

Primary Arts of Language: Writing

Based on the Blended Sound-Sight Program of Learning
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Adapted for Home Educators
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Teacher's Manual

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Class Journal

Introduce the class journal. Write the day, date, and a few sentences. Choose one or two things to point out as you write (perhaps how you use the calendar to figure out the date). Don't spend long on this! Short and snappy is the key.

Printing

Introduce the letters *c*, *o*, *a*. You do not need to teach the name of each letter at this point, just its sound. If printing is new for your student, just teach the letter *c* today, and add others once the *c* is mastered.

Be sure to read the introduction to teaching printing. Introduce the letters on the whiteboard first, and have your student practice his letters on the whiteboard also. You may also want to begin by forming the letters with play dough. Roll a piece of dough into a long string, and form the letter with a single strand. There is a recipe for play dough in the Appendix.

Before writing on paper, teach your child how to hold the pen and tip the paper. Post the "Printing Reminder Sign" (provided in the Part I Student Book and in the Appendix of this manual) somewhere in your classroom, and refer to it at the beginning of every printing lesson. On the sign, circle which paper tilt your student will use.

The Happy Letter: *c*

Begin by introducing the letter *c*. Say the sound (the hard |c| or |k| sound, not the name of the letter). Write a *c* on the whiteboard and say, "|c| is the happy letter. He is happy because he is a cookie, and somebody took a bite!"

Say, "To make a |c|, I start up on the right (relate to an object in the room, such as the windows or the wall). Do not pick your pen up! Go up and around, but do not close it up. |c|, |c| cookie!" Be sure your student starts near the top of the *c* and circles all the way around. Tell him to imagine he is drawing a circle around his head. Starting at the temple, move around the top of the head and around to the chin stopping at the jaw line. Practice several *c*'s on the whiteboard. You can practice all the letters with play dough and on the whiteboard first, and then move to paper.

The Sad Letter: *o*

Now introduce the letter *o*. Draw one on the board and say, "This is the sad letter |ō|. He is sad because nobody took a bite out of him, 'Ahh.' To form the letter, start just like the happy letter, but continue around until you meet where you started."

Be sure your student does not get into the habit of starting the *o* at the top; it starts like the *c* to the right (relate to an object in the room).

Have your student place a breve (˘) over the |ō|. (A breve is the shape of a reverse arc, or a smile.) You will do this with all the vowels as they are first introduced since you will be teaching the short sounds with the letter stories. Later, the long sounds (the vowel names) can all be taught in one lesson. The long sounds will be marked with a macron (¯), which is the shape of a line over the vowel.

The Angry Letter: *a*

Introduce the letter *a*. Start on the right again (orient to the room). Say, "Start at the top; do not take your pen off the paper, and it says |ă|." You may teach your student to make a little curve at the end of the *a*, like a ponytail, but don't make it too long. Be sure the line from the top to the bottom is straight and not slanted; she keeps her pony tail close to her head. It should end at the bottom of the letter and not extend below the letter. Place a breve (˘) over each *a* to reinforce the short sound.

Monday
September 7, 2010

Yesterday, we went to Cook's Orchard and picked two bushels of apples. They had a dog that thought the apples were balls to chase! We are going to make applesauce with our apples.

Remind your student of the importance of not picking up the pen during the entire letter formation, especially with the letter *a*. There are letter story cards to cut out in the student pages to reinforce the stories.

Story Summary

Read the fairy tale “Goldilocks and the Three Bears.” You may use another version if you wish.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Once upon a time there were three bears, who lived in a little cottage in the forest. There was an enormous Papa Bear, a middle-sized Mamma Bear, and wee little Baby Bear. It was their custom to take a morning walk, so Mamma Bear poured hot porridge into their bowls to cool while they were out sharpening their claws and strengthening their muscles.

A little girl named Goldilocks was also out for a walk that morning. She had wandered farther than she should have and was becoming very tired and hungry. Seeing the little cottage deep in the forest, she wondered who lived there. She knocked, but no one answered. Overcome with curiosity, she decided to peek inside.



On the kitchen table, she saw the porridge. Since she was so very hungry from her walk, she decided to taste some from Papa Bear’s big bowl. She exclaimed, “Ooh! This porridge is too hot!” She found that Mamma’s porridge was too cold, but Baby Bear’s porridge was just right. Before she knew it, she had gobbled it all up!

Goldilocks decided to rest before going home, so she flounced into the living room. She plopped in Papa Bear’s chair and grunted, “Ugh! This chair is too big.” Mamma’s chair was too small, but Baby Bear’s chair was just right. However, it broke shortly after she dropped into it.

She decided she really wanted to lie down, so she clumped upstairs to find a bed. She tried Papa Bear’s bed, but it was too hard. She tried Mamma Bear’s bed, but it was too soft. When she tried Baby Bear’s bed, it felt just right, and she fell asleep.

Soon, the bears returned home. Seeing the table, Papa Bear complained, “Someone has been eating my porridge!” Mamma Bear gasped, “Someone has been eating my porridge!” and Baby Bear cried, “Someone has been eating my porridge and ate it all up!”

They went into the living room and discovered that someone had been there too! Papa Bear grumbled, “Someone has been sitting in my chair.” Mamma Bear complained, “Someone has been sitting in my chair!” And Baby Bear whimpered, “Someone has been sitting in my chair and broke it all to bits!”

Hearing a creak above their heads, the bears decided to investigate. The bears crept up the stairs and looked around. When they came up to their beds, Papa Bear growled, “Someone has been sleeping in my bed.” Mamma Bear snarled, “Someone has been sleeping in my bed,” and Baby Bear snapped, “Someone has been sleeping in my bed, and she is still there!”

Just then, Goldilocks woke up. Seeing the three bears glaring at her, she screamed, leaped out of bed, and bolted down the stairs. The bears were after her in an instant, but they tripped on the stairs and landed in a heap at the bottom, giving Goldilocks time to race out the door and flee for home.

Safe at home, she decided never to go deep into the forest again, for she feared the wrath of the three bears.



Story Summary

Using the Story Sequence Chart located in the Part I Student Book and in the Appendix of this manual, help your student summarize the story into its three parts. Ask the story sequence questions and help your student answer; his answers can be phrases. Below are suggestions for questions and possible answers. Adam Andrews' talk "Reading Comprehension from Seuss to Socrates" (available as an mp3 audio on the *Primary Arts of Language: + @ing* DVD-ROM) will also help you with this process.

Over time, your student can learn to retell the story in complete sentences using the chart for reference. For now, focus on just answering the questions to sort the story into its three parts.

Characters and Setting

Who is in the story? (Main Characters)	The Bear family: Papa Bear, Mamma Bear, and Baby Bear You can save Goldilocks until the problem, or get her started on her morning walk in the woods too.
What do they look like?	Papa Bear is big and tough, Mamma Bear is sweet and soft, and Baby Bear is little. If you are including Goldilocks, she is young and naïve.
When does it happen?	In the morning, it is a lovely day.
What do they say/do? Where do they go?	The bears went for a walk having poured the porridge to cool while they were out.

The Problem

	Goldilocks finds the house and decides to enter, uninvited. The problem can be her hunger and being too far away from home, or her bad manners.
What does she do?	She breaks into their house, eats their food, breaks their stuff, and sleeps in their beds. Although your student can give all the details for each section with the "too hot, too cold, and just right," it is a good thing to hurry through the early part of the plot and slow down when you get nearer the climax.
What do the bears say/do?	They find the results of Goldilocks' visit as they go through their house. They eventually go upstairs.

Climax/Resolution

How is the problem solved?	The bears find Goldilocks, and she gets away.
What happens after?	You can make up something for "what comes after." Do the bears start to lock their house? Do they move away? Does Goldilocks learn anything?

Clincher

Have one, final sentence that ends the story with a bang. Suggestions:

"She decided never to go so far from home again."
"Goldilocks determined never to enter strange houses again."
"The Bears decided to lock their doors from now on."
"The Bears are still looking for Goldilocks. She had better watch out for the Three Bears."

Spelling Test

Later in the day, plan a few minutes for a "spelling test" where the letters taught can be practiced at the whiteboard. Say the letter *sound* and ask your student to "spell" it. Today's "test" is on the letters *c*, *o*, and *a*. If your student cannot remember the letters or how to print them, you may want to repeat this lesson tomorrow before progressing to Lesson 2.

Class Journal

Continue the class journal. Write the day, date, and a few sentences. Take note of how you find the day and date on the calendar. Only spend a few minutes on this.

Printing

Review *c*, *o*, and *a*. Review can be done on the whiteboard. Then introduce the letters *d*, *g*, *u*.

Again, introduce all the letters on the whiteboard first, and let your child practice on the whiteboard also. You may want to form the letters with play dough as well. Roll a piece of dough into a long string, and form the letter with a single strand.

Before writing on paper, reinforce how to hold the pen and tip the paper.

If you are not sure how to present the letter sounds, use the Phonogram CD-ROM that came in your *All About Spelling* Basic Interactive Package.

Also, when a letter is presented in straight brackets (e.g., [b]), it indicates that the letter's sound is being referred to. When the letter is in italics, then read the letter's name. A breve (˘) is used over a vowel to indicate its short sound, and a macron (¯) is used over the vowel for its long sound (its name).

The Doggy Letter: *d*

Introduce the letter by its sound, not its name. Say, "This letter is the doggy letter. Draw the head first, just like you started the [c], but then come up to make the tail, and then trace back to the ground. Feel your lips when you say [d]. See how your lips make a circle? Make the round part of the [d] first, and then draw the line." When making the [d] out of play dough, be sure to have enough dough to double back along the line to the floor.

Be sure that students start the letter *d* with a *c*; do not let them begin the *d* at the top of the line. Starting with the *c* will significantly reduce reversals, and will make the learning of cursive later much easier.

The Draggy-Leg Letter: *g*

Introduce this letter by saying, "[g] is the draggy-leg letter. His foot is bent underneath him." Stand up and walk around the room dragging a heavy leg. Say "[g], [g], [g]" as you shuffle around the room. Invite your student to join you in the draggy-leg march.

The letter *g* is another *c* starter; draw the *c*, then go up and down and curve under to make the draggy-leg.

The Princess Letter: *u*

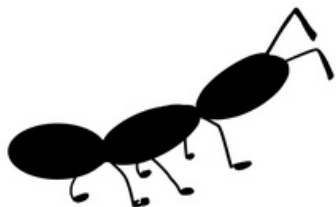
Say, "Princess *u* is like a little girl who holds up her hands and says her short sound, like a little girl lisping 'Uh? Uh?' which is baby talk for 'Up? Up?'" Have your student hold up his hands and say "uh, uh?" Form the letter by starting at the top, go straight down, curve and up again. Finish by coming straight down. When writing, have your student place a breve (˘) over the *u*.

Story Summary

See the next page for an Aesop fable to read and summarize using the Story Sequence Chart. Feel free to substitute another story.

Spelling Test

Later in the day, give an informal "spelling test" on the letters learned thus far. The "test" should be done at the whiteboard. Use this test to determine if a student needs more practice on these letters before moving on. Be sure to say the letter sounds, not the letter names, when giving the test. Use the Letter Stories if necessary to help your student remember.



An Ant, nimbly running about in the sunshine in search of food, came across a Chrysalis that was very near its time of change. The Chrysalis moved its tail and thus attracted the attention of the Ant, who then saw for the first time that it was alive.

“Poor, pitiable animal!” cried the Ant disdainfully. “What a sad fate is yours! While I can run hither and thither at my pleasure and if I wish, ascend the tallest tree, you lie imprisoned here in your shell with power only to move a joint or two of your scaly tail.” The Chrysalis heard all this but did not try to make any reply.

A few days after, when the Ant passed that way again, nothing but the shell remained. Wondering what had become of its contents, he felt himself suddenly shaded and fanned by the gorgeous wings of a beautiful Butterfly. “Behold in me,” said the Butterfly, “your much-pitied friend! Boast now of your powers to run and climb as long as you can get me to listen.” So saying, the Butterfly rose in the air and borne along and aloft on the summer breeze, was soon lost to the sight of the Ant forever.



text courtesy of aesopfables.com

Story Summary

This is an example of a surprise instead of a problem. Be sure to reference the Story Sequence Chart and ask the questions for each section. Below is just a suggestion for answers.

Characters and Setting

Who: The Ant, the Chrysalis (cocoon)

What are they like? (Ant is industrious, nimble)

Where: Likely in the forest

Ask about the weather (sunny, nice) and what time of year it is (must be summer time since the Ant is looking for food, and butterflies hatch then).

Plot or Problem

The Ant finds a cocoon with something trapped inside. He feels sorry for it.

Surprise

It turns out that the Chrysalis was not a prison at all. A Butterfly was emerging that would be freer than the Ant would ever be.

Clincher

Things are not always what they seem.

Class Journal

Continue the class journal. Write the day, date, and a few sentences. Note how the day of the week and month are capitalized. Go back and read past entries.

Printing

Use the empty letter blocks on the student page to review *c, o, a, d, g,* and *u*. The review can be done by giving an informal “spelling test” just like the one given at the end of the day. Say a letter sound and ask your student to write it on the whiteboard. After the review, introduce the letters *i, l, k* using the whiteboard. Your student can practice the letter on the whiteboard with play dough, or if you are feeling up for a mess, give finger paint a try. Recipes are in the Appendix.

Before writing on paper, reinforce how to hold the pen and tip the paper. If your student is frustrated writing on paper, use the whiteboard exclusively for a while.

The Crying Letter: *i*

Say, “This is the crying letter. The dot is a teardrop.” Put your finger up to your eye like you are going to wipe away a tear, and make short little sobs: “|i|, |i|, |i|.” To write the letter, make a short line from top to bottom, and then place the dot for the teardrop on top.

The Licking Letter: *l*

Tell your student that the letter that says |l| is the licking letter because it looks like an empty lollipop stick. Be sure to form it from the top to the bottom. Finger paint is great with this letter: the gooey stroke from top to bottom through a glob of paint is so fun. You can also have your student pretend to lick the tip of his finger, and then use his finger to stroke from top to bottom. Notice that this is a tall letter compared to the short little *i*.

The Kicking Letter: *k*

Explain that |k| is the kicking letter. Draw a tall line, which is his body, and then have him kick out his legs. Athletic children might want to give it a try: Jump up and punch out a leg and an arm like a karate kid.

Again, the first line is a tall one, but the legs kick out further down. Decide if you want to have your student draw the *k* with one or two strokes (*k* or *ƙ*). Some students have trouble figuring out how to make the second half of the letter. The one-stroke method might make it easier in the long run, and it will make the transition to cursive easier as well. It is a little more complicated to learn, so decide what is best for your student. Definitely practice with play dough first!

To create a *k* with one loopy stroke (see diagram at right), teach your student to draw the tall line first. Then trace back up just a little way, and then curve up and over to create a loop. Come back to the line, and then slide down and out to the floor. To use two strokes, draw the tall line first, pick the pen up, move a little out to the right (oriented to the room), and then kick in and out. The copy work pages in Part II of these lessons will use the stick *k*, but you can choose either.

Story Summary

See the next page for an Aesop fable to read and summarize. Feel free to substitute another story.

Spelling Test

Later in the day, give a “spelling test” at the whiteboard on the letters learned thus far.



In a field one summer's day, a Grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart's content. An Ant passed by bearing along with great toil an ear of corn he was taking to the nest.

"Why not come and chat with me," said the Grasshopper, "instead of toiling and moiling in that way?"

"I am helping to lay up food for the winter," said the Ant, "and recommend you to do the same."

"Why bother about winter?" said the Grasshopper. "We have got plenty of food at present." But the Ant went on its way and continued its toil.

When the winter came, the Grasshopper had no food and found itself dying of hunger, while it saw the ants distributing every day corn and grain from the stores they had collected in the summer. Then the Grasshopper knew:



It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.

text courtesy of aesopfables.com

Story Summary

Be sure to reference the Story Sequence Chart and ask the questions for each section. Below is just a suggestion for answers.

Characters and Setting

Who: The Grasshopper and the Ant. The Grasshopper is happy-go-lucky; the Ant works hard.

Where: Farm country? It is probably fall since there is corn to harvest.

Plot or Problem

The Grasshopper wants to play and not work since there is plenty of food for the taking. The Ant continues to work hard thinking ahead to the future.

Surprise (to the Grasshopper!)

When winter came, there was no food; the Ant was right after all.

Clincher

It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.