Section 1: Tutoring Goals
Section 2: Assessment
Section 3: Emergent Reader Plan

**Section 4: Alphabetic Reader Plan**

Section 5: Early Reader Plan
Section 6: Appendix
Recognizing the Alphabetic Reader

Alphabetic Readers know nearly all letter sounds and have control over writing both the initial and final consonants in CVC words. They may also know some blends or digraphs such as *tr* or *sh*. These students are focusing on learning vowel sounds, beginning with the middle vowel in CVC words. The writing samples below show what a student’s writing might look like at the beginning, middle, and end of the alphabetic stage.

If your student’s assessment looks similar to the samples above, she is in the Alphabetic Stage. Alphabetic Stage students have become proficient at listening for the first and last sounds in words and attaching that sound to letters, but have difficulty with the medial vowel sounds. They also do not record the second sound in a blend. These students can benefit from instruction that helps them with the medial sounds in CVC words and consonant clusters they aren’t yet handling well.

If your student is in the Middle Letter name- Alphabetic Stage, she regularly uses vowels in CVC words, though they are not always the correct vowels. She may have some knowledge of blends and digraphs, but regularly confuses them or misses the second sound in blends.
Late Alphabetic spellers have a good handle on CVC words and beginning blends. They often need help blending letter-sounds throughout a word (e.g. reading “past”) and, in general, blending letter-sounds at a fast clip throughout a CVC word. They may need help with more difficult consonant digraphs like “ck” or “ch” (e.g. “check”). Alphabetic readers often spell long vowel words without long vowel markers (e.g. “cake” spelled “cak”). When your alphabetic reader starts to use long vowel patterns and can fluently decode CVC words, then you are ready to move to CVCE words (e.g. from “mad” to “made”).

The heart of word study with alphabetic readers is helping them learn to read and write CVC words (e.g., lip, nap). The CVC spelling pattern is the building block of written English. Around this basic unit there are some allowable consonant permutations (e.g., slip, chip, snap). Most of these consonant permutations blend one sound into another (e.g., sl, sn). There are a few common consonant digraphs that form a somewhat unique sound (e.g., ch, sh, wh, th). The alphabetic reader will also learn that the consonant “r” changes the sound of the vowel from its predictable short vowel sound into with what is called the “r-controlled” sound (e.g., “cat” with a short vowel sound and “car”).

The child who writes, “cup” as “cp” or “kp” reflects the fact that consonant letter-sounds are more easily perceived in spoken English than vowel sounds. You can feel this for yourself: Say, “cup” and feel the sounds in your mouth as you say it. What are most distinctive are the /k/ sound and the /p/ sound because you are more aware of how your lips, breath, and tongue move during these sounds. On /p/, for example, you can feel your lips purse, the slight holding of breath, and the little burst of air. Children are often more aware of “feeling their mouth positions” as they read and write words than are experienced readers. Helping them feel the sounds in their mouth is good!

Vowels are the glue of words. Vowels are, if you will, the peanut butter in the middle of the consonant bread slices in the CVC sandwich. Vowel sounds are ones that enable the mouth to move between the more dramatic consonant sounds. As you are
pronouncing the /k/ in “cup” your mouth is already moving into the vowel sound. And just when you think you pronounce the vowel alone, you are already moving your mouth into position to make the /p/. This phenomenon is called “coarticulation.” Humans are able to speak so fast precisely because they merge one sound into another. We don’t pronounce, “cup” as “kuh, uh, puh” in speech. However, in learning to read or spell we have to be able break words into their constituent phonemes. The alphabetic principle that underlies alphabetic writing systems like English is that the somewhat separable component sounds of spoken words can be represented by written letters.

Discovering the alphabetic principle is what the alphabetic reader is all about doing. It is not easy! The first hard task for children learning to decode is to acquire the insight that spoken words can be broken down into smaller sound units (i.e., called phonemic awareness); that is, they need to be able to break down “cup” into “kuh, uh, puh.” The second hard task is to learn which letters make each of those three sounds (e.g., the letter “c” makes the /k/ sound at the beginning, the letter “u” makes the “uh,” and the letter “p” makes the /p/). Due to coarticulation, it is difficult to parse a spoken word into its component sounds and as you do so you distort the actual phoneme (i.e., there isn’t really a “puh” at the end of “cup” or it would be spoken as “cupuh.” Therefore the insights and learning a child needs to do to learn to read are not easy to acquire. This is why a tutor and teacher need to be patient and give children lots of repeated lessons. Don’t get frustrated if your child doesn’t catch onto the “puh” sound of the letter “p” or the short u—the “uh” sound—of the letter “u” after only one lesson! You will need to help your child break down either a spoken or written word into its component sounds and learn to map these sounds to letters. You are helping the child learn to decode and to spell by: 1) Breaking a word down into its component sounds, and 2) Linking those sounds to letters.

There are two powerful analytic processes that need to be working smoothly for children to understand a statement like, “The first sound in “cup” is /k/.” First, they need to perceive that there is a first sound in “cup.” If you ask a child who lacks phonemic awareness the first sound in “cup,” she might say “slurp, slurp.” As you work with
Coming from the Emergent stage, Alphabetic spellers often start by representing consonant sounds as in this spelling of “tyrannosaurus.”

words, *elongate and exaggerate* the sounds to help children perceive them and feel them in their mouth (e.g. “kkkkkkkkuuuuuuuuuppppp”). You can then have children point to or write which letter makes the “kuh” or “uuuh” or “puh.” Your alphabetic reader likely has awareness of most consonant sounds but will need particular help attending to the vowel sound (e.g., kuuuuuuuuup). You will likely need to stretch out the vowel sound many times in many different CVC words. So have fun with this, exaggerate those sounds as you help children connect letters to sounds in reading and sounds to letters in writing.

If you are working with an alphabetic reader, then you are truly working with core decoding skills around the CVC unit (e.g., cup, jam, mom, pet, sip, lip, flip, slip). You need to realize, however, that all of this sounding out and blending of sounds is based on the premise that children already know the meaning of the spoken word. If a child is trying to sound out the printed word “cup” and going “kuh-uh-puh” he will only be able to link these sounds to the spoken word “cup” if that word is already in his oral vocabulary. For all children, and

fin you dot limi wrking you ovwas s locat the mes you mad.

“Fine. You don’t like my working. You always say look at the mess you made.”

Alphabetic writers often use letter-names to represent the parts of words that they don’t know how to spell (e.g., “i” in “fine” or spelling “my” as “mi.” Middle stage Alphabetic writers do not yet use long vowel markers (e.g., spelling “fine” as “fin” or “made” as “mad.”) They may have memorized some high frequency words like “you” and “the” and correctly spell these.
especially those that are not native English speakers, you need to talk about the meaning of a word before you move to sounding it out. Make sure your child can point to the picture of a “cup” in a book or card, or pretend to drink from a “cup,” before you ask them to sound it out.

One more caution about working with alphabetic readers: *When a child comes to a word he can’t read, don’t say, “sound it out” unless you know they know all the letter-sounds in the word!* If you have not yet taught short vowel sounds, for example—if your child is an early alphabetic speller—you cannot expect your child to sound out the word “cup.” When your child becomes a late alphabetic speller, then you can finally say, “sound it out” when he comes to an unknown CVC word!
Alphabetic Reader Lesson Plan: An Overview

There are four parts to the Ravenswood Reads Alphabetic Reader Tutoring Plan: Revisiting Familiar Texts, Word Study, New Reading/Sharing a Book, and Communication. The sections that follow will provide you with information and activities for planning each part of the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Revisiting Familiar Texts | • Develop fluency and confidence  
                          • Read and comprehend easily                                      | 5 minutes  |
| Word Study                | • Introduce letter/sound correspondences  
                          • Practice blending sounds  
                          • Learn CVC patterns  
                          • Build familiarity with high frequency words                      | 10 minutes |
| New Reading               | • Help students fall in love with books  
                          • Develop decoding and word-attack skills  
                          • Build comprehension  
                          • Stimulate interest and curiosity about the world through nonfiction  
                          • Develop understanding of narrative  
                          • Provide a language model                                          | 5-10 minutes|
| Communication             | • Develop oral language skills  
                          • Make the reading-writing connection  
                          • Develop vocabulary  
                          • Pursue interests through reading and writing  
                          • Provide a language model  
                          • Build comprehension                                                  | 5–10 minutes|

**Tutor Tip:** If you find that you are not able to finish your lesson plan, talk to a Ravenswood Reads staff member for advice on time management and lesson planning strategies. We’re here to help!
Revisiting Familiar Texts

Each session will begin with revisiting 3–4 books from those in the “reading rotation” developed during previous sessions with your student. Revisiting Familiar Texts should comprise approximately 5 minutes of the tutoring session. The goals of this activity include building confidence, providing opportunities for students to learn to recognize words automatically, and developing facility with learned reading strategies.

Tutor Tips for Revisiting Familiar Texts

• Give your student controlled choices. Rather than asking a “yes/no” question, present options. For example, if you ask, “Do you want to read it now?” the student may respond, “No.” A better approach is to ask, “Which book do you want to read, this one or this one?” This provides the student with choices while staying focused on the lesson goals.

• If your student struggles with a word, first check to see if it is a word he should know. If so, don’t jump in prematurely with the right answer; provide him with enough time to sound it out. If he still needs help, try pointing out the initial sound of the word: “What is the first letter? And what sound does it make?”

• If a student makes a mistake, address the source of the discrepancy. For example, if the student reads “cat” for “car,” you might suggest, “Look at that last letter…t. What sound does “t” make? So what is that word?” If the source of difficulty is a word beyond your student’s reading ability, simply read the word for him.

• Before rereading, remind your student of the strategies he knows and should use when he needs to figure out a word. After rereading a book, reinforce the strategies that the student used successfully.

• Text memorization is a common occurrence among Emergent and Alphabetic readers. Be sure to have your child point to the words during the reading! After reading the book, you can open to different pages and ask your child to locate a word on the page.
When the student has read a book 2–3 times, you can remove it from your Revisiting Familiar Texts rotation. You may also remove a book if a student does not like a particular book, or if he finds the text too easy or too difficult.

As expected, the Revisiting Familiar Texts segment may not occur during the first few sessions, as the child has not yet established a repertoire of texts read in previous lessons.
**Word Study**

You should spend about 10 minutes per session on Word Study. Word Study helps students learn new words, teaches letter-sound correspondences, improves students’ skills in figuring out unfamiliar words when they read, and helps them learn to spell words. There are two parts to Word Study for Alphabetic Readers: Word Bank and Phonics. The bulk of Word Study time should be spent on Phonics. Reviewing a Word Bank can go very quickly.

**Word Bank**

From the earliest text experiences, readers encounter **high frequency words** like “the” and “my” and “you” (for more examples, see the High Frequency Word Assessment). These words occur often in texts, but many are not decodable or contain a more advanced phonics element than the student is not ready to learn. This section is designed to help children become familiar with an increasing body of high frequency words. The goal is to achieve automatic recognition so that students can read these words immediately when they are encountered in text.

For Alphabetic Readers, add 1-2 words to their word banks each session. The primary source for selecting word bank words is the “Can You Read These?” section that appears on the inside back cover of the text you and your student are reading. Words chosen from this section will provide students with the opportunity to practice known words in context. Words that your student will use often in writing or encounter often in reading may be added to the word bank, as well. The tutor should write the words on note cards in clear print, as they would appear in a published book. Refer to the letter cards at the end of this chapter to check on your printing. Make sure the print, the size of the card, and the ink color are consistent. This practice will help ensure that your student is paying attention to the letters in the word as opposed to other characteristics (e.g., if the word “the” is written in purple ink while other words are written in a different color, the student may only recognize the word by color, a feature which would not be helpful in reading a standard text). The word bank activities depicted below consist of
two types, those designed to introduce new words, and those designed to help the student review words already in the word bank.

**Word Bank Activities – Introducing New Words**
The following activities focus on building automatic recognition of new word bank words or old word bank words that the student is struggling to recall. If your student has had sufficient practice with particular word(s) during reading or writing and you do not feel that more work is necessary, it is fine to add these word(s) to the word bank and move into the review section.

**Mix and Make.** Using magnetic letters or letter cards or tiles, have your student make the new word. If needed, display the word bank card so the sequence of letters can be copied. Next, ask the student to mix up the letters and make the word again. Repeat this process once more. You can make the activity into a game by asking the student to make the word faster each time.

**Word Puzzles.** Write the new word on a strip of paper and cut the word apart with the child, letter by letter. Mix up the letters and encourage the child to reconstruct the word in the correct order. Initially, you may choose to provide the child with another copy of the target word as a model, but then remove this model as the child demonstrates greater facility with reconstructing the word.
Rainbow Writing. Use a highlighter or light-colored marker to write the new word on a blank sheet of paper. Encourage your child to point and identify the letters in the word. Invite your student to trace over the word multiple times, using a different colored crayon each time. It is important to note that the child should write the entire word with one color before switching to the next color.

Word Hunt. Have your student locate the new word in a reading book from a previous session. Be sure the book is one that the student knows and remembers, as it is important that books are read for meaning first and used for word hunts and other activities later.

Look, Say, Hide, Write, Check.

Look: Ask your student to study the word card.
Ask: Ask your student to read the word, then say the letters in the word (i.e. “the,” “t,” “h,” “e,”).
Hide: Next, turn the word card over.
Write: Ask your student to write the word on a white board.
Check: Reveal the card again and ask the student to check for correct spelling.
* Refrain from making corrections for the student. The act of looking closely at the card and white board spelling will help your student learn the word.

Word Bank Activities – Reviewing Word Bank Words

It is important to review the word bank words at every session. If your student has many words in the word bank, it is not necessary to review all of the words every time. The following activities suggest some ways to review.

Pick-Up. Lay out 6-10 word cards. Ask the student to find and pick up the word you name. Once the student knows how to play, invite him to call out words for you to find and pick up. You can vary this activity by providing the student with categories of words to pick up (i.e. “Pick up all the names,” “Pick up all the words that begin with s,” “Pickup all the words that have three letters”).

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**Bingo.** Create a bingo card using 9-12 word bank words. As you randomly pick up a word bank card your child can put a penny or maker on the word. You can each have bingo sheets and play. You can also take turns as the word caller and player.

**Concentration.** Make a duplicate set of 6-8 word bank cards. Turn all the words face down and take turns turning up two cards at a time. If the player turns up a matched pair, she may keep the pair if she can read the words independently.

**Read the Cards.** During tutoring sessions when you are short on time, you can still review the word cards in about one minute. Have the student read through some or all of the cards as quickly as he can.

**Tutor Tip:** Alphabetic Readers generally develop a Word Bank of no more than 40 words. If the list becomes too cumbersome, retire words that the student no longer needs to review. As students reach this point, more time can be spent on Phonics.

**Phonics**

The phonics curriculum for the Alphabetic Reader focuses on consonant *blends*, consonant digraphs, and short vowel sounds in CVC words. Only after these are fairly solid do we add CVCe words (e.g., go from *mad* to *made*). Our goal for alphabetic readers is to have them quickly be able to read CVC words (e.g. pet, cat) and words which use a consonant blend or digraph around the short vowel (e.g., pest, scat).

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As stated in the introduction, we primarily help alphabetic readers to decode in two ways: 1) We help them break down a spoken word into its somewhat separable component sounds (phonemes); 2) We help them link these sounds (phonemes) to letters. Often it helps to follow a four-step process in your word study work:

**Typical Phonics Sequence**

1) Help your child *Hear the sound* you are teaching in spoken words. Elongate and exaggerate the target sound as you say the word.

2) Have your child *Make words* with the target letter-sounds by manipulating letter cards, letter tiles, or magnetic letters.

3) Have your child write words with the target letter-sounds by writing words you dictate. This is called *Writing for Sounds*.

4) *Read a book* that has a few words with the target letter-sound(s). This might be the *New book* in the next section of the lesson plan.

**Which letter-sounds should I be teaching?**

Generally the first vowel to start with is *a*. That’s because it is the easiest for children to “hear” in words and it is in a lot of common CVC words. There is a suggested phonics sequence towards the end of this chapter. It will help you select books that go with the phonics patterns you are teaching. **Be sure to check the levels of the books; both the phonics emphasis and the book level should match your child’s strengths and needs.** There are suggested Making Words activities listed too. When possible, follow up making Words with a Writing for Sounds activity. Don’t feel you have to read every book or every book in the order it is listed in the units that start on page 118. You can skip around, selecting books because they are ones that meet your child’s needs.
## Phonics Curriculum for the Alphabetic Stage

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Progression</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Simple CVC patterns</td>
<td>Begin with CVC words that all have the same vowel and one or two ending consonants (e.g., words ending in –ap and –at). As you choose words for study, check your student’s assessment to see that she knows the letter sounds for the letters she’ll need. Don’t introduce blends or digraphs until you student is confident in decoding simple CVC words independently. Units 1 -3 in the phonics sequence at the end of the chapter can be used for this level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Beginning blends and digraphs</td>
<td>Once your student can read simple CVC words independently, add common beginning consonant blends (two-letter blends only) and digraphs (ch, sh, th) to your word study activities, as well as r-controlled words and hard and soft sounds for the letters c and g. Be careful not to overwhelm your student with too many of these words. Units 4 -13 in the phonics sequence at the end of the chapter can be used for this level.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Contrasting CVC patterns</td>
<td>As you continue to work on beginning blends and digraphs, introduce word study activities that contrast the short vowel sounds. Start with contrasts that are easier to hear (e.g., <em>pit</em> and <em>pat</em>) before moving to sounds that are very similar (e.g., <em>lit</em> and <em>let</em>). Units 14 -17 in the phonics sequence at the end of the chapter can be used for this level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Ending blends and digraphs</td>
<td>As you continue reinforcing short vowel contrasts in Units 14-17, you can begin introducing ending blends and digraphs. At first, choose words that have either a beginning consonant blend/digraph or an ending consonant blend/digraph. As your student is ready, you can add some words with consonant blends/digraphs at the beginning and end of the word. The ending blends <em>lk</em>, <em>nd</em>, <em>nk</em>, <em>nt</em>, and <em>mp</em> are harder for students to hear, so leave these for your final lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CVCE</td>
<td>Once your student is fairly fast at CVC words and common blends and digraphs, you can introduce CVCe words. These are words with the “magic e” that signals the vowel has its long sound (the letter name). So, “mad” is “made” and “cap” is “cape.” Units 18 -20 in the phonics sequence at the end of the chapter can be used for this level. Your student will continue to get practice with this pattern as they move into the Early Reader plan.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
“Hear the sound”

Help your child locate the vowel sound in words by exaggerating and elongating it throughout your instruction in Phonics and Writing for sounds (e.g., “maaad”). This may be enough for your child to “hear” the sound.” With consonant digraphs and blends you exaggerate the sounds too (e.g. “Shut” and “Ssssttttttoooop.” If your child really struggles with this you may want to engage in some picture sorts for particularly troubling sounds.

**Picture Sorts.** The primary method for teaching phonics at this stage is through contrastive analysis, through comparing what one letter can do when it changes in a word (e.g., “cab” to “crab”). We do this by changing letter cards in a Making words activity in phonics. You can supplement Making Words with picture sorts as needed. See Steps for Picture Sorting on the next page for advice on planning, preparing, and teaching through sorts. We will have some picture cards available to you or you can download photos and clip art from the web. The photographs on the right show picture cards after they have been sorted into categories.
## Steps for Picture Sorting

<table>
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<th>Planning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Decide on a sort based on your student’s assessment. The sort should compare two to three categories of words (e.g., <em>cr, cl</em>). At least one of the categories should be one that the child already knows.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Preparing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Create picture cards for your student to sort. Choose one picture for each category to represent the “anchor sound.” This picture will contain the word that you introduce as the example for that pattern.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Teaching</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Introduce</em> the picture cards. <em>First name them!</em> You can look at the same picture card and label it differently. This can also be a time to build oral vocabulary! Next, talk about the patterns in the sort. Building on what your child already knows, talk about the sound of each pattern.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Model</em> how to sort the words. Be sure to demonstrate your thinking.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Invite</em> your student to sort several cards with you.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Assess</em> your student; does she seem capable of continuing independently?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allow your student to <em>sort</em> the remainder of the pictures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Once all of the pictures have been sorted, <em>name</em> the pictures in each group together.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Check</em> to see if any need to be moved. If some words are sorted incorrectly and your student doesn’t notice a misplaced picture after naming all pictures in the group, provide a hint, such as, “I think there are two pictures in this column that don’t belong.” You might need to model the act of looking at each picture and checking the sound to be sure it is in the correct place.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the sound similarities between words in each column.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Making Words.** *Making Words is the most critical activity in Word Study. If you are short on time, this is the one activity to do!* Having your child move letter cards to make words is a hands-on activity that is quite effective in helping your child sequence sounds in words and connect them to letters. The activity is more difficult than picture sorting because the student must spell the words. It is a great follow-up to a picture sorting activity. The steps on the next page illustrate one way to engage students in a making words activity.

You can also follow the procedures in Beck, I.L. (2006). *Making sense of phonics.* New York, NY: The Guilford Press. This book provides a very structured, systematic approach to teaching phonics. Beck’s explanations are informative and easy to understand. For planning instruction, refer to the units in the appendices starting on p. 83. If your student missed ANY short vowels on the spelling assessment, start with Unit 1. If your child knows short vowels but was not able to spell all the blends and digraphs (sh, th, ch, wh), begin with Unit 4. As you reach a good level of challenge for your student, you may need to spend several sessions on one phonics pattern. You can refer to other ideas in the phonics section to keep things lively.
## Steps for Making Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong></td>
<td>Choose the phonics patterns you will teach. At least one of the patterns should be one that the child already knows. Create a list of words for your student to spell. There is a reference list, called Word Lists, in the Appendix that may help you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparing</strong></td>
<td>Create letter cards. You can Xerox and cut the ones at the end of the chapter or get needed magnetic letters or letter tiles. Note that you may need duplicate copies of some of the letters (e.g. to make “pop” or “mom” or “dad”). Only set out those letters that are needed to spell the words on your list. Don’t overwhelm your child by putting down too many letters!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td><em>Introduce</em> the patterns that you will ask the child to spell. Building on what your child already knows, talk about the sound and spelling of each pattern. Say each word and exaggerate the sounds. The student will make it with the letters. If the student forgets a letter-sound you can refer to an alphabet. Check the spelling after each word and provide support as needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sequence below is a concrete example of *Making Words*:

**Sample of Making Words:**

If you want to teach short a, you might: Spread out magnetic letters, tiles, or letter cards. Ask which one makes the /a/ sound like in the middle of “caaat.”

\[ c \ t \ a \ b \ p \]

Model making “cat” with the letters: Match each sound to its respective letter as you slowly say the sound and move down the letter. Next, scramble up the letters and have your child make words—scrambling back the letters after each word is made:

\[ cat, \ at, \ pat, \ cap, \ tap, \ bat \]

As a variation on the above, do this all on a whiteboard. After the child makes the word with magnetic letters, you immediately write the word next to it with an erasable marker. You will end up with a list of words that the child can read after making all the words.

**Note:** Your child won’t really learn short “a” until she can practice contrasting it with other short vowel patterns. So in an upcoming *Making Words* you introduce another vowel (e.g. c t a b p o) and make words like: cat, cot, pat, pot, tap, top).

If any of this is too hard, simply tell the child which letters to use (e.g., “Put letter a between p and t. What word did you make? Change the a to o. What did you make?”

As you make words with letters or when your child encounters an unknown CVC word in a book, you will need to help your child blend the sounds of the letters together to “sound out” a word. *Blending letter-sounds can be very hard for children*, so expect to model this many times. There is a model for blending on the next page.
Here’s a model for blending:

**Writing for sounds.** If there is time, finish up your phonics activity by having your child write words that have the spelling patterns you have just reviewed. Have your child write on lined paper. You simply dictate a few words that you had your child spell in the Making Words activity. You may find the Word Lists in the Appendix helpful. You can also have your child write the words that go with a few of the picture cards you used in the Hearing Word Sounds portion of the lesson. Have an alphabet strip nearby so that your child can refer to it if he forgets how to write a letter. There is one in the Appendix.
If your child has difficulty writing the words, you might help in the following way: 1) Ask the child to help you identify the number of sounds heard in the word. 2) As you identify the number of sounds, draw a set of horizontally connected boxes on the practice portion of your paper that corresponds in number to those sounds. Remember that digraphs are one sound (e.g. sh, ch, th). 3) Ask the child to identify the letter that makes each of those sounds. You will end up with the word written in Elkonin\(^1\) boxes that you can practice blending together. You may have the student rewrite the word underneath the boxes. Here are some examples of the boxes with final writing under them:

*How many sounds do you hear in the word s-a-t?*

```
s a t
sat
```

*How many sounds do you hear in the word l-a-s-t?*

```
l a s t
last
```

*How many sounds do you hear in the word f-i-sh?*

```
f i sh
fish
```

---

Two Tutor Tips:

1) You may extend Writing for Sounds into the Communication section of your lesson. See page 112: **Write a Short Sentence.**

2) The sample lesson plan at the end of this section gives you an idea of the progression of Word Bank and Phonics activities in a tutoring session.

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\(^1\) Elkonin boxes were developed by Russian psychologist, Daniel Elkonin, in the mid 20\(^{th}\) century. The boxes are used to support students in identifying and blending the phonemes (smallest unit of sound in a language system) of a word.
New Reading

Students in this stage are learning to decode some basic phonics patterns. The leveled books, particularly those in the MCP series, are designed to support this by providing lots of practice with common high frequency words and a limited number of patterns. Because these students are just beginning to read words, their books are pretty simple. However, even the simplest books can lend themselves to personal response, vocabulary development, and comprehension basics. For example, you can challenge your student to use new vocabulary when retelling a story or sharing what he learned from a nonfiction book. Note that this challenge will be different for students with different levels of English. You might also ask your student to relate his personal experiences to the story, imagine what he would do as the character, or think about characters’ feelings and relationships. When reading nonfiction, you can encourage your student to ask questions and talk about what she learned.

Selecting the Appropriate Book

A crucial consideration in New Reading is selecting an appropriate book. Introducing a new book will give your student the opportunity to apply and practice reading skills with a new text. Choose a book that is engaging for your student and supportive of her level of phonics and vocabulary development. In working with an Alphabetic Reader, you will likely select books at levels C through E.

You also may find some books in levels A and B that are suitable for your student. Some of these early books focus on rhymes for students to memorize, which supports learning the concept of a word. Students learn to attend to high frequency words that they know and the first letters in words that they don’t know. Students in the Alphabetic stage can use these books for a different purpose: learning to decode simple CVC words. However, use caution when choosing books from these levels. Some have words that are very hard to read because the instructional focus is on the first letter. Therefore, you might encounter a word like rain, which is too hard for an Alphabetic
reader to read, because Emergent readers are encouraged to use the first letter and picture to guess. Keep this in mind as you work with books in the suggested sequence.

**Tutor Tip: Is your child ready for decoding?**

You can use level A book, *Baby Bear’s Ride*, to check your book selection and make sure your child is really ready for decoding. As you explore this wordless picture book with your child, notice how well he knows the letter sounds featured on each page. (Note: English learners may have difficulty simply due to vocabulary limitations. This should be taken into consideration.). You should also review your child’s Letter Sounds assessment and look at the teaching points in Emergent chapter, under Tutor Tips for Supporting Emergent Readers.

On your second reading of *Baby Bear’s Ride*, check your child’s ability to blend sounds. This is a critical pre-reading skill that he'll need before moving into decoding in reading. Tell the child you will play an I Spy game. You will say the sounds of something on the page, and the child must say the word and point to the picture. On page 2, say “/c/--/a/--/t/,” making the sounds of the letters with a short pause between each sound. Do not elongate the sounds. Wait for your child to respond, and correct her if she misses. Continue with I Spy, keeping notes to yourself about your child’s success rate.

- Page 3: /c/--/u/--/p/
- Page 4: /m/--/oo/--/n/
- Page 5: /l/--/o/--/g/
- Page 6: /w/--/e/--/l/
- Page 7: /p/--/ā/--/n/--/t/ (paint)
- Page 8: /g/--/r/--/ā/--/p/ (grape)

If your child does well with this activity, at least up to page 6, knows at least 10 high frequency words, knows most letter sounds, and understands the print concepts and strategies taught in the Emergent Stage, it is time to begin reading simple decodable text.

If your child is missing some of these pieces, take the time now to build a strong foundation for reading success. Hone in on the remaining skills needed by reading level A and B books and reinforcing these concepts throughout the lesson plan. If your child is ready except that she cannot blend the sounds in *Baby Bear’s Ride*, make I Spy a part of your lesson plan each time. You can also do this with letters. (Refer to the Push It, Say It activity in the Word Study section).
Characteristics Books at levels C through E

There are some important features of texts at the alphabetic level that reflect the milestones that students are making in their reading. Once you learn a bit about your child as a reader, you can use the descriptions below to help you find a book at just the right level for your student. As mentioned above, you may also find appropriate books in levels A and B. To choose an appropriate book, identify the needs of your student (e.g., short a words, many short vowel combinations with blends) and peruse the books or the index to find books that meet your student’s needs.

Please note that the descriptions of the books are broad, and you’re likely to find variation within every level. As a general rule, books in the MCP series will align more closely with the descriptions below. Leveled trade books (i.e., regular books you can buy at the store), tend to be less phonetically regular and provide different opportunities for instruction and enjoyment.

If your student is just beginning to blend sounds to make words, you should begin with level C books. These books are comprised mostly of high frequency words and CVC words. Usually there is an instructional theme, such as short a or short u words, that provides a supportive text for beginning decoders. They also have a predictable sentence pattern. Students need not be comfortable switching between all the short vowel patterns to begin reading these books. Some books may also introduce some common blends and digraphs in short vowel words. You may also find books that highlight short vowels in level A and B.

If your student has some facility with reading short vowel words, you should begin with level D books. Unlike texts leveled A through C, these books do not have a predictable sentence pattern and usually include more than one short vowel sound in the text. Once your student has a firm grasp of short vowel words and common blends and digraphs, you can continue to level E books.
Many level E books introduce the most common long vowel pattern (vowel-consonant-\textit{e}). The common word endings \textit{s}, \textit{ed}, and \textit{ing} are also introduced. There are more blends in these texts, too. Though there are now more high frequency words and vowel variety in the text, there is usually an instructional theme, such as “\textit{a}-consonant-\textit{e}” words, that provides support for the reader.

\textbf{Tutor Tip:} Most books in level C feature a single short vowel, while level D books may feature more than one short vowel pattern. If your student is still learning the sounds and spellings of the vowels and decoding fairly slowly, you should try reading in level C.

\textbf{At the end of this section there is a suggested sequence for books used in tutoring!} The text selection checklist will help you decide which books in the sequence are good ones to use.

\textbf{Text selection checklist.}

1) Look at the decodable words. Is the phonics pattern one you have been working on and that your student needs to practice? Is the pattern one that you think your student is ready to learn?

2) Look at the variation in the word patterns. Do all the words end the same (\textit{bat, cat, rat}), or do they just have the same medial vowel (\textit{hog, hot, top})? Will your student be able to handle the level of variation within the short vowel pattern?

3) Look at the high frequency words in the book. Make note of words that will provide a review for your student, as well as words that will be new. You may want to add these words to the Word Bank portion of your lesson.

4) Look at the level of predictability. Are the sentences the same or nearly the same, or are they different? Will the level of sentence variation provide adequate support and challenge for your student?
**Reading Accuracy**
The text should not be too difficult or too easy for the student to read independently. Can your student read the book with at least 90% accuracy but not more than 94% accuracy? If so, the level is a good fit. If the student is struggling to read the book, help him out; then choose an easier book next time. If the book is too easy, try for something a bit harder next time. As you get to know your student, you'll get better at choosing a book that provides the optimal challenge for learning.

**Reading the Book**
The introduction of a new text involves previewing a book with your student (Introducing the Book) and providing an opportunity (During Reading) and discussing the book (After Reading). Each step is described in greater detail below. Read with expression, act out the story, whatever engages the student and clarifies content. Read the text more than once! The benefits of language learning accrue through repeated readings.

**Introducing the Book**
When you do a book preview with Alphabetic Readers, you should begin by reading the title and explaining in one or two sentences what the book is about. Try to build the student’s interest in the topic and make connections to his prior knowledge about the subject. If the book depicts a story, you may present the dilemma and ask, “What do you think will happen?” to engage the student in thinking about the story. For an ELL student, you may have to model the language expected by asking and answering your own questions.

**Picture Walk.** Always begin the reading segment with a picture walk. The picture walk is an opportunity to preview the story, identify key vocabulary items and theme, and
engage the student in the narrative. During the picture walk, look at each page in the book with your student. Remember, for your ELL student, you are the language model. Begin with a running commentary about what is happening on each page; this process engages the student in the narrative and provides an effective scaffold for language and literacy development.

Use the words that your student will encounter in the text while talking about the pictures. Make sure your student understands the vocabulary that you are using. Encourage him to say new words with you. In addition, mention any character names that may be tricky for your student. If there are words that you think may be too difficult for your student to figure out during the reading, you might discuss the word and ask the student to point to the word during the picture walk. This process will help the student remember challenging words when they are encountered during the reading.

**During Reading**

Depending on your student’s level, you may choose to read together (early level C) before engaging the student in guided reading, or you may do guided reading only (levels D and E).

**Reading together.** This should only be done with those students for whom decoding is still slow and challenging (i.e., those students reading at level C). Begin by reading at a slow, story-telling pace, so that the student may follow along easily. Point to the words as you read and have the student point to the words. At the early Alphabetic stage, you may establish the sentence pattern at the beginning of the book and let student finish the book on her own. This practice should taper off, however, as soon as your student: 1) knows enough high frequency words and 2) has a greater facility with decoding CVC words (i.e., it doesn’t take your student more than 30 seconds to blend a word like “bat”). Let the student do as much independent reading as possible as soon as she is able. Then continue with guided reading, which is explained below. As you move from
the highly supportive structure of Reading Together to the more independent practice of Guided Reading only, use the picture walk as a bridge into independent reading.

Guided reading. After the picture walk (and Reading Together, if applicable), have your student read the book on her own. Encourage your student to point to the words while reading. Praise your student for her efforts. Remember to acknowledge the student’s specific strengths when reading (For example, “Wow, you really read with a lot of expression!” or “There were some hard words in there, but you figured them out.”) Provide support as needed but allow several seconds of wait time before giving an unknown word. If the student appeals for help, ask her to give it a try. If the student makes an error that goes unnoticed, let her read to the end of the sentence. If she doesn’t go back to self-correct the error, prompt her to try reading the sentence again.

As you read a new book, hold your child accountable for what you have taught. For example, help your child sound and blend the letter-sounds in CVC words in these books when you have taught the vowel and know your child knows the consonants. Read for your child, however, a word she doesn’t recognize, if that word contains letter-sounds your child doesn’t know. (The exception to this would be a word in the Word Bank.) You may be able to jointly read unknown words—words your child can’t totally sound out yet on her own—by pointing to the letters within the word that she does know and letting her give their sounds—while you help blend in unknown letter-sounds.

After Reading
After reading, you should always spend at least a minute or so discussing the book. You can also engage your student in a longer response using the suggested activities in the Communication section. To open up a discussion about the book, ask open-ended questions, such as “Did you enjoy the book?” or “What does this book make you think of?” or “Was your prediction correct?”). If you were working on a specific skill or strategy, review and check for understanding as needed. Use this step as an opportunity for the student to comment further about the book. This practice allows the student to confirm and extend understanding. Review any vocabulary items or sections...
of the text that were particularly challenging for the student. You may also want to revisit the discussion from the Book Introduction segment.
Tutor Tips for Supporting Alphabetic Readers

Here is a list of some things you might teach or reinforce during this phase of the session. The list is presented in approximate order of increasing difficulty. For advice on how you might teach these concepts and skills, contact a Ravenswood Reads staff member.

High Frequency Words
- Locate high frequency words in a text
- Learn many high frequency words by sight

Phonics
- Use the first and last letter to figure out a word
- Blend sounds in CVC words, like *cat*
- Blend sounds in CCVC words, like *flat*
- Blend sounds in CVCe words, like *gate*
- Blend sounds in CCVCe words, like *state*

Print Conventions: Function and Terminology
- Commas
- Quotation marks
- Apostrophes

Strategies
- Point with your finger
- Look at the first letter. What sound does it make?
- Look at the last letter. What sound does it make?
- Look at the picture to help you. (No, this is not cheating!)
- Think: What would make sense here?
- Crosscheck: Does your word match the first letter and the picture?
- Blend the first two sounds together. Say the blend out loud. Now add the third sound. Now say the word naturally and smoothly. Follow the same procedure with words with four sounds, such as long and short vowel words with blends.
- Your student may like to cover up all but the first two letters to focus his attention, revealing one letter at a time and adding its sound. Note that this strategy becomes inefficient later in the Alphabetic Stage, when long vowel patterns are introduced and the student needs to look ahead to the silent “e.”
- When decoding, notice if the word has an *e* at the end. If so, remember to use the long sound for the medial vowel.
- Decoding by analogy: Help your student notice rimes. Rimes are groups of words that are spelled the same from the first vowel to the end of the word. *Cat* and *sat* are a rime. *Bite* and *light* are not. Help your student use her knowledge of rimes to decode new words. For instance, if your student knows *sand* and the word she is working on is *hand*, you might say, “that word has *and* in it, like *sand*. Only the first sound is different.”
- Reread: Students should reread from the beginning of the sentence when they spend a while figuring out a word, when they read something with the wrong intonation, when what they read does not make sense to them, or when they make a correction.
Communication

This section focuses on oral and written communication, comprehension, and vocabulary. In order to make the most of your tutoring session, the activities in this section will usually be in response to or an extension of the book you read. However, there are times in which it is appropriate to do something else altogether. For example, your student may have a special interest for which you cannot find books at his level. You can use the communication time to talk, write, or read together about this topic. Below you’ll find some ideas for this section of the lesson. They are divided into three sections: fiction response, nonfiction response, and unrelated to reading. Each section is roughly organized from easier to harder activities. However, you should consider the needs of your student and use your judgment when selecting activities.

Fiction response.

These activities are designed to help students’ oral and written communication, comprehension, and vocabulary in response to fiction books. Not all activities will be appropriate for all fiction books.

Retell the story. Ask your student to retell the story. Note what details are remembered and what is left out. Ask follow-up questions as needed. If your child needs English support, you can model by retelling the story first. Then ask your student join in, retelling the story with you.

Favorite part/favorite page. Ask your student to share his favorite part or page. Note that parsing a story into “parts” is a skill your student may not have yet. If this is the case, you can ask your students to share his favorite page. You can talk about your favorite part, too. Discuss why it is your favorite.

Vocabulary review and extension. Use the book as a springboard for learning new words. For example, if the book uses many words to describe feelings, you and your students can act these out or talk about times that you had those feelings. If there aren’t
many new words for your student to learn, you can introduce some new words that are related. You could also do this as a written activity.

**Tutor Tip:** Students learn new vocabulary through hearing a word in multiple contexts and using the word themselves. When teaching new vocabulary, encourage your student to say the word. If it’s challenging to pronounce, you might clap out the syllables together, saying the word one piece at a time.

**Personal connections.** Making personal connections to texts can increase enjoyment and help students understand the book. Ask your student if the book reminds them of anything from their lives. For example, if the book is about a lost pair of shoes, you can ask your student if she has ever lost anything. Encourage your student to “tell the story of when . . .” This will build important vocabulary, communication, and sequencing skills.

**Making Predictions.** This communication activity may be integrated with the New Reading phase of the lesson. Before reading the text, give the student a sneak peak at the book you have selected for today’s session. Show him the front cover and a few pages of the book. Have the student write down what he thinks the book will be about. You may also choose to read part of a book, have the student write down a prediction for what will happen next, and then return to the reading to check the prediction. This process is especially effective for fiction books that have a somewhat predictable plot or foreshadowing. If you have chosen a nonfiction book, you may want to ask the student to write down what he already knows about the topic and questions he hopes to have answered by reading the book. Students need exposure to how to think about books as they read. If the student seems lost as to how to predict, model this by “thinking aloud.” Demonstrate how you use clues from the text and illustrations to help you predict.

**Reading Response.** Revisit a book from the current or previous tutoring sessions. Ask the student to respond to the reading in some way. For nonfiction books, you may ask the student to write down what she learned, what she found most interesting, or what
she would like to learn more about. For fiction books, you may ask your student to write about her favorite part, explain why a character behaved in a certain way, or explain the moral of the story. These are just a few suggestions to get you started. There are myriad ways to respond to books!

**Dramatic Reenactment.** If you and your student have read a story-based text, dramatic reenactment provides a great opportunity for oral language development. Your student can choose to reenact the entire story or a favorite part. Your student may choose to take the role of one or multiple characters. To add to the reenactment experience, you may choose to bring in props such as stick puppets or masks to represent story characters (*Note, if you choose to use props for this activity, plan to prepare them ahead of time so that you can focus this stage of your tutoring session on language and communication). These props can also be used to help your student sequence the events of the story. The emphasis for this activity is on dialogue, expression, and vocabulary, rather than story memorization and retelling. As a variation to this activity, you may have your student create an alternate ending to the story. Together, you can act out your student’s creative ideas!

**Nonfiction response.**
These activities are designed to help students’ oral and written communication, comprehension, and vocabulary in response to nonfiction books. Not all activities will be appropriate for all nonfiction books.

**KWL.** Make a chart with three columns: What I Know, What I Want to Know, and What I Learned. Talk about what the book will be about. After the picture walk, talk with your child about what he knows about the topic on the first column, What I Know. Write these down for him. Next, work together to create a list of questions based on the picture walk and your student’s curiosity. Write these down, too. Because this should be quick and may have difficult vocabulary, you should not ask your child to be the recorder. As you read the book, stop to note when prior knowledge is confirmed or when questions are
answered. Finish the activity by discussing some of the things you both learned and write them in the last column.

![Image of a KWL chart]

Figure 5: A kindergarten KWL chart. From [www.kdgteacher.com/kwlchart.html](http://www.kdgteacher.com/kwlchart.html)

**Make a book.** Children often find making a book more engaging than simply writing down what they learned. You can easily make a book by folding and stapling paper. You can provide your student with a sentence frame, such as “Sharks have ____” on each page, so that the child only has to write one word. The student can then take it home to color.

**Label a picture or diagram.** Students can reinforce new concepts and vocabulary by labeling and talking about a diagram or picture. Before the tutoring session, create an illustration for your child to label, (e.g., parts of a flower), that are based on the information found in the book. After reading, use the book as a resource to label the illustration.

**Concept sort.** Some books talk about categories of objects, such as machines or arachnids. You can extend your student’s knowledge and vocabulary by creating a
concept sort. For example, after your student reads a book about things in different rooms in a house, you can provide her with pictures of different household objects. These could be sorted by the room to which they belong, whether or not they use electricity, etc.

*If I were . . .* If you are reading a book about animals or people, you can ask your child to imagine what it would be like to be that person (e.g., a firefighter) or that animal. You can ask him to write about what he would do, see, say, or feel. Provide a sentence frame, such as, “If I were a firefighter, I would________________” and help your student to complete the thought and write the words.

**Activities unrelated to the New Reading**

There are times when you may want to take advantage of a student’s interest in a topic, an upcoming holiday, or a special event. The communication time allows for flexibility so that you can address the needs and interests of your student. You also may find that the book you are reading does not lend itself to much discussion. In that case, starting something new can be more productive than continuing with the theme of the book.

**Read-aloud.** Students learn a great deal of their vocabulary from listening to adults read to them and from conversations they have with adults about books. Moreover, when tutors read and talk about stories with students, they serve as language models, which is especially important for English Language Learners who have limited contact with fluent English speakers. Sharing a book facilitates the development of vocabulary, comprehension, and narrative skills. Taking time to choose an engaging story can have great rewards. Reading a special book to your student can help you build a trusting and caring relationship. In addition, it can stir passion and enthusiasm for reading, increasing motivation to work, and build vocabulary. Reading to your student also facilitates active listening, an activity critical to the development of comprehension skills. When tutors share books with students, they are able to communicate their own passion and enthusiasm for reading. Reading aloud offers the student an important opportunity to fall in love with books and understand reading as a meaning-making activity.
**Cards and notes.** It’s easy to get cards and graphics off the internet, and having special paper or a card to write on—and an audience to write to—can be a big motivator for students. You might create cards for holidays that your student celebrates or everyday cards just to say “hello” or “I love you.” If you choose to create a card with your student, spend the time on writing rather than drawing. The student can decorate the card on her own time, or you can provide a pre-made card so that the child will leave tutoring ready to deliver her message.

**Story writing.** Some students may enjoy creating a story themselves or may enjoy creating it with you. You can take turns writing or have your student do all the writing. This may take several sessions. Some students may enjoy creating spooky Halloween stories or other holiday stories. Other students might enjoy telling a true story about an experience they have had. Make sure that the story is not too ambitious; you’ll want to finish writing before it feels like a chore. Your story may only be a few sentences.

**Learning about a topic of interest.** Your student might already have a lot of knowledge about a particular topic, or he may have an interest in a topic but not know much about it. In either case, you can foster your student’s knowledge and enthusiasm.
for learning by bringing in books, magazines, and printouts from the Internet. You can read these to the child and talk about what you have learned.

**Write a Short Sentence.** The communication activity you select may extend the objective you set for the day’s Word Study. For example, if your Phonics Activity focused on the short a sound, you might think of a sentence with short a sound words in it. Or if you introduced the high frequency word “was” into your student’s word bank, you might think of a sentence with the word “was” in it. Linking the Communication portion of your tutoring plan with your other tutoring activities will offer your student more practice with the words and/or spelling patterns you are teaching by offering the opportunity to **encode** into writing those words and patterns you have been teaching your child to **decode** in text. Threading the focus on a particular spelling pattern will also help add coherence to the multiple sections of your tutoring plan.

Imagine, for example, that you are working with an Alphabetic Reader who is making the transition from studying short vowels to words with blends. And, because your student has a pet dog, you have been reading a book together about dogs. As a Communication activity, you might have your student write the sentence:

> Last night, I fed my dog.

A high quality sentence is complete and grammatically correct and is mostly made up of words that are on your student’s reading level. As stated above, it can include spelling patterns and/or high frequency words on which you are focusing with your student.

After developing the sentence, identify four types of words: 1) high frequency words, 2) words that follow spelling patterns your are teaching, 3) other words your student may know, and 4) words that you will simply give your student because they are not words your child should know how to spell yet.
Example Sentence: Last night, I fed my dog.

High frequency words: I, my
Words for Pattern Study: last
Words student may know: fed, dog
Words tutor gives: night

Now you are ready to invite your student to write the sentence. First, divide the paper in half, designating one portion as a space to practice words and the other portion for the final version of the sentence.

Have the student write the sentence word by word. For the word(s) you identified as fruitful for pattern study, ask the student to help you identify the number of sounds heard in the word. In our example, you might ask,

_How many sounds do you hear in the word l-a-s-t?_

As your child identifies that there are four sounds, draw a set of four horizontally connected boxes on the practice portion of your paper. Then, ask the student to identify the letter that makes each of those four sounds. You will end up with the word written in Elkonin\(^2\) boxes that you can practice blending together. You may have the student rewrite the word underneath the boxes to finalize the way it will appear on the final page.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
  l & a & s & t \\
\end{array}
\]

last

If your student misspells a word you expected would be known, use the same Elkonin box activity described above. If your student misspells a high frequency word that is

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\(^2\) Russian psychologist, Daniel Elkonin, developed Elkonin boxes in the mid 20th century. The boxes are used to support students in identifying and blending the phonemes (smallest unit of sound in a language system) of a word.

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within your Word Bank, pull out that Word Bank card and have the student independently correct her/his own spelling. As suggested, simply spell any words in your sentence that are beyond your student’s reading level.

Maintain the practice portion of this Communication activity as a means of information sharing with your tutoring supervisor and other tutors who might work with your child.

Example of final page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>last</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Draft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last night, I fed my dog.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Journal. Students like to share the exciting events happening in their lives. Keeping a journal allows them to record these activities and can be a great motivator for writing. You may choose to provide your student with a special notebook to use as a journal. You can also staple several pieces of lined paper between a construction paper cover and allow the student to personalize his journal.
**Written Conversation.** Play a conversation game with the student. Tell her that no one can talk and both players must communicate through writing. Next, write a question to the student such as, “What is your favorite color?” Pass the question to her and prompt her to respond in writing. Continue with questions for her to answer. She may also want to respond with a question for you to answer!

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**Tutor Tips for Communication**

Be careful not to correct everything. If your student feels you expect perfection, she may become reluctant to write or participate in a conversation.

If a student spells a word incorrectly and you think she should be able to spell it correctly (for example, because she knows the phonics pattern or the word is in her Word Bank), point out the word and ask her to give it another try. Writing involves concentration on multiple levels, the ideas, the sentence, the words, and the sounds. It’s a lot to attend to all at once!
### Alphabetic Reader Lesson Plan

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<th>Student:</th>
<th>Tutor:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Session #:</th>
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#### Overall Objectives

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<td>Phonics:</td>
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#### Activity

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<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Book Titles:</td>
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<td>New Reading/ Sharing a Book</td>
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<td>After Reading:</td>
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<td>Key Vocabulary:</td>
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#### Notes (Success, Issues, Ideas)
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<tr>
<th>Student: Chris</th>
<th>Tutor: Meredith</th>
<th>Date: 10/9/08</th>
<th>Session #: 3</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oral Language:</strong> Vocabulary development, story language, making predictions</td>
<td>** Phonics:** Introduce short /i/ sound, review short /a/ sound, blend and build cvc words</td>
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<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description of Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
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| **Revisiting Familiar Texts** | **Book Title(s):** The Ant, Sandy  
Talk to Chris about what he remembers about The Ant and why he thought the book was interesting. Review The Ant and ask Chris to reread the text several times. Encourage Chris to point to the words while rereading. Review key vocabulary (ant, cap, map, pack, pants, plant, snack), and ask Chris about personal experiences related to these words. Repeat this process with Sandy. Add Sandy and The Ant to Chris’s reading list and talk to him about how this list will serve as a record of all the books he reads during our tutoring sessions. | 5 min.  
9:50 - 9:55 a.m. |
| **Word Study** | **Word Bank – New Word(s):** was, not  
**Word Bank – Review Word(s):** and, with  
**Word Bank Activity:**  
* Word Puzzles – was, not. Write and cut apart the new words and ask Chris to rebuild each word independently; repeat several times; encourage Chris to increase speed each time; if he is highly successful, the letters for the two words can be mixed together and then rebuilt.  
* Concentration game with pairs of four word cards (eight cards total), including both new and review words.  
**Phonics Activity:**  
* Picture Sort – short /a/, short /i/ sort  
* Making Words – cvc words with short /a/ and short /i/  
* Writing for Sounds – big, did, hid, dig, pit, sit, bat, hat, had, pat, bag, sat | 10 min.  
9:55 – 10:05 a.m. |
| **New Reading** | **Book Title:** The Big Cat  
**Introducing the Book:** Show Chris the front cover of The Big Cat and explain that we will be reading a book about animals that live in the jungle. Ask questions such as, “Do you know any animals that live in the jungle?” “What do you know about these animals?” “Do you know what they eat?” “How do they move?” “What color/size are these animals?” Ask Chris to predict what The Big Cat is about. Take a picture walk through The Big Cat and talk to Chris about what is happening on each page. Provide animal names and background information as needed.  
**During Reading:** Reading Together: Read The Big Cat with Chris, while pointing to the words. I’ll encourage Chris to read The (animal name) while I read the variations at the end of each sentence and highlight the cvc words with medial short /i/. Ask Chris to point and repeat each line independently. Guided Reading: Ask Chris to point and read the entire text of The Big Cat independently if possible (at least once, additional readings as time permits). Encourage Chris to point to and blend the short /i/ cvc words in the text. Support Chris in sounding out the medial short /i/ cvc words with pointing and blending prompts.  
**After Reading:** Discuss the content of Monster Mop with Alex. Include questions such as “Did you enjoy the story?” “Which page was your favorite? Why?” “Point to the monkey (snake, lizard, fish, tiger/big cat, etc.).” “Did the story happen the way you thought it would/was your prediction correct?” “Why were all the animals frightened?” “How did you know they were afraid?”  
**Key Vocabulary:** monkey, snake, lizard, fish, big cat/tiger, hid, slid, still, swim | 10 min.  
10:05 – 10:15 a.m. |
| **Communication** | **Create a dramatic reenactment of The Big Cat with Chris. Chris can choose which animal(s) he would like to act out. I will act out the remaining animal(s). Both of us can engage in the movements of the animals and add details from the story. I will encourage Chris to add dialogue, imagining what each of the animals would say if they could talk.  
* Start a journal for Chris. I will encourage Chris to write about something he is interested in or something exciting happening in his life. If he needs a prompt to get started on his journal entry, I’ll ask him to think about his favorite animal and explain how any of the animals from The Big Cat are similar to his favorite animal. | 10 min.  
10:15 – 10:25 a.m. |

**Notes** *(Success, Issues, Ideas)*  
Chris displays strong understanding of how books work and has well-established concepts of print. He demonstrated clear one-to-one correspondence in tracking print, and provided elaborate details on his observations of the pictures in the story. Chris had some difficulty recalling the word bank words from our previous session. He ventured guesses for words he couldn’t recall. His guesses included other high frequency words with some shared letters (i.e. we for was). Chris is clearly attending to the first letter of the word bank words, but not looking through the entire word, a skill I will emphasize in subsequent sessions. Chris demonstrated moderate success with the picture sort and word building activities, but I would like to spend a little more time working with these two vowel sounds before I introduce an additional vowel sound. Chris appeared highly interested in activities involving movement, as evidenced by his enthusiasm for word puzzle building and acting out animal characters from the story. Chris expressed less interest in written work. Although he seemed to like the idea of having a personal journal, he appeared reluctant to write in the journal. He managed to write ‘I lik trtls’ (I like turtles), though producing this phrase required substantial prompts and redirection to complete. To address Chris’ interest in active tasks, I will make sure to include a kinesthetic component to multiple portions of our tutoring session. I think having Chris’ word bank cards present during writing tasks will ease some of his frustration and provide a scaffold for increasing his confidence.
Alphabetic Reader Phonics Sequence

The Skill Focus column provides a suggested sequence for instruction. Note that ALL books that teach or review this pattern are listed at the right. Not all of these books will be good choices for your student. Use your student’s reading level to guide your choices.

A note about level A books: Level A books were designed with the emergent reader in mind. This means that they were made to be memorized so that students could “read” and point along. Therefore, level A books can be unpredictable in terms of their readability for beginning readers. Be sure to take a close look at any level A books you choose and ask yourself: Does my student have the skills to read these words?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Skill Focus</th>
<th>Texts (with Level)</th>
<th>Letter cards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Short /i/, Short /o/</td>
<td><em>My Twin! – A</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Mr. Fin’s Trip – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>The Big Cat – D</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Stop! – A</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Can A Cow Hop? – D</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Lost in the Fog – D</em>&lt;br&gt;“POP” Pops the Popcorn – E&lt;br&gt;<em>What Is At The Top? – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short a, i, and o. Include blends and digraphs when ready.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Short /e/, Short /u/</td>
<td><em>Going Fishing – A</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Ben’s Pets – C</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Ted’s Red Sled – D</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Little House – A</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Good Night, Little Bug – D</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>A Nut Pie for Jud – D</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>The Best Places – D</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>The Lucky Duck – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Just Like Us – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short e and short u. Include blends and digraphs when ready.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>R-controlled vowels</td>
<td><em>A Sea Star – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>My Fish Does Not Chirp – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make r-controlled words.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Hard C, Soft C, Hard G, Soft G</td>
<td><em>The City Cat and the Country Cat – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>I Got a Goldfish – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Sort some word cards into short and hard sounds (e.g., city, cat)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>S Blends</td>
<td><em>Sally’s Spaceship – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>My Lost Top – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words with s blends.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>L Blends</td>
<td><em>Glenda and the Lion – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Planting a Garden – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words with l blends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>R Blends</td>
<td><em>Roll Out the Red Rug – E</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>At the Track – E</em>&lt;br&gt;**Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words</td>
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<td>Page</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>S, L, R Blends</td>
<td>A Fun Place to Eat – E Where Does the Rabbit Hop? – E The River Grows – E</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words with s, l, and r blends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>/sh/</td>
<td>The Ship – B Silvia’s Soccer Game – F Shell Shopping – F</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words with the sh digraph.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>/ch/, /th/</td>
<td>Chipmunk Chili – B This and That – B Five Little Dinosaurs – E Cat Chat – F</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words with the ch and th digraphs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Blend and Digraph Review</td>
<td>That Pig Can’t Do a Thing – F Dragon’s Lunch – F Stan Packs – E</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make short vowel words with blends and digraphs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Short /a/, Short /i/, Short /o/</td>
<td>My Hamster, Van – E It’s Hot – D Little Frog’s Monster Story – E The Toy Box – A The Track Is Stuck – A Mama Hen, Come Quick! – A My Clock Is Sick – D</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short e and short u. Include blends and digraphs. Add in ck. Have fun with ick, ack, ock, and uck!</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Short /a/, Short /e/, Short /i/</td>
<td>What Do We Have to Get? – E I Can Swim – D</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short a, e and i. Include blends and digraphs.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Short /e/, Short /o/</td>
<td>The Little Hen – D Polly’s Shop – E</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short e, o, and u. Include blends and digraphs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Short Vowel Review</td>
<td>Three Little Pigs and One Big Pig – E Night and Day – E The Trip – E</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with all short vowels. Include blends and digraphs.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Short /a/, Long /a/, Short /i/, Long /i/, Short /o/, Long /o/</td>
<td>The Name Is the Same – G Dive In! – F When Bob Woke Up Late – G</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short vowel a pattern and then add magic e. Do the same for i and o. Include blends and digraphs.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Short /e/, Long /e/, Short /u/, Long /u/</td>
<td>Eyes Are Everywhere – E True or False – G</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short vowels e pattern and then add magic e. Do the same for u. Include blends and digraphs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Short and Long Vowel Review</td>
<td>Mr. Wink – E The Apple Farm – E Cat’s Trip – G</td>
<td>Use letter cards, tiles, or magnetic letters to make CVC words with short vowels and then add magic e. Include blends and digraphs.</td>
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Letter cards

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