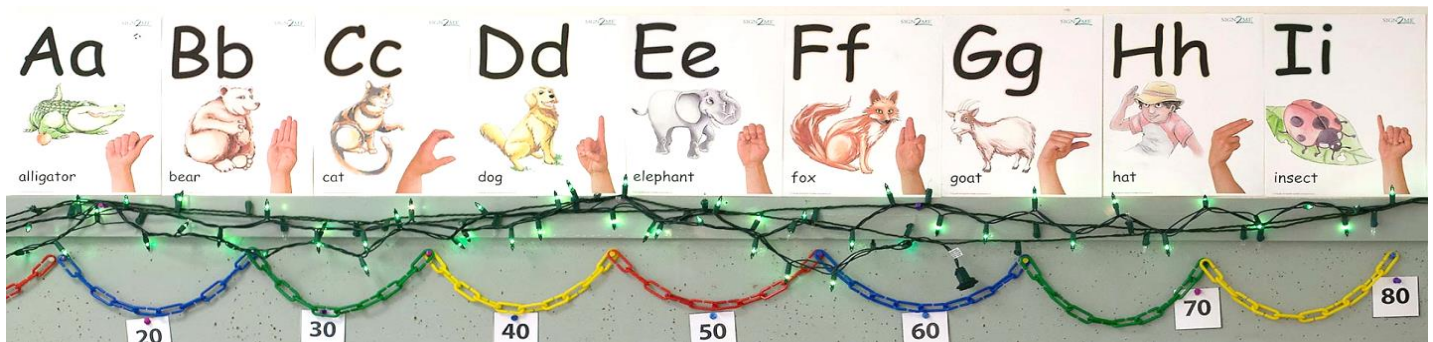
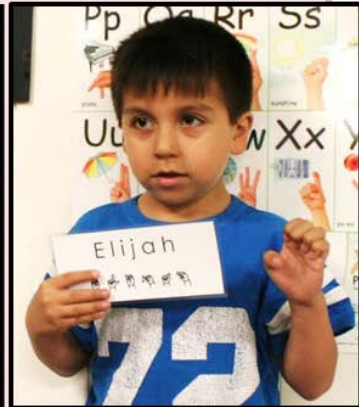


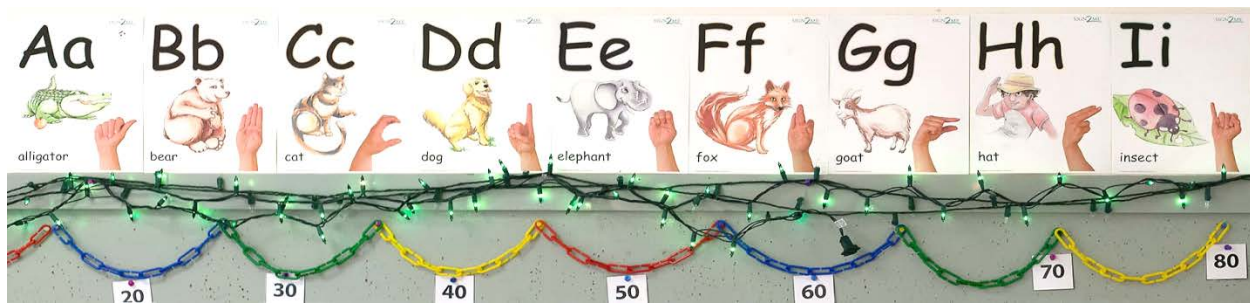
3 Levels of ABC Phonics Mastery: How to Build the Reading and Writing Brain



A proven sequence for powerful results with Nellie Edge
ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! program

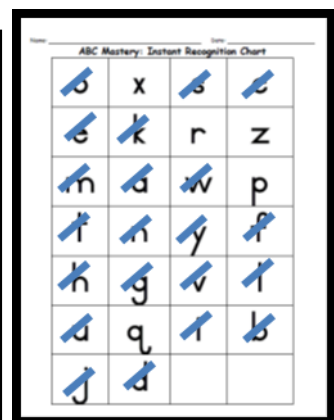
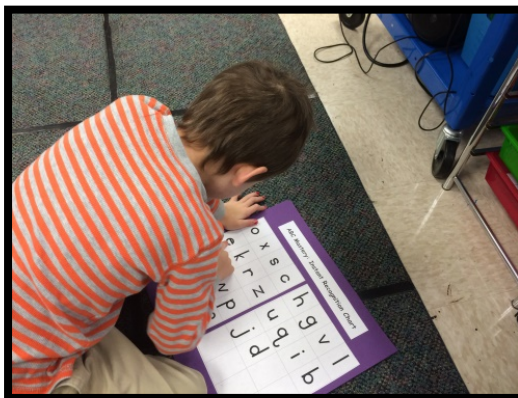
Documentation from Nellie Edge and Colleagues (2018)





A Word about ABC Phonics Mastery in Kindergarten:

This *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* program is one piece of our comprehensive writing workshop model, which has proven successful in diverse kindergartens in Salem, Oregon and across the country. All kindergarten learners thrive with a comprehensive, authentic, and multisensory *ABC Phonics* program. We recognize that in both affluent school communities and Title I schools, there are harder-to-accelerate learners who need additional support. Assessment-driven instruction identifies these higher-needs learners early for systematic, intentional remediation that builds on Reading Recovery® research and principles of visible learning. Our engaging, art-rich Response to Intervention (RTI) approach does not let kindergarten learners fall through the cracks.



Teaching and Learning Goals for 3 Levels of ABC Phonics Mastery

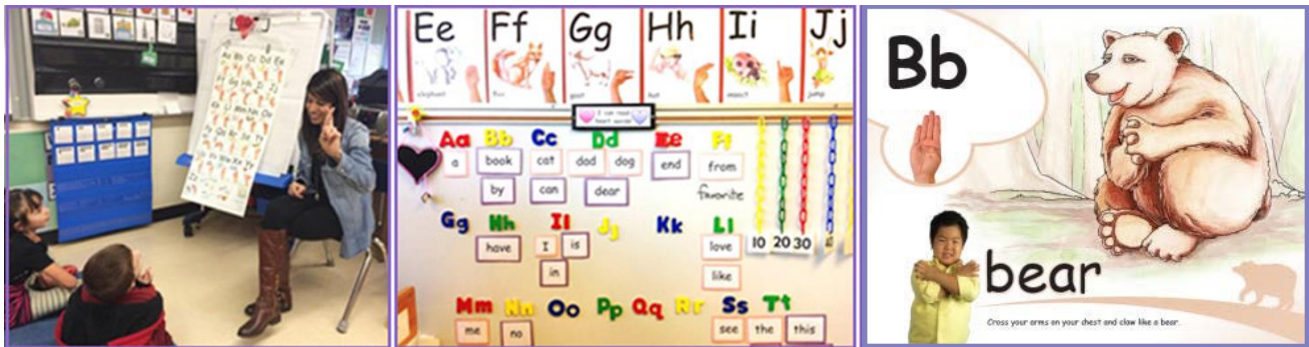
Systematic Instruction • Visual Learning • Parents as Partners

1. **Memorize, recite, and perform *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* with accurate fingerspelling.** Build auditory memory, sound/symbol relationship, and kinesthetic memory hooks. Demonstrate phonemic awareness: Rhyming words, identifying beginning/ending sounds, segmenting, blending, and syllabication.
2. **Instant recall of both letters and sounds WITHOUT key phonics visuals.** Systematic, multisensory instruction challenges children to build speed and accuracy encoding and decoding CVC words.
3. **A-Z fluency quick writes: Proficiency writing lower case letters within 60 seconds** using good handwriting. Repetition builds the reading and writing brain!



A Proven Sequence for Powerful Results with Nellie Edge ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! Program

1. Discover the easiest, most delightful way to teach ABC Phonics skills. Don't wait until kindergarten! First introduce the [ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!](#) song with [FREE instructional video clips](#) and support materials to Head Start teachers, families of preschool, and homeschooling parents in the school community. Encourage a culture of family literacy so all children can build a strong ABC Phonics foundation for success of writing and reading fluency in kindergarten.



2. During spring kindergarten registration, give families the [ABC Phonics Family Reference Chart](#) and [accompanying letter](#) explaining the program. Do a short ABC Phonics program presentation on the actual spring kindergarten orientation day for new kindergarten families (See video clip on "[Multisensory and Phonics Overview](#)" and see document: [Why We Use Sign Language and Fingerspelling](#)) Help parents understand how ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! builds literacy success for kindergartners with a strong "parents as partners" component. Check out "[Parents as Partners](#)" [Resources](#). Many children master the ABC Phonics song and fingerspelling before kindergarten begins.



3. As part of Back-to-School Night, use a family scavenger hunt to involve families in teaching the fingerspelling of their child's name. (See blog: [How to Have the Best Back-to-School Night Ever.](#)) Give each family a magnetically backed and laminated Family ABC Chart as another reminder to practice at home. (This is a small investment in time and resources that will multiply the teacher's effectiveness.) Families use the chart as refrigerator art and are also reminded to use magnetic letters.



4. Teachers: On the [ABC Phonics page](#), find examples of beautiful and organized kindergarten learning environments with consistent ABC visual props throughout the room from the ABC Phonics program: ABC Wall Cards, a vertical poster near the instructional area, miniature charts, books in the library for children to study, and dictionary pages in writing folders, which children learn how to use. (Download FREE resources at [www.NellieEdge.com/ABC Phonics page](http://www.NellieEdge.com/ABCPhonicspage))



5. Introduce 4 letters and sounds the first day of school and add 4 new letters every 3 to 4 days. Take the [20 days to 26 Letters and Sounds Challenge](#) weaving short, targeted fingerspelling minilessons in throughout the day. (Many children will already know handshapes

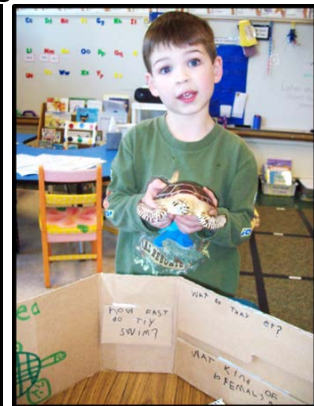
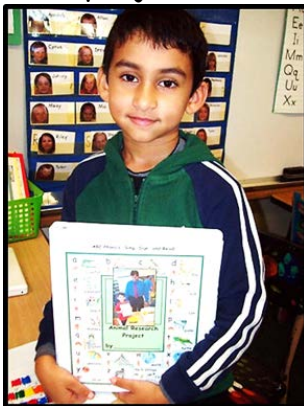
and simply need to work on fingerspelling with greater precision.) Keep learning joyful with high expectations! Some teachers use the slower version of the *ABC Phonics* instructional DVD to ensure more accurate American Sign Language (ASL) lessons.



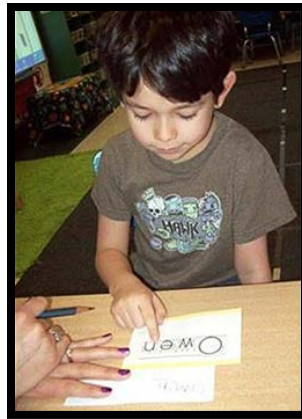
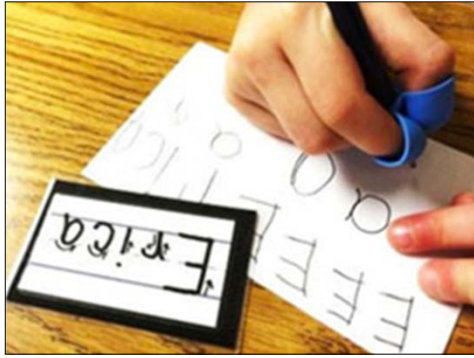
6. **Check for fingerspelling accuracy every day** the first month of school by using those short segments of time as children are lining up for recess or lunch. **Remind children to practice at home!** *I bet you practiced at home last night! Who thinks they are ready to perform the entire song?* Accurate fingerspelling is a vital link to ABC Phonics memory for harder-to-accelerate students and English learners. The kinesthetic act of fingerspelling with accuracy will help the learners connect with the visual and phonetic components of language. Multisensory learning takes advantage of how the brain learns best!



7. **Differentiate learning for early readers and writers.** Challenge all children to soar! Provide a comprehensive, early writing program that includes *ABC Phonics Animal Research Notebook* projects. All children deserve a cognitively-challenging curriculum!



8. **Provide name-writing lessons with the "Name Ticket" strategy from the beginning of the school year.** Help children set personal goals beginning with learning to fingerspell, name, and write the letters of their name. Celebrate when a less experienced or struggling learner can instantly name and fingerspell every letter in his or her name. *Wow! You worked hard and focused and now you instantly know every letter in your name. You must feel proud of your new learning. What's your next learning goal? Can you already write the word 'love'?*



9. **Assess students for letter and sound knowledge the beginning of the year and after 10 days of instruction.** Determine which children may need additional support with auditory, visual, or kinesthetic memory. Aim for mastery of letters, sounds, and fingerspelling within 20-30 days. Remind parents to practice fingerspelling at home every night with the ABC Phonics video. Send home ABC Flashcards and ABC game directions. (Free Download: [ABC Phonics Flashcards Lower Case](#) and [ABC Phonics Flashcards Upper Case](#)). Coordinate with the Response to Intervention (RTI) team, or use volunteers, IAs, or 5th grade reading buddies (during their recess time) for additional support.



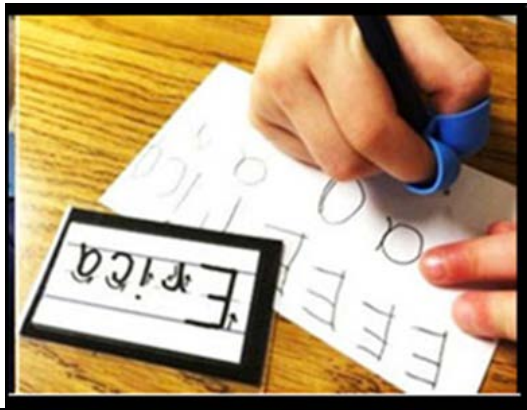
10. **Intervention teams provide the same model of integrated ABC Phonics instruction**, often slower, more intensive, and individualized, or in small groups with more repetition. Children use multisensory tools: salt trays to write words, magnetic letters, flash cards, white erase boards, the *ABC Phonics* book, and the slow teaching tutorial version on the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* DVD. They also use magnetically backed letter and sign language images on cookie sheets, [ABC playdough mats](#), and sandpaper letters. **The first ABC goal for ALL children** is to write and recognize the letters within their first name; then "love" and a b c d; and the remaining 15 high-frequency sight words (kindergartners call them pink "heart words"). Children practice their *ABC Phonics* song daily with fingerspelling. They also practice writing and naming letters, and learning to write real words with good handwriting.



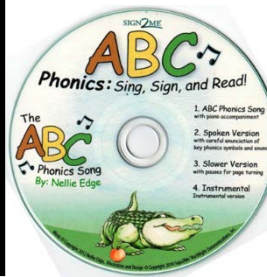
11. This accelerated literacy model embraces a growth mindset; learning is visible and multisensory and instruction is assessment driven. Feedback reinforces persistence and hard work towards a goal. More proficient writers are allowed to soar while all learners have the scaffolding for success. We want children to delight in learning new skills!
- Look at all those letters you already know! When you work hard, you can learn anything!*
 - Wow! How did you learn all the letters in your name?*
 - Your "a" handshape looks just like the one in our book and chart: you sure are focusing.*



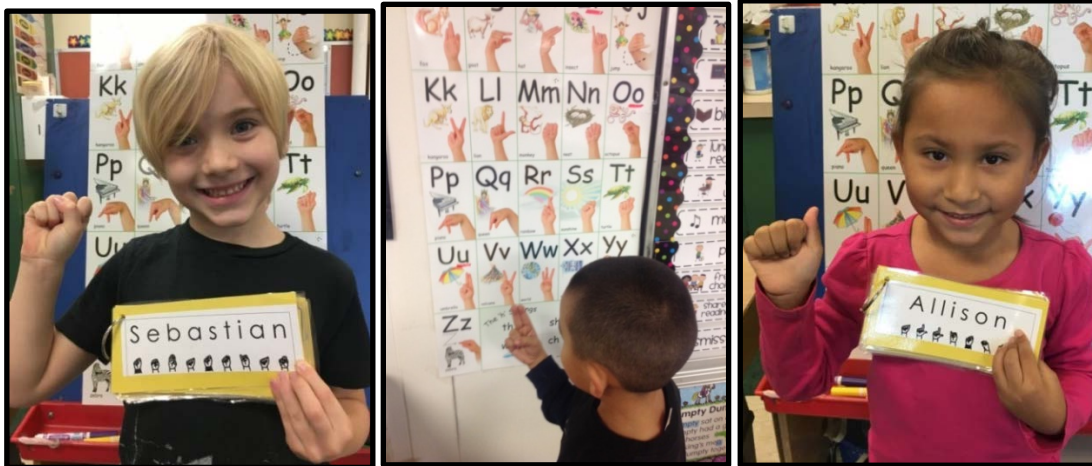
12. Every child in kindergarten is expected to fingerspell and say the letters of his or her name daily until mastery is demonstrated. This happens as a part of their morning name-writing practice. (We immerse children in print that has meaning to them and continue presenting information in an engaging, integrated, multisensory format.) As much as possible, we personalize and individualize instruction to meet the needs of ALL learners.



13. Provide the song from the *ABC Phonics* CD and accompanying reference chart at the listening center for children who need more auditory support in remembering the sequence of the song. Dance the lyrics with cross-the-body pattern movements for brain breaks! (See "Workout to the Letter Sounds" on Jack Hartmann's CD, *Hip-Hop AlphaBop2*.)



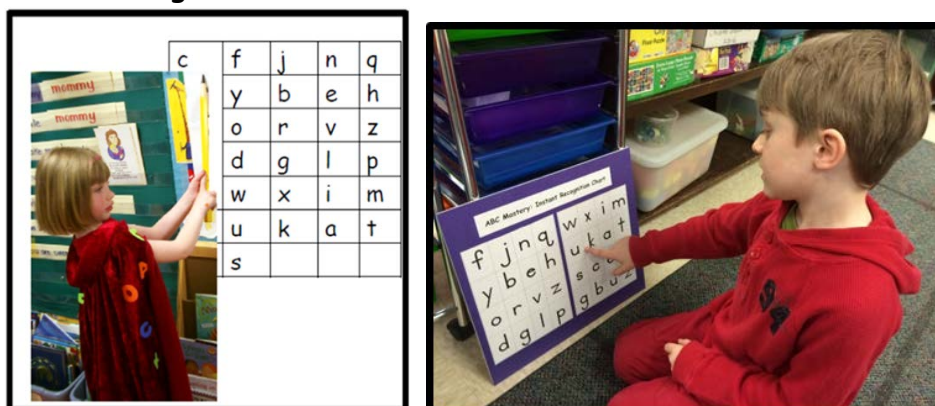
14. Have a vertical *ABC Phonics* chart available in the instructional area; teach children to use it, and encourage them to evaluate and self-correct their fingerspelling. Once they know the *ABC Phonics* song, challenge children to also perform the traditional ABC song with fingerspelling! We are building automaticity with the ABC sequence and fingerspelling. This is powerful support for our English learners and special needs students: it builds all children's finger dexterity and visual/kinesthetic memory.



15. Use the Helper-of-the-Day song/fingerspelling strategy ([See Katie Nelson's Authentic Writing video clip on Salem-Keizer's website](#)) to teach students the letter names and fingerspelling of their classmates' names. This empowering musical lesson builds community, phonemic awareness, phonics skills, and fingerspelling simultaneously. It is one of a series of joyful literacy lessons for optimal and personalized learning!



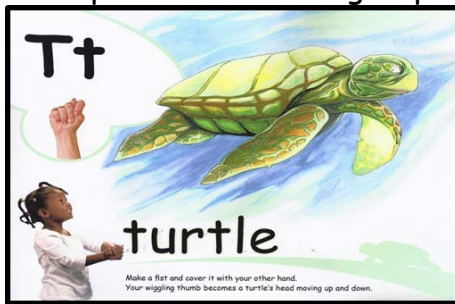
16. Begin transitioning to rapid letter recognition without key phonics visuals. Play Master of the Alphabet games with both large and small groups as transitions to building quick visual recall of letters and sounds without visual supports. Ask students to verbalize and print letters a through d on the back of their Name Tickets.





o	x	s	c
e	k	r	z
m	a	w	p
t	n	y	f
h	g	v	l
u	q	i	b
j	d		

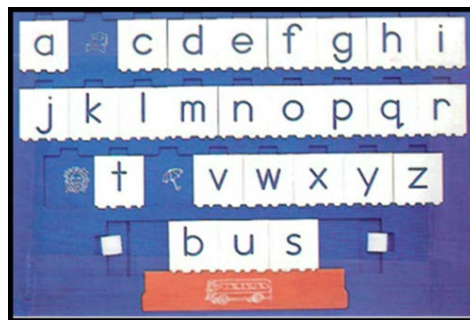
17. The *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* book has both directional language and scientific vocabulary. Read exact sign language description from several pages a day while practicing fingerspelling because "saying and doing" greatly increases retention of new information. Expect accurate fingerspelling!



Make a fist and cover it with your other hand.

Your wiggling thumb becomes a turtle's head moving up and down.

18. Keep phonics instruction with CVC words meaningful and multisensory. As a part of a comprehensive writing workshop model, use white boards to provide whole group practice encoding CVC words to print and practicing digraphs, word families, and word endings. Continue to monitor students needing additional support with the intervention team. Keep interventions consistent with the best kindergarten literacy practices as seen on the website pages: [Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting](#), [Authentic Sight Word Work](#), and [the 10 High-Impact Strategies of a Comprehensive Writing Workshop Model](#).



19. **Celebrate student achievement:** Post photos in an *ABC Phonics Experts* book or a class-made *ABC Phonics* book. Invite children to play Master of the Alphabet games with cape and wands or present puppet shows with ABC Phonics puppets during literacy play time. Find practice opportunities for less-proficient students: During choice time, give them focused attention - even if the child's pace requires repetitive learning of the letters within one new word over an extended time!



20. Weave this multisensory approach to *ABC Phonics* skills into your kindergarten-friendly handwriting and authentic sight word to provide optimal learning. You will expand your ABC Phonics instructional time when students sing, fingerspell, name, and write letters. Repetition. Repetition. Repetition. Authentic ABC Phonics word work throughout the day!



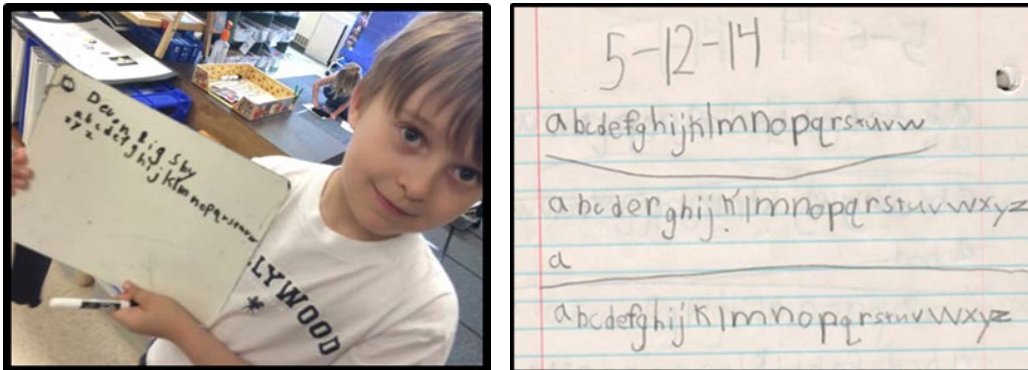
21. Read "Teach Letter Formations with Movement and Consistent Language" and study [the Handwriting Page](#) to understand how to verbalize directional cues when practicing handwriting motions for letters within real words (e.g. *down, up and around* for the letter "b"). Expect all children to verbalize these cues. "Saying and doing" greatly increases retention of new information and builds vocabulary for English learners.



22. **Expect mastery early in the year!** Identify children needing additional support. Work with your RTI team and the parents to support this systematic and meaningful approach to teaching and learning. Honor children as *ABC Phonics Fingerspelling Experts* with a crown, a badge, or their name and photo in a class book.



23. **During the last two months of the school year, provide ABC brain exercises for fluency** each morning using paper or white boards. Be sensitive to special needs students who still may need to see an actual a-z model. Students who have experienced our *ABC Phonics* teaching progression will be able to retrieve and write all 26 lowercase letters from memory in 40 seconds. Research from the University of Washington (and our own action-research) shows this skill leads to highly-proficient first grade writers and readers. (These strategies are documented in [Nellie Edge Online Seminar #1](#), "Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion: building the Writing and Reading Brain.")



Prevent reading failure in kindergarten: Provide the intensive, systematic, multisensory—and joyful—instruction that all children deserve.



How Does the Nellie Edge Approach to ABC Phonics Mastery Fit into a Comprehensive Writing Workshop Model?

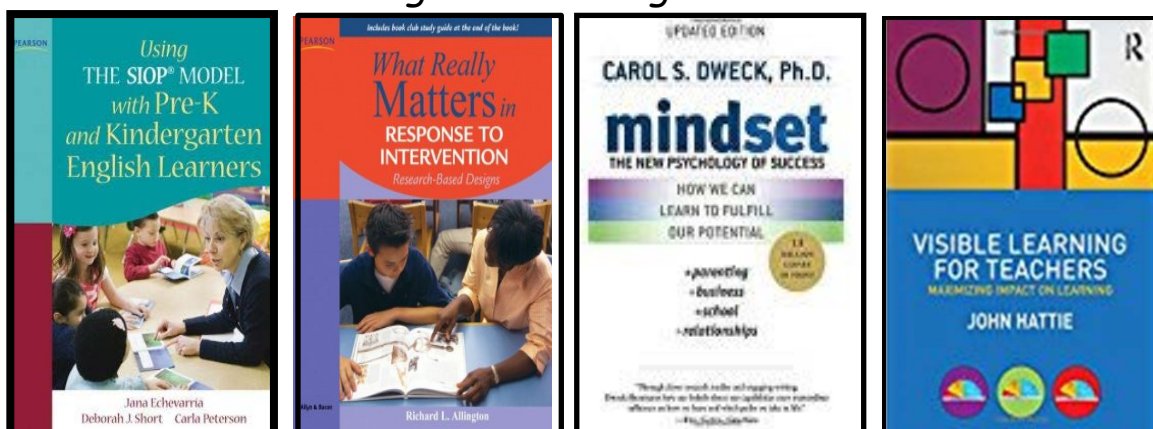
Peruse the writing pages at www.nellieedge.com for glimpses of kindergarten writing, from authentic word work to published books at the end of the school year.



Related ABC Phonics and Phonemic Awareness Resources for study:

- [ABC Phonics](#) tab at [NellieEdge.com](#).
- See "Parents as Partners in Kindergarten Success" resources on TpT.
- Study [Nellie Edge Online Seminar #1](#) Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion.
Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2 Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting
Nellie Edge Online Seminar #3 Authentic Sight Word Work
- How to Make Name/Fingerspelling Cards

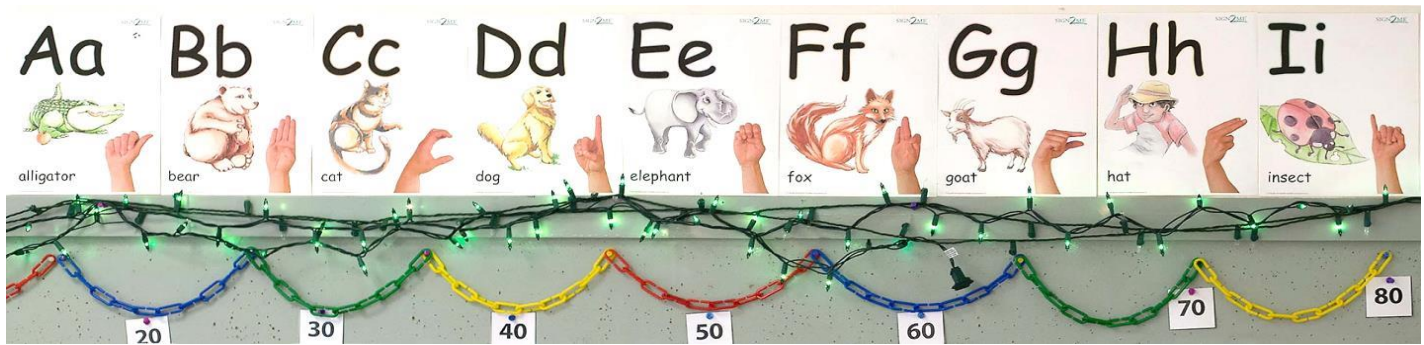
The best financial investment that schools can make is great kindergarten writing instruction.



Excellent first teaching prevents reading failure.

A special thank you to master Oregon kindergarten teachers and accomplished teachers from across the country who helped develop and pilot the original ABC Phonics program and who worked with us to polish the final publication of the ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! program: Kathie Bridges, Katie Nelson, Jaime Corliss, Laura Flocker, Jennifer Foster, Celeste Starr, Shanda Lung, Susie Haas, Sally Rudnick, Diane Larson, Julie Lay, Joanie Cutler, Susan Handzel, Becky Leber, Kathy Magoun, and Mitzi Shirk.

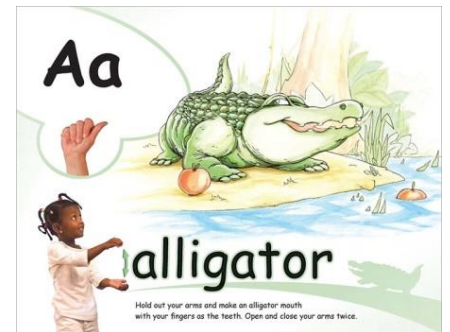
ABC Phonics Family Reference Chart



Dear Parents,

This **ABC Phonics** chart was designed to work together with the **ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!** program, which we use in kindergarten. You will be amazed how quickly your child will learn to recognize and connect letters, fingerspelling, phonics, and sign language when they are all linked together through this engaging **ABC Phonics** song.

1. Practice the **ABC Phonics** song with your child using the **FREE ASL video tutorials** at <http://nellieedge.com/abc-phonics-sing-sign-read/>. This webpage explains how the program works.
2. Help your child learn letters and sounds every day at home.
3. Keep the daily practice playful. Encourage your child to quickly and accurately **fingerspell and name** each letter and sound.
4. Compare fingerspelling positions to the American Sign Language (ASL) on the video tutorials.



Remember: When first learning these essential skills, your child needs to practice each letter and sound consistently using the same **ABC phonics** symbols, both at home and at school.

Take advantage of how your child's brain learns best! Daily repetition with both singing and signing accelerates learning.

Idea: Once your child has learned the **first eight letters** of the song, invite the child to perform it for any appreciative audience. Soon your child will be performing the whole song and become an **ABC Phonics** Expert!

Thank you for supporting your child's success in kindergarten. You are helping build your kindergartner's reading and writing brain! We hope you create many joyful family memories as you sing, sign, and read together.

With appreciation,

The Kindergarten Team

Post the attached chart on the refrigerator or in your child's bedroom. Review it daily until your child knows the entire song (with fingerspelling) by heart.