

I.P.A. Home Reading Program

Infant through Preschool



Alphabet Flashcards

Upper and Lower-Case Letters

Alphabet Flashcards

The Alphabet Song

Sing the Alphabet Song often and recite the alphabet soon after the baby is born. Singing the ABC Song will key the child's interest in the alphabet and the child will want to see the flashcards. In addition alphabetical order will be learned.

Letter Recognition

Learning to recognize the letters by name is the next step. Alphabet flashcards are used for this purpose.

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness (being able to hear the *sounds* the letters make) comes easily when the child knows the names of the letters because the names of most of the letters contain the sounds the letters make. Singing and reciting the alphabet is a simple way for parents to convey sounds of speech to the newborn.

Some say you should teach phonograms first and the names of the letters should come much later. We disagree since babies can so easily be taught the alphabet when parents sing and recite the Alphabet for their child. Why make the child wait until it becomes more difficult? And why begin with the complex rather than the simple?

Learning in the Womb

Parents can sing to the baby and recite the alphabet as soon as they know mom is pregnant.

Description of Alphabet Flashcards

Upper-case letters (capitals) are shown on one side of the flashcards. Lower-case letters (small letters) are shown on the other side making 26 double-sided flashcards.

How to Assemble the Flashcards

Print flashcards on index paper (card stock) or use card stock or poster board for backing if you print on standard weight paper. (Slip poster board in-between upper and lower-case letters.) Match the lower-case letters to the upper-case letters, back to back, and slip them into a loose-leaf page protector so that one side of the flashcard shows the upper-case letters and the other side shows the lower-case letters.

Pointers

- Practice your presentation in front of a mirror until you are comfortable handling flashcards. Do this before presenting them to the child.
- Show flashcards when both you and the baby are feeling well and are in a good mood. Otherwise, wait for a better time.
- Good lighting is essential.
- Eliminate noise and distractions before giving a presentation.
- Gain the child's consent to show flashcards. (Pick a time when he's not doing something he enjoys and doesn't mind being interrupted.)
- Flashcards should be shown in alphabetical order the first few times they are presented.

Then you may mix-up the order and show them randomly.

Presenting Flashcards

- Take the first 10 flashcards in alphabetical order, holding them in one hand with the lower-case letters facing you. (In this way you will be showing the upper-case letters first.) Capital letters are shown first because they are larger and a bit easier for the infant to see.
- Tell the child that you have the letters of the alphabet and you will be presenting upper-case letters. Next, do the same with lower-case letters. Each time before presenting the alphabet you will say whether letters are upper or lower-case (or both).
- Hold the flashcards steady, at the child's level, and at a comfortable distance where he can see clearly without straining (about 18" for an infant).
- Take the flashcards from behind and bring them up to the front, one at a time, saying the name of each letter as the child sees the flashcard. (Or you may want to sit the child next to you on the couch and put the flashcards on your lap and hold up the top flashcard for the child to see. Some prefer to put flashcards in a loose-leaf binder and flip them over like a flip chart.)
- Presentations should be done quickly and smoothly. Ten seconds is ideal for 10 flashcards. (Some children may want to see the entire alphabet. If the child is attentive, show from A to Z.)
- Repeat the process until the entire alphabet has been shown.
- For variation and reinforcement present upper and lower-case letters together in the same presentation. Show one side of the flashcard and say, "upper-case "A". Then quickly turn around the flashcard to the other side and say, "lower-case "a".

- After showing the alphabet inform the child that the letters of the alphabet make two categories—consonants and vowels. Separate the vowels and consonants. Inform the child that you will first show the vowels and then the consonants.
- When you have shown both upper and lower-case letters a few times and have presented vowels and consonants, show *Beginning Phonograms*. Review letters from time-to-time and keep changing their order, as well as reciting the alphabet so that alphabetical order will be mastered.s Continue to move along quickly in the program and provide new content to hold the child’s interest.

Maintaining Interest

Keep in mind that the rule is to stop before the child loses interest, so the child will be eager to see the flashcards next time you show them. If it works better for you or the child to show fewer flashcards (or more) show the number that works best.

We hope you and your child enjoy this reading program. The gift of reading is one of the greatest gifts you can give your child. Early readers have all of the advantage in life, and it is never too soon (or too late) to begin to learn to read.

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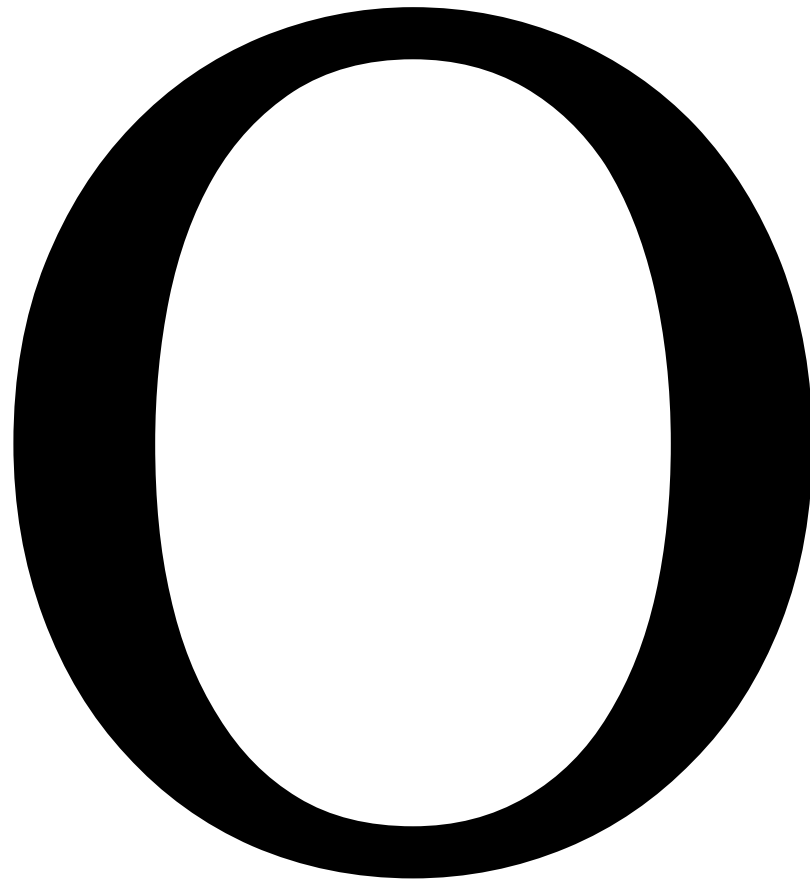
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