

ABCDEFGHIJKLM

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Complete with teacher's manual and lesson plan!

(See page 131)

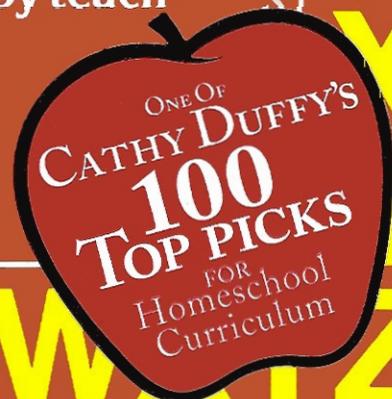
The Original

Alpha-Phonics

A Primer for Beginning Readers

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

An effective, step-by-step, intensive phonics program for teaching reading to beginners of all ages. Designed for easy use by teachers, tutors, and parents.



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Alpha-Phonics - A Primer for Beginning Readers - Alpha-Phonics

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ALPHA-PHONICS

A Primer for Beginning Readers

by

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

THE PARADIGM COMPANY

Boise, Idaho

Alpha-Phonics - A Primer for Beginning Readers - Alpha-Phonics

ALPHA-PHONICS

A Primer for Beginning Readers

Reading maketh a full man . . . and writing an exact man.

FRANCIS BACON

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To
Watson Washburn
Eleanor "Yie" Parkman
Bettina Rubicam
and
Rudolf Flesch

*For their untiring efforts
to restore intensive phonics in
primary reading instruction.*

PREFACE

ALPHA-PHONICS was created to provide teachers, tutors and parents with a sensible, logical, easy-to-use tool for teaching reading. It is an intensive phonics instruction program based on the author's many years of research and experience in the reading instruction field. It answers the need for a practical instruction book that anyone who wants to teach reading can learn to use with a minimum of training.

This program can be used to teach reading to beginners of all ages, older students in need of remediation and retraining, functional illiterates, dyslexics, special-needs students, the learning disabled, and non-English speakers who wish to learn to read English and improve their pronunciation.

It can also be used as a supplement to any other reading program being used in the classroom. Its systematic approach to teaching basic phonetic skills makes it particularly valuable to programs that lack such instruction.

The book's step-by-step lessons in large, eye-pleasing calligraphy make it suitable for both direct one-on-one tutoring and regular classroom use. Parents who wish to teach their children to read at home will find the book particularly useful, since it is written in normal, every day English and is free of the professional jargon characteristic of so many reading instruction books.

All of the lesson pages were carefully designed to eliminate distraction and to focus the pupils full attention on the work at hand. The Teacher's Manual, in the back of the book, provides teachers and tutors with the necessary instructional information for each lesson. The program, as a whole, is flexible enough so that any teacher or tutor can adapt it to his or her own teaching style or situation.

If you have never taught reading before in this sensible, systematic way, you will be pleasantly surprised by the results.

— Samuel L Blumenfeld

Aa Bb Cc Dd
Ee Ff Gg Hh
Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm
Nn Oo Pp Qq
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv
Ww Xx Yy Zz

ALPHA-PHONICS: A Primer for Beginning Readers

Hand lettered by Marc Vachon

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| a | m | am |
| a | n | an |
| a | s | as |
| a | t | at |
| a | x | ax |

NOTE:

Your **COMPLETE** set of
instructions for every lesson
begins on page 131 - 150

S am Sam

m an man

h as has

s at sat

t ax tax

S s

am an as at ax
Sam man has hat tax

Sam sat.
Sam has an ax.

Lesson 4

a d ad
d ad dad
w ax wax
D an Dan

Dan sat.
Dad has wax.

Dd

ALPHA-PHONICS TEACHER'S MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

This course of instruction will enable any teacher or tutor to teach reading to anyone who needs to learn it: beginning readers of all ages or poor readers in need of retraining. The method is based on a thorough analysis of the English writing system, how it works, and how best it can be taught.

Written English is a purely alphabetic system, regardless of what we may think of its many eccentricities and irregularities. An alphabet, by definition, is a set of graphic symbols that stand for the irreducible speech sounds of a particular language. Therefore, all of our written words stand for spoken sounds, no matter how irregular the spellings may be.

We must not forget that the invention of the alphabet is based on one of man's greatest discoveries: that all of spoken language is composed of a relatively small number of different speech sounds. (In English, only 44!)

This is one of the great discoveries that has enabled man to do much more with much less. Instead of wrestling with a writing system using thousands and thousands of symbols representing thousands of individual ideas and concepts, as in Chinese or Egyptian hieroglyphics, man could create a writing system using less than fifty symbols to handle an entire language.

It is vitally important to understand the difference between an alphabetic writing system and an ideographic one. The latter uses graphic symbols to represent ideas, concepts, feelings, actions, things, etc. An ideographic system is basically independent of any particular language although many of its symbols may represent specific words of a language. In an ideographic system language is used to interpret the symbols. Precision and accuracy are therefore hard to achieve with an ideographic system.

An alphabetic system, on the other hand, is a sound-symbol system used merely to represent on paper a particular spoken language. The spoken words stand for the ideas, concepts, feelings, etc., while the written words are mere graphic representations of the spoken words. Therefore, in an alphabetic system, the relationship between written and spoken language is one of precision and exactness. The spoken word may be subject to interpretation, but the written word is an exact representation of a specific spoken counterpart. Thus alphabetic writing can also be a tool of thought, for the thought process uses the spoken language for its development.

The invention of the alphabet, which took place about 2000 B.C., not only made hieroglyphics and every other ideographic system obsolete, it permitted a tremendous expansion of vocabulary because now there was a writing system that could easily accommodate it. The greatest works of the ancient world have come down to us through alphabetic writing: the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Greek dramas, the Bible. Without the alphabet, man's intellectual and spiritual development would have been seriously retarded. So we must regard the alphabet with great awe, respect, and even love. It is civilization's prize possession.

It stands to reason that a thorough knowledge and understanding of the English alphabetic system will enable a pupil not only to read well, but also to spell well. We often forget that our writing system is a two-way process: to be used both for reading **and** writing, decoding and encoding; and a pupil must become proficient in both in order to be truly literate.

Knowledge alone, however, does not lead to reading fluency. To gain fluency requires all of the techniques used in developing a skill to the point where it seems effortless: practice, frequent use, drill, review, etc.

This course of instruction makes full use of all of these proven techniques of learning. Moreover, it teaches in a logical, systematic way facts about our alphabetic system which are usually taught rather haphazardly if at all. And it makes these facts operating knowledge for the student who wishes to learn to spell accurately and enlarge his or her vocabulary.

No one denies that the English alphabetic system is somewhat complex. But its complexity is hardly an excuse for not teaching it.

For far too long, teachers of reading have avoided the difficulties of our alphabetic system by teaching sight vocabularies, whole-word configurations, context clues, and incidental phonetic clues. While such methods may produce some initial success on the primary level, they are, in the long run, injurious because they violate the basic nature of our writing system and are not in harmony with its principles. They do not provide the student with a fundamental understanding of the symbolic system we use in reading and writing, an understanding which he or she must have in order to become truly literate.

It was Dr. Samuel T. Orton, the world's foremost expert on dyslexia, who first warned educators that the look-say, whole-word method could be harmful. He wrote in *Educational Psychology* in 1929 that the whole-word method "may not only prevent the acquisition of academic education by children of average capacity but may also give rise to far-reaching damage to their emotional life."

ALPHA-PHONICS was created to make it unnecessary for any teacher to expose a child to teaching methods that can be harmful.

OUR ALPHABETIC SYSTEM

The English alphabetic system may be complex, but it can be taught and it ought to be taught. We have an alphabetic system of great range and flexibility. Our spellings reveal much about the history and development of our language, and once the eccentricities of the system are learned, they are learned. They do not change. The reward for learning this system is to have for one's personal use and enrichment the entire body of our published literature. Such a literary treasure is indeed the priceless inheritance of everyone who can read.

Our English alphabetic system is complex for a variety of reasons: (1) it uses 26 letters to stand for 44 sounds; (2) it uses five vowel letters to stand for 21 vowel sounds; (3) many consonant letters stand for more than one sound; (4) some sounds, particularly

the long vowel sounds, are represented by more than one spelling; (5) the invasions of foreign languages have enriched English but complicated its spellings (6) pronunciations have changed over the centuries but the spellings have not, creating many irregularities.

Despite all of this, our system is more than 80 percent consistent or regular, with most of the irregularities consisting of variant vowel spellings.

In devising this instruction program, we have taken all of the above into account. Therefore, we start out by teaching the pupil the short vowels, which are the most regular in spelling, in conjunction with the consonants. Then we teach the consonant blends - final blends first, then the initial blends. Last, we teach the long vowels in their great variety of spelling forms.

Thus we proceed from the simple to the complex in easy stages, giving the pupil plenty of practice and drill along the way. The pupil learns to read and spell in an orderly, systematic, logical way, as well as to pronounce the language with greater accuracy.

To some teachers this will seem like an overly academic way to teach reading. And it is, on purpose, because we want the pupil to learn to enjoy using his or her mind.

In teaching someone to read English, we must decide what should come first: learning the alphabetic system or enjoying inane stories with lots of irregular sight words. The latter may seem to be much more fun for teacher and pupil; but does it accomplish what we want to accomplish? If our goal is high literacy, it does not.

We know from experience that the pupil will derive much deeper satisfaction by learning the alphabetic system first, because it will give him or her much greater overall reading mastery in a shorter period of time.

Competency and skill are the two most important ingredients of self-confidence, and self-confidence is the cornerstone of self-esteem. Learning to read is the pupil's first real exposure to formal education, and a positive attitude can be instilled in the young mind by how we approach the subject at hand.

It is obvious that one learns faster and better when the knowledge one is expected to acquire is organized in such a way as to make its acquisition as easy as possible. This is the concept behind ALPHA-PHONICS. Our aim is to provide the pupil with the kind of basic knowledge that will become the solid foundation of all his or her future academic work.

Of course, no instructional program teaches itself. Its success depends a great deal on the teacher. This program has a good deal of flexibility and provides many ways to measure the pupils' progress. But since pupils vary greatly in their prior knowledge and capabilities, the teacher in some instances will have to tailor the instruction to the individual pupil.

While we have organized this course in a certain order to make sure that what should be learned is learned, we have also done this to make the teaching of reading as easy for the teacher as possible. We therefore advise the teacher to read this book in its entirety before using it.

TEACHING THE ALPHABET

The fastest and most efficient way to teach the alphabet is to have the child repeat it after you in alphabetical order while you point to the letters. Thus the child learns the alphabet both orally and visually at the same time. Usually the oral learning will be faster than the visual, since the oral alphabet when repeated often enough is learned almost like a melody or a poem. The alphabet lends itself easily to this kind of learning since it can be broken up into rhythmical and rhyming lines as follows:

A B C D
E F G
H I J K
L M N O P
Q R S
T U V
W
X Y Z

It will take some time, before the child's visual learning catches up with his or her oral knowledge. Indeed, some children learn to recite the alphabet perfectly long before they are able to identify all of the letters at random. This is perfectly normal since the child has had much oral practice learning to speak the language. However, now he is required to do highly precise visual learning which may take some getting used to, especially if the child has had little exposure to print.

Children with photographic memories will learn visually much faster than those not so favorably endowed. The slowest learners will be those with weak visual memories. These children will benefit most from simple alphabetic exercises, such as repeating the letters at random, several at a time, as in the Prereading Alphabet Exercises, (p. 159).

Both oral and visual learning of the alphabet should be accompanied by kinesthetic learning, that is, by having the pupil draw the letters in both capital and lower-case forms. Drawing the letters will help the child learn their different shapes more thoroughly. A lined notebook should be used by the pupil for doing this work in class and as homework.

Another effective way for the child to learn to identify letters at random is to ask him or her to pick out specific letters from advertisement print matter in newspapers and magazines. In this way the pupil learns to recognize the letters in different sizes and type faces. This is also a good way to check on the child's vision.

Pictures are not necessary in teaching the alphabet if you do it in the systematic manner prescribed in this program. The picture the child should be looking at is the **letter itself**, not an apple or a bumblebee, or an elephant.

Pictures are a distraction that can only delay learning the alphabet directly as a set of graphic symbols. We make this point because shortly after the letters are learned, the pupil will be taught to identify them with speech sounds, and this is very crucial.

A letter is a symbol of a sound. It is not the symbol of anything else.

The letter is supposed to stimulate the mouth, lips, and tongue to make particular sounds. It is not supposed to make the pupil think of an apple or an elephant. He or she must translate groups of letters into speech, and the pupil will be able to do this more readily the better he or she associates the letters with sounds.

A word of caution: When a pupil is having uncommon difficulty learning or mastering any phase of the instruction, do not become impatient and do not scold. Analyze and try to pinpoint the cause of the difficulty. You may simply have to take more time than you thought necessary. Some students take a year to master what others can master in a month. Remember, the goal is not to win a race but to teach a person to read - no matter how much time it takes to do the job well.

TEACHING THE LETTER SOUNDS

Assuming that the pupil has learned the alphabet, we are now ready to teach the letter sounds. The pupil's knowledge of the alphabet does not have to be letter perfect before we move on to this next phase, for the simple reason that the student will learn the letters better as they are used.

When you are ready to teach the letter sounds, you might explain to the student something about how and why the alphabet was invented. Older students are usually quite fascinated to learn that the entire English language is made up of only 44 irreducible speech sounds. Try, if possible, to appeal to the learner's intellectual curiosity. You never know what kind of a response you will get.

Pupils are very sensitive about their ability to learn. This is particularly true of remedial students whose self-esteem has been badly battered by failure. A learning block or handicap, is not a reflection of basic intelligence. We all know of highly intelligent people who have trouble doing simple addition. We also know that many so-called dyslexics are very bright and articulate. Therefore, always appeal to a pupil's basic intelligence.

When teaching younger pupils the letter sounds you might simply say: "Now we are going to learn the sounds the letters stand for so that you can put the letters to work for you. Each letter stands for a different sound. You will be able to read words by knowing the sounds the letters stand for."

The essence of what you want to convey to the pupil is that letters have meaning - they stand for sounds - and that the letters in a written word tell the reader how to say it.

In teaching the letter sounds, it is important to convey the idea that the distinct sounds of our language can be isolated and represented by written symbols. Obviously the alphabet was invented by someone who spoke clearly and heard clearly and could distinguish between the fine differences of speech sounds, between the **t** and the **d**, between **s** and **z**, **m** and **n**, short **a** and short **e**. But a pupil's attunement to speech sounds may not be very sharp. In fact, some pupils may articulate very poorly and require a good deal of work to improve their pronunciations. Therefore, spend as much time as is needed to sharpen your pupil's attunement to the isolated, irreducible speech sounds of our language as you teach the letter sounds. Be sure to pronounce all words clearly.

The alphabet is a tremendously exciting invention based on a great discovery: that all of human language is composed of a small number of irreducible speech sounds. In teaching the alphabet, you can convey to your pupil the excitement of this great discovery and the marvelous invention based on it "Did you know that every word you speak can be put down on paper?" you tell the pupil. That's exciting. "And that's what you are going to learn to do - to put down on paper every sound of speech you make."

Thus you've established the concept of a set of written symbols representing speech sounds. This is the association you want to establish in the pupil's mind: that letters on paper stand for sounds that he can make with his voice, and that the sounds he makes can be put down on paper by way of letters representing them.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

This book has been designed to be used as both a tutoring and a classroom text. If the classroom teacher has only one copy of ALPHA-PHONICS, then the pupils should be provided with lined notebooks in which to copy lessons from the board. Ideally, each pupil should have his own copy of ALPHA-PHONICS plus a notebook in order to facilitate the assignment of homework. This would also reduce the need for time-consuming board work by the teacher and costly duplicating.

Tutored pupils should also, whenever possible, have their own copies of ALPHA-PHONICS for homework and reference use. The pupil should also have a lined notebook for practicing cursive, spelling exercises, vocabulary lists, and sentence writing. It is advisable to assign some written homework after each tutoring session. The purpose of homework is to speed up the acquisition, retention, and improvement of skills. The amount of homework should depend on the amount of time between sessions.

Although the lesson instructions have been written from a classroom viewpoint, a tutor will find them easily adaptable for one-on-one teaching. Simply substitute pupil for class.

ISOLATING THE LETTER SOUNDS

In articulating the letter sounds, the best way to isolate a consonant sound is to listen to what it sounds like at the end of a word; then lift it from the rest of the word. By doing so, you will minimize injecting a vowel element.

This can be done with consonants **b, ck, d, f, g** (as in **tag** and **large**), **k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v (ve), x z (ze), sh, ch, th**. Consonant **c** stands for the **k** sound before vowels **a, o** and **u**; it stands for the **s** sound before vowels **e** and **i**. The letter **q** is always followed by **u** and is pronounced as if it were **kw**.

Some consonants - **h, j, w, y, wh** - do not appear as consonants at the ends of words. These can also be articulated in isolation with just the barest hint of a vowel element.

By pronouncing the isolated sounds as purely as possible, the pupil will be able to understand what we mean by an irreducible speech sound.

ORDER OF LESSONS

LESSON 1: Have the pupils turn to Lesson 1 in their textbooks. Start by telling the class (student) that you are now going to teach the sounds the letters stand for. “When you learned the alphabet, you learned the names of the letters. Now you’re going to learn the sounds the letters stand for. Let’s start with the first sounds. Now listen to the sound I make.” Make a short **a** sound. (Short **a** is the **a** in **cat**) “Did you hear that sound?” Make it again and ask the class to repeat it after you. “That sound is not a word all by itself, but you hear it and say it often in many words. Can you say it again?” After the class repeats the short **a** sound and hears you repeat it, print the letter **a** on the blackboard. “The letter **a** that you see on the board and in your books stands for the sound you just made. It is called the short **a** sound. Now I am going to say five words with that sound in it, words that you use every day: **am, an, as, at, ax**” Print them on the board as they appear in the book. Give examples of how each word is used in a spoken sentence, so that the class understands that they are words. A word is the smallest unit of speech that has meaning. “The short a sound all by itself doesn’t mean anything. But a sound that means something is a word. **Am, an, as, at, ax** are all words because they have meaning.

“Now each of these words has two letters in it. Can you name the letters?” Have the class spell each word, saying the word after it is spelled. Spelling a word means naming its letters in proper left-to-right sequence. “Now if the words each have two letters and each letter stands for a sound, how many sounds does each word have?” Repeat the word **am** slowly. Write and say the short **a** sound; then write and say the word **am** just below it “Do you hear the difference between **a** and **am**? When we say **am**, we add another sound to the **a**. What is the sound we added to the **a** in the word **am**?” Say the **m** sound as it is said in the word **am**. (To correctly isolate this consonant sound, listen to what it sounds like at the end of a word; then lift it from the rest of the word. By doing so you will minimize injecting a vowel element.) After you’ve made the **m** sound, ask the class: “Did you all hear it? Can the class say it?” After the class says the **m** sound, tell them that the letter **m** stands for the **m** sound. “So if we want to write the word **am** we must write **a-m**, because these are the letters that stand for those sounds.”

Repeat the procedure for **an, as, at, ax**. In this instance teach the **s** as soft **s**. Just as the vowel letters represent more than one sound, some consonants also have variant sounds. But at this stage, we are teaching only the sounds used in the words presented in the textbook. Have the pupil print these words, say them, spell them. (This may also be a good time to start teaching cursive writing. For instruction on introducing cursive, page 156.) In any case, make sure that the pupils understand that each word has two sounds and that they can match the right sound with the right letter. Point out how the name of each letter, except **a** in this instance, gives them a hint of the sound each letter stands for. Exaggerate the sounds so that the class can hear them distinctly and learn to recognize them when heard.

When you are convinced that the class knows these letter sounds thoroughly, tell them that there are two kinds of letters in the alphabet - vowels and consonants. **A** is a vowel and **m, n, s, t and x** are consonants. The other vowels are **e, i, o, and u**. All the rest are consonants, although **y** is sometimes used as a vowel. Explain that the vowels are the most powerful letters in the alphabet, because you can't have a word without one. Consonants need vowels in order to make words. They can never stand alone. You needn't elaborate at this point, suffice it merely to establish the fact that there are two classes of letters: vowels and consonants.

By now the class has learned a great deal. They are beginning to hear words with a greater awareness of their different sounds, and they have seen how these different sounds are represented in their books by alphabet letters. They see that the letters are printed from left to right in the same sequence as they are spoken. The five words can also be printed on cards and flashed to the class in short drills to help develop quick recognition.

LESSON 2: Review all of the material taught in Lesson 1. When that is done, print the word **am** on the board. Tell the class that you are going to make a new word by adding **S** to the beginning of it. Ask if anyone can figure out what that new word is. The word is the name **Sam**. Ask them how many sounds are in that word. Have them identify the three sounds in the order they are printed. Explain that we use a capital **S** in the word **Sam** because it is a proper name and all proper names begin with capital letters. Repeat this procedure with the other words in the lesson. With the word **has** identify the sound the letter **h** stands for.

LESSON 3: Have the class study all of the words in the lesson and read them aloud. Now tell them that they know enough words to be able to write their first sentences: **Sam sat. Sam has an ax.** Explain that a sentence begins with a capital letter, whether the first word is a name or not, and that it ends with a period. Define a sentence as a complete thought.

LESSON 4: Teach the sound the letter **d** stands for to make the word **ad**. Expand **ad** to **dad**. Introduce the sound of the letter **w**. Put the **w** in front of **ax** and see if the class can figure out the word **wax**. Place **D** before **an** to make **Dan**. Have the class read the two new sentences.

LESSON 5: By now the class should begin to understand the principle behind alphabetic word building, how each letter's sound is used in writing words. Have the class read the words in their columns. By using all of the letters known by the class, their reading vocabulary has been expanded to 25 words. Point out that the word **was**, while in the **as, has** spelling family, is pronounced **wuz**. This is an irregular pronunciation. Thus the class has been made aware that there are irregularities in the system.

ORDER OF LESSONS

LESSON

1. Short **a**; consonants **m, n, s, t, x**
2. Initial consonants **S, m, h, s, t**
3. Review sentences
4. Consonants **d, D, w**
5. Alphabetic word building
6. Short **a** sentences; punctuation
7. Consonant blend **nd**; consonant **l**
8. Consonants **l, b, c, g, j, f**
9. Consonants **p, t, r, v, y, z**
10. Review of short **a** words
11. Consonant digraph **ck; qu**
12. **a** as a word
13. Sentences
14. Review of short **a** words and syllables
15. Short vowels **a, e, i, o, u**
16. Short **e** words
17. Short **e** sentences
18. Short **e** words and syllables
19. Short **j** words; **ph** as **f**
20. Short **a, e, i** sentences
21. Consonant digraph **th**
22. Sentences
23. Short **o** words
24. Short **o** sentences
25. Plural **s, es,** and **'s**
26. Sentences
27. Short **u** words
28. Short **u** sentences
- 28a. Consonants **b** and **d**
29. Consonant digraph **sh**
30. Consonant digraph **ch**
31. Consonant digraph **wh**
32. Review of **sh, ch, wh** words
33. Sentences
34. Verbs **to be** and **to have**
35. Sentences
36. Contractions
37. Sentences with contractions
38. Two-syllable, short-vowel words
39. Sentences with two-syllable, short-vowel words
40. **a** as in **all**; sentences
41. Consonant blend **ng; ing** words
42. Sentences with **ing** words

43. Final consonant blends **nd, nt**
44. Sentences
45. Final syllable **er, er** words and sentences
46. Final consonant blends **nk, nc, nch**, 63
47. Sentences
48. Final consonant blends **ct, ft, pt, xt**; sentences
49. Final consonant blends **sk, sp, st**; sentences
50. Final consonant blends **ib, id, if, lk**
51. Final consonant blends **im, lp, it**
52. Final consonant blend **mp**
53. Final consonant blend **tch**; sentences
54. Final consonant blend **dge**
55. Final consonant blends **nce, nse**
56. Review of words with final consonant blends
57. Two-syllable words with consonant blends
58. Initial consonant blends **bl, br**
59. Initial consonant blends **cl, cr**
60. Initial consonant blends **dr, dw**
61. Initial consonant blends **fl, fr**, 73
62. Initial consonant blends **gl, gr, gw**
63. Initial consonant blends **bl, pr**
64. Initial consonant blend **sl**
65. Initial consonant blends **shr, sm, sn**
66. Initial consonant blends **sp, spr**
67. Initial consonant blends **st, str**
68. Initial consonant blends **sw, sc, sk, scr**
69. Initial consonant blends **tr, thr, tw**
70. Words with consonant blends
71. Sentences
72. Long **a**
73. Long **a** as **a-e**
74. Sentences with long **a** words
75. Long **a** as **ai**
76. Long **a** sentences
77. Long **a** as **ay** and **ey**
78. Long **a** sentences
79. Long **a** as **ei** and **eigh**; sentences
80. Review of words with long **a** spellings
81. Long **a** homonyms
82. Two-syllable words with long **a** syllables
83. Vowel spellings **au, aw**
84. Sentences with **au, aw** words
85. **a** as in **ma, car**
86. Sentences with **a-as-ah** words
87. Long **e** as **ee**

88. Long **e** sentences
89. Long **e** as **ea**
90. Long **e** sentences
91. Long **e** as **e-e**; sentences
92. Long **e** as **ie**; sentences
93. Long **e** as **y**
94. Long **e** as **y** sentences
95. Plural **ies**
96. Review of long **e** words
97. Long **e** sentences
98. Long **i** as **i-e, y, ie**
99. Long **i** sentences
100. Long **i** as **igh**; sentences
101. Spelling forms **ough** and **augh**
102. **gh** as **f**
103. Long **o** as **o-e**
104. Long **o** sentences
105. Long **o** as **oa**; sentences
106. Long **o** as **ow**; sentences
107. Long **o** as in **old**; sentences
108. Common irregular words
109. **oo** as in **good food**
110. Sentences with **oo** words
111. Spelling form **ould**; sentences
112. **ow** and **ou** as in **cow** and **ouch**
113. Sentences
114. **oy** as in **boy**; **oi** as in **oil**; sentences
115. Long **u** as **u-e**; sentences
116. Long **u** as **ue** and **ul**; sentences
117. Long **u** as **ew** and **eu**; sentences
118. **er, ir, or, ur, ear**; sentences
119. Words ending in **le**; silent **t**; sentences
120. **ph** as **f**
121. **ce, sc, ci, si, ti, xi, su, tu** as **sh, ch, zh**
122. **kn** as **n**
123. **mb** as **m**; **bt** as **t**
124. Silent **h**
125. **wr** as **r**
126. **st** as **s**; **ft** as **f**
127. **ch** as **k**; **ps** as **s**
128. **y** as short **i**

ENGLISH ALPHABETIC SYSTEM

Sound

Common Spelling Forms

Vowels

| | |
|----------------|---|
| short a | ă as in cat |
| short e | ĕ as in met ; ea as in bread |
| short i | ĭ as in sit ; y as in myth, gym |
| short o | ŏ as in top |
| short u | ŭ as in cup ; ou as in precious |
| Long a | a-e as in ate ; ai as in wait ; ay as in way ; ei as in veil ; eigh as in eight ; a as in apron ; ey as in they |
| Long e | ee as in tree ; ea as in eat ; ie as in field ; e as in me ; e-e as in eve ; y as in happy, city ; ei as in receive |
| Long i | i-e as in time ; igh as in high ; y as in try ; ie as in lie ; i as in item |
| Long o | o as in go ; o-e as in home ; oa as in boat ; ow as in snow ; oe as in toe |
| Long u | u-e as in use ; ew as in new ; ue as in true ; iew as in view |
| oo | oo as in food |
| oo | oo as in good ; oul as in could, should |
| ou/ow | ou as in out ; ow as in cow |
| oi/oy | oi as in oil ; oy as in boy |
| a (ah) | a as in car ; father |
| a | a as in care, there, heir, fair |
| a/au/ | a as in all ; aw as in law ; au as in cause ; ough as in ought ; augh as in taught ; |
| aw | o as in loss |
| er | er as in germ ; ir as in girl ; ur as in fur ; ear as in earn ; or as in work |
| o | o as in born, core |

Consonants

| | |
|----------|--|
| b | b as in bat, cab |
| d | d as in did |
| f | f as in fan ; ph as in phone ; gh as in rough, laugh |
| g | g as in get ; gh as in ghetto |
| h | h as in house ; wh as in who |
| j | j as in jam ; g as in gem, angel, ginger ; dge as in fudge |

(continued)

ENGLISH ALPHABETIC SYSTEM (con't)

Sound

Common Spelling Forms

| | |
|-----------|--|
| k | k/ck as in kick ; c as in cat ; ch as in chorus ; qu as kw (quit=kwit); x as ks (rex=wrecks) |
| l | l as in lull |
| m | m as in mom |
| n | n as in nun ; kn as in knee |
| p | p as in pep |
| r | r as in ran, car ; wr as in wrap, write |
| s | s as in sell ; c as in cell ; ps as in psychic |
| t | t as in ten, net |
| v | v as in van, have ; f as in of |
| w | w as in well |
| y | y as in yes |
| z | z as in zoo ; s as in has |
| th | th as in the, with, father |
| th | th as in thin, think, truth |
| ch | ch as in chin, rich ; tch as in catch ; tu as in capture, picture ; ti as in question |
| sh | sh as in she, wish ; ti as in nation, patient ; s as in sure ; ci as in special, precious |
| wh | wh as in where, when |
| zh | su as in pleasure ; zu as in azure |
| n | ng as in sing ; nk as in sink |

Introducing Cursive

One of the most important tools of literacy that an individual must acquire is a good cursive handwriting. Cursive is a flowing form of handwriting in which all the letters of a word are joined. Manuscript, or print-script, which most children are taught in the first grade, is really a form of hand printing or lettering.

Most schools require children to learn cursive by the third grade. Unfortunately, many children fail to make a good transition from manuscript to cursive mainly because the third grade curriculum does not provide enough time for or supervision over handwriting development. The result is poor, often illegible handwriting.

But the simple truth is that most children can be taught cursive in the first grade, thereby eliminating the need for a difficult and chancy transition period in the third grade.

The virtue of teaching cursive in the first grade is that the teacher can spend more time supervising its correct acquisition. Also, the pupil begins developing an active tool of literacy which he or she will be using for the rest of one's life.

The most important task for the teacher in teaching cursive is to make sure that the pupil learns to hold the writing instrument correctly and form the letters correctly; that is, knowing where the letter starts and where it ends.

Cursive was developed to permit writers to obtain a fast, fluent, legible script with the minimum expenditure of energy. It takes time to develop a good cursive handwriting, and that is why it is wise to begin cursive instruction in the first grade.

Most children, as they learn the letter forms, begin writing cursive in a large awkward scrawl. This is quite natural because the child is being required to perform a manual physical task which requires considerable dexterity and precision. But in a few weeks or months that scrawl will evolve into a neat, legible script.

There are some youngsters - and adults - who experience great difficulty in learning to write. This is usually a physical problem that has nothing to do with intelligence. This condition is called dysgraphia and can only be overcome with a great deal of practice and perseverance. Dysgraphics usually find it equally hard to learn manuscript as well as cursive. Therefore, it makes sense to concentrate on cursive, since ultimately it is the more useful and required tool of literacy.

There are a number of good cursive instruction courses on the market that can be used in conjunction with ALPHA-PHONICS. Be sure to obtain one that shows the pupil how to form the letters in a correct series of steps. It is very important to teach the child to form the letters correctly the first time, for there is nothing more difficult than trying to break bad habits once they are acquired. Such future agony can be avoided by having the child do it right the first time.

For additional information about teaching cursive by this author, please refer to my book *How To Tutor*, which has a full section devoted to cursive.

CURSIVE ALPHABET

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee

Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj

Kk Ll Mm Nn

Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss

Tt Uu Vv Ww

Xx Yy Zz

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PREREADING ALPHABET EXERCISES

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | | a | b | c |
| D | E | F | | d | e | f |
| G | H | I | | g | h | i |
| J | K | L | | j | k | l |
| M | N | O | | m | n | o |
| P | Q | R | | p | q | r |
| S | T | U | | s | t | u |
| | V | W | | | v | w |
| X | Y | Z | | x | y | z |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | B | C |
| C | C | B |
| B | B | C |
| B | A | A |
| C | A | B |
| A | C | B |
| B | B | A |
| B | C | A |
| C | B | A |
| A | C | C |
| C | C | A |
| B | A | B |
| B | C | B |
| C | A | C |
| C | B | C |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a | b | c |
| c | c | b |
| b | b | c |
| b | a | a |
| c | a | b |
| a | c | b |
| b | b | a |
| b | c | a |
| c | b | a |
| a | c | c |
| c | c | a |
| b | a | b |
| b | c | b |
| c | a | c |
| c | b | c |

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SAMUEL L BLUMENFELD first became aware of the reading problem in 1961 when, as a book editor in New York, he was asked to join the National Advisory Council of the Reading Reform Foundation. The more Mr. Blumenfeld became aware of the reading instruction controversy, the more resolved he became to do something about it.

In 1972 he wrote *THE NEW ILLITERATES* in which he traced the history of reading instruction in America and diagnosed the causes of reading disability. He also traced the origin of the look-say method back to its inventor, Thomas H. Gallaudet, the celebrated teacher of the deaf. Since then Mr. Blumenfeld has taught in schools and tutored privately, developing his own system of intensive phonics.

ALPHA-PHONICS is the result of that thorough research and first-hand experience. "I wanted to create an effective, inexpensive and uncomplicated reading instruction program that could be used as widely as possible to help solve America's reading problem. With competent instruction, virtually anyone can be taught to read well."

Mr. Blumenfeld's other books include *HOW TO START YOUR OWN PRIVATE SCHOOL -AND WHY YOU NEED ONE*, *HOW TO TUTOR*, and *IS PUBLIC EDUCATION NECESSARY?* His writings on the literacy problem have appeared in *The Reading Informer*, *Education Digest*, *Vital Speeches*, *Boston Magazine*, and *Reason*.

Prior to authoring his books, Mr. Blumenfeld spent ten years in the New York publishing industry where he was First Reader of the Viking Press and Editor of the Universal Library at Grosset & Dunlap. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the City College of New York.

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This book can solve America's reading problem!

Letters to the author from parents:

I must write to express my wife's and my thanks for your excellent book. It has been so very valuable to us in teaching our 8 1/2 -year-old son, Eric, to read. . .

When I started on September 10th, Eric was almost totally retarded as a reader. Evidently he was one of those youngsters who refuse to attempt sight reading. I followed your book's instructions exactly. Would you believe that we went from Lesson 2 through Lesson 27 in two weeks? And by Thanksgiving we had drilled right through Lesson 117?

Even you wouldn't believe the results! It was as if we were witnessing a miracle!

Eric is now reading **Robinson Crusoe**, and is just loving it! He had been having headaches all through second grade and was losing weight. Since he started learning by your method, he hasn't been sick one day, and has gained weight rapidly to where he has a perfect physique.

Needless to say, we are grateful. Thank you so much for your excellent effort in helping countless parents, such as ourselves, in warding off the educational crippling of countless children.

W.M.
Westfield, New Jersey
(now residing in Hendersonville,
North Carolina)

My daughter is almost six years old and we are home educating her... I have tried a couple of reading programs, most of which were game type learning. None of these produced any results. I recently ordered **Alpha-Phonics** because I have heard Samuel Blumenfeld speak on several shows.

Dianna and I are just beginning lesson 5. After going over lessons three and four Dianna was so excited that she could read that she hugged my neck and told me she loved me. She said, "Oh mommy, my wish is coming true. You and Daddy are teaching me to read." What else can I say?

I love this systematic way of teaching reading because it produces immediate results and children, as well as adults, like to see progress.

By the way, *we only spend about five to ten minutes a day on this.* This is an excellent intensive, systematic phonics program.

Thank you,
C. M.

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