

ABC Fun

Summary

This lesson is designed to help educators find out how familiar their students are with letters and words and also give students an opportunity to develop their fine motor skills.

Materials

- ABC magnetic letters (one set per pair)
- Paper bags (one per pair)
- Large demonstration Venn Diagram

- [Venn Diagram](#)
- *Chicka Chicka Boom*
, by Bill Martin
- [Alphabet Names](#)
- [Word Maker](#)

Additional Resources

Books

- *Chicka Chicka Boom*
. By Bill Martin Jr.: ISBN 006443348X
- *Developing Literacy Using Reading Manipulatives*
, by Sandi Hill; ISBN 1-57471-222-5
- *Animalia*
, by Graeme Base; ISBN: 0810918684

Background for Teachers

The beginning of first grade is a time when teachers can assess and find out how familiar their students are with letters and words. This lesson is designed to help find that out and also give students an opportunity to develop their fine motor skills. It is recommended that this activity be given early in the school year. Previous to this activity, make sure students have had a chance to explore manipulatives and are familiar with sorting objects and using the information. Also, be sure to have used a Venn diagram as a class to ensure students are familiar with them.

Intended Learning Outcomes

5. Understand and use basic concepts and skills.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Say to your students, "We've been doing a lot of different sorting in class using many different manipulatives. Today we are going to do a sort using letters. This is your chance to go through the letters, explore them, and see what you notice about them." Place magnetic letters on each table and let students explore.

Instructional Procedures

Invite students to come to a central area in the classroom.

Say to your students, "what did you notice about the different letters?"

As they share, write their observations down on the board. Some examples they may share might be: curved lines, straight lines; vowels, consonants; long, short; tails, no tails.

Say to your students, "we are going to learn more about letters by reading a fun story. As we

read it, pay attention to how the letters are similar and different."

Read *Chicka Chicka Boom* to them, and as you read model the letters coming on and off the tree using a magnetic board and magnetic letters.

After completing the story, say to the students, "what did you notice about the different letters in the story? How are they the same and how are they different?"

Compare what they share to the list that you made at the beginning of the lesson. Add any new observations they may have made.

Say to the students, "now we are going to use a [Venn Diagram](#) to demonstrate that the letters of the alphabet have characteristics that are similar and different. Let's use the categories curved lines and straight lines first."

Put all the letters of the alphabet in a paper bag and then say to the students, "before I pull out a letter, let's predict which letter I might pull out." Make a prediction of what your letter could be.

This would be a good time to discuss that some of the letters look and feel the same, it just depends on how you are holding them. For example the letter d could be confused for a letter p.

Explain to your students that it's okay if they say one or the other on their prediction, but when they pull it out, they must decide which letter they want it to be and hold it the correct way for that letter.

Pull out your letter and look at it. Say to the students, "look at my letter closely. Does it have curved lines, straight lines, or both?" After they respond, place it in the correct spot on the *Venn Diagram*.

Repeat the process with nine to ten letters to ensure that students understand how to play the game.

Tell the students they are going to play a game using a *Hidden ABC Bag*. Pair them up and give them each a Paper bag with the letters of the alphabet in it, and a *Venn Diagram* worksheet and let them play the game! Some sorts to suggest are:

- curved lines, straight lines

- vowels, consonants (check to see if they understand that they can't be both)

- confusing and not confusing letters

- tall letters, short letters

Extensions

Curriculum Extensions/Adaptations/ Integration

Names of the alphabet (Advanced Students)

Have students take the paper bags and draw out one letter at a time. After drawing out their letter, they must write down a name that starts with that letter. Encourage them to use the names of the students in the class. Fill out the [Alphabet Names worksheet](#).

Word maker (Middle Students)

Sort letters into two paper bags. Put the consonants into one bag and the vowels into another bag. Have students draw out one vowel and four consonants, and see what words they can make. Have them write their words down on the [Word Maker worksheet](#). After each try, they put the letters back in and mix them up.

Animalia letter search (Low Students)

Using the book *Animalia* by Graeme Base, students pull out a letter from the paper bag and say the name of the letter and its sound. They then open *Animalia* find the letter and look at the pictures that start with that letter.

Family Connections

Send home [ABC Homework worksheet](#) and *Venn Diagram* worksheet. Have students cut out the letters and graph them a different way at home and bring it back to class.

Have students look for different letters around their house, talk about and write down how they

are different and alike, and share them with the class.

Assessment Plan

As students are playing the game, watch to see if they know the names of the letters and the sounds they make.

Make a checklist for each student and mark off which letters they are familiar and unfamiliar with. Watch to see if they are able to make a prediction beforehand and compare it to the real answer afterward.

Pull out the letters p, d, q, and b. See if your students know the difference between them and how to tell them apart.

Bibliography

Research Basis

Neuman, S.B. (2005). Readiness for reading and writing -- What does it mean? *Early Childhood Today*, Volume 20 (Issue 1), Page 8.

This article discusses the importance of children having a readiness to read and write. One big key to being ready is knowing the letters of the alphabet and being able to say their sounds.

Authors

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