

Session 4: Beginning Reading & Writing

Around age 5, once the child has had plenty of experience with informal pre-reading and pre-writing activities, the child may be ready to start formal reading. This will depend on the level of language development.

Phonics

In kindergarten we teach the SOUNDS the letters make, not the letter names.

The 5-year-old child will already be familiar with the sounds the letters make. If you show them a ball, they will be able to say that it begins with 'b'. They may not yet know the symbols the letters make, and how to match symbols with sounds.

Before they start to do this, they must be able to tell you the first sound of a picture or object. If you hold up a picture of a cat, they can say that it begins with 'c'. You will need lots of small pictures so they can practice this.

Sight words

We also give the children practice in looking at shapes, to get their eyes ready to see the shapes of words, (sight words).

Not all words need to be sounded out. For example, "the". This word is recognized by its shape. It is called a sight word.

Examples of sight words – (can't be sounded with initial sounds):

- the
- was
- here
- one

We also make and read **Big Books** with children to help them see that in a text, there are words and spaces. You can teach sight words by making Big Books, where there is one sentence for each page plus a picture, e.g., This is a dog (Page 1); This is a cat (Page 2) This is a tree (Page 3).

Phonics Stage 1: initial sounds

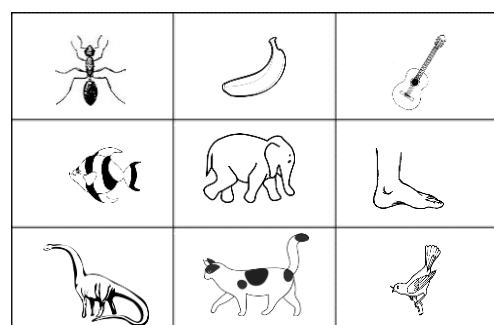
e.g. cat starts with 'c'. (Say the sound you hear at the beginning of cat, not the letter name.)

Resources:

Bible Phonics; initial sounds small pictures

Games for initial sounds:

- I spy
- Picture-letter matching



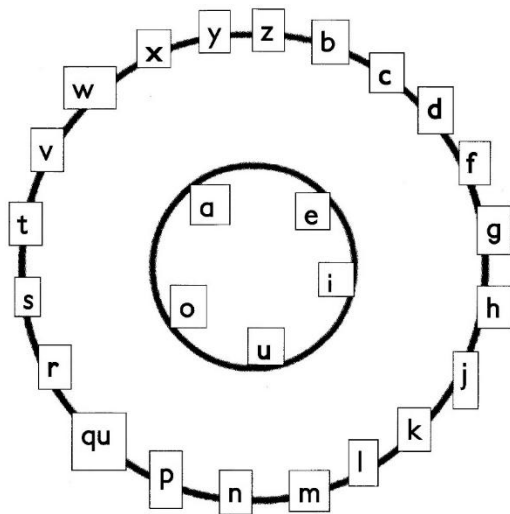
By the end of the year a four-year-old (turning five) should know all their initial sounds.

Phonics Stage 2: Three letter words

e.g. sounding out c – a - t

Activities and games to teach 3-letter phonetic words

- Word wheel
- Phonics flipper
- Circle of sounds
- Bottle top letters



Teach **sight words** at the same time as **initial sounds**

Use short repetitive sentences.

Example: I went to the ...

“I went to the market”; “I went to the house”; “I went to the river”

Resource: Level 1 Reading cards (See Beacon Media website)

For some words, the student just points to the picture and does not have to read the word.

If the picture is of a word unknown to the student, the student can guess the word from the picture.

Sight word flashcard games

- Pass flash cards around the circle. When the teacher says “stop” the students say the flashcard in their hand.
- Stepping stones – set the flashcards out like stepping stones for the students to walk along while saying the words.

Expectation of skills to be mastered in the kindergarten year (4 years-olds)

- Cutting and pasting
- Perseverance (*Ask children to try hard to do something that they find difficult*)
- Drawing a recognizable human figure
- Forming a circle with other children in a group. (Teacher *gives instructions to stand up and hold hands.*)
- Counting to 10 (or 20) and number recognition to 10 (or 20)
- Colour recognition
- Shape recognition (circle, square etc.)
- Recognizing their name written on a card, and later, write their name.
- Learning the initial sounds of the alphabet. Use pictures or objects, *e.g. show three pictures or objects: an apple, an orange and a banana. Ask, "Which one starts with the 'a' sound." At this stage don't use letter name yet.*

Expectations for 5-year-olds

- All expectations for 4-year-old kindergarten should be continued PLUS:
- Recognition of alphabet sounds; matching letters to pictures
- Writing letters of the alphabet
- Making up a verbal 'sentence' about a picture they have drawn. (The teacher can write the sentence for them.)
- Reading Big Books made by the class.
- Numbers to 20 - counting, adding and subtracting, making groups, completing patterns