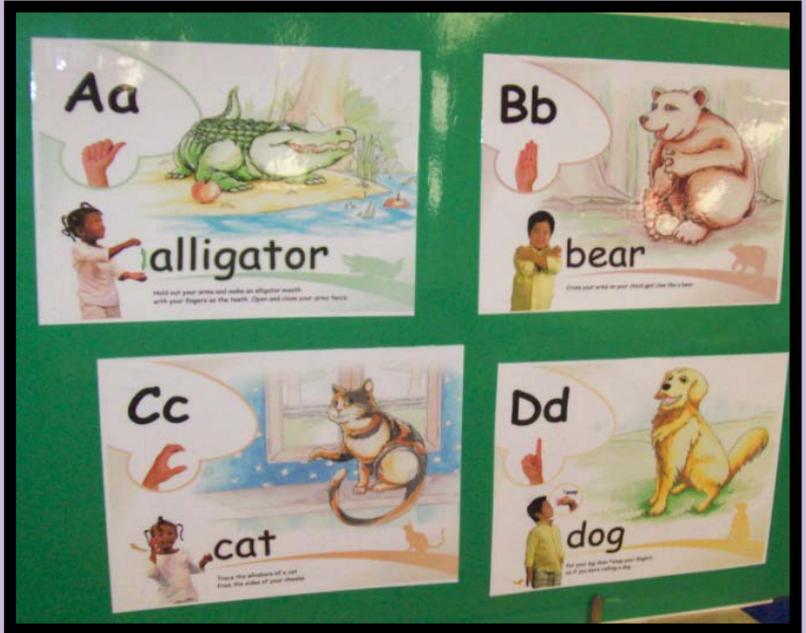


ABC and Phonics Immersion Strategies: Teach For Mastery through Joyful Accelerated Literacy! Teacher's Guide and Nellie Edge Online Seminar



Simultaneously engage visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities to accelerate learning for **ALL**.

ABC and Phonics Immersion Strategies: Teach Mastery through Joyful Accelerated Literacy!

by Nellie Edge

with contributions from and special appreciation to Becky Leber, Julie Lay, Kathie Bridges, Jaime Corliss, Shanda Lung, Kathy Magoun, Katie Nelson, Laura Flocker, Joanie Cutler, Celeste Starr, and Winter Curry.

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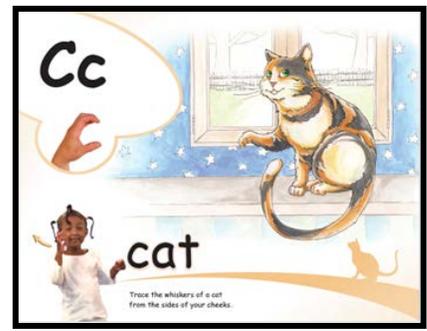
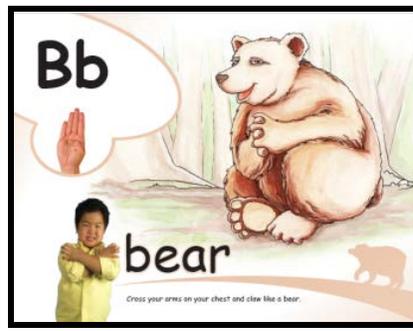
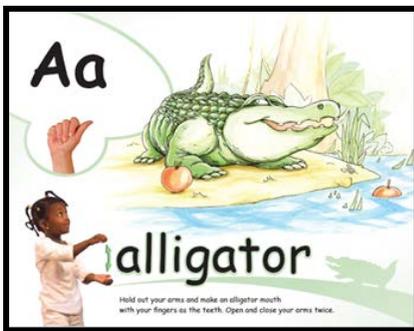


Excellence in Kindergarten and Early Literacy

Nellie Edge Resources, Inc., P.O. Box 12399, Salem, OR 97309-0399

503-399-0040 / www.nellieedge.com / fax: 503-399-0435 / info@nellieedge.com





Our Vision and Challenge

Nellie Edge Seminars and Resources is committed to helping all children achieve high standards of literacy and a love of learning. Our seminars, presented by outstanding teacher-researchers, are designed to integrate current research and state-of-the-art literacy practices that are meaning-centered and in harmony with how the young child's brain learns best.

We have demonstrated that our joyful writing-to-read strategies within a comprehensive literacy framework produce outcomes that meet or exceed Common Core State Standards. Our purpose in this manual is to share our proven "best practices" and to inspire reflection, collaboration, and intentional teaching. "How can I do an even better job reaching every child?" and "How do I create a classroom community that recognizes the social nature of learning, the importance of the mentor-apprentice relationship, and the vital role of the educational arts?" When teachers truly understand the writing and reading process and the power of multisensory teaching, they can more easily and effectively create responsive environments that embrace the diverse learning styles and gifts that our children bring to school. **Rigorous standards are reached when children are deeply engaged in authentic literacy experiences and challenged to become ambitious readers, writers, and thinkers.**

Bruno Bettelheim's research reminds us that how children perceive themselves in the act of learning to read generalizes to their whole self-concept. With this in mind, we are committed, through our professional development programs and literacy materials, to assist teachers in creating challenging and caring learning environments that will provide all children with the foundations they need to build on success. **We believe learning to read and write must be a meaning-centered, engaging process.** Our expectation is that every child can and will develop high levels of literacy skills while building belief systems of competence, belonging, and the motivation to do their best.

Our seminars and resources support our commitment to excellence in literacy, the honoring of childhood, and our belief that educators can and must positively influence the lives of children and the future of our democratic society.

**Our vision is... creating schools worthy of our children:
joyful and rigorous learning communities!**

About Nellie Edge

Author of *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!*

Nellie Edge author of *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* is a kindergarten teacher-researcher, literacy coach, nationally recognized early literacy presenter, folk musician, and recording artist. While teaching in a bilingual kindergarten in Albuquerque, New Mexico, she discovered the power of developing language and literacy skills through traditional Spanish and English folk songs. Her desire to make learning to read a successful and joyful journey for all children led to the publication of her *Nellie Edge Read and Sing Big Books™*, with accompanying Little Books, Parents as Partners connections, and Differentiated Literacy guides.



A recipient of the *IRA Reading Excellence Through the Arts award*, Nellie Edge is a proponent of using music, American Sign Language, and all of the arts to enhance early literacy skills. She was the founder of the Northwest Coalition for Excellence in Kindergarten Literacy and is a strong advocate for developing professional learning communities for teachers that inspire collaborative inquiry into best teaching practices.

How do we make learning to read an engaging and successful experience for all young children? How can we involve parents as partners in developing vital literacy foundations while nurturing healthy dispositions towards learning? For over thirty-five years, these questions have been the driving force behind Nellie Edge and her dedicated work. Nellie's first publication was the best-selling children's cookbook *Kids in the Kitchen* (a.k.a. *Kindergarten Cooks*). It was developed under this premise, fully illustrated to help her kindergartners on the Makah Indian Reservation connect cooking and reading in a delicious and meaningful way. Nellie has continued to focus her writing on creating joyful beginning reading experiences and providing culturally relevant language, thereby supporting parent involvement in early literacy development.

Nellie's collaboration with Dr. Pat Wolfe, an internationally-recognized author, researcher, and expert on brain-based teaching, validated what many wise parents and teachers have intuitively discovered: Optimal learning experiences are emotionally engaging, multisensory, and take advantage of the musical brain!

Now, after years of study and collaboration with accomplished kindergarten teachers on "best practices" for accelerating early literacy, Nellie shares an innovative, yet elegantly simple approach for teaching ABC and phonics skills in her newest book and CD from Early Learning publisher, Sign2Me®. Through *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!*, she takes adults and children on a musical, kinesthetic, visual adventure, teaching them fingerspelling and the exquisite gestures of American Sign Language (ASL). This "Total Emotional Physical Response" experience produces dramatic recall, and the process is delightfully fun for everyone involved!

In the book, Nellie Edge once again engages beginning readers in a celebration of language, and involves parents, teachers, and children in meaningful, life-long learning. She invites you to combine the memorable art of singing with the visual images of dancing fingers; effortlessly activating multiple pathways for ABC and phonics fluency: now all children can be gifted early learners! Come join the experience as we, "Sing, Sign, and Read!"

ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! Teacher's Guide

Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion Strategies

by Nellie Edge, ©2015

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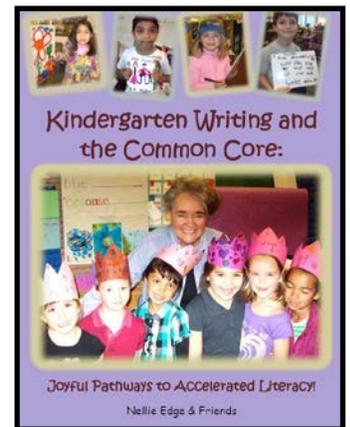
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10 Best Writing-to-Read Strategies

What are the high-impact writing practices that accelerate writing development? How do we differentiate instruction to simultaneously challenge and support diverse learners within the same kindergarten? How do we teach more intentionally, systematically, and create joyful pathways to the Common Core Standards? Authentic, meaning-centered literacy is the answer!

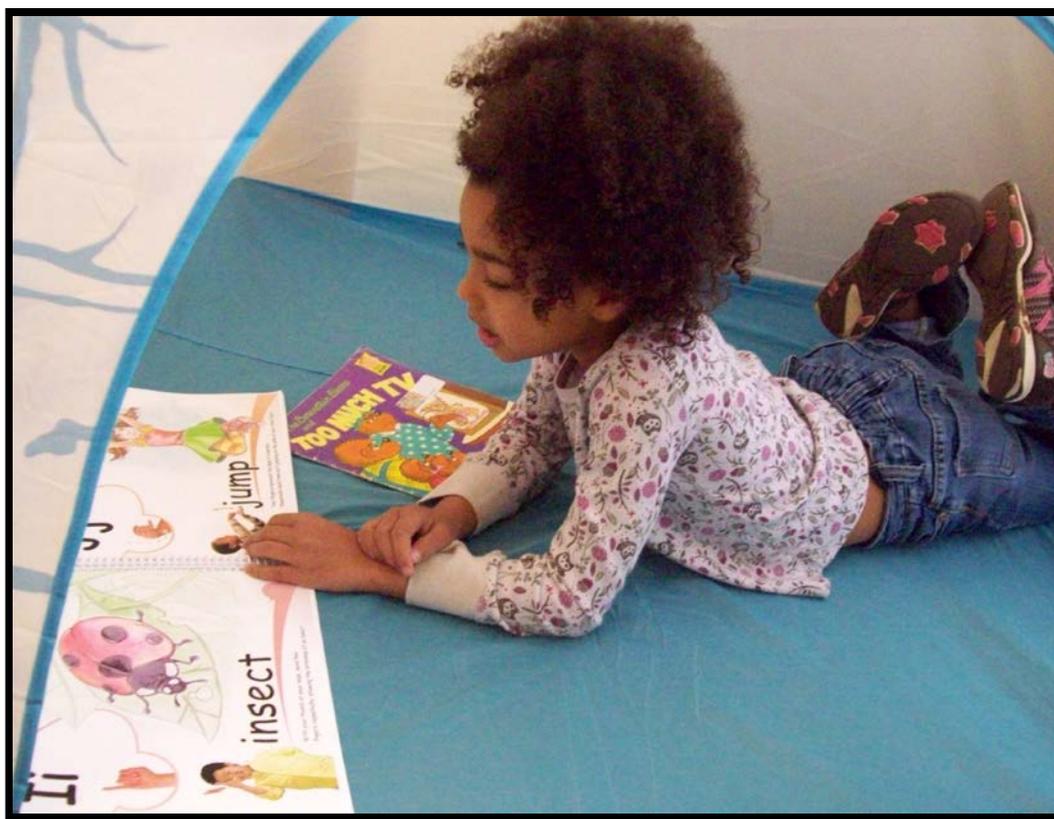
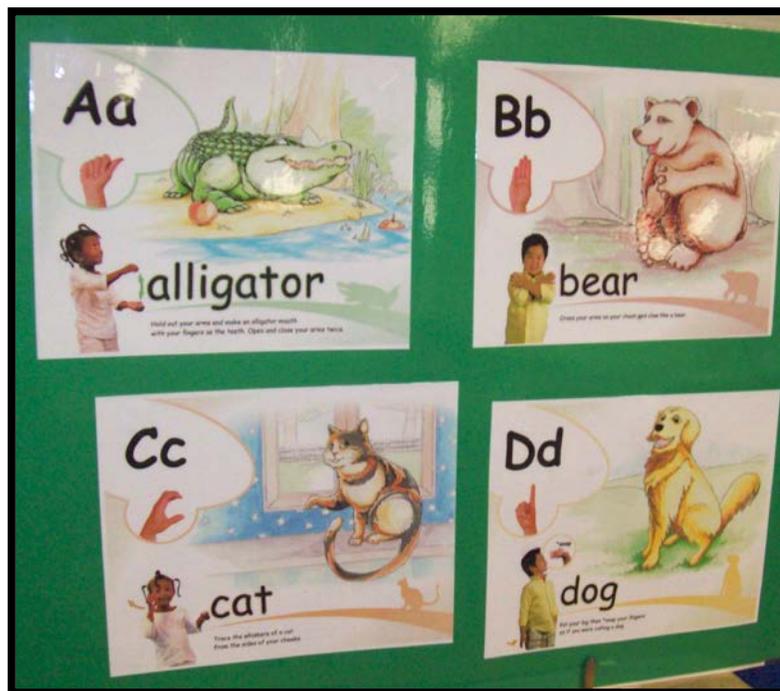
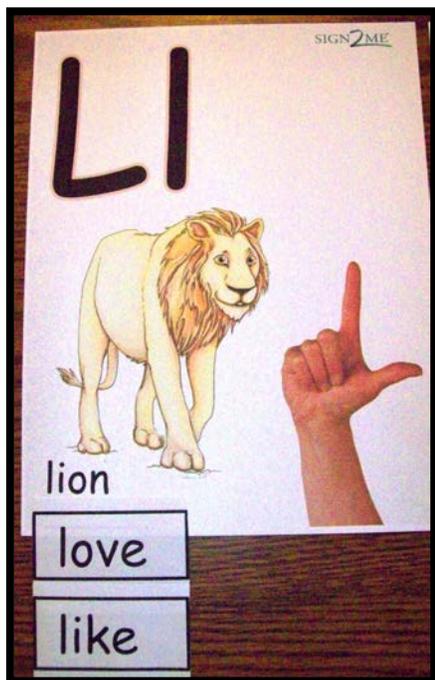
- Strategy 1 **Bond with Children, and Create a Joyful Learning Community, Rich in Songs, Poetry, Sign Language, and Celebrations.** Use collaborative experiences in the arts and deep connections with nature to engage the child in reading, writing, thinking, speaking, listening, and creating. (Read about the SMILE approach to joyful accelerated literacy.)
- Strategy 2 **Use Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion** with American Sign Language and Parents as Partners: Teach for mastery!
- Strategy 3 **Begin Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting with the "Name Ticket:"** Teach basic handwriting patterns through memorable songs, chants, and movement techniques.
- Strategy 4 **Teach for Fluency with High-Frequency "Heart Words" and Provide Authentic Phonics Practice!** Sing, sign, spell, and write real words—systematically, playfully, and with great intention.
- Strategy 5 **Create a Culture of Engaged and Purposeful Writers** with "Kid Writing" workshop and authentic writing experiences across the curriculum. Use anchor charts and graphic organizers to inform narrative, information, and opinion writing. Provide engaging minilessons that touch the heart and imagination of children.
- Strategy 6 **Invite Children to Use Independent Writing and Drawing Centers** to practice their craft in a meaningful context and develop writing stamina. Make lists, messages, and "really cool" books. Thoughtfully provide "choice words" and responsive feedback to your children.
- "We can choose to spoon-feed our children or we can teach them to be independent, self-regulated learners." - Nellie Edge*
- Strategy 7 **Introduce Well-loved Song Picture Books, Quality Fiction, and Nonfiction as Mentor Texts:** Build oral language patterns, voracious vocabulary learning habits, and a love of books. Involve children in book clubs, science exploration, and family research projects. Integrate Next Generation Science Standards.
- Strategy 8 **Publish Children's Books and Celebrate Young Authors in Simple and Delightful Ways!** Invite children to write, illustrate, revise, edit and publish their own books. Discover the powerful affirmation through word and song, ♪"Prolific Writers Are We!"
- Strategy 9 **Use Ongoing Authentic Assessment** culminating in student-led parent conferences. Be systematic and intentional. End the year with simple and memorable celebrations of learning!
- Strategy 10 **Involve Parents as Partners** to nurture a love of writing and drawing, and to reinforce foundational literacy skills through authentic writing activities at home. Family literacy multiplies our teaching effectiveness.



Create a culture of engaged young writers: Keep writing real!

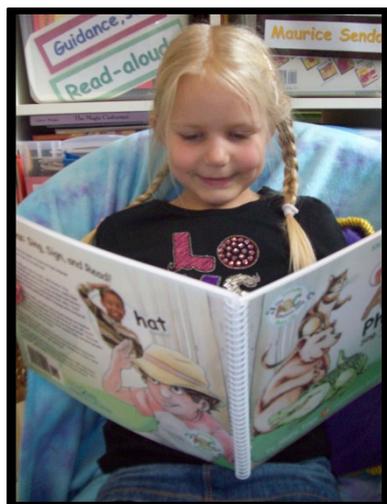
Begin the Year with One Consistent ABC Phonics Program

The *ABC Phonics* Book, Wall Chart, Family Reference Chart, Flashcards, and Instructional Videos All Support the Child in Creating Powerful Memory Hooks

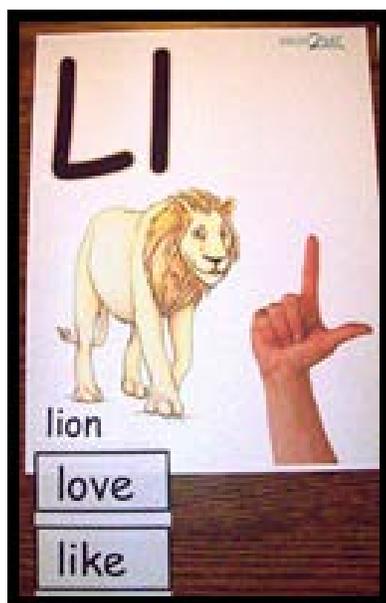
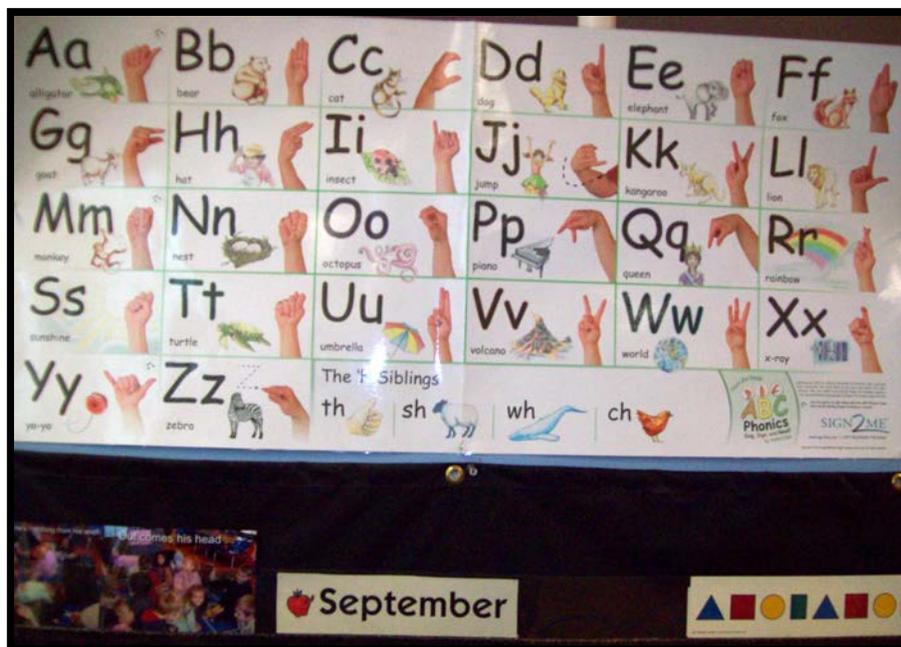


ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! book and CD by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning, 2010. Book and teacher support materials are available at sign2me.com and amazon.com. Parents as Partners letters and complimentary Teaching Guide are available to members at nellieedge.com.

Dramatically Increase Learning With One Consistent, Multisensory ABC Phonics Program throughout the Classroom and at Home!



Children delight in reading and rereading this multicultural ABC book.



Our ABC Phonics Program features convenient, large (18"x24") vertical and horizontal wall charts to be used in key places throughout the room:

- In the Shared Instructional area
- By the Writing Center table
- On the class door
- In the hallway
- In the Literacy Play Center

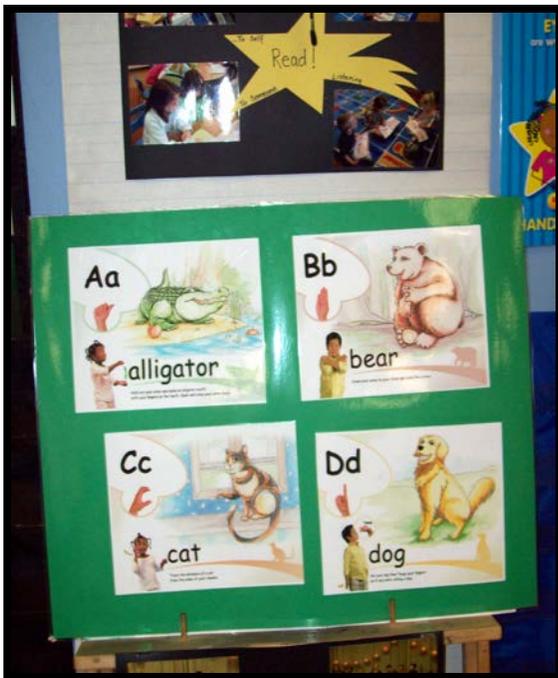


We attach new "heart words" to our ABC Word Wall.

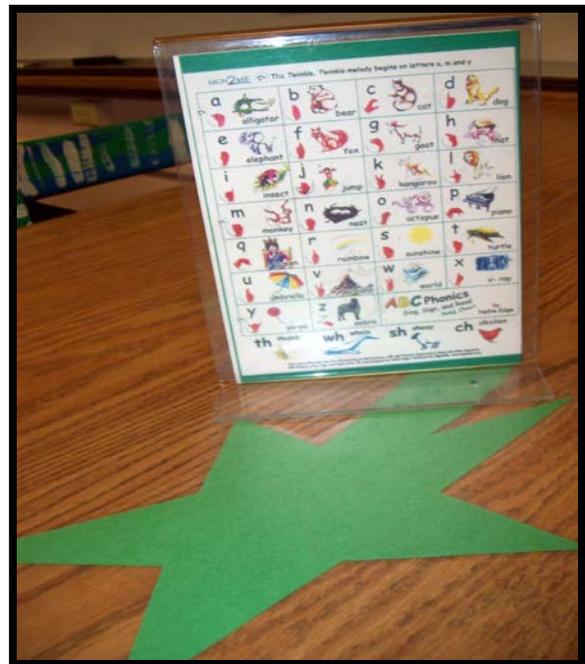
More than just a beautiful ABC Phonics book and CD, this comprehensive and innovative program with complimentary instructional videos, Teacher's Guide, Family Reference Charts, curriculum connections, and parent letters invites parents to be partners in ABC and Phonics accelerated learning.

ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! book and CD, wall charts, and individual A-Z cards by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning are available at amazon.com and sign2me.com. Additional components are being developed. Family Reference Charts and parent letters are available to online members at nellieedge.com.

ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!: Excellence in Musical, Multisensory ABC Immersion with Parents as Partners



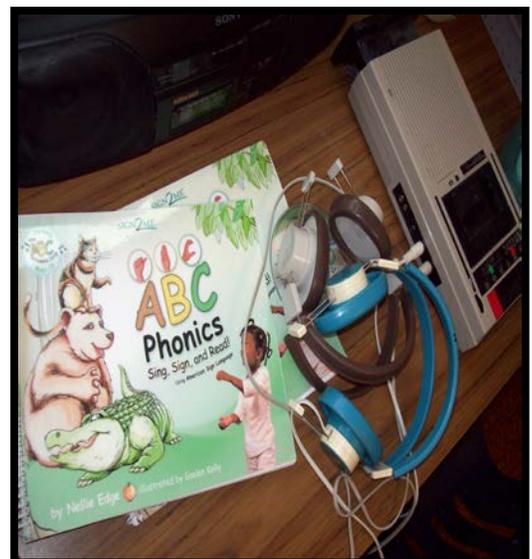
Individual pages of this beautiful book make helpful laminated posters for shared reading and independent ABC phonics work. Until this program component is available separately, we simply use two *ABC Phonics* books, take them apart, trim, and mount them on green railroad board.



Miniature ABC Charts in 5"x7" plastic sign holders are available throughout the room to support phonics instruction and "kid writing."



The 8.5"x11" individual *ABC Phonics* Wall Chart pages are perfect for one-on-one tutoring in K-1. They are ideal for eye level displays in daycare and preschool settings, or can be laminated in groups of three or four for convenient table top reference.



Children use our *ABC Phonics* book and CD in the Listening Center. **Track 4 of the music CD has pauses which allow for page turning.** It is helpful to have multiple copies of the book for guided reading before offering them for independent literacy learning at the Listen Center.

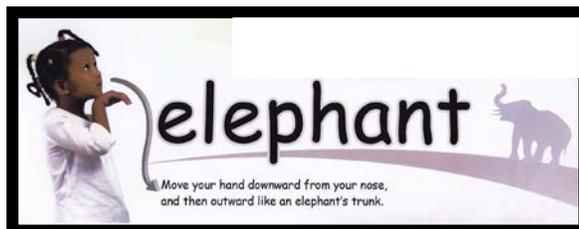
Research Supports Teaching All Children to Fingerspell and Sign Songs

Summary of Benefits:

- **Engages the child's multiple intelligences** in representing language symbolically.
- Develops phonemic awareness, **the alphabetic principal**, vocabulary, and spelling skills.
- Facilitates a comfort in **understanding and expressing feelings**.
- Fingerspelling **develops the small muscles** necessary for writing.
- Develops **all communication skills**, which provide the window to basic literacy and academic excellence across disciplines.

"It should be remembered that we speak more than we write. Throughout our lives we judge others, and we ourselves are judged, by what we say and how we speak." - Ernest Boyer

- Encourages the child to **share school experiences at home**.
- **Builds community** through shared language experiences.
- Provides a **constructive physical outlet for the kinesthetic learner**.
- Combines **"saying and doing,"** which increases retention of language and concepts by **90%**.
- Provides a **natural bridge for limited English speaking children** in developing a second language.
- Engages the high-risk learners in building confidence and **enthusiasm for learning**.
- **Encourages the whole child to focus attention on learning**.
- Provides an introduction to the **beautiful visual gestural language of ASL**.
- **Accelerates learning in the child's first and second language**, bridging the achievement gap.
- Personalizes language and concepts through **"total emotional body response."**
- Can lead to **memorable performances** for parents.
- **Builds comprehension** by creating **internal images of language**.
- **Is supported by brain research** and language acquisition theory.
- Singing and signing fluently with expression, gesture, and confidence **builds children's speaking skills**.
- **Supports inclusion programs**.
- **Teaches life skills. ASL is the third most common language in the United States.**

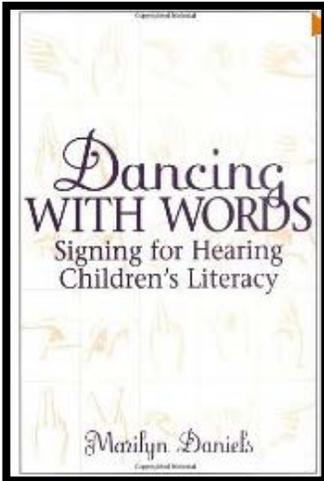


"Our job is not to help kids do well in school. It's to help them do well in life."

- Elliot Eisner, Speech to the National Staff Development Council, December 1991

- Reading the 3-dimensional language of sign **develops visual skills for reading** printed language.
- **Provides Talented and Gifted (TAG) students a challenge - one that parents love!**

Signing for Hearing Children's Literacy is Supported by Extensive Research



Here are excerpts from a book we highly recommend:

Dancing With Words: Signing for Hearing Children's Literacy by Marilyn Daniels

This book is about sign language and how sign language can be used to improve hearing children's English vocabulary, reading ability, spelling proficiency, self-esteem, and comfort with expressing emotions. Sign also facilitates communication, is an effective tool for establishing interaction between home and school, aids teachers with classroom management, has been shown to promote a more comfortable learning environment, and initiates an interest in and enthusiasm for learning on the part of students...

The activity of manually fingerspelling a word reinforces a child's ability to write or read or say it. Spelling a word strengthens existing associations among writing a word, reading a word, and saying a word. Clearly children need solid visual knowledge of letters to read well. When this visual knowledge is overlaid with the feel of the letter, reading becomes easier...

However, well before children are able to form letters with a pencil, they can form letters with the manual alphabet. Using the manual alphabet will activate the same formative link to reading as printing, but it may have an even greater effect on children's literacy because it can occur far earlier in their maturation process...

The feeling signs are nearly all iconic. Because the signs visually represent feelings in discernible form, the child can comprehend the meaning of the word and relate the word to their own feelings. They are congruent. Children find it easier to identify their feelings, to express their feelings, to discuss their feelings, to understand their feelings, and perform the same operations with the feelings of others...

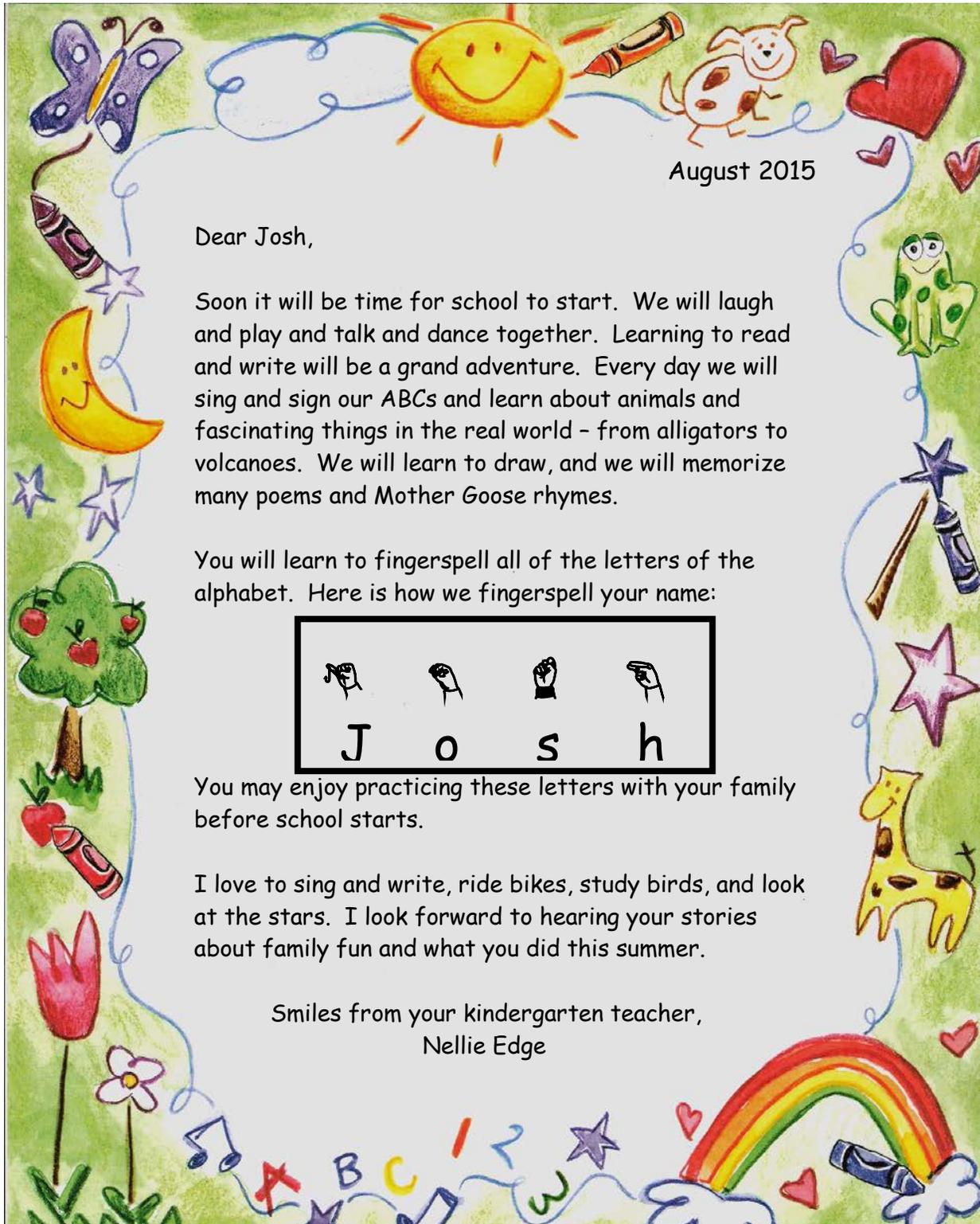
Become an early partner with your child as together you dance with the words of ASL. Both your fingers and hands and your child's fingers and hands can create meaning in the air as you silently exchange messages in sign language. **For your child this dance will activate formative links in the developing brain; teach phonics, vocabulary, word recognition, and comprehension; become a precursor to the recognition of print; provoke positive feedback from others; give access to Deaf people; engender feelings of self-worth; and ultimately aid reading and spelling and communicative ability in general.** It is a dance with words, to be enjoyed from babyhood, through childhood, to adulthood.

Source:

Daniels, Marilyn. *Dancing With Words: Signing for Hearing Children's Literacy*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2001. www.greenwood.com www.marilyndaniels.com

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Send Your Students a Welcome Letter: Fingerspell Your Name!



We use the *Fingerletter Font (Signed letters)* efi@educationalfontware.com and added the Comic Sans MS font letters underneath the hand symbols.

The Art of Teaching Songs in Sign Language

In signing songs, we take some poetic license to combine American Sign Language (ASL) and signed English for specific teaching or artistic purposes.

- **We are respectful of the language and culture of the deaf and do not just “make up signs.”** We are conscious that language acquisition requires meaningful repetition in an emotionally safe environment. Children must feel comfortable taking risks and know that approximations are valued.
- **American Sign Language** is a language used by the deaf community in this country. It is concept oriented and not in English word order.
- **Signed English** is exact word for word signing of the English language which will make it easier for deaf children to learn to read English.
- **There are several “correct” ways to sign some words.** While most signs are fairly consistent or similar in the United States, there are regional differences in sign language just as there are in spoken English. The book *Signs Across America* found many variances for some signs. As an extreme example, there were 23 different ways to sign “birthday” out of the 25 states sampled. If you learned a sign different than we are teaching it, your sign is probably not incorrect, however your teacher may have learned it from a different part of the country. In developing our training materials we have sought advice from other sign language instructors and people in the deaf community. We continually seek to learn more about the beautiful art of signing songs.

Our most used reference is *The Perigee Visual Dictionary of Signing*. We have also consulted several other dictionaries, which are listed in the resources.

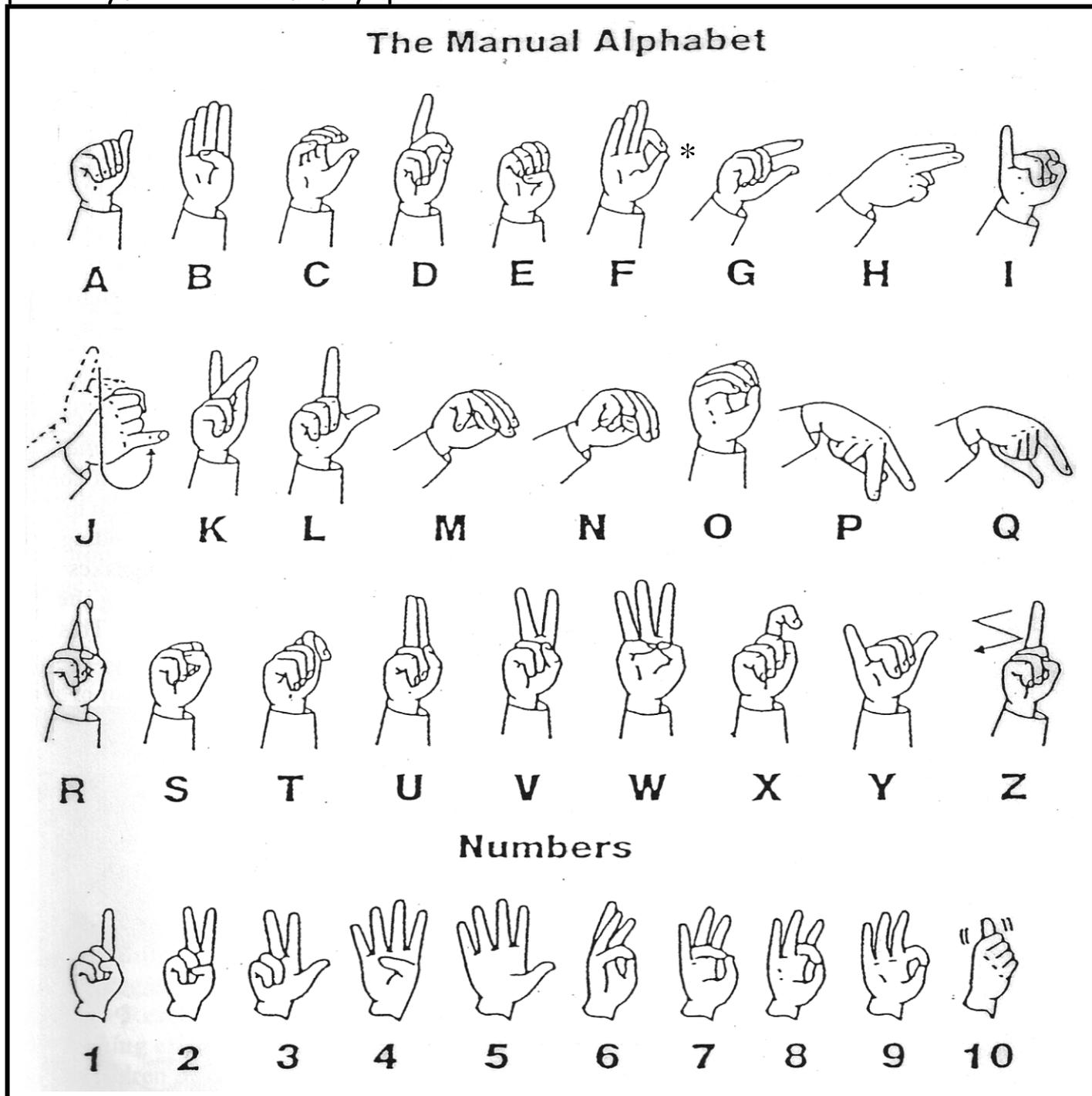
- **What if I’m left-handed?** How do I sign? There are left-handed and right-handed signers in the deaf community. The important thing is to be consistent within yourself. Decide which hand is easier for you to use as your dominant signing hand. Sign consistently with that hand.
- **When I teach young children to sign, does it matter if I sign right or left-handed?** Most young children will not analyze which hand you are using. They will simply begin doing sign language because their bodies love to express meaning. They will sign right or left-handed as it feels correct for them. (Some will mirror image the teacher’s signs and some will naturally use their dominant hand. Both are okay.) With second or third-graders you might say, “Use the hand you write with - your *dominant hand.”

**This is a great way to introduce the new vocabulary “dominant and non-dominant.” You’ll be amazed at how quickly your voracious vocabulary learners will start using these words.*



Begin the Year with One, Consistent, Multisensory ABC and Phonics Book with Language Chart

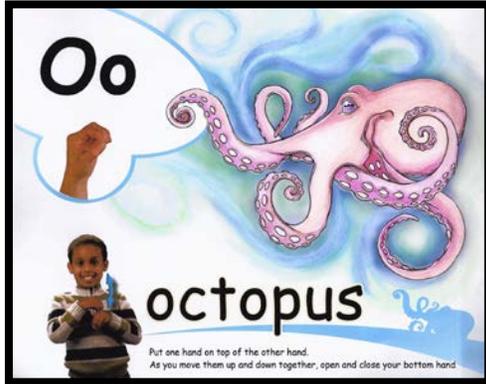
For powerful ABC and Phonics Immersion, add American Sign Language (ASL), fingerspelling and a signed alphabet song book and chart to your classroom. Children more easily access memory for letters and sounds when they fingerspell. Send a copy of your ABC song chart and CD home. Children love sharing this new language with family. Adding the kinesthetic element of ASL for the ABC's and key phonics symbols creates powerful hooks to long-term memory with whatever ABC and phonics system you are using. Singing allows the brain to chunk all 26 letters, sounds and key phonics symbols into one memory space.



* F is signed both with the three fingers spread and with them closed.
Used with permission.

Parents as Partners: Why We Teach American Sign Language

Meeting the Challenge of High Common Core Standards: Take Advantage of How the Brain Learns Best!



Why We Use Sign Language and Fingerspelling

Signing Songs and Fingerspelling Accelerates Early Literacy Skills.

Signing songs and manual fingerspelling engage the whole child in joyful learning. They add a kinesthetic memory connection for acquiring new skills and develop the small muscles necessary for writing. Singing and signing is multisensory; it combines "saying and doing," which increases retention of new

information and understanding of language concepts up to 90 percent. Research shows that learning sign language builds confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Reading the three-dimensional language of sign also develops visual skills for reading printed language. **High academic standards are met most easily when children are engaged and motivated.** Enriching children's literacy experiences by signing familiar songs encourages teachers and parents to become learners right along with their children. As an added bonus, children usually learn to sign songs more easily than adults, much to their delight!

Learning Sign Language is a Life Skill.

Not only does learning American Sign Language (ASL) give children enhanced literacy skills, but it also provides them with an important life skill for communication. **ASL is the third most commonly used language in the United States!** Proficiency in a second language is a requirement for high school and college graduation, and the optimum age to acquire a new language is during early childhood. **Additional language acquired while the child is young enhances their communication skills throughout life.** This is especially true of learning the emotionally rich American Sign Language. New language connections in a child's brain will develop much more quickly through song, as the child communicates whole sentences and phrases rather than isolated words.

Singing and Signing Enhance Speaking Skills.

Young children who are fortunate enough to learn ASL through accelerated language learning with songs at home, in preschool, and in kindergarten have an early advantage in developing expressive, dynamic speaking skills.

Singing and Signing Makes Learning to Recognize and Spell Words Easier.

Kindergarten teachers have discovered that singing and signing builds success for spelling and "word work" activities by making learning auditory, kinesthetic, social, and fun! **Most young children first become auditory spellers; they become visual spellers later.** By nature, children love to move their bodies. **Children's memory for the spelling sequence of words is dramatically improved through singing, signing, and fingerspelling.**

They can use fingerspelling more easily and quickly than they can print letters. Kinesthetically forming letters with the fingers dramatically improves recall of letters, especially for the hardest-to-reach children.

Signing Songs Accelerates ABC and Phonics Skills.

ABC and Phonics Immersion through sign language and song has been shown to greatly accelerate the learning of the alphabetic principal, especially for the hardest-to-reach children. Early mastery of these foundational skills is vital to ensure literacy success for all children. Singing and signing allows us to provide multisensory instruction that is simply more memorable and joyful for young learners. In other words, it is "kid friendly." Children quickly learn letters and sounds with *ABC Sing, Sign, and Read!* **The kinesthetic motion of fingerspelling a letter and then signing the key word triggers a response that will help children recall the corresponding sound.** It places explicit, systematic phonics instruction within a rich language learning experience that simultaneously enhances fluency, comprehension skills, and vocabulary. These powerful first teaching strategies are designed to prevent early literacy difficulties and bridge the achievement gap as we **build the reading brain.**

Group Singing and Signing is a Satisfying Social Experience.

Choral singing, signing, and reading are satisfying social experiences in which every child will have a sense of belonging and perceive themselves as successful. **When children are singing and signing, they are joyful, focused, and engaged – the optimum state for language learning.** They acquire language fluency while having the magical "I can read" experience. Skills instruction is accelerated because it is multisensory and placed in a meaningful context that strengthens a child's capacity for listening, speaking, and self-regulated learning behavior.

Children's Experience in Learning to Read Generalizes to Their Whole Self-Concept.

Bruno Bettelheim's research reminds us that how children perceive themselves in the act of learning to read generalizes to their whole self-concept. When teachers engage their students in multisensory literacy through signing familiar songs, the motivation, pleasure, and success they feel not only supports them in learning to read, but also allows them to see themselves as successful individuals who are passionate about learning. These are the positive attitudes that will allow children to begin reaching high Common Core Standards in literacy and beyond.

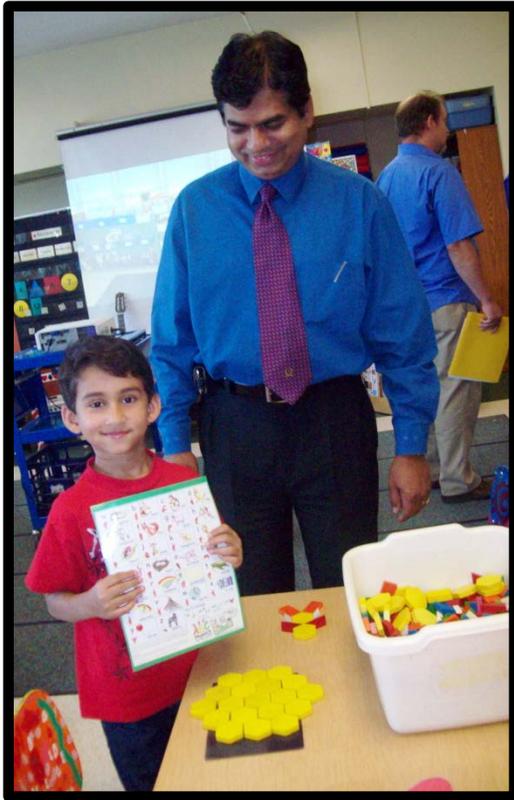
For additional information, see www.nellieedge.com/articles_and_resources.htm

- *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* by Nellie Edge, Sign2Me Early Learning, publisher
- Sing and Sign for Powerful ABC and Phonics Immersion
- The Magic of Signing Songs - Some Favorite Resources
- Parents as Partners: Taking the ABC and Phonics Challenge
- Signing Songs is a Powerful Language and Literacy Strategy
- Accelerate English and Spanish Learning
- Research Excerpts from **Dancing with Words** by Marilyn Daniels
- Parent Letters and Articles from **Parents as Partners in Kindergarten and Early Literacy** by Nellie Edge



Give Families An ABC Literacy Gift:

The Lovely *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* Family Reference Chart and  Access to Instructional Videos from Sign2Me Early Learning



Turn this Family Reference Chart into refrigerator art! Consider laminating each chart and attaching with magnetic tape: Parents love this gift. Our *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* program makes it easy for parents to be partners in ABC and phonics learning. The quality online instructional videos provide strong support.

Common Core State Standards stress the importance of building mastery of foundational reading skills. We want to do this in the most emotionally engaging and efficient manner possible: **Singing and signing with Parents as Partners is the answer!**



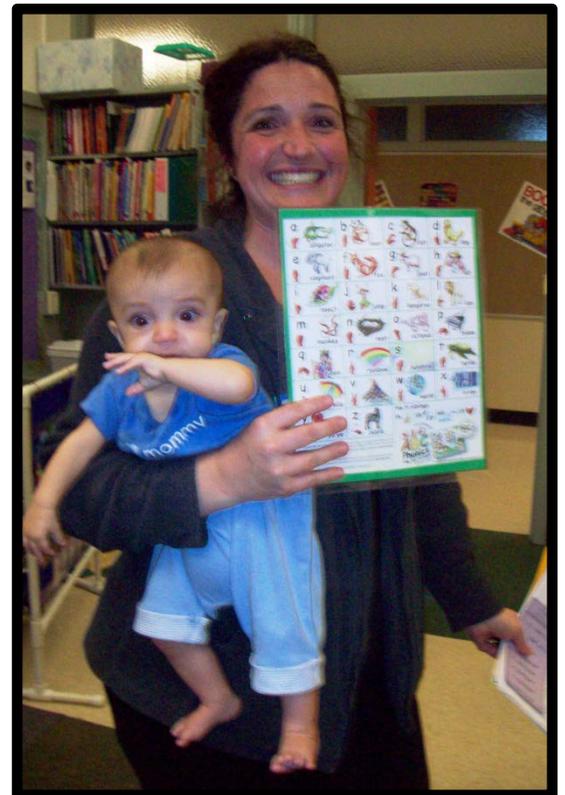
We introduced families to the parent component of our *ABC Phonics* Program the beginning of the year in several kindergarten classrooms. Within days we saw powerful results. Progress is accelerated when families enjoy the complimentary *ABC Phonics*  instructional videos together. These are directly linked from the kindergarten websites.

Katie Nelson's **Back-to-School event** was a **Family Scavenger Hunt** to explore each area of the classroom. **At one table, they received the *ABC Phonics* Family Reference Chart**, a quick lesson on signing the first four letters, and a reminder to watch the online instructional videos. Then they moved on to find the "blue table" and perform another activity. **A joyful family event!**

Laura Flocker's **Parent Literacy Information Night** was an overview of the importance of:

- The *ABC Phonics* Program, and why singing and signing is so brain-friendly and powerful!
- Efficient handwriting, beginning with Name Tickets
- Reading at home with the "I Can Read" Poetry Notebooks and how to support the reading process.

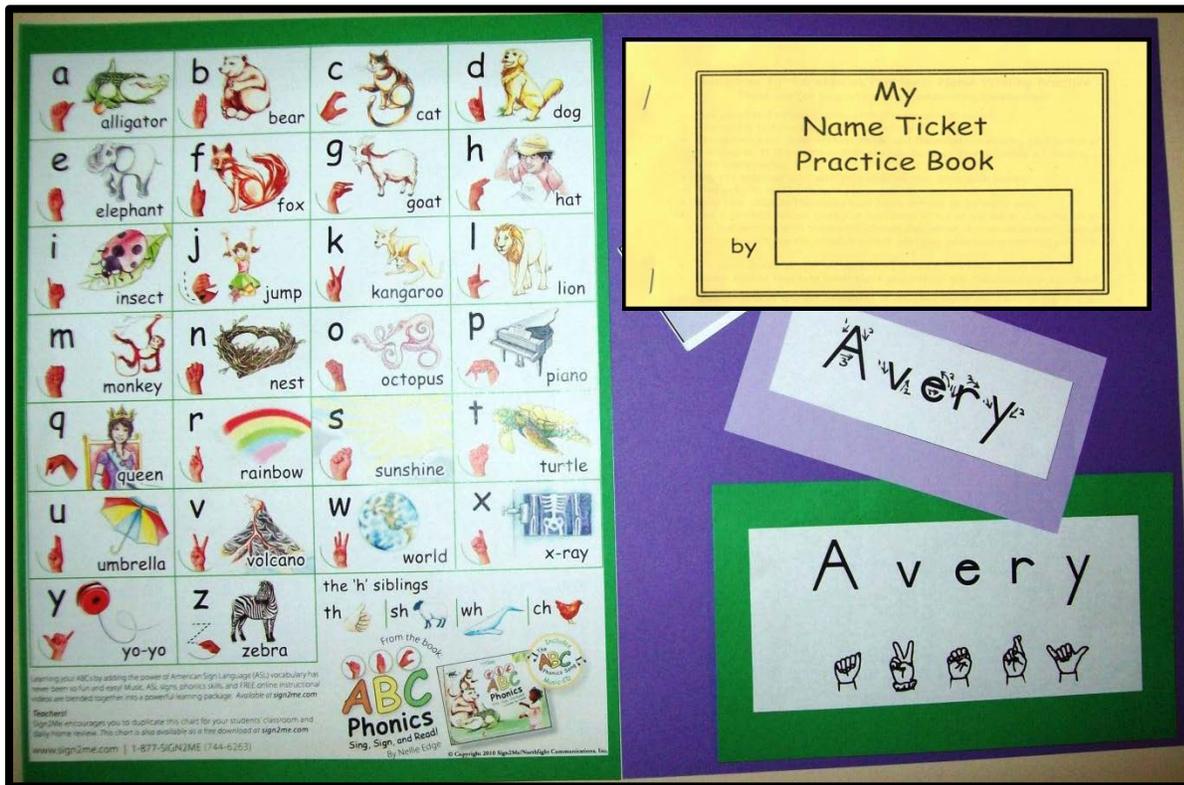
Parents responded with questions and enthusiasm.



"The success of your child's year depends on the strength of our partnership."

Family Literacy Gifts that Build Mastery of Foundational Reading and Writing Skills

Parents as Partners Multiplies our Teaching Effectiveness



At the beginning of the year, we share with families:

- **A beautiful copy of the *ABC Phonics Sing, Sign, and Read!* Family Reference chart.** (This one was trimmed, mounted on bright green heavy paper, laminated and backed with magnetic tape—perfect to attach to the refrigerator!)
- **Parent information letters about our ABC Phonics program**
- Their child's handwriting "Name Ticket" model; a letter about how efficient handwriting helps build happy kid writers, **a booklet of 10 name tickets for "at home" practice**, an envelope to return it in, and an A to Z handwriting guide.
- **A name fingerspelling guide** for at-home practice.
- **Tips on how to weave ABC Phonics practice into family routines:** it takes less than one minute to slowly sing and sign six to eight letters on the way to the car, while fixing dinner, or just before bedtime. As a family, watch the quality ABC Phonics  instructional videos online at nellieedge.com, generously provided by Sign2Me and enjoy learning memories together!
- **The belief that learning to read and write must be an engaging, multisensory, and meaning-centered activity.** We have high expectations that within a few weeks, most children will have mastery of the initial ABC recognition and letter-sound correspondence.
- **That additional support will be provided for our less-experienced English language learners** through repetition, demonstrating the signs, and focusing on the pictures. We will simultaneously **challenge advanced students to begin reading the sign language descriptions** and to conduct online research about animals in the book (there are 13!).

ABC Phonics Family Reference Chart Letter

Dear Parents and Families,

This ABC, American Sign Language (ASL) and phonics reference chart was designed to work together with the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* program by Nellie Edge. It was developed to provide joyful multisensory literacy instruction in the classroom and at home. Our children look forward to singing, signing, and reading this song every day! It's amazing how quickly children learn to recognize and connect letters, ASL signs, and key phonics symbols and sounds when they are all linked together through this engaging *ABC Phonics* book and song.

Research has clearly demonstrated that the brain is uniquely wired to remember large amounts of new information more easily when that information is deeply integrated through the rhythm and melody of a song. Our *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read!* book and song provide that important connection. The book is now available at amazon.com.

You can enjoy learning the *ABC Phonics* song with the help of  FREE YouTube ASL video tutorials at sign2me.com and nellieedge.com.

Please post this song chart on the refrigerator or in your child's bedroom for additional daily practice until your child knows the entire song by heart. Pay close attention to each key phonics sound; it needs to be crisp and accurate.

This ABC chart will help you:

- Encourage your child to playfully and dramatically practice the *ABC Phonics* song every day.
- See how quickly and accurately your child can fingerspell, name, and demonstrate each letter-sound correspondence. Watch them sign the key phonics symbol.
- Guide your child's fingerspelling and use of ASL vocabulary.
- Invite your child to teach *you* how to fingerspell each letter. (Fingerspelling builds small muscle skills for handwriting and playing musical instruments!)
- Compare your child's finger positions to the ASL signs demonstrated in the reference chart and online video tutorials.
- We are first building accuracy and then speed as we teach for mastery of foundational reading skills.

Remember: When first learning these essential foundation skills, it's important for children to practice each letter and sound consistently using the same ABC key phonics symbols, both at home and at school. Daily multisensory repetition reinforces and accelerates children's learning.

Once your child has learned the first portion of the song, invite the child to perform it over and over again for any appreciative audience. Your child will soon be reading and performing the entire *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* song and will become an *ABC Phonics* Expert!

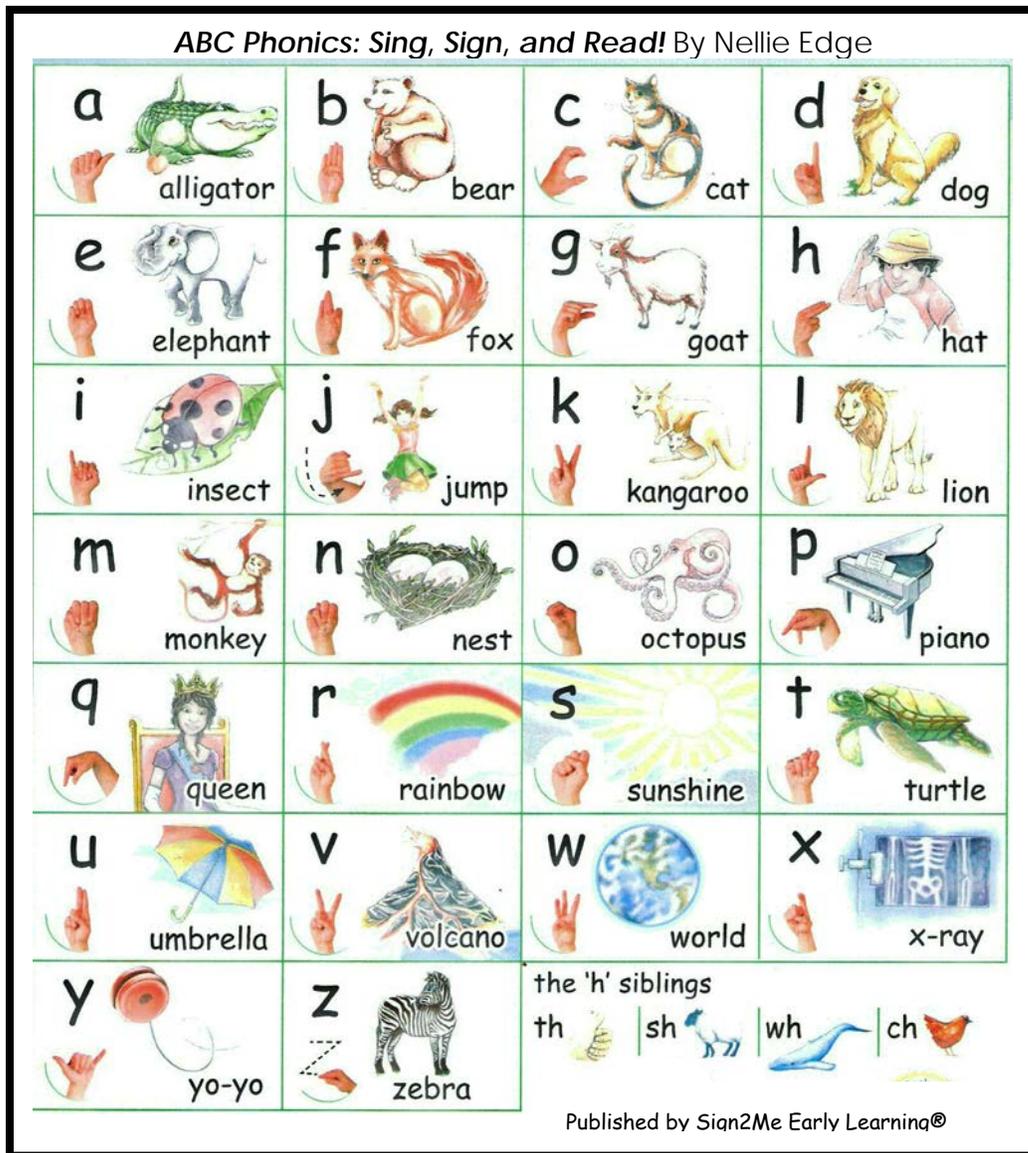
Thank you for your commitment to your child's literacy development. We hope you create many joyful family memories as you sing, sign, and read together!

Smiles!

(Your child's teacher)

Permission is granted for teachers to make multiple copies of this letter as a part of the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* program by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning ©2010. See nellieedge.com for more information about our action-research on "Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion." Download our complimentary e-Book.

Keep Copies of Your Miniature ABC Phonics Chart on Tables Throughout the Classroom



Your ABC Phonics Charts can be kept in literacy play centers and on tables in clear plastic sign holders for children to refer to as they engage in daily "kid writing." (Vowels may be highlighted in red.) As an added bonus, children use these miniature ABC Phonics Charts for story ideas and to label pictures.

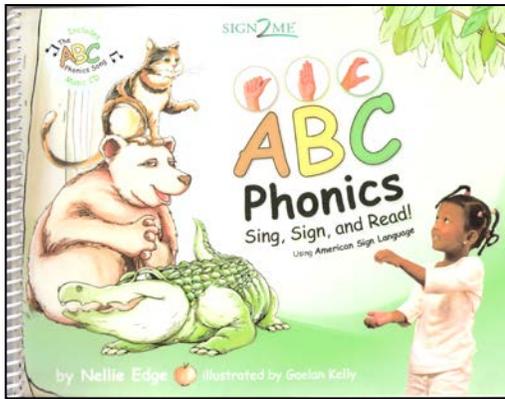
(Clear stand-up 5"x7" sign holders are available at www.officemax.com, item #20334577.)

To create your own easel, mount two miniature ABC charts on sturdy weight paper and laminate. Fold in half and secure with jute tacked to the inside and tied with a bow.



Additional teacher support materials for *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* are currently being developed by Sign2Me Early Learning at sign2me.com. For teacher research, parent letters, and strategies, see nellieedge.com.

Optimal Learning with ABC Books in Preschool and Kindergarten: Sing, Sign, and Read for an Engaging Multisensory Adventure!



ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! book and CD by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning, 2010.

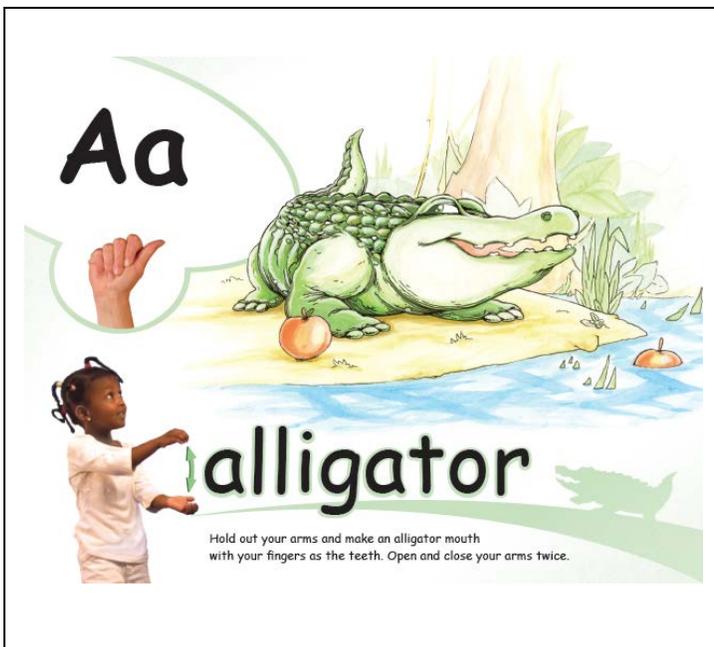
Begin the year with one key ABC and phonics book as your anchor text! We are excited to announce the initial publication of *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* a multicultural ABC book and CD in teacher's edition. Hundreds of teachers and parents using earlier versions of this book have proven the power of adding singing, fingerspelling, and American Sign Language (ASL) to their ABC program! Engaging children in a multisensory musical adventure as they develop letter and sound correspondence dramatically increases recall. Read about our action-research on "Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion" in a free e-Book at nellieedge.com: *Begin the Year with Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion*.

Send home a copy of the Family *ABC Phonics* chart that accompanies the *ABC Phonics: Sing Sign and Read!* book so children can practice from the same foundation program at school and at home. (See nellieedge.com and sign2me.com for free YouTube *ABC Phonics* tutorial videos, *ABC Phonics* Reference charts, literacy guides, and parent letters for teacher and parent support to accurately learn American Sign Language and fingerspelling along with children.)

Your Multicultural ABC Book Becomes an Anchor Text

After children have gained mastery of letters and sounds with this multicultural ABC text (i.e. they can instantly recognize and fingerspell all of the letters and accurately pronounce the corresponding key phonics sound), use this pattern as a bridge to introduce other delightful ABC books to the children. (Continue using fingerspelling for initial consonants and refer back to your original key phonics symbols as anchors to long term memory. "Oh, we know A/a/alligator and in this book we have A/a/apple... Who knows another word that starts with the /a/ sound?") See our list of "Favorite ABC Books for Preschool and Kindergarten" at www.nellieedge.com/childrensbooks.

- **Reinforce letter recognition and phonics skills in daily "kid writing" and expect 100% mastery from every kindergarten child.** (Some children may need more time and more individual scaffolded practice; all children are capable of learning through multisensory channels.) Many preschool children will be able to remember the letter sound and corresponding phonics symbol, even though developmentally they are just beginning to visually recognize letters in print. Combining singing, signing, and initial sound awareness is great phonemic awareness training all for preschool, kindergarten, ELL, and special needs children.
- **Connect the letters, sounds, and key phonics symbols to each child's name.** Teach each child to fingerspell the initial letter in their name and challenge them to learn all the letters in their name. Connect the letters and sounds to the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* book.
- **Celebrate when a child becomes an ABC and Phonics Champ or "Expert."** We like to give the child a playful certificate with their picture and name on it. (See photo essays.) Honor the kindergarten experts by inviting them to become "ABC and Phonics Helpers" with children who are still learning letters and sounds.
- **Use elaborative rehearsal strategies: Practice to classical music, practice silently, practice the song as a handjive, stand and make big movements, sit and make smaller Sign Language gestures.** Sign the ABCs while facing an elbow buddy. Help each other! Practice while quietly walking down the hall... (See pages 22 and 23 for more strategies.)



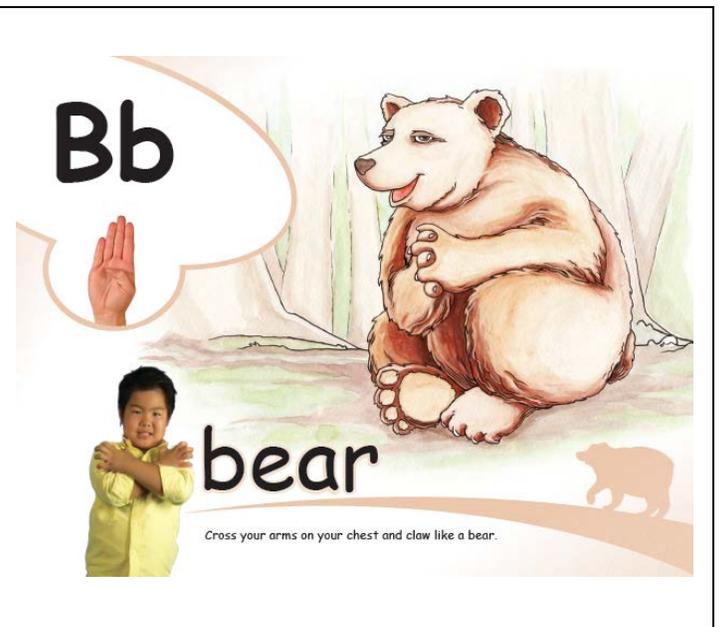
Aa

alligator

Hold out your arms and make an alligator mouth with your fingers as the teeth. Open and close your arms twice.

- **Repetition through multiple modalities builds faster and faster memory pathways**, so vary the rehearsal strategies.
- **Practice for accuracy and mastery** using the same ABC and phonics symbols; practice from the class chart; practice with the large individual ABC ASL cards; refer to the tabletop reference charts during "Kid Writing" Workshop.
- **Practice makes permanent!** Only perfect practice make perfect. Monitor each child's progress. Use the free YouTube ASL video tutorials at sign2me.com to develop accuracy, speed, and confidence!

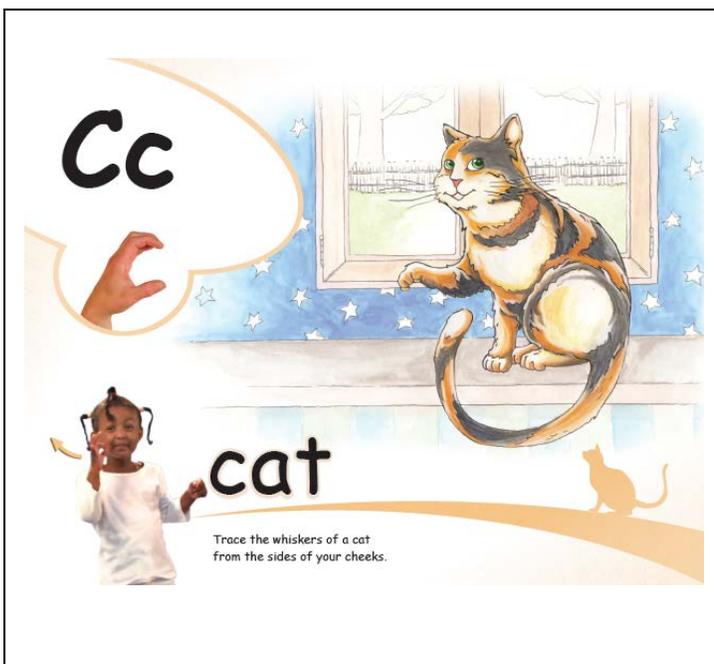
- **Teach ABC recognition and associated phonics skills in sets of four to eight letters** and in fluent, natural phrases. Evaluate each child for accuracy with fingerspelling and clear phonics articulation on an ongoing or weekly basis.
- **Provide extra support for harder-to-accelerate students early on.** Do not let children fall behind! The large ABC ASL instructional cards are perfect for one-on-one tutoring. Expect and support mastery of these foundation literacy skills.



Bb

bear

Cross your arms on your chest and claw like a bear.



Cc

cat

Trace the whiskers of a cat from the sides of your cheeks.

- **Keep practice joyful and engaging** so children build positive attitudes about learning to read!
- **Remind children to keep practicing at home:** send the "Family ABC Phonics Chart" and "Parents as Partners" letters home to encourage family learning.
- **Celebrate** as each child can perform the entire chant accurately: **Award the child with an "ABC and Phonics Champ" badge or "ABC Expert" certificate.**

Reminder: For *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* "Parents as Partners: letters, complimentary Best Practices e-Books, Family Reference charts, and YouTube videos of ASL tutorials, see nelliedge.com and sign2me.com.

Taking "The ABC and Phonics Challenge"

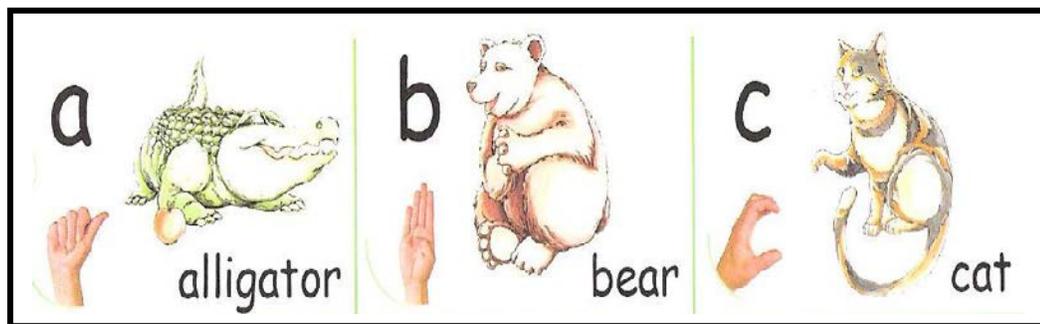
Dear Families,

The kindergarten children are quickly learning *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* Thank you for continuing to review it daily at home. We sing and say the letter names while we fingerspell them, adding the sounds of the letters, and then sign and read the picture clue for each page. For those children who already know letter names and letter sounds, this gives them practice learning American Sign Language (ASL) and reading key phonics words.

Starting next week, children may choose to take "The ABC and Phonics Challenge." If they can read the whole book on their own, with accurate fingerspelling and sign language, we will celebrate their accomplishments; they become an "ABC and Phonics Expert" and can help other children practice. **The children are not in competition with each other.** This is their personal literacy challenge. Learning letters and sounds is an exciting and vitally important skill. It is made more memorable when combined with American Sign Language. That is why we are immersed in multisensory ABC and phonics learning in kindergarten.

Thank you for encouraging your child's delight in learning and performing ABCs, phonics, and ASL. **Your support at home is helping them build a solid and successful foundation for reading and writing.**

With appreciation,



Our Animated Literacy Cheer:

Jeremy can read!
Hip, hip, hooray!
Cha-cha-cha

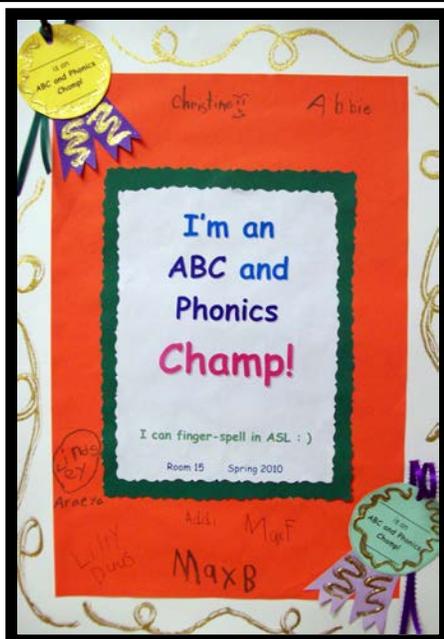
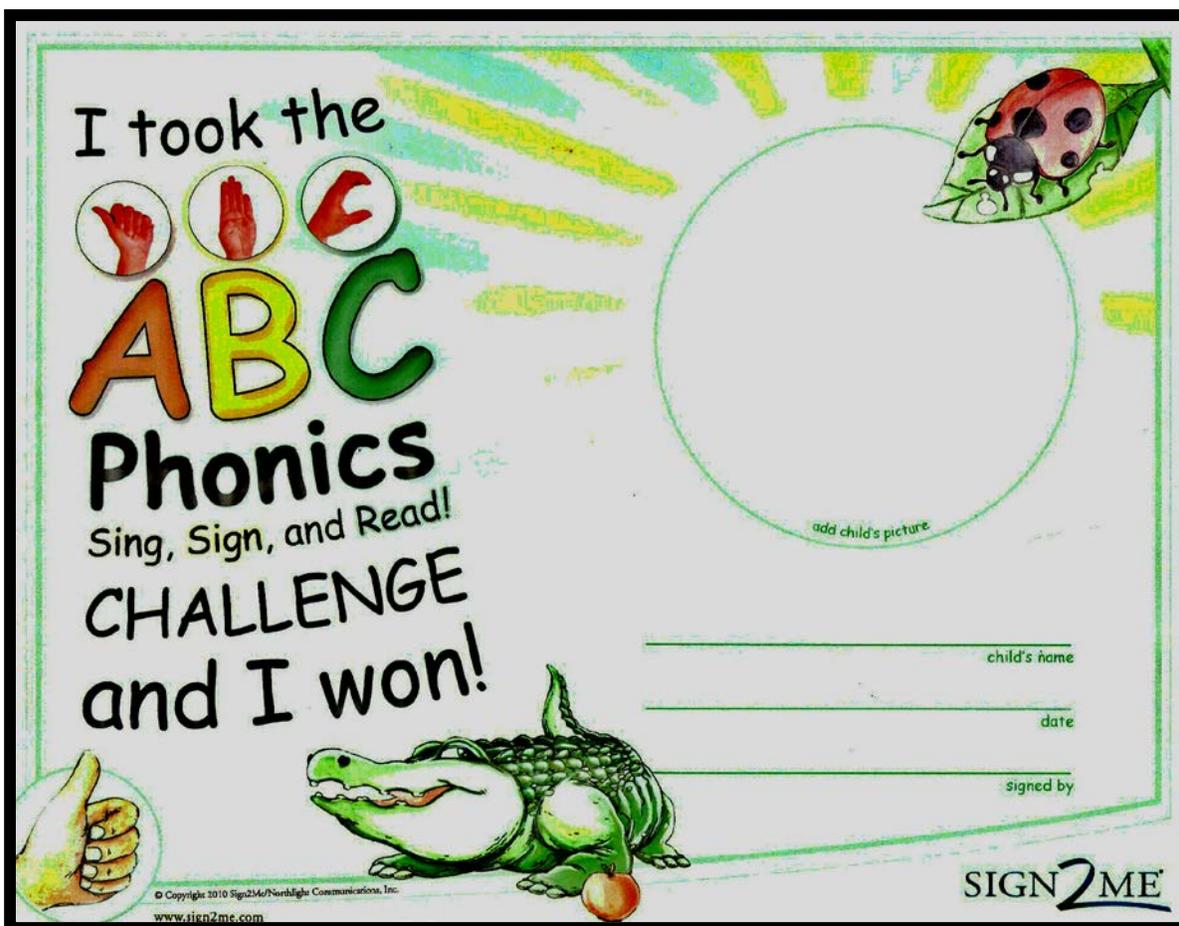
(Exact Signed English for Silent Applause)*

*Children wave both hands enthusiastically as in signing "wonderful."

Inspiration for this letter comes from Susie Haas and Diane Larson.

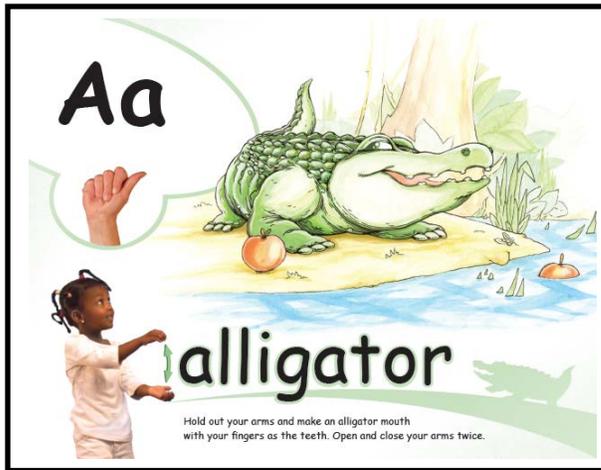
Nellie Edge "Parents as Partners" letters, © 2010. Permission granted for teachers to copy or adapt this letter when used with the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* program by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Literacy with credits notes.

Give Children the ABC Phonics Challenge



Kindergarten teacher Laura Flocker made special awards for each child to wear when they had mastered accurate fingerspelling and instant recognition of each letter and sound for the entire alphabet. Children practiced their *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* song at home and helped each other at school using the class charts and books. The earliest *ABC Phonics* "experts" were often the highly kinesthetic, musical children who are not traditionally the early readers. **Multisensory ABC and phonics immersion honors all learning styles.**

ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! Vary the Practice, Maintain Focus, and Keep Joy Alive!



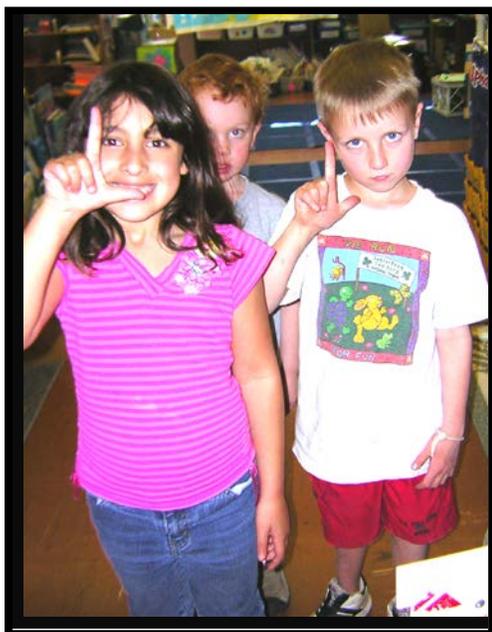
- **Send copies of the Family ABC Phonics reference chart home for shared family learning.** Include the Parents as Partners letters. (You are encouraged to **take advantage of our "Parents as Partners" program.**) Invite parents to view the quality complimentary YouTube ASL tutorial videos at [sign2me](http://sign2me.com) and nellieedge.com.
- **Consider scheduling the children's first performance of this song in November as a part of your "Thankfulness Celebration" or in December for your winter or Christmas celebration.** Practicing for a performance is motivating!

- **Our focus is active, joyful "Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion."** We want to build these foundation skills in the most efficient, accurate, and successful way possible for diverse learners.

Children need a variety of ways to practice so they don't get bored. The brain needs "elaborative rehearsal." Consider these strategies:

- **Teach A-G the first week of school. Teach these letters well.** Let the children perform for the music teacher, librarian, or school secretary - any appreciative audience will do! Add three or four new letters (in fluent phrasing) at a time. Review these letters throughout the day. Practice while lining up for recess. Practice while walking in the hall. Expect mastery!
- **"Please teach A-G to your fourth-grade buddy today."**
- **"Review H, I, J, and K with your kindergarten elbow buddy: Pair, review, observe, and teach each other."**
- **"Today we're going to chant our *ABC Phonics* song by doing a clap-slap rhythm on our thighs." (No Sign Language.) "Keep the steady beat!"**
- **"Today, see if you can keep the rhythm with rhythm sticks while we sing our *ABC Phonics* song all the way through. 1-2-3. Eyes on me! Ready? Start!"**
- **"Today we're going to do our *ABC Phonics* song with a partner as a handjive." (Demonstrate patty-cake style.)**
- **Invite half the class to stand and perform A-G while the audience of remaining children sing along and give them positive feedback. "I liked the way Addie signed each letter..."**
- **"Today we're going to do our best practice. Then, we'll go perform for the principal. He is amazed at our singing and signing."**
- **"Instead of singing, let's say our *ABC Phonics* song with a full voice and march to the rhythm." "Now let's sit down and whisper the song slowly."**
- **Practice doing A-G with "no voice at all," using only Sign Language and mouthing the letters and sounds. This teaches children to hear and feel the rhythm of the language internally.**

Motivate Children with Elaborative Rehearsal Strategies



- "Let's say our *ABC Phonics* song softly and tiptoe around the room. Remember to bring the hand to the mouth while you make each letter and sound."
- "Sing *A-G* in slow motion... now let's see if we can sing at a rapid pace!"
- Silently fingerspell *a-b-c-d* while the children say each letter and sound to themselves. Add three to four letters each week. Do this during those 30-second transition times.
- "We'll practice our *ABC Phonics* song silently as we go down the hall. Hear the language in your inner ear, mouth the sound while signing - but no sound will come out. Watch me!" (As teacher walks backwards.)
- "Who did you sing, sign and read your *ABC Phonics* song to last night? Remember, if your family is not available to listen, you can read and perform it for your cat or teddy

bear or goldfish. They will love to listen to you!"

- Invite last year's kindergartners to come and partner with your kindergartners and sing and sign facing the new learners.
- Give extra help to the harder-to-accelerate learners and playfully reinforce the skill one-on-one when you are dialoguing with them. "*B/b/bear* and *B/b/Brian*."
- Bring in a signing bear and invite the children to sign with him...and later make him available in the *ABC Phonics* Literacy Center.
- "This time, I'm going to try and trick you. Watch my hand signs and see if I'm doing the correct animal." (Fingerspell "*B/b*" and sign cat or dog instead of bear.) "Aren't you clever for catching my trick!"
-  Use the ASL instructional videos with the whole class. Remind parents to view them.
- Using white boards, ask the children to write the lowercase letter while you say the letter and sound. Start with *A/a/* through *D/d/*... Repeat this over and over again. Then add *a-d* to the back of the Name Ticket.
- Celebrate as each new child becomes an "expert." Let the child perform for the whole class with the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* CD as musical accompaniment.



Our friend Mitzi Shirk had thirty-five kindergartners (which should never happen in a state that values literacy!), but even against the odds, her children still far surpassed state benchmarks for kindergarten. She attributes this to "Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion" and daily "kid writing."

Practicing for the ABC Challenge is Collaborative and Fun: Tips from Becky Leber, Gifted Title 1 Kindergarten Teacher



Leaving the ABC chart at floor level makes this a natural literacy center. Within four to six weeks of multisensory ABC and phonics immersion, children are eager to take the "ABC Challenge" and see if they can identify each letter (A-Z), make the corresponding sound, and read the key phonics word - complete with American Sign Language (ASL). Hooray for the ABC champs!

At kindergarten orientation, I gave each family a copy of *The ABC Sign Language and Phonics Song* book, chart, and song CD (Now called *ABC*

Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!). I really emphasized how important it was for parents to become partners in ABC and phonics learning. At the beginning of the year, we immerse all of the children in multisensory ABC activities: **singing, signing, reading, playing games, clapping, handjiving, and marching to the rhythms and language of our ABC song.** Children often choose the ABC/Phonics Literacy Center to proudly perform their new skills for each other, and motivation is high!

To design a successful ABC/Sign Language/Phonics Center, you will need:

- Multiple copies of *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!*
- The corresponding laminated ABC chart at floor level
- Reading the room pointers (we use a dowel with an eraser attached)

Having multiple copies of the *ABC Phonics* book helps. The beginning-of-the-year kinders are especially excited to practice their new American Sign Language and phonics skills. Any visitor who happens by the classroom hears, "Do you want to hear me sing the ABCs?" They are so proud of themselves. My first year using the program, I was amazed at how excited the kids were and how quickly they learned all the letters and sounds. Each year this multisensory ABC and Phonics approach gets more powerful because I am more comfortable weaving fingerspelling into all of our literacy learning. Children all want to take the ABC challenge and be an "ABC champ". One child, who was still making good progress, was advised by his friends, "Go home and practice with your book and CD!"



ABC Phonics Puppets Support ELL Comprehension: Mentor Kindergarten Teacher Celeste Starr Uses Drama



L /l/ lion and hand puppet

My students love to sing and sign and are always ready and willing to practice again and again. It is a great filler for those two-minute transition times when you have nothing else planned. We play with the letters, signs, and words: **We've drawn pictures that go with each letter, physically acted out the letters, made our own ABC charts, posters, and books for the room.**

We have puppets that go with the animals in the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* (formerly known as the *ABC Sign Language and Phonics Song*) so each student has opportunities to hold them and dramatically become that letter, sound, and animal. We also use little props that

represent the key phonics symbol (a miniature rainbow and umbrella). These are used to help all English language learners make the connection between letters, sounds, words, and real everyday items. **We have a special basket that is just for sign language books, flashcards, and our ABC/phonics charts.** There are also pointers, puppets, and wipe-off boards available so that students can be actively engaged in ABC learning during independent choice time.

I have found that this kinesthetic approach is a joyful and powerful link to students' acquisition of letters, sounds, and words. They acquire these skills so much more quickly when we integrate song and American Sign Language. **My students are happily engaged and eager to share with each other, their parents and even perform for other classrooms.** When students are trying to figure out a word or sound for their "kid writing," they often refer back to their sign ABC reference chart or even chant the song to themselves. Children will frequently have automatic recall of words or sounds when I sign the letter. **This is especially important for helping ELL students to make personal connections and acquire their English language skills with comprehension.**



K /k/ kangaroo: notice the finger puppet

There is a special connection between the signed ABCs and how students remember them; they naturally and easily use them in their reading and writing. Students are empowered with a sense of accomplishment when they have internalized the concepts of letters, sounds and words, and they realize it is literally all at their fingertips.

Tips on Building Your Own Basket of ABC Puppets:

- Shop at dollar stores or in discount bulk catalogs.
- Check garage sales.
- Ask parents to help: Send a wish list of the puppets you still need.
- Visit Goodwill, other thrift stores, and children's used clothing stores.
- You do not need to have a complete A-Z basket to start an ABC/puppet center - start with A-L (alligator through lion).

Kathie Bridges' Children Memorize, Recite, and Perform Language: *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!*



Kathie Bridges teaches in a mixed socio-economic community in Salem, Oregon.

Kathie's joyful, language-rich classroom, high expectations for student achievement, and her own background using American Sign Language in special education made *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* (formerly called *The ABC Sign Language and Phonics Song*) a natural part of her curriculum. The children

quickly learned the song and signed with precision and delight. **They performed with great pride for their fourth-grade buddies, the school secretary, and to enthusiastic applause from families during the Winter (Christmas) Celebration.**

Pringle Elementary is one of Salem's oldest schools, with a long tradition of celebrating the arts and high expectations that all of its students become good performers. This more often than not becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. **Pringle children rise to meet high expectations with amazing performance skills.**

How does Kathie help the slower sign language learners?

Kathie helps the children individually to form each sign correctly. She talks to the children about the deaf community ("**When communicating in sign language, the palm of your hand is like your face. You would never turn your back to people when speaking to them, so keep your palm facing outward.**"). Kathie adds four new letters every few days and reviews often.

Copies of the *ABC Phonics* chart and plain A-Z (letter only) flashcards go home with each child. Most families keep the chart on the refrigerator. The children love to practice, and their parents are so impressed.

Kathie further reinforces the sign language ABCs by **dismissing the children silently by fingerspelling the first letter of their name.** "**If your name begins with ... (Kathie signs a letter) then you may be excused.**" This teaches the children to really pay attention and sharpen their visual skills. High-frequency words are also fingerspelled.

Kathie Bridges makes ABC and phonics learning meaningful, engaging, multisensory, and fun! She further builds automaticity with letters and sounds through a program of individual, systematic, daily repetition at home and at school using ABC flashcards until mastery is achieved.



Kathy Magoun Makes Learning Relevant: Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion Across the Curriculum



Kathy Magoun, a Teacher of the Year from Connecticut, is a long-time advocate of using sign language for joyful, multisensory learning so she was excited to discover our *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* (formerly called *ABC Sign Language and Phonics Song*). She integrates ABC/phonics skills throughout her engaging child-centered kindergarten program. Learning ABC and Phonics skills is rarely an isolated literacy event.

- I asked Kathy, "When and how did you introduce other ABC books?"

"After most children have a memorable sense of The ABC Sign Language and Phonics Song (which we sing all the way through often the first few weeks of school), we use the pattern to introduce each new page in other ABC books (e.g., A /a/ alligator and A /a/ apple). This keeps the learning new and interesting."

- Kathy elaborated, *"We review the letter/sound/sign language throughout the day and across the curriculum whenever it's relevant rather than singing the whole song repeatedly. When we talk about families I say, "F "f" fox and F "f" family..." This way connecting letter/sound/sign language becomes a part of all of our discussions and everything we do - and children learn naturally and almost effortlessly."*

Kathy Magoun's kindergartners happily perform for any appreciative audience. *"When the theater for the deaf visited our school, we sang and signed for them. They were so impressed and my kids were so proud!"*

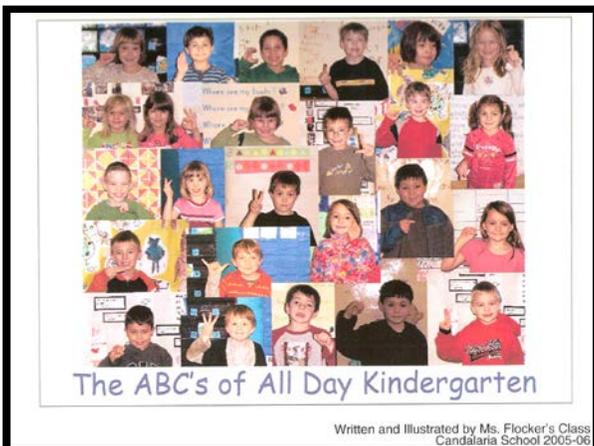


Consider connecting *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* (originally called *ABC Sign Language and Phonics Song*) with the names of your kinders: A "a" alligator and A "a" Allison, B "b" bear and B "b" Bryon... Nellie Edge

Laura Flocker's Experience: Parents Love this Approach to the ABCs

Laura Flocker teaches an all-day kindergarten in Salem, Oregon. Laura is a legend in this school community, known for her incredible arts-rich program where science explorations, drawing, and art experiences fill the day and friendly animals are a part of the life of the classroom. Parent participation and support for their child learning American Sign Language (ASL) is very high. **They love seeing their child's pride and enthusiasm for learning. Parents appreciate the playful, stress-free approach to learning phonics while the children are also learning a second language.** One parent whose daughter learned the whole *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read!* in one week told of how proudly her daughter performed the song for her cousins and neighbors - for anyone who would listen. Her brother was jealous that he didn't get to learn the ABCs through sign and song!

Laura gave every parent a copy of the ASL Reference Chart for nightly review and invited them to use the free online instructional videos from Sign2Me®.



Laura Flocker's class has also published their own original book featuring the children as ABC experts. This was a real hit, and Laura says it is "one of the best things I've done!" Now every family has a cherished bound book they can read together and delight in. It is a celebration of kindergarten friends and a reminder of each child's joy in learning ASL, reading, and writing.

To publish your class book, contact:

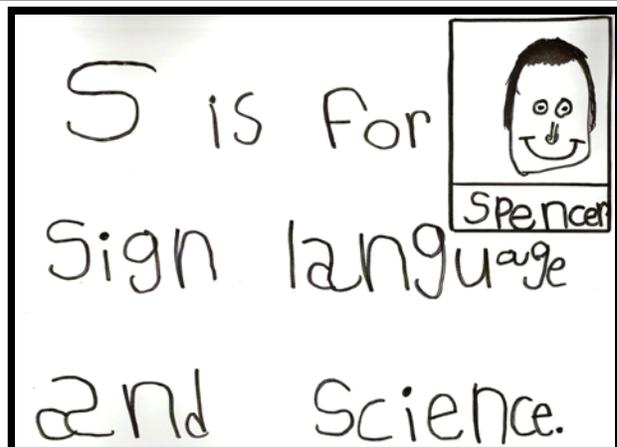
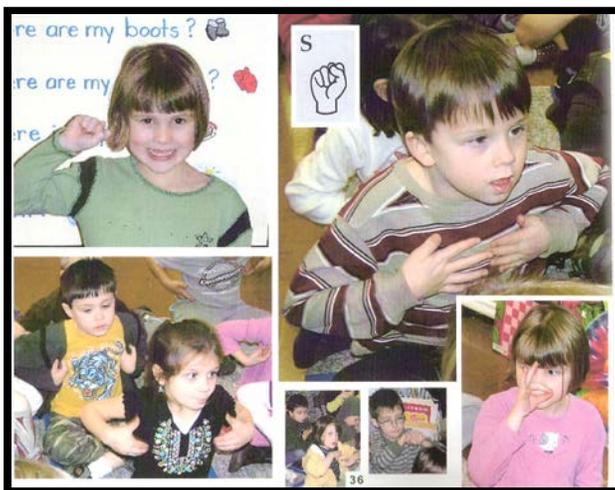
Nationwide Learning, Inc.

6700 South Topeka Blvd.

P.O. Box 19244, Topeka, KS 66619-0244

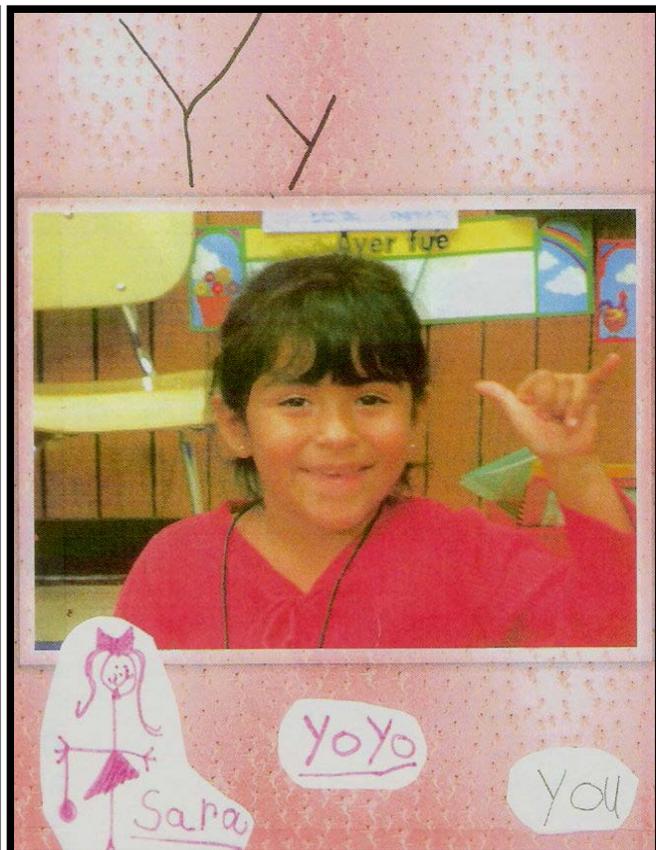
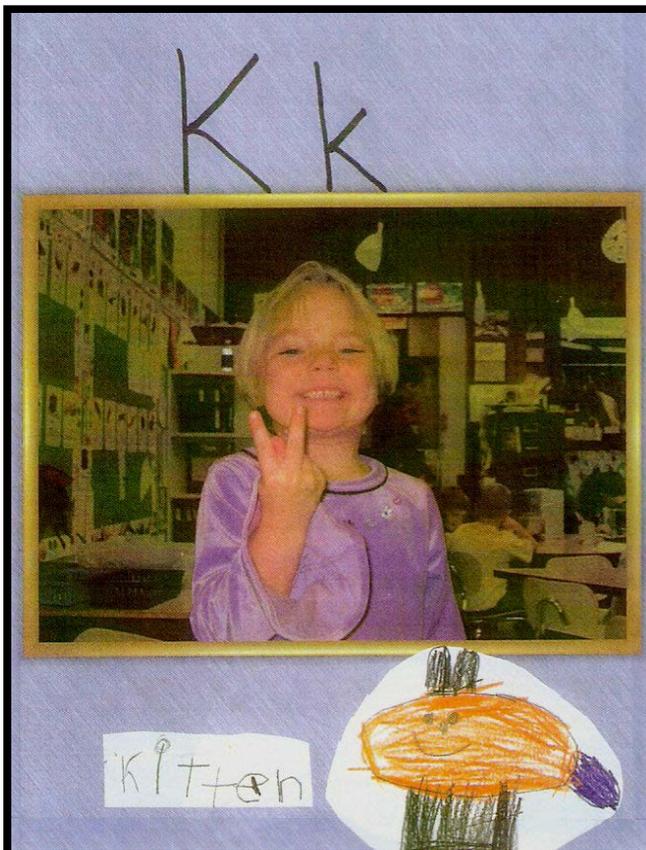
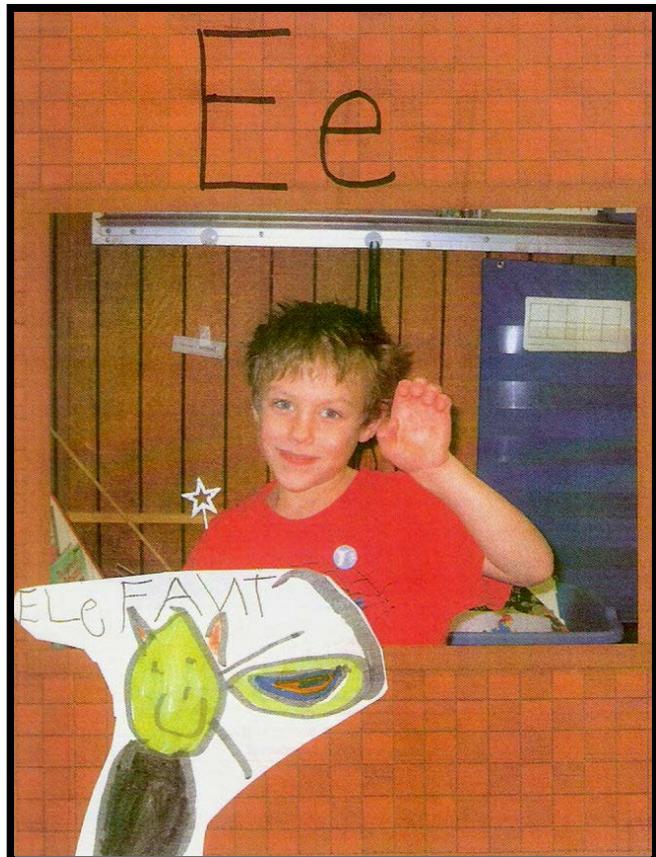
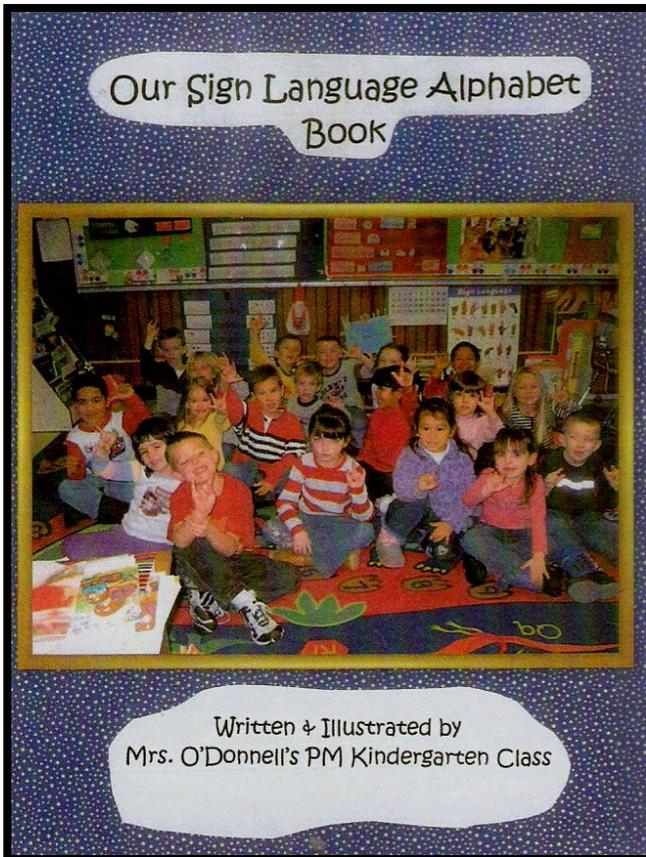
800-867-2292 (7:00am to 5:30pm CST weekdays)

Email: info@nationwide.com



We love this way of honoring children as authors, illustrators, and experts at American Sign Language and phonics. Teachers receive the class book kit and one copy of the bound book free, and books are published within ten days of agreed-upon publishing date. Cost per book is similar to the cost of quality hardback children's books, and they look and feel like real books. How fun is that?

Personalize Your ABC and Phonics Program: Create a Classroom of Signing Experts



What a wonderful ABC memory book: each child's photo, name, writing, and art.
Special thanks to Jill O'Donnell for sharing.

Parents as Partners in ABC Phonics Learning

Fast and accurate identification of each letter of the alphabet, both capital and lowercase, and its most common sound is part of the foundation for successfully learning to read and write. With each repetition seeing and naming a letter, the neurological pathway for reading gets faster and children's confidence grows.

We encourage families to keep the ABC Phonics Family Chart (framed as art) and magnetic letters on their refrigerator so children can manipulate print. (See page 44 for details.) Families are encouraged to watch the free ASL instructional videos by Sign2Me found on YouTube and learn together! Once a child has memorize the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* song, it is much easier for them to anchor the letter name and sound in long term memory.



A note about refrigerator art: The individual abc cards are from the ABC Phonics Family Chart which is generously provided free by Sign2Me Early Learning. A parent may choose to cut, mount, and laminate each letter of the chart and attach magnets to the back.

For children who need additional practice, consider giving families abc flash cards as a follow up activity for children who need more practice quickly remembering letters and sounds. Encourage children to remember their fingerspelling when using these cards to provide a kinesthetic memory hook while simultaneously developing their fine motor skills for handwriting.

<p>ABC Flashcards Use after singing the <i>ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!</i> song by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me</p> <p>The ABC Phonics book may be purchased from Sign2Me.com</p>	<p>ABC Flashcards for Family Literacy Print on index weight paper. Iron and send the entire set in an ABC box as a gift! Some teachers choose to send home 4-6 new cards on a ring until they are all mastered. Children need instant recall of the letters as they have something to anchor the key phonics sound onto. With repetition, the child will develop instant recognition of each other.</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>a</td><td>b</td><td>c</td><td>d</td></tr> <tr><td>e</td><td>f</td><td>g</td><td>h</td></tr> <tr><td>i</td><td>j</td><td>k</td><td>l</td></tr> </table>	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Mm</td><td>Nn</td><td>Oo</td><td>Pp</td></tr> <tr><td>Qq</td><td>Rr</td><td>Ss</td><td>Tt</td></tr> <tr><td>Uu</td><td>Vv</td><td>Ww</td><td>Xx</td></tr> <tr><td>Yy</td><td>Zz</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>ABC Flashcards Use after singing the <i>ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!</i> song by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me.</p> <p>Teachers using the <i>ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!</i> program may download the complimentary Family ABC Phonics Chart. To maximize learning we recommend giving a copy to each family as refrigerator art.</p>	Mm	Nn	Oo	Pp	Qq	Rr	Ss	Tt	Uu	Vv	Ww	Xx	Yy	Zz			<p>ABC Mastery</p> <p>135 Pins</p>
a	b	c	d																												
e	f	g	h																												
i	j	k	l																												
Mm	Nn	Oo	Pp																												
Qq	Rr	Ss	Tt																												
Uu	Vv	Ww	Xx																												
Yy	Zz																														

Download plain ABC Flashcards from ABC Phonics tab at www.nellieedge.com. See Nellie Edge Pinterest Board: ABC Mastery for additional letter/sound strategies.

ABC Flashcards for Family Literacy

Print on index weight paper, trim and send the entire set in an ABC box as a gift. Some teachers choose to send home 4-6 new cards on a ring until they are all mastered.

Children need instant recall of the letters so they have something to anchor the key phonics sound onto. With repetition, the child will develop instant recognition of each letter.

a

b

c

d

e

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h

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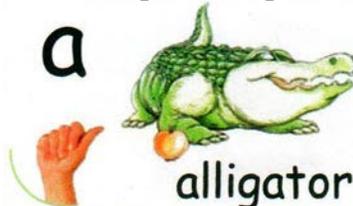
x

y

z

ABC Flashcards

Use after singing the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* song by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me



The ABC Phonics book may be purchased from Sign2Me.com

Teachers using the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read!* program, may also download the complimentary Family ABC Phonics Chart. To accelerate learning we recommend giving a copy to each family as delightful refrigerator art.

ABC Flashcards for Family Literacy

Print on index weight paper, trim and send the entire set in an ABC box as a gift. Some teachers choose to send home 4-6 new cards on a ring until they are all mastered.

Children need instant recall of the letters so they have something to anchor the key phonics sound onto. With repetition, the child will develop instant recognition of each other.

A a	B b	C c	D d
E e	F f	G g	H h
I i	J j	K k	L l

M m

N n

O o

P p

Q q

R r

S s

T t

U u

V v

W w

X x

Y y

Z z

ABC Flashcards

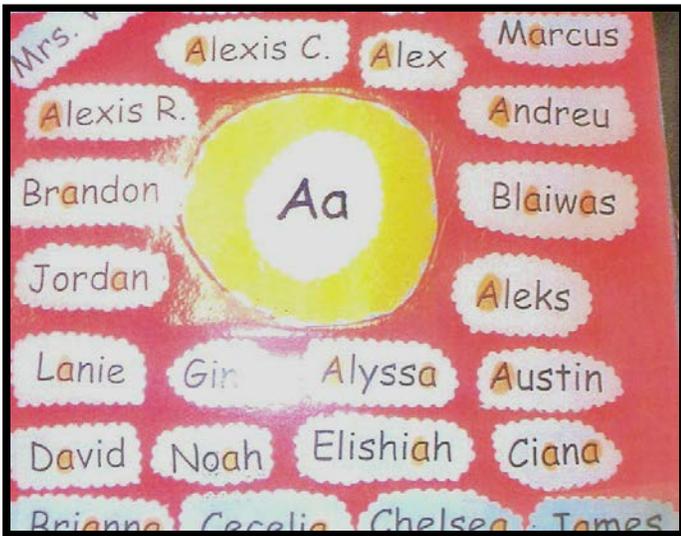
Use after singing the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* song by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me



The ABC Phonics book may be purchased from Sign2Me.com

Teachers using the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read!* program, may also download the complimentary Family ABC Phonics Chart. To accelerate learning we recommend giving a copy to each family as delightful refrigerator art.

Enhance Your ABC and Phonics Immersion Program: Create Memory Hooks Using the Letters of Each Child's Name



"Who has a 'd' in their name?" Create your own colorful ABC name book.



*Make name/fingerspelling cards for each child in the class. The "helper of the day" gets to lead the whole class in a name/fingerspelling cheer.
"Give me an 'M'!"*



Notice the fingerspelling on Katie Nelson's moveable name word wall. Children use the name cards during word work activities and writing workshop.



Post a color-highlighted, alphabetized list of children's names for comparison and word study. When the list changes, demonstrate crossing off a name or adding a new friend's name using an arrow or other text features. (Thank you Jennifer Foster!)

High Common Core State Standards will only be met if children are engaged in personally meaningful literacy events.

"The child's name is an island of security in a sea of unknown print"

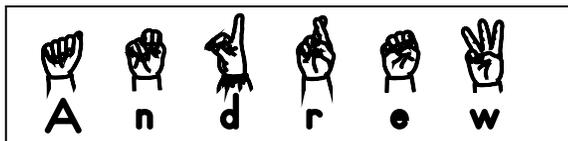
~Marie Clay

How Do We Engage Children Who Are Harder to Accelerate?

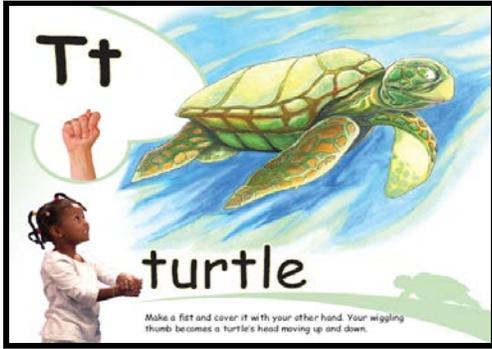
Remember Bettelheim's research:

"How children perceive themselves in the act of learning to read generalizes to their whole self-concept." Start with what the child can do and build on success. Keep going back to what is known to build confidence and create an anchor for new learning."

- **Joyful, multisensory immersion is still the key** - some children need more of it with greater support and repetition. **More good teaching. More good practice.**
- **Celeste Starr has a puppet that corresponds to each of our key phonics objects.** Children are motivated to play with the sound puppets.
- **Writing a hard-to-remember letter** (on a white-erase board or in a sand tray) **while saying the letter/sound and key phonics object** seems to help some learners.
- **Pairing the slower-learning child with an ABC expert** (who is also a kind kinder buddy) for practice has proven effective.
- **Let the less-experienced ABC learner become the class expert** for one or two letter/sounds and call on her to display that knowledge often.
- As soon as the child can do four letters accurately, **let him perform** (with a few confident buddies - if needed) **for an enthusiastic school helper** - janitors, librarians and secretaries usually offer enthusiastic responses. *"Listen to you - you know ABCD - and even the sign language!" "Wow! Aren't you proud of yourself!"*
- **Emphasize the first letter of their name** and connect it to the *ABC Phonics* song. Teach each child to fingerspell and name the letters in their name.
- **With every new set of three or four letters** provide additional, individual, multisensory practice. Train a parent volunteer or 4th-grade buddy to help. Do not let a child fall behind. Cut up the big horizontal wall chart for flash cards or use ones at the *ABC Phonics Tab*
- **Give parents a link** to the free instructional videos from your class website, and reference it in Parents as Partners letters. (Families LOVE watching these videos!)
- **Show parents how to engage the child in direct, systematic instruction with a growing collection of ABC flashcards** to build instant recognition of letters and sounds. (Kathie Bridges sends plain A-Z (capital and lower case) flashcards and a record-keeping form home so parents whose children need extra support can track their child's progress weekly.)
- **Practice for automaticity:** Have the child write his name several times a day, fingerspell, and name the letters in order and then randomly. **Practice until there is instant retrieval of alphabetic knowledge.**
- **Send loaner copies of the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* book and CD** by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning home for family sharing several days at a time. Add favorite animal puppets to the *ABC Phonics* book bag so the child can engage dramatically with them at home.
- **Parents wishing to give *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* book and CD** as a literacy gift to their child can purchase it at amazon.com or sign2me.com.



Make Your Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion Program the Best It Can Be: Summary of Best Practices

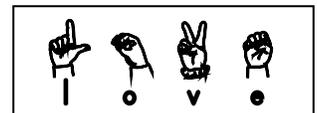
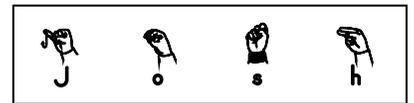


Page from *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!*

- **Sing and Sign:** Add ASL fingerspelling for each letter and sign the key phonics word.
- **Teach for instant letter/sound association in the brain.** "A-ă-alligator" (accompanied with the emotionally engaging ASL) is a more efficient mnemonic device than "ă-alligator-ă."
- **Dramatically explore** each key phonics word (e.g., alligator, bear, cat, dog, etc.). Let children

dramatize the animals or objects to heighten comprehension and emotional involvement. **Have puppets and/or stuffed animals available** for additional small group letter/sound instruction for those children who need it.

- **Sing, sign, and read your ABC Phonics picture book or language chart several times a day.** Provide explicit large group instruction for four to eight sounds/symbols at a time. Then **provide several 15-second reviews** during the day (e.g., on the way to the library, out to recess, transitioning to story time...).
- **Send it home:** Communicate, educate and engage "parents as partners" in ABC and phonics immersion. Send home copies of the family wall chart that accompany the book *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* by Nellie Edge. Invite parents to view the free ASL Phonics song tutorial with their children at nellieedge.com under Video Clips. **Ask each child, "Where did you hang up your chart?" "Who did you sing and sign for?"** Expect nightly review.
- **Have high expectations:** provide emotionally engaging, multisensory instruction that motivates and accelerates learning! Expect mastery of the fingerspelling of letters and sounds with signed key phonics symbols within four to six weeks. **You will be amazed** at the progress: some children will learn A-Z in one weekend!
- **Have one consistent ABC and phonics program with sign language and reference charts available throughout the room:** keep copies in children's writing notebooks, on the walls, and in the art center. Have one copy of the book in the dramatic play center, and several in the class library.
- **Teach fingerspelling for children's names.** Fingerspell as you quietly go down the hall. Fingerspell the *L-O-V-E Spells Love* and *M-O-M Spells Mom* songs. See  video clips at www.nellieedge.com.
- **Engage children in "kid writing"** from the first day of school. Keep miniature versions of your *ABC and Phonics* charts available throughout the room to support children's writing. Keep one copy in their drawing and writing notebooks.
- **Give children real words and sentences to sign, spell, write and read.** Teach "I love you, the end, Mom, Dad, because..." through auditory and kinesthetic channels.



How will you make your ABC and phonics instruction more memorable?

ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!

Science Information and "Voracious Vocabulary" Learning

You can use *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning to teach foundational literacy skills and simultaneously challenge accelerated learners to expand their reading, enhance voracious vocabulary habits, and build science research skills!

First, repeatedly read the exact text describing how to make each key phonics sign. This will build English fluency and support independent readers as they challenge themselves to read this entire informational text on their own. Intentionally encourage this early reading behavior even as most of the class is still mastering letters and sounds and engaging in "magical memory reading." Another way to differentiate learning for independent readers is to use the book to introduce simple scientific facts and rich vocabulary words. Once a week use the text to explore what children know and wonder about animals. **Then invite the children to go home, do some online research about one of their favorite animals (from the 14 animals in the book), and return to share more fascinating facts!** New information can be added to the current information with the student-researchers' names highlighted in an *ABC Phonics Animal Research* notebook. This is consistent with the kind of teaching that meets high Common Core State Standards.

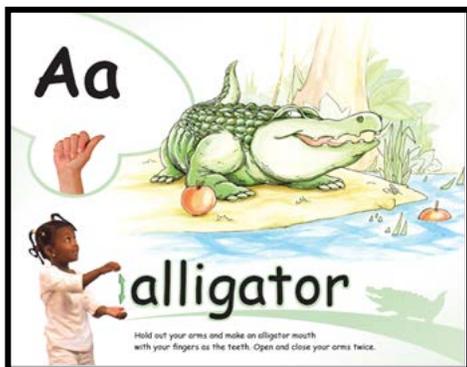


Weave a rich web of vocabulary and scientific information throughout the pages of this ABC book.

"When they enter school, students differ markedly in their vocabulary knowledge. Materials must address this vocabulary gap early, systematically, and aggressively, or it will expand and accelerate."

-Excerpt from Common Core State Standards document

What do we know about alligators?



- An alligator is a **reptile** which means it has a **backbone**, it needs warmth from the sun, and it has dry, **scaly** skin.
- They are **carnivores**, and "they might eat you!"
- They can swim in the water and travel on land.
- Alligators live in the **coastal** waters of southeast states: Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Texas.
- They like a warm, wet **habitat** and live on every continent except **Europe** and **Antarctica**.
- Alligators are **oviparous** animals: The young are hatched from eggs and look like their parents.

This is not a published document. Our future newsletters and ABC Phonics tab at nellieedge.com will provide additional information and ongoing support.

This Scavenger Hunt Introduces Families to the *ABC Phonics: Sign, Sign, and Read! Program*

McKINLEY KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM SCAVENGER HUNT!

Dear Families,

Welcome to our Back to School Night. Here is a short "scavenger hunt" for you and your child to complete together.

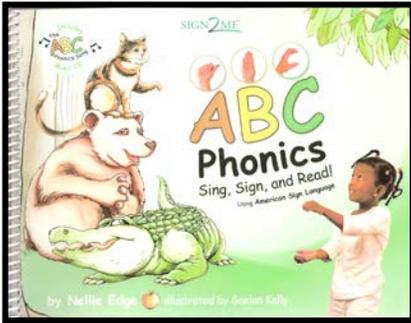
At the end I will have a small treat for you. You can do steps 5-10 in any order. **Have fun!**

1. Find the sign-in sheet and your name ticket model on the **purple table**. Write your name very carefully. Take home a set of name tickets for at-home practicing. (Parents, please sign in on the Volunteer and/or Conference Day Sheets.)
2. If you brought your school supplies, sort them into the bins on the **orange table**.
3. **Find your cubby**. Take out the papers and give them to your parents. This is your homework.
4. **Find your book box** (the clear plastic shoe box) and take to the big carpet area where the calendar is.
5. Find our classroom library; **pick a book to put in your book box** for next week. (Return the box to the spot where you found it.)
6. Find your coat/backpack hook in the **closet**.
7. **Find our classroom pet**. What is his name?
8. Find the **blue table**. Roll and cut out a shape from the playdough.
9. Build something with the manipulatives on the **red table**.
10. Find the **green table** with the ABC/Phonics Chart. Can you fingerspell the ABCs? Take a Family ABC/Phonics Chart home for your refrigerator.
11. Find the **photo booth**. Have your family photo taken!
12. **Before you leave this evening, make sure you help your child find the bathroom**. Help him/her practice locking and unlocking a door, flushing, and washing hands. Notice the "Stop" and "Go" sign.
13. **Also, check out our "Kindergarten Giving Tree"** in the hallway-pick an apple and fulfill a wish for classroom supplies/needs.

THANK YOU FOR COMING--WE'RE SURE TO HAVE A GREAT YEAR!

How to Use Favorite ABC Books in Preschool and Kindergarten:

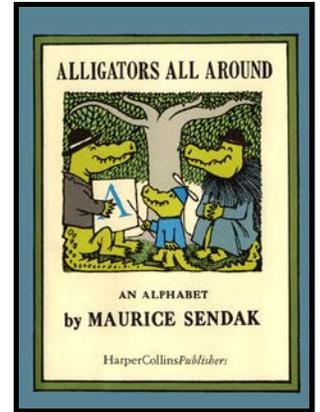
Enhance your ABC and Phonics Program with Multisensory Strategies that Stick



ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read by Nellie Edge and Sign2Me Early Learning, 2010.

Start the year with one key multisensory ABC and Phonics book as your anchor text. Add finger spelling and American Sign Language (ASL) for phonics symbols and invite your children on an engaging musical learning adventure at school and at home. After children have fluency with one

foundation ABC book, introduce other ABC books, using the fingerspelling and referring back to your original key phonics symbols. Children will often continue to automatically use the rhythm and fingerspelling pattern from their original ABC phonics program. "Oh, we know A/a/alligator and in this book we see A/a/apple..."



ABC: A Child's First Alphabet Book by Alison Jay (Dutton, 2003)

Animalia by Graeme Base (Puffin, 1996)

Alligators All Around: An Alphabet by Maurice Sendak (Harper Trophy, 1991)

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. (Simon and Schuster, 1989)

Eating the Alphabet: Fruits & Vegetables From A to Z by Lois Ehlert (Voyager Books, 1993)

Max's ABC by Rosemary Wells (Puffin, 2006)

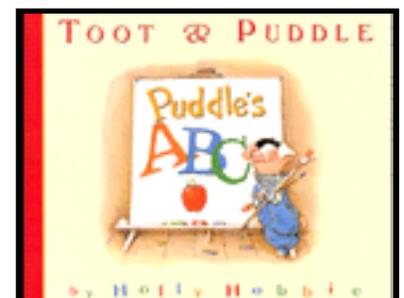
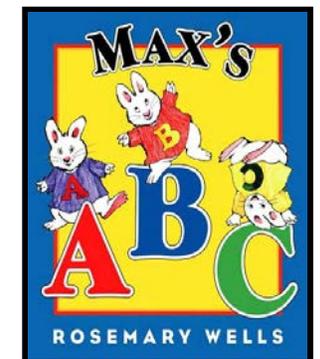
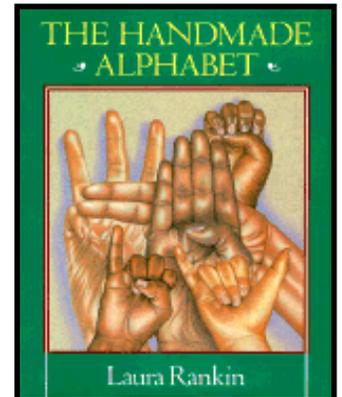
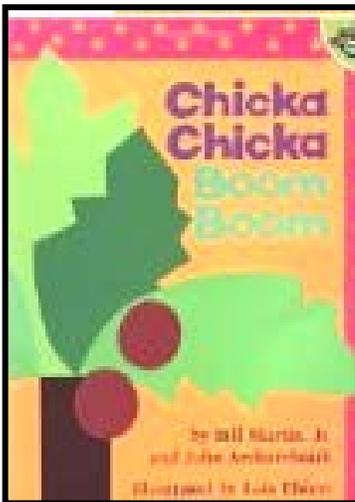
Mrs. Bindergarten Gets Ready For Kindergarten by Joseph Slate (Dutton, 1996)

Superhero ABC by Bob McLeod (HarperCollins, 2006)

The Butterfly Alphabet by Kjell B. Sandved (Scholastic, 1996)

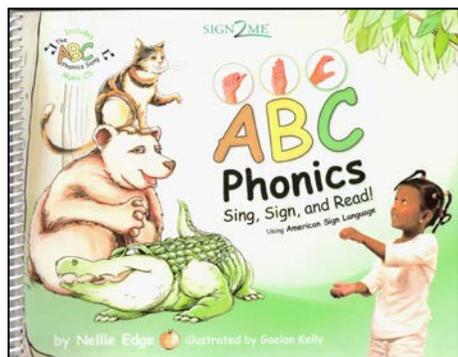
The Handmade Alphabet by Laura Rankin (Dial Books, 1991)

Toot & Puddle: Puddle's ABC by Hollie Hobbie (Little, Brown and Company, 2000)



Explore the Power of Fingerspelling and Sign Language: Our Favorite Resources

ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! (Picture Book/CD and Program) by Nellie Edge
© Sign2Me®/Northlight Communications; 2010



ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!
book and CD by Nellie Edge
(Sign2Me/Northlight Publishing, 2010)

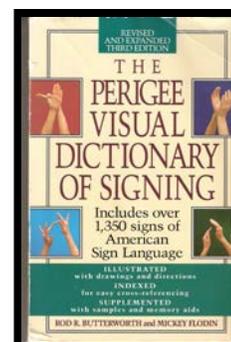
Begin the year with one key ABC and phonics book as your anchor text! *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* is a multicultural ABC book and CD with free online teacher support including four ASL instructional videos, Teachers' Guide e-book, parent letters, and instructional strategies available at www.nelliedge.com on our ABC Phonics tab. Discover the power of using singing, fingerspelling, and American Sign Language (ASL) to build the reading brain. Engaging children in a multisensory musical adventure as they develop letter and sound correspondence dramatically increases recall and builds positive attitudes about learning.

Visit Sign2Me for the additional ABC Phonics Carts, Wall Cards and Teacher Materials.

The Perigee Visual Dictionary of Signing

By Rod Butterworth and Mickey (1995) Produced by: Perigee Trade.

Your class needs at least one sign language dictionary. **This affordable paperback is our choice.**



Lift Up Your Hands

By Donna C. Gadling, Pastor Daniel H. Pokorny, and Dr. Lottie L. Riekehof (1992). Produced by: The National Grange, 1616 H Street NW, Washington, D.C. 2006. (202) 628-3507; www.nationalgrange.org

Favorite patriotic songs with illustrations for sign language interpretation are featured. They use a combination of American Sign Language signs and English word order.

Beginning Sign Language Books

Produced by: Garlic Press, New owners Douglas and Huma Rife, (800) 789-0554; www.garlicpress.com, email: sales@garlicpress.com

Our two favorites are: *Signing at School*, which presents especially common signs, sentences and vocabulary for use in the early childhood classroom, and *Signs for Animals and Pets* (a board book). Children love to explore sign language books.

Dancing with Words: Signing for Hearing Children's Literacy

By Marilyn Daniels. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2001.

This fascinating book presents the research underlying the recommendation of teaching sign language to all children to "improve hearing children's English vocabulary, reading ability, spelling proficiency, self-esteem, and comfort expressing emotions."

Seminar and Distance Learning Materials

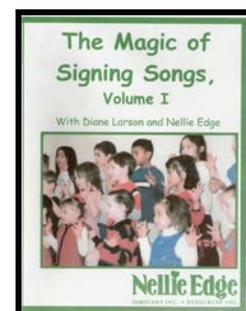
(Email info@nelliedge.com for details.)

The Original Video (Now DVD): *The Magic of Signing Songs, Volume I*

Instructional DVD: How to sign twenty-one songs, from Nellie Edge Seminars.

Signed by Diane Larson. Nellie Edge Resources, Inc. www.nelliedge.com

Includes ABC Song; Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star; You Are My Sunshine; May There Always Be Sunshine; Sing Your Way Home; Five Little Monkeys; Happy Birthday; Rainbow 'Round Me; Magic Penny; I Think You're Wonderful; Sign to Me; We Wish You a Merry Christmas.



Also includes Nellie Edge Read and Sing Big Books™:

I Can Read Colors (Se Leer Colores); I Have A Cat (Yo Tengo Un Gato); The Opposite Song (La Canción de Opuestos); Goodnight Irene (Buenos Noches Irene); Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear (Osito, Osito); I Love the Mountains (Amos Los Montes).

- Comes with ASL Instruction Book and "I Can Read" anthology set.

Maximizing Language and Literacy Through the Magic of Signing Songs

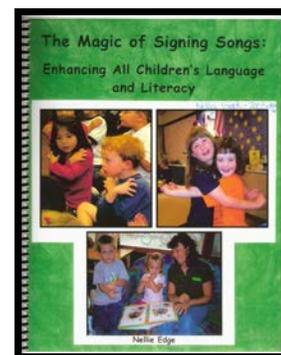
Literacy Manual by Nellie Edge, Revised 2008.

This book combines research and "best practices" for incorporating twenty-one well-loved songs in sign language into the pre K-3 curriculum. It contains the words, music, and chords for all signed songs and is designed to accompany the original instructional DVD *The Magic of Signing Songs*. You will find concise summaries of informative articles, Brain-Friendly Literacy™ strategies, classroom rituals and traditions that build joyful learning communities, the rationale for signing songs with all children, and resources for additional study. Includes a separate "I Can Read" Anthology packet of ten songs, poems, and rhymes (blackline masters).

The Magic of Signing Songs: Enhancing All Children's Language and Literacy

Literacy Manual by Nellie Edge, revised 2010.

The next best thing to attending the engaging signing seminar, *The Magic of Signing Songs*, is to study this book and the accompanying seminar video. This practical book is designed to introduce all educators to the joyful art of signing songs. Engage your children in signing songs for powerful ABC and phonics immersion, to enhance spelling, reading and speaking skills, build a cooperative learning community, and utilize their multiple intelligences in learning and expressing language. Includes words and extensive curriculum connections for all songs, Brain-Friendly Literacy™ strategies, sample parent letters, phonemic awareness and differentiated literacy guides, information on using sign language for class management, classroom rituals and celebrations, literacy research, and resources. Book comes with ASL instructional book and "I Can Read" Anthology and Little Book collection (blackline masters).



DVD: *The Magic of Signing Songs, Volume II*

(Includes song book with pictorial American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation)

Instructional DVD of ten songs from Nellie Edge Seminars. Signed by Diane Larson.

Nellie Edge Resources, Inc. www.nellieedge.com

Includes: *The Sign Language ABC and Phonics Song, What a Wonderful World, Pledge of Allegiance, America the Beautiful, This Land is Your Land, See Me Beautiful, The More We Get Together (Entre Más Nos Reunimos), L-O-V-E Spells Love, M-O-M Spells Mom, English and Spanish Greeting and Farewell Song*. These songs have accelerated literacy, engaged children in joyful learning, and brought audiences to tears.

Teachers, parents, and their children love how easy it is to learn to sign memorable songs with our new video. Each song is sung and signed in its entirety; the signs are slowly demonstrated and explained and the song is repeated. Take this video and the songs with the accompanying visual ASL guide into your classroom (or living room) and learn to sign along with your students.

- Comes with ASL Instruction Book and "I Can Read" anthology set.

Come Sign With Us

Book by Jan C. Hafer and Robert M. Wilson; illustrated by Paul Setzer. Washington, D.C.: Clerc Books, 1996.

Here is a fully illustrated activities manual for teaching children sign language. It features more than 300 line drawings of adults and children signing familiar words, phrases, and sentences using American Sign Language (ASL) signs in English word order. All signs have equivalent words listed in English and Spanish as well. The *Come Sign With Us* video is also available.

Sign with Your Baby

Book and Video/DVD by Joseph Garcia

Seattle, WA: Northlight Communications, 1999.

www.sign2me.com

We love this timeless book and DVD - it makes a wonderful gift for new parents! The how-to DVD shows Dr. Joseph Garcia and wise, responsive parents empowering early two-way communication with their babies and toddlers while supporting English language development, all through the use of American Sign Language.

Sign Language Rubber Stamps

Harris Communication, 1-800-825-6758, www.harriscomm.com (To locate, go to the homepage, click on "novelties," "rubber stamps," then "next page.")

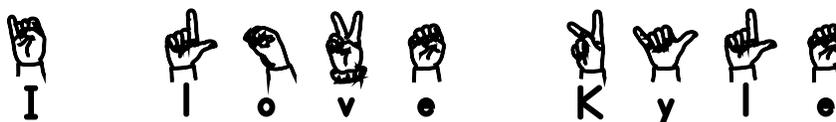
These stamps are our favorites for the writing center: Fingerspell "LOVE," "friend" and the ABC's with manual sign and capital letter.

Fingerletter Font (Signed letters)

Available at Educational Fontware, Inc., 6396 NE Ralston Rd, Bainbridge Island, WA, 98110.

(800) 806-2155; efi@educationalfontware.com

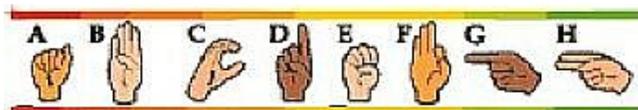
Help children learn to fingerspell each other's names by creating name tags with this specialty computer font using the signed fingerspelling that can be made very large.



Sign Language Alphabet Line

by TS Denison available at <http://www.frankschaffer.com/>

These child-size handshapes are perfect to display in the classroom at kid level. Simply cut the alphabet line apart and add your hand-made laminated heart letters or use a die cut machine. (See page 118.)



Practice American Sign Language on the Internet

Michigan State University ASL (American Sign Language) Browser *

<http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/title>

For a comprehensive catalog of sign language resources:

Gallaudet University Bookstore, 800 Florida Avenue NE, Washington, D.C., 2002. (800) 451-1073; <http://www.gallaudet.edu/>.

To order a Signing Bear

See: <http://www.signingsmart.com/store/customer/home.php?cat=268>

A cuddly signing bear adds to the emotionally engaging experience of signing songs for children of all ages! Your arms fit into his arms so the bear can "come alive" in the classroom



Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion: Taking Advantage of How the Brain Learns Best!—Notes

