

# The Sounds of the Letters



You're  
reading  
with...



the hippos!

## Getting Ready - A Broad View of the Landscape Before You Begin



*The Sounds of the Letters* expedition is one of the most important parts of the reading process. It is the critical foundation upon which many other phonics principles rest. Take your time in teaching this expedition. Make it fun. Incorporate the concepts of the sounds of the letters in everyday life. Listen carefully to the pronunciation of the sounds of the letters on track 28 of the CD, provided in your backpack. These pronunciations will not only help your reader learn these sounds, but will eventually help him or her to spell words, as well. It is also important to point out that, although we have spelled out a pronunciation for each letter in this folder, the best way to say the beginning sounds is demonstrated on the Audio Guide. Listen to the sounds demonstrated on track 28, before embarking on your journey. After listening to the lesson on track 28, listen to the song entitled, *The Sounds of the Letters*, on track 3.

Recommendations for teaching this expedition are outlined below and on the following pages.

- Steps 1 and 2) Listen to the lesson on track 28 and to *The Sounds of the Letters* song on track 3 of the CD with your reader. The beginning sounds of all of the letters are demonstrated for you. Learn to sing along with the song and say the sounds along with the Audio Guide. A list of these sounds is provided for you in this folder. Notice that the "uh" sound should NOT be emphasized when saying the sounds of many of the consonants.
- Steps 3 and 4) Use the flash cards of the lower case letters, found in Flash Card Set 2 (you will want to explain that the upper case letters say the same thing as their lower case counterparts). First, hold each letter up, *in sequence*, and ask, "What does the (name of letter) say?" Your reader should give the appropriate response, after you have demonstrated it first. Try and master six letters at a time. After all of the letters have been mastered in groups of 6, shuffle all of the cards and repeat the exercise with all of the letters *in random order*. Take your time. Don't try to learn all of the letters and their sounds in a few days. This is the most important concept you will teach in the reading process.
- Step 5) Go on a treasure hunt! Look all around the house (or the classroom) together. Point to everyday objects and toys. Decipher the beginning sounds of the items together. (These should be words that do not yet include exceptions to the rules, such as "giraffe" and "celery" which each use the "soft" sounds of "g" and "c", which come later in the program.) Do not use words that include consonant blends in their beginning sounds such as "shoe" or "chease".

People often hunt hippos for their teeth. Their teeth are made of ivory, a valuable and prized material.



Below are some common objects. You may want to use these objects when practicing beginning sounds.

|            |          |         |          |         |
|------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| ball       | table    | bed     | fan      | jelly   |
| cat        | light    | bath    | gum      | kettle  |
| dog        | door     | apple   | hat      | milk    |
| television | computer | cup     | ice      | nose    |
| coat       | pan      | egg     | jam      | oatmeal |
| pencil     | soap     | vase    | yawn     | rug     |
| sofa       | water    | zipper  | ring     | toys    |
| quilt      | quarter  | railing | umbrella | yo-yo   |

As you teach, use pennies, stickers, pieces of popcorn, praise or other rewards for correct answers. Remember, keeping the phonics process fun and energized will increase the speed with which your child learns. It will also enhance his or her interest in reading. Frequent praise will encourage your reader and increase his or her confidence level.

- Step 6) "The Penny Game". Get a small jar or container and enough pennies to fill the container up to a designated line or put tape on the jar (about 1/3 of the way up is usually good). Say a letter of the alphabet, and ask your reader to name the sound it makes. For each correct answer, drop a penny in the jar and say something like, "great job!" or "super!" When the pennies reach the designated line, tell your reader that they have "won" the game!
- Step 7) Work with your safari mate on the Funsheets provided in this Reading Expedition. This collection of fun activities will strengthen your reader's knowledge of the sounds of the letters.
- Step 8) To review, use both Flash Card Sets 1 and 2. Once again, make sure your reader understands that upper case and corresponding lower case letters make the same sounds.
- Step 9) Turn to page 17 in *The Reading Place*. This section features pictures of familiar items, as well as the sounds of the letters. Your reader can try and determine the beginning sound of each object. Follow the simple instructions outlined at the top of page 18.

As you move on to new Reading Expeditions, continue to review the sounds of the letters. Before starting each of the next fifteen expeditions, sing "The Sounds of the Letters" song together and listen to the pronunciations of the beginning sounds on Audio Guide track 28. It will provide a great review and will set the tone for more fun-filled phonics experiences!

### *Taking a Closer Look - Sample Dialogue to Help Direct Your Course*

**Tour Guide:** "All 26 letters of the alphabet make special sounds. Learning the sound that each letter makes is the first step in learning how to read words. After we learn the sound of each letter, we can combine the letters and sounds to read words, and sentences, and books. We'll listen to all of the sounds of the letters together. We're also going to listen to a special song called *The Sounds of the Letters* song. We'll learn to say all of the beginning sounds together...a little at a time, of course."

**Reader:** "Do we have to learn them all today?"

**Tour Guide:** "No. As a matter of fact, were going to spend many, many days on this special expedition. It's one of the most important expeditions of all! And we'll have fun doing it, too! There are even games we can play...and you can earn pennies by knowing the correct answers!"





# The Sounds of the Letters



- The letter A says...a and aaah.
- The letter B says...buh-buh-buh.\*
- The letter C says...ck-ck-ck.
- The letter D says...duh-duh-duh.\*
- The letter E says...e and eh.
- The letter F says...fff-fff-fff.
- The letter G says...guh-guh-guh.\*
- The letter H says...hhh-hhh-hhh.
- The letter I says...i and ih.
- The letter J says...juh-juh-juh.\*
- The letter K says...ck-ck-ck.
- The letter L says...lll-lll-lll.
- M says mmm.
- N says nnn.
- O says o and ahhh.
- P says ppp.
- Q says kwuh.\*
- R says ruh-ruh-ruh.
- The letter S says...sss-sss-sss.
- The letter T says...ttt-ttt-ttt.
- The letter U says...u and uh.
- The letter V says...vvv-vvv-vvv.
- The letter W says...wuh-wuh-wuh.\*
- The letter X says...ks-ks-ks.
- The letter Y says...yuh-yuh-yuh.\*
- The letter Z says...zzz-zzz-zzz.

\*The "uh" sound is not emphasized. Use the sounds demonstrated in the Audio Guide, track 28

## Consonants without the "uh" sound

- c
- f
- h
- k
- l
- m
- n
- p
- s
- t
- v
- x
- z

## Consonants with a very abbreviated "uh" sound

- b
- d
- g
- j
- q
- r
- w
- y

## The Sounds of the Letters

- a "a" and "aaah"
- b "buh"\*
- c "ck"
- d "duh"\*
- e "e" and "eh"
- f "fff"
- g "guh"\*
- h "hhh"
- i "i" and "ih"
- j "juh"\*
- k "ck"
- l "lll"
- m "mmm"
- n "nnn"
- o "o" and "ahhh"
- p "ppp"
- q "kwuh"\*
- r "ruh"
- s "sss"
- t "ttt"
- u "u" and "uh"
- v "vvv"
- w "wuh"\*
- x "ks" (as in box)
- y "yuh"\*
- z "zzz"

### More Fun... for Friends

### Here's a fun game to play...

Once your safari mate has mastered saying the alphabet and can recognize all of the letters and their sounds, see if he or she can play the alphabet guessing game. One person gives a clue such as: "I'm the letter that sits between the 'e' and the 'g'. Who am I?" Or, "I come after 'h', and I say 'ih'. Who am I?"



## What You'll Need to Pack for the Safari



Flash Card Set 2, The Audio Guide Lesson (track 28), *The Sounds of the Letters* song (track 3) *The Reading Place* (pages 17-22).

## Results to Achieve During Your Expedition



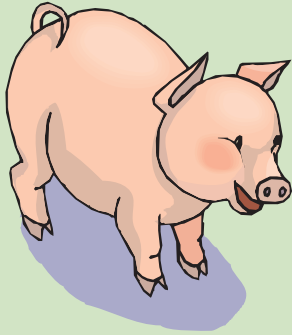
Your safari mate will be able to determine the sounds of the letters, when the letters are presented in sequence and randomly. He or she will also be able to identify beginning sounds when presented with pictures of objects that begin with those sounds.

# Jungle Journal

| Accomplished with Excellence! | Expedition Activities:                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                               | Reader listens to track 28 of the CD and says the sounds of the letters along with the Audio Guide                              |
|                               | Reader sings <i>The Sounds of the Letters</i> song                                                                              |
|                               | Reader identifies beginning sounds when the letters are presented sequentially, six letters at a time                           |
|                               | Reader identifies beginning sounds when the letters are presented in random order - knows all 26 letters and their sounds       |
|                               | Reader identifies beginning sounds in pictures on pages 17-22 of <i>The Reading Place</i> .                                     |
|                               | Reader completes Funsheets (instructions to be read by Tour Guide)                                                              |
|                               | Reader draws a star on the Safari Success Trail poster, in space number 4 (check off Jungle Journal in the backpack to advance) |
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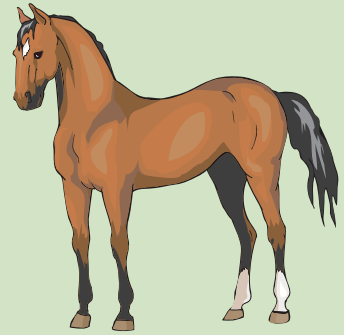
Circle the beginning sound of each animal.



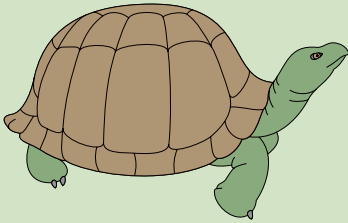
b x t p



e h f d



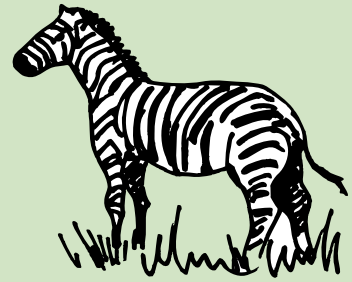
i h d b



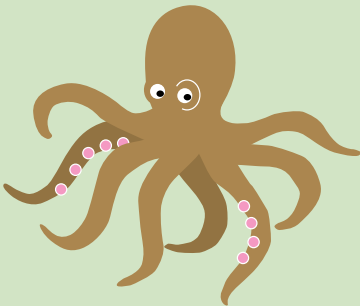
t u v w



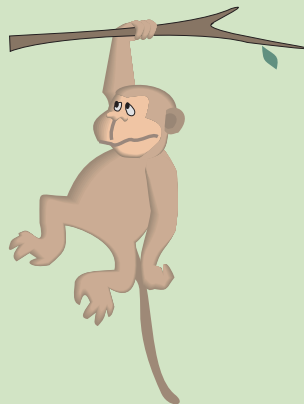
b z f m



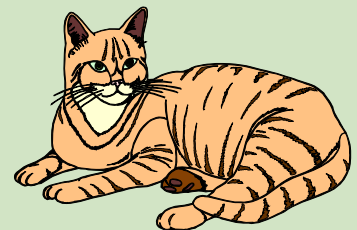
k z p n



j t o a



o b n m



p c t w



Bobby's name starts with a "B", so Bobby wants to play with toys that begin with "b". Can you circle the toys that begin with "b"? (There are five of them.) What is the first letter of *your* name?

