



Using songs: a lesson plan for 'The Alphabet'

Lesson overview

Your students will love this charming and catchy alphabet song. It will become a welcome addition to your songs bank, especially for teachers who have used more traditional versions over the years.

This lesson explores some fun ways of making connections between the letters and sounds of the alphabet that will also help students to pronounce the names of the letters correctly.

Target language

The names of the letters of the alphabet and their correct pronunciation

Materials

- ✓ A set of alphabet cards large enough for the students to see.
- ✓ Sets of smaller versions of the alphabet cards for each team of 2–6 students. These are to be used in the game and can be smaller as they do not need to be seen from a distance.
- ✓ The song 'The Alphabet'
- ✓ 'The Alphabet' song sheet

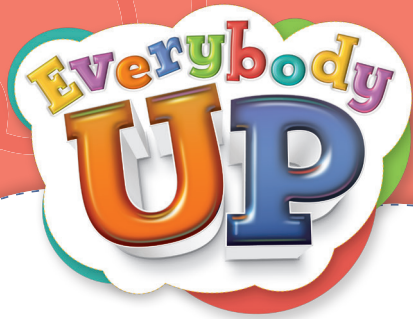
Stages

A. Warm up

Fix the alphabet cards to the walls and furniture around the classroom including in some slightly hidden places that will be fun for students to spot. Play the song 'The Alphabet' in the background as students arrive for class. Greet the class and then ask individual students to point to the cards they can see. It is best for them to sit down while they do this to avoid accidents! As the students point out the cards, collect them and bring them to the board, saying the letter of the alphabet and the item on the card as follows: ('A' (letter name) 'A' (sound) 'Apple'. Repeat and say together.) Place the cards on the board in the correct order.

B. Vocabulary presentation

From the warm-up activity, you have the whole alphabet on the board. Go through the letters one by one, saying the letters and the sounds as in the warm-up activity. Say the letters, sounds and words clearly so that students can hear the correct pronunciation. Now go through the cards again, turning some of the cards over and fixing them so that the letters and pictures can't be seen. Then ask students to select and say what is on the hidden cards. Repeat with different cards.



C. Practice activity

- i) Show the students about 8 of the cards, saying and repeating together the names of the letters, first sounds, and words. As they say the sounds, the students can draw the shapes of the letters (either upper or lower case or both) with their fingers on their desks. Some suggested letters: Aa, Bb, Ee, Ff, Gg, Ii, Jj, Qq, Rr, Zz.
- ii) Select 8 different cards, saying and repeating together while students make the shapes of the letters with their hands. Some suggested letters: Cc, Dd, Kk, Mm, Oo, Uu, Ww, Xx
- iii) Select the last 10 cards and mime gestures for the items on the cards. Easy ones to do are Aa apple, Cc cat, Hh hat, Ll lion, Nn nose, Pp pencil, Ss sun, Tt teacher (point to yourself!), Vv violin, Yy yo-yo.

D. Song

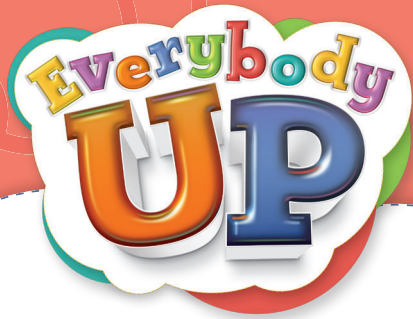
Teach each student the first letter of their own name. Sing 'The Alphabet' together with all the cards on the board where the students can see them. When the students hear their letter the first time, they stand up. When they hear it the next time they sit down, and so on until the end of the song. Repeat – this time start with all the students standing up and do the activity in reverse.

E. Activity

- i) Give each student an alphabet picture card which they hold to their chests so others can see their card.
- ii) If you have space, make a big circle.
- iii) Play or sing the song again.
- iv) When students hear their letter they move two steps into the circle. When they hear their letter again they move out again, expanding the circle.

F. Game

- i) Divide the class into teams. Give each team a shuffled set of smaller alphabet cards.
- ii) Students deal out the cards as evenly as possible
- iii) Explain to the students that this is a race to put all their cards in the correct order, either in a row along the floor, on desks or in a circle depending on the layout of your classroom. For groups with less available space, they can just sort the cards back into the correct order in a pack. This will depend on your available space and will not affect the fun of the game.
- iv) Before you start the game, review the alphabet using the larger cards on the board. Depending on how well the students know the alphabet, these can be left on the board for reference during the game.



- v) When you start the race (*Go!, Ready, set, go!, or Start!!*) the students put their cards in the correct order. Play 'The Alphabet' song as they work. Help any team that is falling behind.
- vi) When all the teams have finished, read through the alphabet again.

G. Activity

- i) Students make pairs and stand with one student facing the other's back.
- ii) Students take it in turns to trace letters with their fingers on each other's backs. They call out the letters when they recognize what is being written on them.
- iii) Groups that are more familiar with the alphabet can do a more advanced version where one student writes a letter and the other student calls out a word that starts with that letter.

H. Follow-up at home

Ask students to make an alphabet poster. They must find and put on their poster cut-out or drawn pictures of items to show the whole alphabet. An alternative is to give each student their own letter (this could be the first letter of their name perhaps) and ask them to collect pictures of as many items as they can beginning with that letter.