

Module: Writing

Teaching Early Literacy with the Learning Toolkit+

Welcome to the CSLP's Teaching Early Literacy with the Learning Toolkit+. As you move through these modules, you will familiarize yourself with each broad literacy skill and its corresponding sub-skills, gain a deeper understanding of various teaching approaches and practical tips, and explore how the CSLP's Learning Toolkit+ also known as LTK+ supports the development of these literacy skills.



These modules can be used in a variety of settings; from asynchronous and fully online to synchronous, blended and in-person workshops. Each of the modules has a similar structure, outlined in a table of contents. All of the modules focus on explanations, practice, and interactive content to insure understanding and engagement. We hope these modules provide you with new knowledge, useful suggestions on how to integrate the various literacy tools into your teaching, and helps you develop your expertise in early literacy instruction.

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Introduction

Introduction

Writing is one method that children use to convey their thoughts and ideas. Children in the first grade are beginning to learn the basics of writing.

Building on the concept of a word, learners begin to print clearly and grasp the basics of grammar rules and style, such as when to use capital letters. They write with a combination of correct and incorrect spelling. Writing involves skills (mechanics), such as printing, spelling, and punctuation. Writing also involves higher level skills, such as composition, using text structure, and the ability to convey ideas.

Module Objectives

This module will help you make the most of the ABRA activities in your teaching. At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Describe the main characteristics of writing and typing skills.
- Identify the goals of writing instruction.
- Select activities in ABRA that support the development of those skills.
- Prepare a plan for integrating ABRA writing activities into your classroom teaching.

Pause and Think

Activity: Group Discussion or Individual Reflection

Small Group Discussion

15 minutes

If you are doing this module with peers, form small groups of 3-5 participants. Use the following questions to discuss your experiences with writing instruction.

Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions:

- Think back to when you were learning how to write? What motivated you to develop this skill?
- What is still difficult about writing?
- How skilled are your learners at typing? Do you have any strategies to help children develop this skill?
- What teaching strategies have you tried in your classroom to foster learners' writing skills? What worked and what didn't?
- What questions do you have about writing and typing instruction?



Writing

What do you Need to Know and Do to Write?

Reading and writing involve many of the same cognitive processes. Writers convey meaning by using their knowledge of words, grammatical structure, and text structure. Readers interpret what is written based on their own knowledge and experiences. These skills are interconnected so, as children develop their abilities in alphabets, fluency, and comprehension, they will also develop their skills in writing. Still, they need guided instruction to improve their abilities.

The goal of writing instruction is to enable your learners to write clearly to communicate ideas, thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Writing is a reflective process that can be used to better understand themselves, or to share with others. Strong writers convey their ideas in an engaging way. Help learners understand the different audiences, purposes, and forms that writing can have.

Try to devote one hour per day to writing:

- 30 minutes for teaching writing strategies.
- 30 minutes on writing practice.

Keep in mind that writing can be part of other subjects. For example, the writing practice could be part of your science curriculum.

What is Writing? (Video Script)

In the [online version of this module](#), there is a video that describes core writing skills. The transcript is provided in the PDF version of the module.

In this video, you will learn how to support and encourage children's writing skills, which are a fundamental part of literacy.

The desire to write starts early. Young children who watch adults writing will often try imitating them by scribbling. But those scribbles have no sense. In order to transform their scribbles into meaningful texts, children will need instruction, practice and encouragement.

Writing requires children to translate their knowledge of speech sounds into words and sentences. Researchers have studied how this process works. They have discovered several key ways to help children become strong writers.

First, children must learn how to spell words correctly, so their texts can be understood by others. You can help children to spell by teaching them some of the specific spelling rules and patterns found in English. For example, you can explain that the letter c sounds like /k/ when you use it in front of the letter a, as in cat. However, the c will



sound like /s/ when put in front of an i, as in city. Of course, English spelling has many exceptions, but these rules and patterns can be a useful starting point for learning to spell.

Students also need practice in the physical skill of handwriting and typing on a keyboard. By acquiring these skills, students can put their ideas onto paper or into a computer without too much physical effort.

Finally, children should practice writing all kinds of texts, including letters, stories, and essays. You can help them write these texts by suggesting they follow a four-step process that includes planning, drafting, editing, and sharing. Let's see how this process works.

Planning means deciding on a topic for a text. Children can generate ideas for the topic by brainstorming or reading about it. In the planning stage, children should also consider the audience and purpose for their text, which both influence the structure and tone used.

Once children have organized their ideas, they can begin drafting the text. Writing is hard work. Remind children that it will take effort and time before a text is completed. Once children have a draft text, you can encourage them to edit their work by looking for spelling errors, improving their handwriting, and making sure the text has a logical flow.

Finally, children should be encouraged to share their work with you, their peers, their parents, and anyone else willing to listen to, or read the text. Sharing their works reminds children that the purpose of writing is to communicate with others. Learning to write effectively takes time, but with proper instruction and plenty of practice, your students will discover the pleasure of being able to express themselves through the written word.

Children can also use the activities in ABRACADABRA's *Writing* section to practice spelling words and sentences. The ABRACADABRA training and support materials will provide more guidance in how best to use these activities to support children's writing skills.



Pause and Think

Activity: Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*) to answer the following questions:

- What did I learn from this video?
- What questions do I have after watching this video?



Mechanics of Writing

Learners today need to know how to write physically and how to use word processing. Some important aspects:

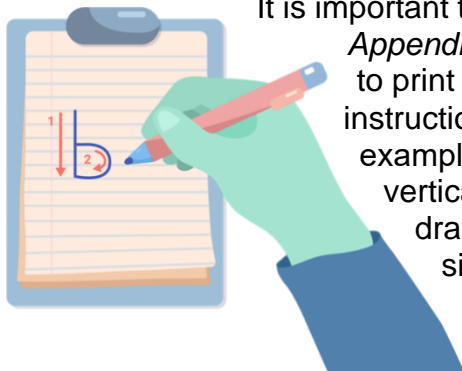
- Pencil grip.
- Motor movement.
- Left-handed learners.
- What is typing?
- Good posture.

Pencil Grip

Beginning learners do not know how to hold writing implements. It is important to show and physically support children when they are first learning how to use a pencil, crayon, or another writing tool. Further support might include individually demonstration, or hand over hand practice. Feel free to gently place the pencil in the child's hand correctly. Balance the pencil on the middle finger.



Motor Movement



It is important that children learn how to properly form letters (see *Appendix B*) from the very beginning as it'll impact their ability to print accurately and quickly. Learners need direct instruction to learn how to print and write correctly. For example, to write a lowercase 'b', you start at the top of the vertical line and come down, then from the center of that line draw a curved line that goes to the bottom on the right side. If children are asked to copy letters without this guidance, they may automatize incorrect motor movements that will be difficult to correct later on.



When children are first learning how to print, they will find the activity tiring and their hands and fingers will become fatigued. Printing requires cognitive effort, hand-eye coordination and muscle control. Holding a pencil or crayon is challenging. Asking them to write for long periods of time will result in sloppy outcomes because children will not have the muscular control necessary. Teachers can help children develop the skills they need by giving them short 1-minute exercises throughout the day. For example, when asking learners to practice writing the letter ‘b’, start by asking them to write one line of ‘b’s. Switch to a non-printing activity for 15 minutes, then return and ask learners to write a second line of ‘b’s. This makes the task less challenging, but allows children to get lots of practice throughout the day.

Some children need additional motivation to practice the motor movements. Turn the task into something playful where practicing is a game: “How many lowercase ‘b’s can you write in 15 seconds?”

Left-Handed Learners



Children establish their dominant hand early in life. Some research suggests that preferences begin in infancy, but by 2 to 4 years of age dominance is usually evident and strongly developed. This means that by the time young children start school, handedness has already been set. Teachers should work with the child’s dominant hand, and not try to change it. Although most of the population is right-handed, left-handedness is natural for the remaining members of the population. Although there are some myths about handedness, there is nothing unnatural or wrong with being left-handed.

To test which hand is dominant, offer a child a pencil by placing it equally distant from both hands—at the child’s midline. The hand they grab the pencil with is likely their dominant hand. Do this a couple of times with a couple of small objects (e.g., pencil, spoon, small toy). If the child consistently reaches with the left hand, presume the child is left-handed. If the child consistently reaches with the right hand, presume right-handedness. In rare cases, a child might be ambidextrous, meaning they can use both hands equally well. If the child switches hands between reaching tasks, watch the child’s use of hands as they may be equally able to write with either hand.



Left-handed learners will experience additional challenges given classrooms and resources are often designed for right-handed users. Teachers can help by planning ahead and providing alternatives. For example:

- Avoid writing utensils that smudge because the left hand will go over the letters and make a mess.
- Avoid spiral notebooks because the hand is always on the coil. Instead use a flat sheet of paper which can be stapled after the child has completed the pages that go together.
- Try to reserve seats at the end of rows or end of groups to allow the left-handed child room to write.

What is Typing?

Typing is the ability to write on a computer. Children as young as 6 or 7 can begin to develop this skill, as their hands should fit comfortably over a keyboard. With digital technologies becoming an increasingly frequent aspect of human life, this is a vital life skill.

Unfortunately, typing is a challenging task for young children as they need an additional skillset beyond their general writing knowledge. When children are first learning to type, they will do it slowly and usually with one finger pressing each of the keys. Ideally, children will continue to develop this skill until they can type accurately, using all of their fingers, and without looking at the keyboard. This skill is called *touch-typing*, and it will allow them to focus on what they are trying to do rather than the keyboard.

Short daily practice sessions are more effective than one long session only once a week. Allow your learners 15-30 minutes of typing practice each day. There are several computer programs designed to help children develop this skill.

Good Posture

Printing or working on a computer for a long time can have negative consequences. For example, having a sore back or neck is common. Help learners develop a good posture for printing and working with computers. Learners should:

- Sit straight with their back against the back of their chair.
- Feet should be flat on the ground.
- Legs should form a 90-degree angle with their knees.
- Arms should be at their sides.
- Wrists should be slightly elevated.
- The screen or paper should be close enough that they are not straining their eyes or neck.



Pause and Think

Activity: Group Discussion or Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions:

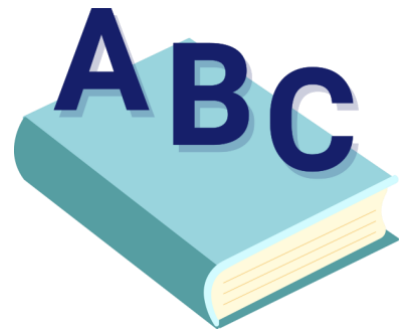
- What motivated you to develop your own printing or typing skills?
- How will your learners benefit from developing their printing or typing skills?
- What barriers or limitations are there for teaching your learners printing or typing skills? How can you overcome them?



If you are doing this module with peers, form small groups of 3-5 participants and discuss these questions.

What is Spelling?

Spelling is an important basic skill related to reading and writing. Spelling involves sound to letter mapping. Similar to reading, for some words there is a good match between sounds and letters. However, some words have a poorer match between sounds and letters, such as silent letters or inconsistent sound to letter matches.



Print and Cursive Writing



Even in an increasingly digital age, handwriting is still an important skill to foster in children. It requires learners to call upon their knowledge of letter formation and spelling while applying pressure and moving a writing implement across paper. Practicing the mechanics of letter formation is an important foundation skill.

Children start by learning upper- and lower-case printed letters. Older learners will eventually learn cursive writing. You can introduce learners to cursive letters at a young age by showing them both printed and cursive letters.



Pause and Think

Activity: Group Discussion or Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on and answer these questions:

- What words do you have difficulty spelling?
- What words do you notice your learners struggling with?

If you are doing this module with peers, form small groups of 3-5 participants and discuss these questions.



Story Prompts

Individual or Group Activity

For young children, the focus of writing instruction is largely centered on the mechanics: how to hold a pencil, how to create the shape of letters, identify letters on a keyboard, proper spelling, and so on. While they work on the mechanics, they will begin to work on the story generation orally. Teachers can write the stories that the children generate and then read it back to the children. Learning how to compose is a life-long skill that can foster one's creative side.

Random Words

Individual Activity

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to create a short story.

Below are lists of words for you to use as prompts. Write a short story where each of the words appears at least once. It may be hard to find a connection, but that will make your story interesting. If possible, share your creation with a colleague. Give them the list of words you used, and see what sort of story, they come up with.

Suggested words:

- Elephant, Herbs, Phone, Miniature, Money, Stir, Wicked.
- Battle, Earth, Entice, Lead, Run, Summer, Whisper.
- Dance, Deafening, Fruit, Inspire, Round, Tenacious, Tree.
- Apparition, Follow, Hum, Loud, Metropolis, Putrid, Winter.

If you're stuck on how to start, pick one of the words and put it in your first sentence.



You can also create your own list of words. Write them down, mix them up, and select a few at random.

Once finished, use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on the following:

- What inspired you?
- What was challenging about this task?
- How would you adapt this task for young children? Try it in your classes!

One Sentence at a Time

Group Activity

In a group of 3-5 participants, work together to create a story. Assign one member to be the recorder who will write down the story as you go.

Use one of the prompts below to start the story. One person continues the story by creating the next sentence. Then, a second person in the group adds their own sentence. This continues until each person has had a chance to add to the story three times, or until the group unanimously decides the story has come to an end.

Sentence examples:

- From the corner of my eye, I saw a bright flash of light...
- It was the hottest day of the year, and the air conditioner was broken...
- I stumbled to a halt when I noticed my best friend crying...
- There were three men in the photo, but I only recognized one of them...
- He sat across from the doctor and held his breath while he waited for the news...

Reread the story together, then use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on the following:

- How did your group members inspire your creativity?
- What addition to the story surprised you the most?
- Did the story end the way you thought it would?
- How would you adapt this task for young children? Try it in your classes!

See if another group used the same prompt as yours. Share your stories with each other.

Compare Beginnings

Group Activity

Form groups of 3-5 participants. As a group select one of the following prompts:



- She held a box in her hands, and idly played with the clasp...
- No one wrote letters anymore. So, it was a great surprise to find one waiting for me when I got home...
- They danced around her, stomping their feet, and singing so loud that the entire town had surely heard them...
- He'd held on to the secret for years, but feared the time for it to remain hidden was quickly coming to a close...

Individually write the first paragraph of a story based on the prompt selected by your group. Once finished, use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign into ePEARL, to reflect on the following:

- What inspired you?
- How do you picture your story continuing?

Regroup and allow everyone to read their story's beginning. After everyone has shared, discuss the following:

- Are there any similarities between the stories?
- What inspired each of you?
- How would you adapt this task for young children? Try it in your classes!

Using ABRA to Support Writing Skills

Writing (Typing)

Children naturally have an interest in writing. Even before their formal literacy instruction begins, they try writing. They scribble until they are taught how to write. Children need to first learn how to spell individual words. Then they can practice combining words into a sentence to convey meaning.

ABRA has two activities to help children build these skills. One focuses on individual words, and the other activity centers on typing full sentences.

Discover the ABRA activities that help children develop their writing skills:

- Spelling Words
- Spelling Sentences



Spelling Words

To access this activity in ABRA:

- 1) Click on *Writing*



- 2) Click on *Spelling Words*



[Watch a demo of this activity online.](#)

Learn more about [this activity](#) by visiting the ABRA resources site.

Spelling Sentences

To access this activity in ABRA:

- 1) Click on *Writing*



- 2) Click on *Spelling Sentences*



[Watch a demo of this activity online.](#)

Learn more about [this activity](#) by visiting the ABRA resources site.



Pause and Think

Activity: Individual Reflection. If Possible, Followed by a Group Discussion

Individual Reflection

Use your course notebook (see *Appendix A*), or sign in to ePEARL, to consider these questions:

- 1) What are some ways your learners struggle with writing and/or typing?
- 2) How can the ABRA activities help build these skills?
- 3) How can you use these activities? Make a specific plan.
- 4) What challenges do you see in carrying out this plan? How can you overcome them?

Group Discussion

Form small groups of 3-5 participants. Everyone should share their individual reflection answers and get feedback from their peers on:

- The learners' needs and the activities selected.
- The plan to get children using the ABRA activities.
- The challenges teachers have identified.

Your Teaching

Let's Go!: Tips and Techniques

Suggestions for Incorporating Writing in your Classroom

Tips

- Ask learners to share their ideas orally before they start writing.

Teacher Aids

The CSLP has prepared a number of resources for teachers. These include technical support for the ABRA tool, pedagogical support for helping children build their literacy skills, and classroom activity and resource suggestions.

Sentence Activities

There are different activities you can use to help your learners develop their skills at writing sentences: sentence framing, sentence expanding, and sentence combining.

Collaboration & Reflection

Suggested strategies on how teachers can learn from their own experiences, receive input from colleagues, and provide feedback to support their peers.



Tips

Here are some ideas to help you get started.

- Have the whole class brainstorm ideas together before learners work independently.
- As a precursor, have learners draw letters with their fingers (in sand or with finger paint).
- Show children spelling patterns that are consistent, such as word families. For example: night, flight, and fight. Define any words that learners might not know (see vocabulary module).
- Have learners work collaboratively. Pair learners who have similar abilities and needs.
- Give the learners a reason to write that goes beyond your classroom. Think of ways their writing and creativity can be used with other classes or in the community.
- Prioritize accuracy over speed when children are learning to type. They can work on their ability to type fast once they are familiar with the keyboard and know the proper spelling.
- Ask learners to use letter magnets to create words. You can use a word of the day approach, or pull out vocabulary words from a story the class read.

Teacher Aids

The following resources suggest ways to teach writing using ABRA.

Dear Character (see *Appendix C*)

This classroom activity asks learners to write a letter to one of the characters in the story *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Learners can use this opportunity to express how they felt about that character's actions.

Step-By-Step (see *Appendix D*)

Learners can explore writing for non-fictional purposes. Using the story *How a Bean Sprouts* as a springboard, ask learners to create a step-by-step process for something they do often in their daily lives.

Spelling Words – Level 6 (see *Appendix E*)

This worksheet asks learners to use the images to identify and spell words. There is also a word search activity on the sheet.

Writing Exercise 1: I Can Move Like a... (see *Appendix F*)

This worksheet asks learners to draw their favourite animal, and then write a sentence for how that animal moves.



Connections: Writing (see *Appendix G*)

This document provides an overview of how the ABRA activities are connected, allowing learners to build and practice their writing skills.

To get more resources, please visit the ABRA Teacher Resource website:

<https://literacy.concordia.ca/resources/abra/teacher/en/>

Sentence Activities

Sentence Framing

This is sometimes referred to as sentence starters. You provide learners a portion of a sentence, such as the beginning, and ask them to write the full sentence.

For example:

Each day, I bring to school _____ .

See *Appendix H* for a sample worksheet to help you get started.

Sentence Expanding

Start with a simple subject-verb sentence, such as “The bird ate”. Slowly add additional nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

For example:

- The bird ate.
- The black bird ate.
- The black bird ate raspberries.
- The black bird ate raspberries from the garden.

Sentence Combining

Combine a few short sentences about the same subject into one sentence. This will help remove the flat and monotonous tone of the repeated sentences. It can also help learners learn to convey lots of information in a concise way.

For example:

- John walked to school. John walked slowly. John was late for school.
- John walked slowly to school, so he was late.



Collaboration and Reflection

Here are some ideas to help you get started.

Lesson Plans

Work with a colleague that teaches the same grade as you. Together create lesson plans (see *Appendix I*), brainstorm activity ideas, and share worksheets. Once you have implemented the lesson, regroup to share your experiences. Discuss both successes and difficulties. Share strategies on how to overcome those difficulties.

- For ePEARL users: attach the lesson or activity to your ePEARL account. *If you don't use ePEARL, write your reflections in your course notebook (see Appendix A).*
- Send a copy to the LTK trainer for evaluation and this will contribute towards attaining a mastery certificate.

Filming Your Lessons

Consider filming your classroom when you're teaching a writing or typing lesson, then:

- Share with colleagues to get feedback and/or provide a model for newer teachers.
- For ePEARL users: attach the video to your ePEARL account. After watching the lesson, reflect on the process. *If you don't use ePEARL, write your reflections in your course notebook (see Appendix A).*
- Send a copy to the LTK trainer for evaluation and this will contribute towards attaining a mastery certificate.
- Use this template (see *Appendix J*) to create a parental permission form.

Summary

Summary

In this module you learned...

- The goal of writing is to express thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a clear way.
- It is easier to spell words with a good match between sounds and letters.
- Practicing the mechanics of letter formation is an important foundation skill.
- Typing is writing on a computer. This is an essential skill in a digital world.
- ABRACADABRA has 2 activities to help children develop these skills.



Appendices

- A: Writing Course Notebook**
- B: Handwriting: Letter Formation**
- C: Dear Character**
- D: Step-By-Step**
- E: Spelling Words – Level 6**
- F: Writing Exercise 1: I Can Move Like a...**
- G: Connections: Writing**
- H: Sentence Framing: Animals**
- I: Lesson Plan Template**
- J: Parental Permission Form Template**





Reflect on Your Past Experiences

Think back to when you were learning how to write? What motivated you to develop this skill?

What is still difficult about writing?

How skilled are your learners at typing? Do you have any strategies to help children develop this skill?





What teaching strategies have you tried in your classroom to foster learners' writing skills? What worked and what didn't?

What questions do you have about writing and typing instruction?

Writing: Watch the Video

What did I learn from this video?

What questions do I have after watching this video?





What motivated you to develop your own printing or typing skills?

How will your learners benefit from developing their printing or typing skills?

What barriers or limitations are there for teaching your learners printing or typing skills?
How can you overcome them?

What words do you have difficult spelling?

What words do you notice your learners struggling with?





Story Prompts

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY – RANDOM WORDS

Write down the list of random words you'll use in your story:

Write your short story:





What inspired you?

What was challenging about this task?

How would you adapt this task for young children? Try it in your classes!





GROUP ACTIVITY – ONE SENTENCE AT A TIME

Write down the story starter your group selected:

Write the story your group created:





How did your group members inspire your creativity?

What addition to the story surprised you the most?

Did the story end the way you thought it would?

How would you adapt this task for young children? Try it in your classes!





What inspired you?

How do you picture your story continuing?

Are there any similarities between the stories?

What inspired each of you?





How would you adapt this task for young children? Try it in your classes!

ABRACADABRA

What are some ways your learners struggle with writing and/or typing?

How can the ABRA activities help build these skills?





How can you use these activities? Make a specific plan.

What challenges do you see in carrying out this plan? How can you overcome them?

NOTE: If possible, meet with your colleagues to go over your plan.

Additional Notes

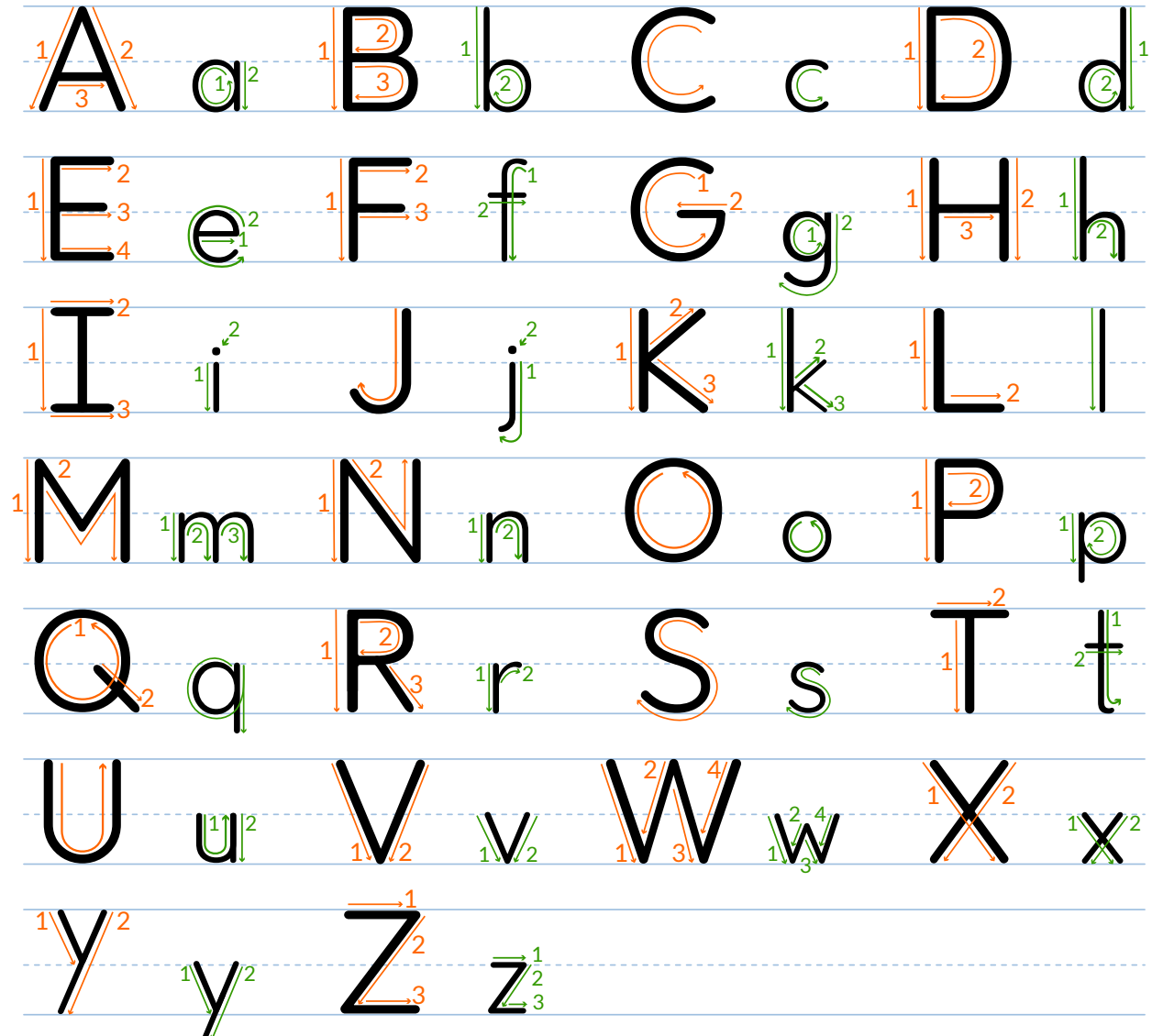
Write any questions or thoughts you have as you go through the module.



How to Write the Letters of the Alphabet

It is important that children learn how to properly form letters because it'll impact their ability to print accurately and quickly. For example, learners need to be taught to start their letters at the top. Below is a diagram that indicates the steps for forming both upper- and lower-case letters.

Letter Formation



123ABCtv. (2019, February 15). Write the ABCs playlist - Children's handwriting videos. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsGKbM3KzyEn6eTjYlhJt60xErXm13zY>
 WikiHow. (2020, October 01). How to Make Letters of the English Alphabet. Retrieved from <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-Letters-of-the-English-Alphabet>

DEAR CHARACTER

Reflecting on the Content of Stories

OBJECTIVE

The learner will compose a letter; define what bullying means.

TIME

45 minutes.

MATERIALS

Copy of an ABRA story, paper and writing materials.

WARM UP: READ A STORY IN ABRA

1. Sign in to ABRACADABRA.
2. Choose the category *Understanding the Story*.
3. Choose *Summarizing* from the activity list.
4. Select *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* from the available list. 
5. Click on *Go*.
6. Click on *Play*.
7. After learners have gone through the activity, ask additional questions:
 - Who was your favourite character? Why?
 - How would you feel if the same thing happened to you? What would you do?

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: BULLYING

The Three Billy Goats Gruff touches upon the topic of bullying. Use it as a springboard to talk about bullying as a class. Prompt them with:

- What is bullying?
- How do you feel when someone is mean to you?
- Is every fight between two people bullying? If not, what makes them different?
- What are some examples of bullying?
- Include non-physical examples.
- What can we do to make everyone feel safe at school?
- What should we do if we see someone bullying another person?
- What should you do if you're being bullied?

WRITING LETTERS TO CHARACTERS

1. Ask "why do people send letters to others?"
2. Write learners' answers and any examples they come up with on the board. Responses might include: share what's going on, express feelings, or give opinions.
3. Ask learners to pick a character to write a letter to. The letter should express how they felt about a character's actions in the story.
 - If positive, why was this a good choice to make?
 - If negative, what is an alternative action they should have taken?
4. They can include a drawing.



STEP-BY-STEP

Strategies to Help Children Grasp Sequencing

OBJECTIVE

The learner will attempt to grow a bean, and write nonfiction work.


TIME

Multiple weeks.

MATERIALS

Copy of *How a Bean Sprouts*, beans, soil, pots, writing and colouring material.

WARM UP: HOW A BEAN SPROUTS

1. Sign in to ABRACADABRA.
2. Choose the *Non-Fiction* category in Books.
3. Select *How a Bean Sprouts* from the available list. 
4. Click on *Go*.
5. Read the story as a class.
6. Ask learners:
 - What was the order?
 - What would happen if you skipped a step?
 - Did the author skip any steps?
7. Write down their answers on the board.

PLANT YOUR OWN BEANS

1. Pair off learners. Each pair gets a pot, soil, and a bean.
2. Have learners put their names on their pots.
3. Ask learner to plant the bean, following the order written on the board (from the warm up discussion).
4. Have learners place their beans in a dedicated spot.
5. Over the next two weeks, prompt learners to consider if their beans need any care.
6. After two weeks are up, have groups evaluate their plants. Did they successfully grow? Why or why not?

WRITING ROUTINES

1. Ask learners what “nonfiction” means.
2. Pair off learners and have them brainstorm activities or routines that are done in stages. For example:
 - Baking a cake
 - Getting ready in the morning
 - Getting ready for bedtime
 - Going on vacation
 - Sitting down for dinner
 - Washing the dog
3. Ask learners to write and illustrate their routine.
4. When completed, bind the books and ask learners to read them to the class.













SPELLING WORDS – LEVEL 6

Consonant Clusters

Look at each picture. Spell each word. Find and circle them in the puzzle.

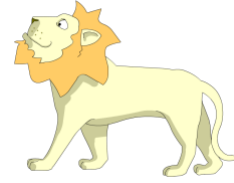
Hint: The words are across and down.

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

	_____		_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____

Name: _____ Date: _____

WRITING EXERCISE: I CAN MOVE LIKE A...



Draw a picture of your favourite animal.

A large, empty rectangular box with a double purple border, intended for the student to draw their favorite animal.

Write a sentence to describe the way that animal moves.



ABRACADABRA

HELPING STUDENTS BUILD THEIR READING SKILLS

WRITING (Typing)

The goals of literacy are to be able to construct meaning effectively from a written text and to encode written text accurately in writing. In order to do this, students need to master a number of skills. Activities in ABRACADABRA are inter-related, therefore, if you notice your student is struggling in one area, you may want to suggest doing another activity that focuses on the same broad skill. You could also use this list to determine where students can extend the practice of recently acquired skills. This allows them to practice and develop their mastery of these skills.

When children write, they take their knowledge of speech sounds and translate those into written texts. Children usually begin scribbling before they begin to read. The process of learning how to write well and effectively requires time, instruction, and practice.



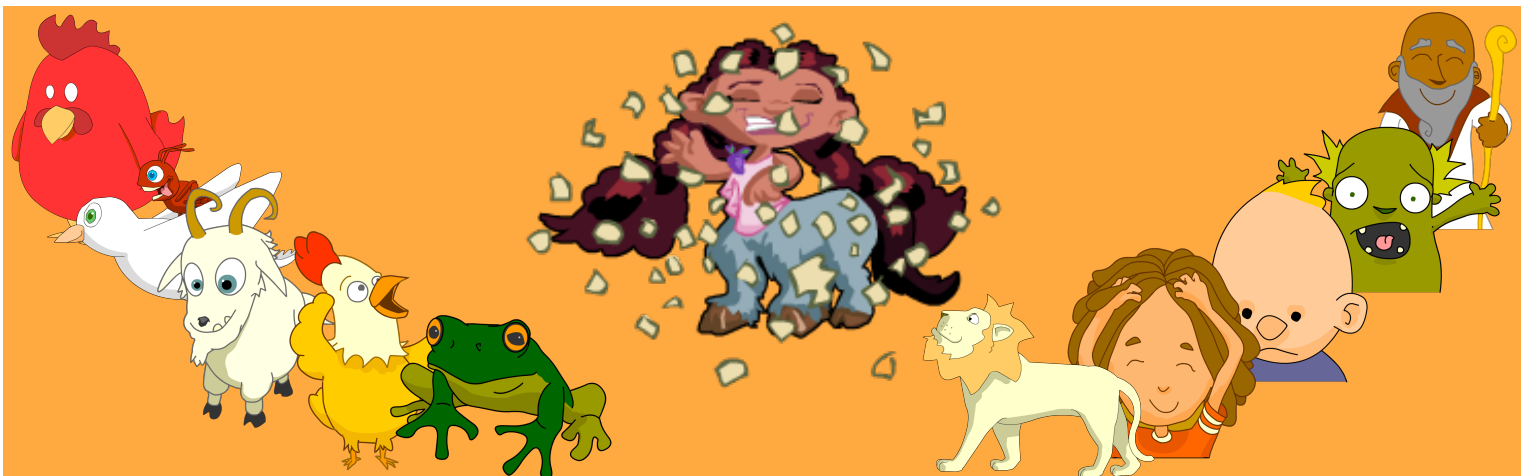
SPELLING SENTENCES

- ◆ Accuracy
- ◆ Basic Decoding
- ◆ High Frequency Words
- ◆ Spelling Words
- ◆ Word Counting
- ◆ Word Families
- ◆ Vocabulary
- ◆ Vocabulary ESL



SPELLING WORDS

- ◆ Basic Decoding
- ◆ Blending Train
- ◆ High Frequency Words
- ◆ Syllable Counting
- ◆ Word Changing
- ◆ Word Families
- ◆ Vocabulary
- ◆ Vocabulary ESL



Name: _____ Date: _____

ANIMALS



What animals do you see every day?

I see _____ every day.

What is your favourite animal?

My favourite animal is _____.

What sounds does your favourite animal make?

My favourite animal makes these sounds:

_____ and
_____.



Lesson Plan Template



Lesson Name

Grade	Lesson Duration	Date
Topic	ABRA Activity	
Materials Needed	Teacher Prep	

Objectives

Prior Knowledge Needed

Lesson Objectives

Curriculum Links

Other Learning Areas	Non-Formal Learning
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Lesson Activities

Introduction & Warm-up Activity	Time
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CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF
LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE





Lesson Plan Template



Main Activity		Time
Extension Activity	Take Home Tasks	

Consolidation

Assessment Questions	Assessment Strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment (Project or Presentation) <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Questions <input type="checkbox"/> Homework <input type="checkbox"/> Observation <input type="checkbox"/> Peer-Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Test/Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Key Vocabulary	

Reflection

Successes

Improvements



Date: [Insert]

School/Schoolboard logo

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Learning to read is an exciting time for both children and parents, but reading doesn't happen on its own. [School name] is dedicated to improving reading skills in young children. This involves teachers collaborating with each other and school ambassadors to improve teaching and learning in our schools. To this end, I, [insert teacher's name], would like to videotape and photograph the lessons your child will be part of.

In order to improve my teaching and support my colleagues, I may decide to share these videos and photographs will be shared with [insert – other teachers at the school/schoolboard, school's ambassador, etc.] for the purpose of [insert – attaining feedback, modeling the process, etc.]. All videos will be available via [insert medium – website? Indicate if access to it is password protected or not. Mention that some sites store data on servers outside of your country and thus might be subject to foreign jurisdictions].

By means of this letter, I am seeking your permission to record your child in video or audio format. We will not use your child's name or any other personal information in any of these photographs or videos. We would ask that you read and sign the attached form.

We very much appreciate your consideration of this request and your support in helping to improve teaching and learning in our schools. Please return page 2 of the signed consent form to your child's teacher by [insert date], indicating if you agree or disagree to allow your child to be part of the videos.

Sincerely yours,

[insert signature]

[insert teacher's name]

[insert signature]

[insert principal's name]

Parental Consent Form

- I have read the above statement and am informed about the intended use of filming and photographing my child's classroom.
- I understand that videos and/or photographs of my child may be taken.
- I understand that my child's name will NOT be released at any time.
- I understand that my child's image and/or voice maybe included in the videos that the [teacher, ambassador?] will create to train other teachers.
- I understand that the videos which my child maybe part of may be stored in and outside of [country].
- I understand that my child's image and/or voice may be made available online, broadcast, performed in public or reproduced for educational purposes.
- I understand that I cannot withdraw my child from the videos and photographs once they are taken.
- I understand that by signing this form, I give the [teacher/school] right to use my child's image and/or voice, both in photographs and videos in electronic format for the purposes of the project. This right is royalty-free, worldwide, perpetual, exclusive and transferrable.

I agree to let my child take part in the videos and/or photographs.

I DO NOT agree to let my child take part in the videos and/or photographs.

Print Your Child's Full Name: _____

Print Your Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Writing Module Glossary

ABRACADABRA (ABRA): a tool in the LTK+ suite that is designed to support children’s acquisition of early literacy.

Ambidextrous: the ability to use one’s left or right hand equally well.

Audience: the intended people meant to read, listen or view something (ex: read a book, listen to music, or attend a play).

Cursive: a style of writing where the letters in a word are joined.

Dominant Hand: the preferred hand to use for fine motor tasks, such as writing. It is usually stronger, faster and more dextrous than the other hand.

ePEARL: a web-based portfolio software, offered within the LTK+ suite. It is designed to support children’s acquisition of self-regulated learning (SRL) skills.

Handedness: the tendency to use one hand more than the other.

Motor Movement: the body’s ability to use muscles to perform a specific task.

Orally: to state something verbally (through speech).

Pencil Grip: how a child holds a pencil or pen. This will affect how much control (legibility, speed, and pain) they have when writing.

Posture: the position of one’s body when standing or sitting.

Print: 1) to clearly write text by hand. Printing requires cognitive effort, hand-eye coordination and muscle control. 2) text produced from a mechanical form (printer, bound book, magazines, etc.).

Spelling: writing or naming the letters in a word.

Touch-typing: the ability to type accurately, using all fingers, and without looking at the keyboard.

Typing: the ability to write on a computer.

Writing: a skill that uses letters and words to create sentences and texts to express thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a clear way.