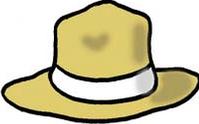


We are learning about letter shapes and sounds using key picture-words and actions.

capital letters	lower case letters	sounds and key pictures	see the letters, say the sounds and do the actions
A	a	/a/ 	See the letter 'a' and say /a/. Mime the eating of an apple held in your hand. Say /a/ as your mouth opens wide to take a bite of the apple. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
B	b	/b/ 	See the letter 'b' and say /b/. Pretend to swing a bat as you hit an imaginary ball. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
C	c	/k/ 	See the letter 'c' and say /k/. With your left hand, pretend to stroke the head of the cat from ear to chin. This can make a 'c' letter shape in the air. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
D	d	/d/ 	See the letter 'd' and say /d/. Pretend to dig a hole with a spade. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
E	e	/e/ 	See the letter 'e' and say /e/. Pretend to crack an egg. Tap it once on the side of an imaginary bowl and then split the shell open to let the egg plop out. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
F	f	/f/ 	See the letter 'f' and say /f/. Pretend to hold a feather gently with your fingers. Flap the feather below your chin as if you are tickling your chin with the soft feather. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>

G	g	/g/ 	See the letter 'g' and say /g/. Choose an action with the hands to indicate a girl doing a hairstyle such as plaiting a long side plait. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
H	h	/h/ 	See the letter 'h' and say /h/. Pretend to pull on a hat firmly around your ears. Please note: This letter sound is little more than a breath. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
I	i	/i/ 	See the letter 'i' and say /i/. 'Walk' the fingers of your hand from your ankle up towards your knee as if an insect is crawling up your leg. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
J	j	/j/ 	See the letter 'j' and say /j/. Pretend to pick up a jug by its handle and pour out some juice. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
K	k	/k/ 	See the letter 'k' and say /k/. Place the palm of one hand over the top of the other hand which is in a fist shape - like a kit box with a lid. Move your top hand to represent the lid of the box being opened and say /k/. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
L	l	/l/ 	See the letter 'l' and say /l/. This sound is closer to "ul" than "luh". Pretend to climb up the rungs of the ladder using arms and legs. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
M	m	/m/ 	See the letter 'm' and say /m/. Pretend to study a map. Look as if you are deep in thought whilst saying "m". <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>

N	n	/n/ 	See the letter 'n' and say /n/. Pretend that you are holding a big ball in your hands. Throw it in the net as you say the quiet sound /n/ with the effort of the throw. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
O	o	/o/ 	See the letter 'o' and say /o/. Curve the palm of your hand as if holding an orange and use your other hand to peel the orange. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
P	p	/p/ 	See the letter 'p' and say /p/. Pretend that you are holding a frying pan in your hand and say the quiet sound /p/ as you toss a pancake up in the air. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
QU	qu	/kw/ 	See the letters 'qu' and say /kw/. Pretend to place your crown on your head and look very regal. Please note: The sound /kw/ is really two sounds /k/ + /w/ blended together. <i>Write the l.c. letter shapes in the air.</i>
R	r	/r/ 	See the letter 'r' and say /r/. Wrinkle up your nose and wriggle it whilst looking around for food. Please note: The sound /r/ is closer to "er" rather than "ruh". <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
S	s	/s/ 	See the letter 's' and say /s/. Make a slithery snake movement with your hand – like the 's' shape. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>
T	t	/t/ 	See the letter 't' and say /t/ quietly - not "tuh". Hold your arms open wide at first and then fold them to hug an imaginary teddy. <i>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</i>

<p>U</p>	<p>u</p>	<p>/u/ </p>	<p>See the letter ‘ u ’ and say /u/. Pretend that you are holding an umbrella. Hold the handle with one hand and ‘push up’ the umbrella with the other.</p> <p>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</p>
<p>V</p>	<p>v</p>	<p>/v/ </p>	<p>See the letter ‘ v ’ and say /v/. Pretend to hold a violin and draw the bow across the strings. Feel the vibrations on your bottom lip when you say the /v/ sound. Vibrations are also made when a violin is played.</p> <p>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</p>
<p>W</p>	<p>w</p>	<p>/w/ </p>	<p>See the letter ‘ w ’ and say /w/. Move your hands and arms alternately as if you are walking through a spider’s web. Please note: Try saying the sound /w/ closer to an “oo” sound than “wuh”.</p> <p>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</p>
<p>X</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>/ks/ </p>	<p>See the letter ‘ x ’ and say /ks/. Cross your straight hands to make an ‘x’ shape. Place this shape on your head to make the fox’s ears. Please note: This sound /ks/ is really two sounds /k/ + /s/ blended together.</p> <p>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</p>
<p>Y</p>	<p>y</p>	<p>/y/ </p>	<p>See the letter ‘ y ’ at the beginning of a word, and say /y/. Stretch your arms and yawn.</p> <p>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</p>
<p>Z</p>	<p>z</p>	<p>/z/ </p>	<p>See the letter ‘ z ’ and say /z/. Write a ‘z’ shape like a zebra making a zig-zag trail as it runs back and forth. Draw attention to the initial left-to-right movement which makes the top horizontal line of the letter ‘z’.</p> <p>Write the l.c. letter shape in the air.</p>
<p>Children see capital letters everywhere. They are code for the same sounds as the lower case letters. Teach the <i>sounds</i> before <i>letter names</i> so that children can say the sounds and blend them for reading words.</p>	<p>Teach children to write the lower case letters <i>before</i> capital letters. Children can learn the ‘starting points’ and ‘directionality’ for writing the letter shapes through writing in the air at first.</p>	<p>The use of slash marks /.../ helps to show which ‘sounds’ are meant, not the letter shapes. Identifying sounds as part of whole spoken words teaches awareness of sounds in speech.</p>	<p>To say a sound quickly in response to seeing the letter shape/s is an essential sub-skill for decoding words. No key picture-words and actions are necessary to learn letter shapes and sounds. Children can find it very helpful to learn through fun, age-appropriate multi-sensory activities to focus them on the core learning. Aids to memory activities are <i>just a means to an end</i> to achieve the target above.</p>