot in the class Alphabet anchor chart as each letter is sung. Students are reminded that there are 26 letters of the alphabet and each letter represents or “shows” a sound. They review the letters “a” and “t” and the sounds they represent (/a/ and /t/) (RF.K.3a, RF.K.3b).



- During Work Time A, students are introduced to a poem that contains the characters “alligator” and “tern” (keywords for the letters “a” and “t” taught during this cycle). In addition, the verses incorporate many words containing the letters “a” and “t.” Students learn the poem and orient themselves to directionality, including left to right and top to bottom, when “reading” text (RF.K.1a).
- At the end of the poem, Anak and Watota go off together to play a game where they search for the letters “a” and “t.” In Work Time B, students “join them” to play this game by looking for the letters “a” and “t” in words in their own individual copies of the poem: “Alligator and Tern” (RF.K.1b, RF.K.1d).
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module. One of the suggestions involves having students build poetry notebooks to use throughout all of the cycles in Kindergarten. For this, each student needs a spiral or composition notebook. They will glue or tape the poems they accumulate throughout the year into these notebooks.

#### How it builds on previous work:

- Lessons 1–3 explored the relationship between letters and words. Lessons 4–6 began developing the graphophonemic connections “t” = /t/ and “a” = /a/ by establishing the keywords “tern” and “alligator” and practicing the formation (shape) of each letter. In this lesson, students apply their knowledge of these letters to find them in written words. Students learn that “a” and “t” can appear in various places in words (beginning, middle, or end).

#### Down the road:

- While the knowledge of the role of vowels and the difference between vowels and consonants is not expected at this point, this lesson continues to name the letter “a” as a vowel and build wonder about the special role that vowels play in words. By the beginning of Module 3, students will have met all of the letters (consonants and vowels) and will start examining the role of vowels in words. As students “meet” and become comfortable with more letters, consider when to use the term “consonant.”
- In the Closing, students reflect on what they know about the letters “a” and “t.” They also think about habits of character by determining how they can allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

## Lesson 9 Teaching Notes

#### Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- This lesson begins with a review of the letter sounds for “a” and “t” in Opening A (RF.K.3a, RF.K.3b).
- In Work Time A, the poem “Alligator and Tern” is used to explore rhythm and beats in oral language. The teacher guides the students in listening for the rhythm and beats as they recite the poem together. Then students listen to and pronounce individual words to determine how many “beats” (syllables) they hear (RF.K.2b).
- In Work Time B, students apply their learning from Work Time A to “read” the written version of the poem. They are guided to track print from left to right and top to bottom

(RF.K.1a). In addition, they explore how to track each “beat” within a word when moving their finger under words (RF.K.1b, RF.K.2b).

- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

### **How it builds on previous work:**

- In Lesson 8, students were introduced to the poem “Alligator and Tern” and used that as a vehicle to cement the letter keyword mnemonics for “a” and “t” and search for and identify the letters “a” and “t.” In this lesson, the poem is now used to explore beats (syllables) in spoken words and match spoken words to printed words by tracking left to right and top to bottom.

### **Down the road:**

- This lesson lays the groundwork for development of syllabication in the instructional practice called Feel the Beats that is formally introduced in Cycle 2.
- In the Closing, students reflect on what they learned about how to hear and identify beats in words. They also think about habits of character by determining what they will do to allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

## **Lesson 10 Teaching Notes**

### **Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:**

- This lesson begins with a review of the letter sounds for “a” and “t” in Opening A (RF.K.3a, RF.K.3b). This is the last lesson in which students are formally singing the “ABC Song.” In Cycle 2, a new transition song and a more formal Letter-Sound Chant instructional practice is introduced.
- In Work Time A, the familiar song “I’m a Little Teapot” serves as a primer for exploring rhyme in the poem “Alligator and Tern” in Work Time B. The teacher invites students to think about how certain words in the song are alike. In Work Time B, this same analysis is applied to the words in the poem, and students identify and articulate the rhymes they hear (RF.K.2a).
- Three suggestions are offered for Independent Work Time after the whole group lesson. All relate to the content and standards in the lesson. This time is used to establish procedures and expectations for independent work rotations and to administer any Baseline Assessments not completed before the beginning of the module.

### **How it builds on previous work:**

- The poem “Alligator and Tern” was introduced in Lesson 8. In that lesson, it was used to support the development of the keyword mnemonics for the letters “a” and “t” (alligator and tern, respectively) as well as a vehicle for identifying those letters in words. In Lesson 9, the poem was used to explore rhythm and beats in oral language. In this lesson, it is used to explore rhyme in oral language.

**Down the road:**

- This lesson lays the groundwork for rhyme development in the Rhyme Time instructional practice that is formally introduced in Cycle 2.
- In the Closing, students reflect on what they have learned throughout this first cycle, including what they know about letters and words, beats, and rhyme. They also think about habits of character in terms of what they will do to allow themselves and others to be successful during Independent Work Time.

**Preparation and Materials**

- Prepare materials for Independent Work Time (all lessons)
- Picture of a teapot (Lesson 1, used again in Lesson 3) or a real teapot
- Student Name Cards (write each student’s name on an index card; used in Lessons 1, 2, and 3; optional in Lessons 4 and 6)
- “The Search for Names” (Parts 1, 2, and 3) (Lessons 1, 2, and 3) (one for teacher use)
- Enlarged copy: “The Word We Heard” (one to be displayed; Lesson 2)
- Pointer (optional)
- Letters and Words Rocks (optional; see Teaching Notes in Lesson 2)
- Enlarged handwriting paper (Lesson 3)
- Handwriting paper (one per student, Lessons 3 and 4)
- Keyword Picture Cards: “t” and “a” (laminated, one for teacher use)
- Whiteboard marker (one for teacher use; optional)
- Prepare a place in the classroom to display each letter of the alphabet as it is learned (starting with Lesson 5). This might be on chart paper, poster paper, or a series of cards placed in order on a wall). This should be blank at the start of the year but clearly show 26 “empty” spaces/cards/boxes. 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 will become an Alphabet anchor chart.
- Letter Demonstration Board (one for teacher, Lessons 5 and 7)
- Letter Formation Guidance document (standalone document for teacher reference; see K–2 Skills Resource Manual)
- “t” handwriting paper (one per student, Lesson 5)
- Letter Stories: “t” and “a” (one for teacher use, Lessons 4 and 6)
- Colorful paper on which to display the Keyword Picture Card: “a” (Lesson 7)
- “a” handwriting paper (one per student) (Lesson 7)
- Enlarged poem “Alligator and Tern” (to display, Lessons 8–10)
- Poem: “Alligator and Tern” (one per student)
- First stanza of the poem: “Alligator and Tern” (one copy per student, Lesson 9)
- Picture of a shoe (Lesson 10)
- Picture of the number two (Lesson 10)