

for educators & learners: introduction to

# ALPHABET ANSWERS

## EVERYTHING to Know (Now) about Teaching & Learning the Letters of the Alphabet

Language Learning Levels & Skills = Pre-Literacy to Beginning Reading & Writing;  
High Beginning to Intermediate Spelling & Vocabulary

The letters of every alphabet are symbols. In most alphabets of the world, letter-symbols or characters represent sounds of the language. Recognizing and knowing how to make use of these symbols are the first steps in literacy—basic reading and writing of the language.

Everyone learning and/or using English needs to become familiar with and be able to use the 26 letters of the alphabet—not only children getting ready to read but also adult new readers, learners of English as a second or foreign language, and everyone that studies or works with printed or hand-written English. Knowledge of and experience with the names of the letters and their order in the English alphabet enable people to:

- understand oral spelling—and spell names and other words aloud
- write down letters and words from dictation (oral reading or speech)
- look up items in dictionaries or other alphabetized sources quickly
- alphabetize items for personal, educational, and real-life and work purposes
- differentiate between letters and sounds in reading, phonics, and pronunciation
- increase language ability by manipulating letters in activities, games, and puzzles
- use knowledge of how an alphabet works to facilitate language learning in general

Following are suggestions for creative language activities and games designed to teach the names of the letters and their order in the English alphabet. Most activities require little or no preparation. At proficiency levels ranging from pre-literate to intermediate, all the ideas will add variety, motivation, cooperation, and/or competition to the language-learning classroom, tutoring situation, learning group, and/or individual study.

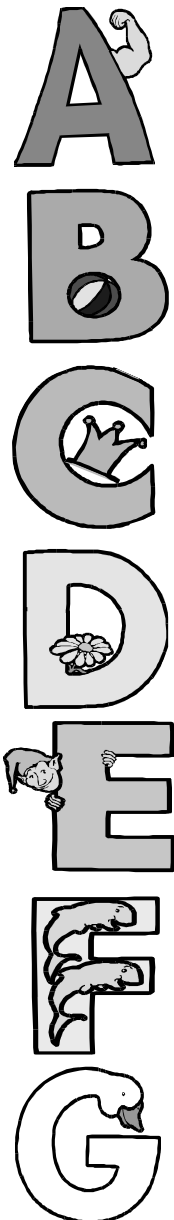
As we all organize, share, and improve upon the legacy of effective language learning and teaching, the differences between what serves teachers and what benefits students tend to disappear. Although the wording of the instructions in the following ideas is directed at educators and facilitators, learners will be able to follow many of the steps on their own as well. In fact, teaching will become learning—and learning, teaching—not only in lessons about the English alphabet but in many, many aspects of language acquisition and improvement.

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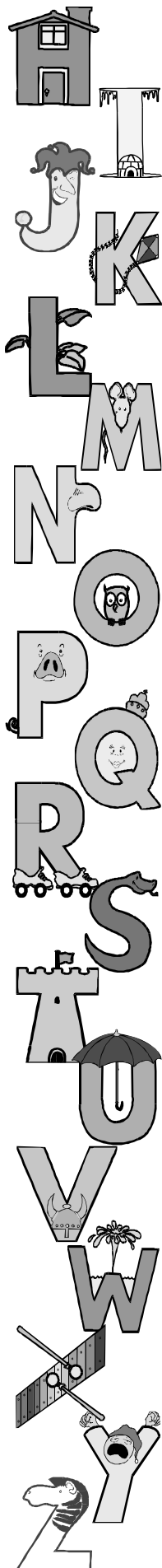
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