

Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Instruction

- Working with Words
- Emergent



What is it?



- Practical instruction teachers can use to organize, plan and teach the alphabet
- Emphasizes specific skills in cycles based on factors that influence learning the alphabet
- Research based

Why do it?



ABC

- Knowledge of the names, sounds, and symbols of the letters is essential for learning to read and write.
- Alphabet knowledge is consistently recognized as the strongest, most durable predictor of later achievement in literacy including decoding, comprehension, and spelling (National Early Literacy Panel 2008).
- Given the significance for children to successfully gain alphabetic knowledge, it is important to consider effective practices.

Why do it?



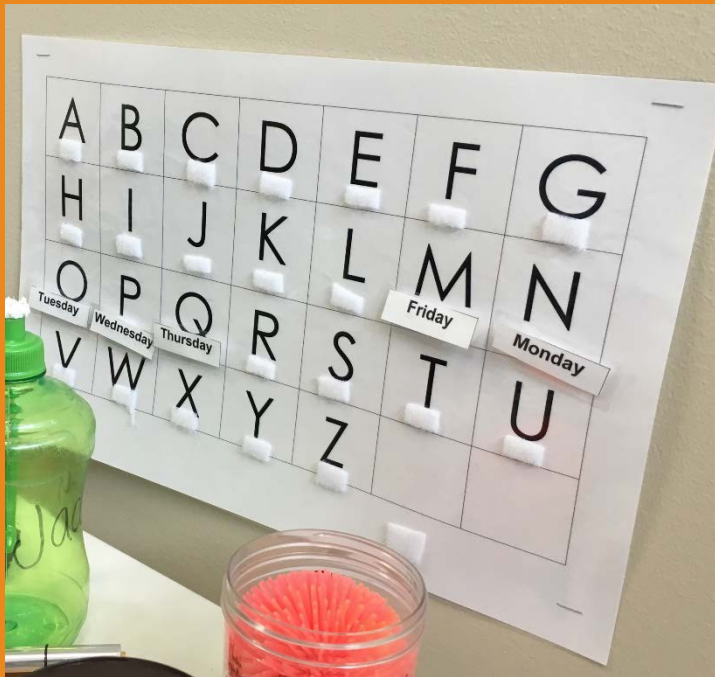
- 1st grade verbal student with ASD
- Never learned more than 4 inconsistent letters before February 2017 during 1st grade year
- Teacher did 9 weeks of EAK
- Student now independently can expressively identify both upper and lower case letters with 19/26 letters
- Student can produce 16/26 letters in writing when asked to write a specific letter

1 Letter a Day ~~1 letter a week~~



- 1 letter a week is proven ineffective
- Unfortunately, this common practice is largely based on tradition rather than empirical validation as an effective instructional practice (Justice et al. 2006)

Cycles & Rational for Learning Advantage



- Own Name
 - Learning advantage for initial letter in first name
- Alphabetical Order
 - Learning advantage for alphabet sequential order
- Letter Name-Letter Sound Relationship
 - Learning advantage for letters that have the letter sound produced in the letter name
- Letter Frequency
 - Learning advantage based upon letter frequency in environmental print and other printed materials

(There is more)

Explicit Lesson Format



- Teach upper and lower case letters at the same time
- Cycle through 1 letter a day
- Lesson Plan calls for teacher modeling and guided practice in:
 - Identifying the letter name and sound
 - Recognizing the letter in text
 - Producing the letter form

Designed for acquisition and application



- Learning in the context of reading and writing
- Step 1 teaches students to identify the name and sound
- Step 2 students immediately begin learning to recognize the letter contextually in books and other written text
- Step 3 students learn how to produce the letter forms for use in writing

Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Lesson Template



Letter Name Identification: (1-2 minutes)

- 1. This is the letter _____. This is the uppercase letter _____. This is the lowercase letter _____. (Show and/or write the letter, explaining the form.)
- 2. Let's practice naming this letter. What is this letter? _____. (Point to uppercase and lowercase letters in different order at least 3 times asking students to identify the letter name).

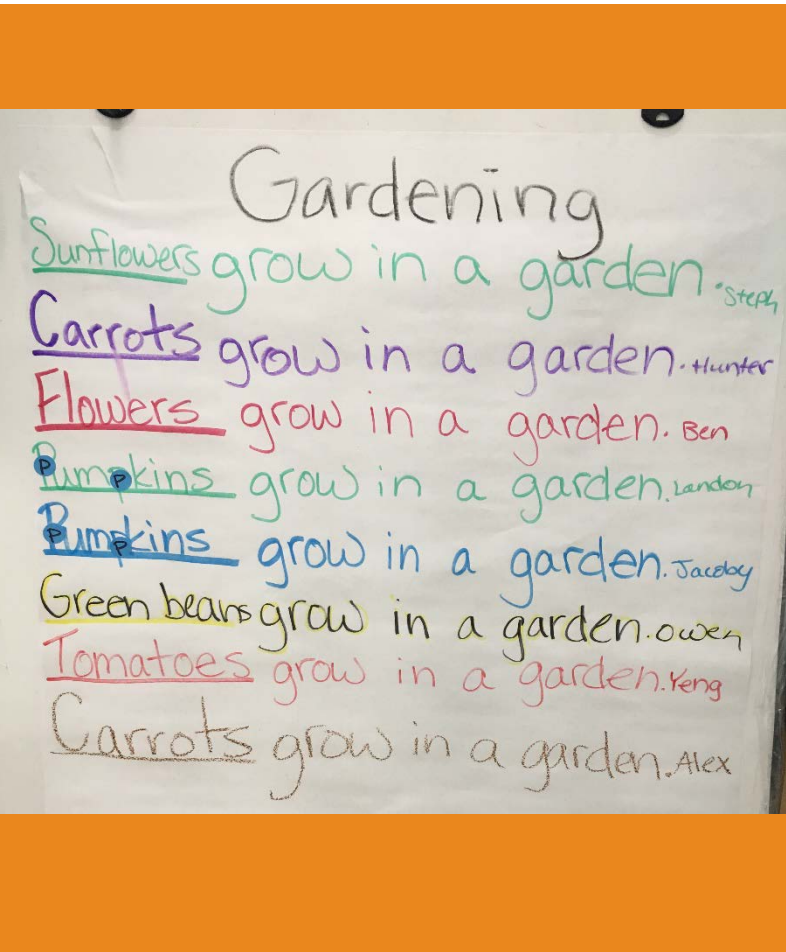
Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Lesson Template



Letter Sound Identification: (1-2 minutes)

- 3. The letter ____ represents the sound /___/. When I say the sound /_/ I place my tongue & mouth like this _____. (Provide explanations/stories/key words to help students remember the sound.)
- 4. Let's practice saying the sound of this letter. The letter ____ represents the _____ sound. Say the _____ sound with me _____, _____, _____. (Point to uppercase and lowercase letters in different order at least 3 times asking students to identify the letter sound).

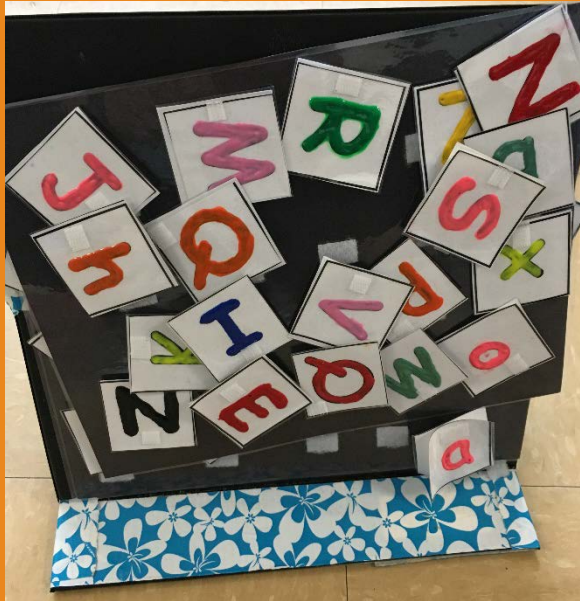
Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Lesson Template



Recognizing the Letter in Text: (3 minutes)

- 5. Now, let's see if we can find the letter _____ (Students locate the uppercase and lowercase letter in text and state the letter name and sound each time the letter is located) There are a number of alternatives for student practice with recognizing the letter in text such as:
 - sorting through magnetic letters/tiles to isolate the particular letter
 - identifying the letter in charts of classmates' names
 - using a crayon to circle the letter in newspapers or magazines

Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Lesson Template



Producing the Letter Form: (4-5 minutes)

- 6. Let me show you how to write the letter _____. Here's where I begin on the paper lines to write the letter _____. (Provide description and hints about how to write the uppercase and lowercase form of the letter).
- 7. Let's practice writing the letter _____ together. Producing the letter can also use alternatives for practice such as:
 - using a transparency and marker to trace over the letter as it is identified in enlarged print from children's books
 - producing the letter form with clay, pipe cleaners, wiki sticks

Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Instruction

A graphic on an orange background featuring the letters 'ABC' in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below the letters is a white checkmark, and a dashed white line extends from the top right of the 'C' down to the checkmark.

- Builds on these two important components of effective instruction:
 - brief, explicit lessons
 - taught through multiple distributed instructional cycles

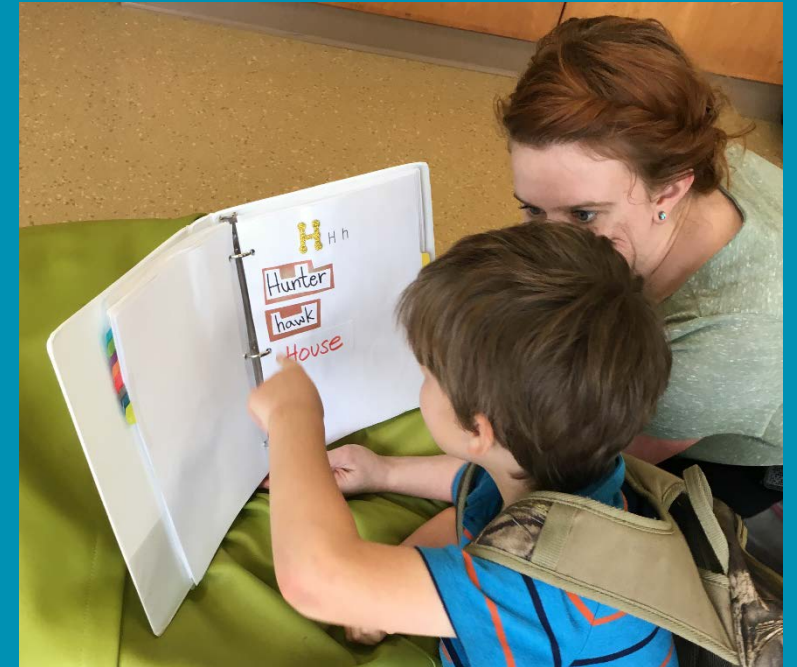
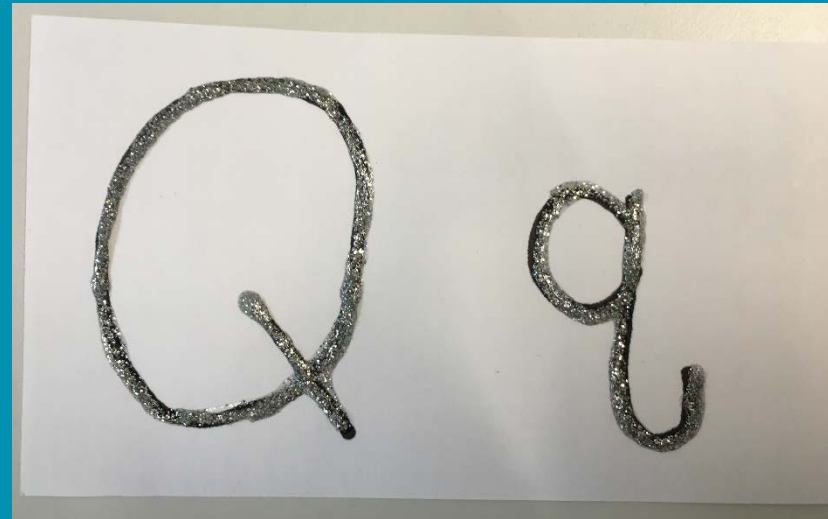
EAK in Everything



- Morning Meeting
 - Letter of the day song, yoga move that starts with the letter
- Word Wall
 - Find the letter on the word wall, identify it in words of the week, read all the words that start with that letter, use lasers or flashlights to find letter
- Shared Reading
 - Print reference the letter of the day, mark it with post it notes
- Writing
 - Model writing the letter and draw attention to it
- PCW
 - Print reference the letter, find in your sentence

Personal Connections

- Traveling word walls
- Take home letter of the day



Questions About Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge Instruction?



References

- Jones, C., Clark, S., & Reutzel R. (2012). Enhancing alphabet knowledge instruction: Research implications and practical strategies for early childhood educators. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=http://readyforlearning.net/&httpsredir=1&article=1403&context=teal_facpub
- Icons made by [Freepik](http://www.flaticon.com) from www.flaticon.com