

Action Alphabet

Pillar: Active Living

Division: I

Grade Level: K-2

Core Curriculum Connections: Language Arts

I. Rationale:

In this lesson, brains and brawn combine to help students improve their vocabulary and increase their activity level in Language Arts class. Since students usually know many more words than they use in their writing, this activity is designed to help them better use their vocabulary. Students will learn what verbs are and then access verbs they already know and use them in sentences. After reviewing the definition of a verb, students will work together to brainstorm and create lists of verbs for each of the letters of the alphabet. Using some of these vocabulary words, students create pages for an Action Alphabet book that includes illustrations and sentences for each of the words. As a culmination of their learning, students will celebrate by sharing their books and collectively acting out their alphabets.

II. Activity Objectives:

Students will:

- Gain or review knowledge of parts of speech by defining what verbs are
- Access and expand their existing vocabulary by listing verbs for each letter of the alphabet
- Apply their vocabulary and knowledge of parts of speech by using verbs in sentences that they then illustrate

III. Curriculum Outcomes: Language Arts (K-2)

Specific Outcomes

2.1 Use Strategies and Cues

Use prior knowledge

Use comprehension strategies

Use textual cues

Use phonics and structural analysis

Use references

2.4 Create Original Text

Generate ideas

Structure texts

3.1 Plan and Focus

Focus attention

Determine information needs

Plan to gather information

Use a variety of sources

Access information

3.3 Organize, Record and Evaluate

<p>Organize information</p> <p>Record information</p> <p>Evaluate information</p>
<p>3.4 Share and Review</p> <p>Share ideas and information</p>
<p>4.1 Enhance and Improve</p> <p>Expand knowledge of language</p> <p>Enhance artistry</p>
<p>4.3 Present and Share</p> <p>Present information</p> <p>Enhance presentation</p> <p>Use effective oral and visual communication</p> <p>Demonstrate attentive listening and viewing</p>
<p>5.1 Respect Others and Strengthen Community</p> <p>Celebrate accomplishments and events</p>

IV. Materials:

- [Alphabet Organizer](#)
- Bookmaking materials
- Dictionaries and thesauri
- Pencils, markers, and crayons
- *Handouts included:*
 - [Alphabet Brainstorming Worksheet](#)
 - [Action ABC's: Book Cover](#)
 - [Action ABC's: Assessment Notes](#)
 - [Action ABC's: Student Assessment Rubric](#)
 - [Action ABC's: Sentence Writing Worksheet](#)

V. Procedure:

Preparation

1. Decide how you want to have students create their books. For example, students who are in kindergarten may make a class book together, with each student creating a page, while students who are in second grade might each make their own books. You might also have students work in pairs or small groups to write books. This will help you determine how many copies of the [Action ABC's: Book Cover](#) and the [Sentence Writing Worksheet](#) you need.
2. Visit and familiarize yourself with the [Alphabet Organizer](#) online tool. Decide how to best provide time for students to use it (see Session 2). This will vary from classroom to classroom depending on your technological resources. For example:
 - If you have a computer lab, reserve a block or blocks of time for students to work on their book pages.
 - If you have one or two computers in your classroom, create a schedule so students can work on the computer one at a time or in pairs.

3. Divide your class into groups of four to five students each. Make enough copies of the [Alphabet Brainstorming Worksheet](#) so that there is one for each group of students.
4. Gather a supply of pencils, markers, and crayons for writing and illustrating the books. Determine how you would like to bind the book pages together and gather these supplies as well.
5. Prior to Session 1, write the alphabet on the board, leaving enough space to write a few words next to each letter.
6. Depending on the age and ability level of your class, you may choose to assemble dictionaries and thesauri for students to use. You should have one of each for each of the groups you created in Step 3. You can also collect some familiar texts such as magazines or books for students to use to locate verbs (see Session 1, Steps 5 and 6).

Instruction and Activities

Session 1

1. Tell students they are going to play a game where they will act out words you say. Some words you might use include:
 - Jump
 - Sit
 - Twirl
 - Sing
 - Clap
 - Yawn

Encourage students to further the game by contributing words of their own.

2. Tell students that the words that they just acted out are called *verbs*. Ask them if they know what a verb is, working toward the following definition: *A part of speech that usually describes an action.*
3. Explain that they will be creating an Action Alphabet book (either a class book, group books, or individual books, depending on what you have decided; see Preparation, Step 1). Each page of the book or books will contain a letter of the alphabet, a verb that starts with that letter, and a sentence using that verb. Let the students know that they will be learning some new vocabulary words that will assist them when they read and write.
4. Ask students to brainstorm verbs for the different letters of the alphabet. Write the words on the board next to the corresponding letters. As it becomes obvious that some letters have few or no verbs next to them, explain that some letters (like *x*, *k*, and *z*) have a smaller number of verbs beginning with them.
5. Ask students if they have any questions about the assignment. When they are ready, have them get into their groups and give each group a copy of the [Alphabet Brainstorming Worksheet](#). If you are using

dictionaries and thesauri, review how to use them, noting in particular where it indicates what part of speech each entry is.

6. Students should spend about 20 minutes creating a list of verbs for each letter of the alphabet (you may want to assign certain letters to each group to make sure all of the letters are covered). While students are working, circulate among groups answering questions and providing support as needed.
7. At the end of the small-group work, bring the class back together into a large group and add the words they came up with to the list on the board. If possible, leave the list of verbs on the board; if not, copy them onto chart paper.

Session 2:

Note: Before this session, compile the list of verbs from Session 1 into one large list. Decide how you would like to assign verbs to your students. For example:

- If students are each making their own books, you might make a copy of the entire list for each student, allowing them to choose their own verbs.
- If students are going to each make one page, you might give them each a copy of the list with the one letter they will work on highlighted.

You will also need to make one copy of the [Sentence Writing Worksheet](#) for every two verbs each student will be writing about.

1. Review the list of verbs from Session 1. Possible questions and prompts for discussion include:
 - What was one of the verbs we acted out?
 - Name a verb that you found that begins with the letter...
 - What is one new verb that you learned?
 - What is another verb for...(e.g., run, tired)?
 - What verb do you like?
 - Which verb could be used to tell something that a (e.g., lion, baby) does?
2. Tell students that they will begin working on creating the pages for the Action Alphabet book.
3. Select a verb and write it on the board next to the letter it begins with. Demonstrate to the students how they will be writing a sentence using a verb. For example: *R, Run, The boy can run very fast.* Tell them that they will be doing the same thing to create the pages for the Action Alphabet book. Repeat this procedure for another letter, but have the students offer their input. Let students know that they will be drawing illustrations, so it is important to think about how they will illustrate what they write.

Note: The complexity of the sentence you want the students to write will vary depending on their writing levels. For example, a kindergartener may write a simple sentence such as, "The dog runs fast" and a second grader may write something more complex such as, "The dog ran so fast that he looked like a black

blur." Your examples should be accordingly simple or complex.

4. Distribute the verb lists and [Sentence Writing Worksheets](#). Students should write sentences for each of the verbs they have been assigned. If students are creating entire books independently, this may take several sessions. Work with the students to review, edit, and revise their sentences as needed.
5. As they finish their sentences, have students begin using the [Alphabet Organizer](#) to create their book pages as follows:
 - a) Students will be prompted to enter their name and a title. You can have them enter *Action ABC's* or *Action Alphabet* as the title.
 - b) On the next screen, they should select *Option Three*.
 - c) They should then click on the letter that their word begins with.
 - d) Next, they will type in the word and then their sentence in the *Note* area beneath it.
 - e) If they have another word to enter, then they will click on the next letter and continue until all their words are entered.
 - f) When they have entered all their words, they will click on *Exit*.
 - g) The next screen will prompt them to print their organizer.
 - h) On the following screen they should select *Letter Pages*. Students cannot save their work; the Alphabet Organizer will only print out the letter pages that were completed during that session.
6. Assist students as needed to finish their pages using the Alphabet Organizer. This may also take several sessions. Collect and save the printed pages.

Session 3:

1. Once students have completed and printed off their pages for the alphabet book or books, they should illustrate them. Demonstrate how to do this by writing a verb and a sentence that uses that verb on the board. Then draw an illustration of the sentence for the students to see.
2. Students should illustrate their pages. Depending on how many they have to do, this may take more than one session.
3. When all the pages are completed assemble them into a class book. You can use the [Action ABC's: Book Cover](#) or have students create their own covers. Have students or groups of students work to bind their individual books.

Session 4:

Plan an action alphabet day where students share their books with the class and act out all of the verbs in their sentences. This will be a very physical way to celebrate and share their learning.

1. Have students reflect upon the lesson by sharing what they learned. Possible questions to ask include:

- What is a verb?
 - What are four different verbs you know?
 - What letters were the hardest to find verbs for?
 - What new words did you learn?
 - What page that you created did you like the best and why?
2. Take this time to emphasize to students that they have learned some new vocabulary words. They will be able to use these words in future writing, in conversations, and while they read.
 3. If your students created multiple books, allow time for them to share the books with each other.

VI. Extensions and Variations:

- Students can share the book or books with another class or with each other in class or at home with their families. Encourage students to use the book or books as reference tools when writing in the classroom.
- Use verbs from another language to create a class alphabet book.
- Have student use online dictionaries or thesauri to find verbs.
- [Enchanted Learning: Online Picture Dictionary](#)
- [Merriam-Webster Online](#)

If computer access is not available, have students create their own alphabet book pages.

VII. Assessment Ideas:

- Informally assess students' understanding of verbs and their abilities to come up with verbs beginning with the letters of the alphabet during both the whole-class and small-group work in Session 1. You may need to spend more time talking about verbs and working with students to develop a vocabulary list before moving on to the creation of the alphabet book.
- Take notes using the [Action ABC's: Assessment Notes](#) sheet. You can use this to record observations while students are working during Sessions 2 and 3.

Looking at the completed alphabet book or books, use the [Action ABC's: Student Assessment Rubric](#) to assess how well students comprehended the project, their use of verbs, and their illustrations.

VIII. Source:

- ReadWriteThink.org

ALPHABET BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET

Instructions: Write verbs that start with each letter next to that letter.

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

H _____

I _____

J _____

K _____

L _____

M _____

N _____

O _____

P _____

Q _____

R _____

S _____

T _____

U _____

V _____

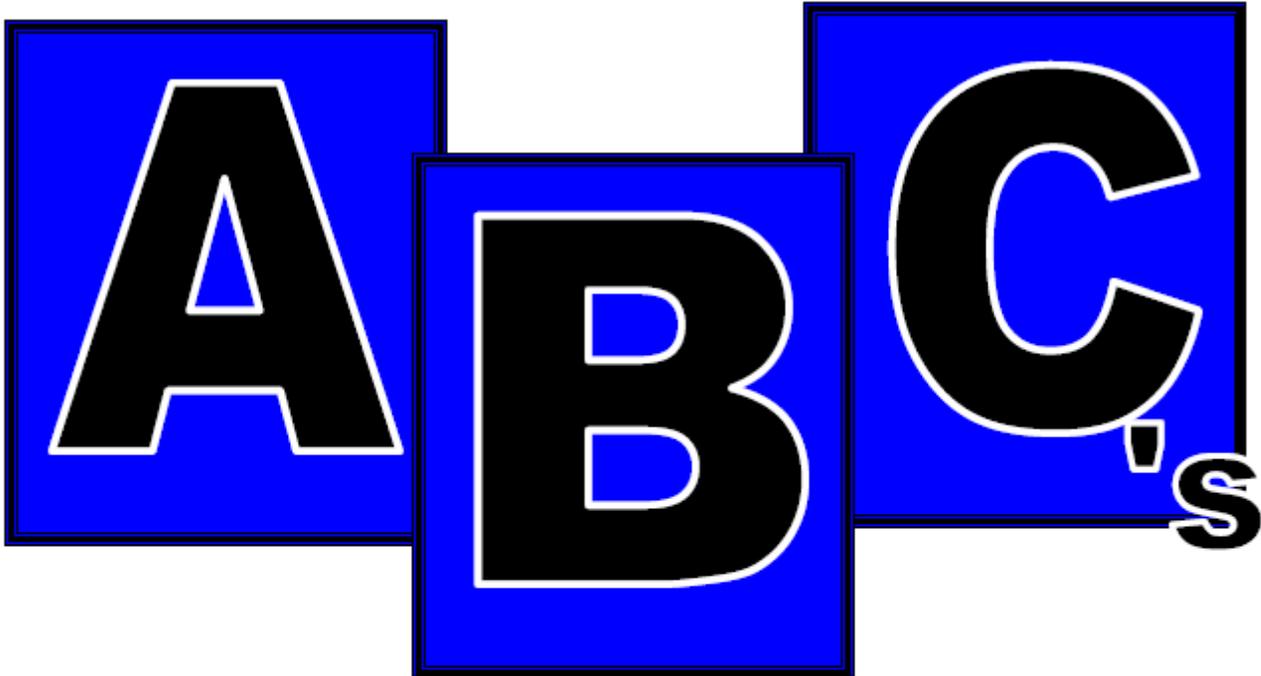
W _____

X _____

Y _____

Z _____

ACTION



An ABC Book of Verbs

Created by

ACTION ABC'S: SENTENCE WRITING WORKSHEET

Instructions: In the space next to the word *Verb*, write down the verb that will appear on the letter page of your Action Alphabet book. Next to the word *Sentence*, write a sentence using that verb.

Verb: _____

Sentence: _____

Verb: _____

Sentence: _____

Verb: _____

Sentence: _____
