Stellar Home Language

Supporting early language and literacy teaching in Grade R

Teacher's Guide for a two-week cycle

Second Edition 2018

An early literacy programme by Wordworks

Ali and the paint

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 1 2019/03/04 08:57

DEAR TEACHER

Wordworks is a non-profit organisation established in 2005 to support early language and literacy development. The Stellar programme was designed by Wordworks to support Grade R teachers in their important role as teachers of language and emergent literacy. We focus on Grade R because evidence shows that strong early language and literacy skills support all later learning.

Early language and literacy development

In order to learn to read and write, children need to have opportunities to build their competence and understanding in two key areas:

- language skills (listening, speaking, vocabulary and comprehension)
- code-related skills (phonological awareness and letter–sound knowledge).

Children also need many opportunities to see how reading and writing work, and for these processes to be modelled by teachers. They need to read and enjoy books and use drawing and early writing to share their ideas.

Our programme

Stellar provides theoretical and practical ideas to help you build a language-rich classroom that supports early literacy development. The programme has been developed and revised in response to feedback from Grade R teachers and trainers. Stellar aligns with CAPS requirements.

Stellar classroom materials

This *Teacher's Guide* is one of a set of guides for the teaching of Home Language, each 'starring' a new story! Each *Teacher's Guide* contains a two-week programme of integrated activities for teaching Home Language to your Grade R class every day.

A *Teacher's Guide for parent meetings* assists you to guide parents to support language learning at home.

Stellar training

For teachers training to use the Stellar programme, there is a set of *Teacher Workbooks* that takes you through the different elements of the programme while deepening your understanding about why each element is important.

Your stories

We know that teachers are creative about using whatever is available to them. We encourage you to adapt the activities in this guide to suit your context and the resources available to you. As you become familiar with the two-week framework in the Stellar programme, you will be able to use your own story books and oral stories as a basis for teaching language and emergent literacy.

Meet Stella

You will see that there is a teacher present throughout this *Teacher's Guide*. She will keep you company on your learning journey and will often give advice based on her years of experience in the Grade R classroom. Teachers have affectionately come to call her Stella!

We hope you enjoy using this programme. You will be giving your Grade R learners the best possible gift – and we know you will enjoy learning with them!

Our best wishes,

Stella and the Wordworks Team

CONTENTS

Introduction to Stellar	4
Ali and the paint	8
Two-week planner	12
Introduction to letters and sounds activities	16
Letters and sounds activities	18
Introduction to story-based activities	26
Story-based activities	28
Introduction to rotation group activities	40
Rotation group activities	42
Resources	50

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 3 2019/03/04 08:57

Introduction to Stellar

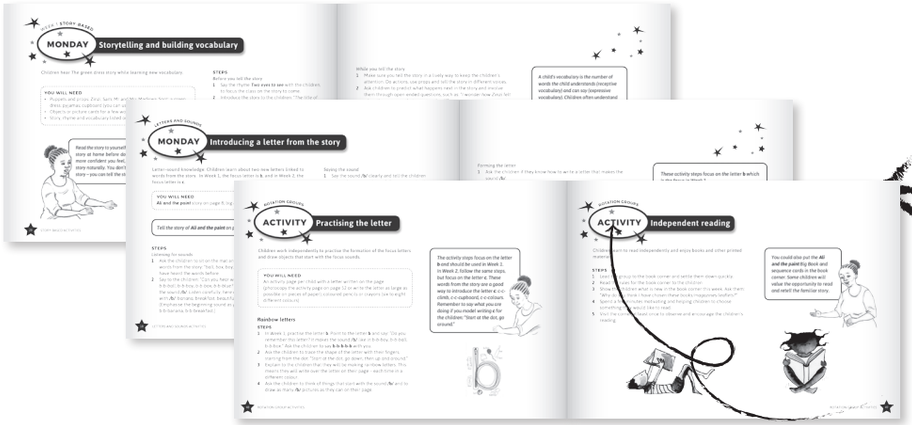
How to use this book

Two-week planner: Week 1

ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
SHOW AND TELL	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
WHOLE CLASS LETTERS AND SOUNDS ACTIVITIES	Tell the story for the first time. Introducing a letter from the story (**b**)	Forming the letter (multisensory activities)	Letter boxes	Listening for beginning and end sounds	Blending and segmenting (syllables)
WHOLE CLASS STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES	Storytelling and building vocabulary	Storytelling and singing	Storytelling and role play	Sequencing pictures	Shared writing and reading
ROTATION GROUP ACTIVITIES	**Group 1** Practising the letter (**b**) **Group 2** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided) **Group 3** Independent reading **Group 4** Letter puzzles and games **Group 5** Creative play (Art and construction)	**Group 1** Creative play (Art and construction) **Group 2** Practising the letter (**b**) **Group 3** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided) **Group 4** Independent reading **Group 5** Letter puzzles and games	**Group 1** Letter puzzles and games **Group 2** Creative play (Art and construction) **Group 3** Practising the letter (**b**) **Group 4** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided) **Group 5** Independent reading	**Group 1** Independent reading **Group 2** Letter puzzles and games **Group 3** Creative play (Art and construction) **Group 4** Practising the letter (**b**) **Group 5** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 1** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided) **Group 2** Independent reading **Group 3** Letter puzzles and games **Group 4** Creative play (Art and construction) **Group 5** Practising the letter (**b**)
STORY TIME	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

Each *Stellar Teacher's Guide* stars one story, which you will find on page 8, together with a verse, a song or poem and a vocabulary list. Refer to this story at the front of the book whenever you need to.

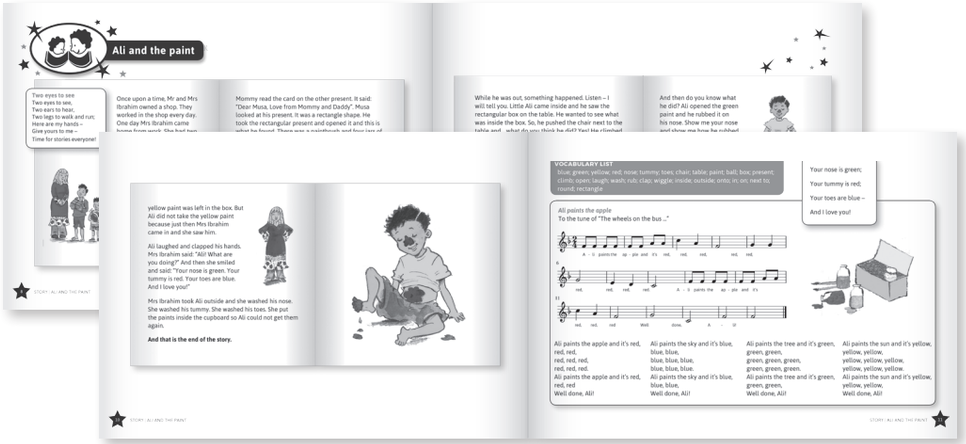
Be sure to tell the story at the very beginning of the two-week cycle, before you do any of the activities.



As you prepare for teaching a two-week cycle, start with the Two-week planner (page 12). It maps out all the activities you will do, every day, for two weeks.

If you follow the planner, you will be covering everything you need for good Home Language teaching in line with CAPS.

Children will have a balance of whole class and small group activities, some of which they do independently; others are teacher-led.



The activities have been divided into three sections, each with its own introduction:

1 **Letters and sounds activities**
2 **Story-based activities**
3 **Rotation group activities**

Find your way easily by looking at the section names at the top and bottom of each page.

We give you two kinds of **Resources** at the end of the book: teacher resources and photocopiable resources for the children. The footer text tells you where to use each resource.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 4 2019/03/04 08:57

Building up a toolkit

You will need to build up your own toolkit of resources over time to teach the Stellar programme. Some of these resources relate to the story in each guide. We have started you off with puppets, sequence pictures and a Big Book in each Story Pack, as well as a template to make little books. We know that as a creative teacher you will plan ahead to make and collect other resources to support the Stellar story. Children will enjoy props during storytelling and costumes for fantasy play, and you will need scrap materials for art and construction activities. Remember how important it is for children to see printed materials connected to the story: look out for picture books, shopping flyers and magazines for your book corner and posters for your walls.

You will always need colourful crayons, paints and paintbrushes, scissors and glue, and paper for children to draw on. You can make simple sand trays, white boards and play dough (recipe and method on page 50). This guide provides templates to make your own puzzles, game boards and letter cards as well as a few activity pages for you to photocopy for your children. If you cannot make photocopies, feel free to adapt the activity or to use the other options given to you in the guide.

We suggest that you make sure everything is set up before you start lessons, so you can make the most of your lesson time.

Assessment

Assessment in Grade R is informal, which means it is particularly important for you to remain aware of each child's language and literacy strengths, challenges and progress, as well as their levels of confidence and enjoyment throughout Home Language lessons. We encourage you to keep notes about each child and jot down significant learning events, challenges being experienced at the time, together with any ideas you have for how you might respond. In addition to daily observations, there are many assessment opportunities built into the Stellar two-week cycle which give you the opportunity to focus on individual children's progress.

These include:

- rotation group activities: you will spend focused time with individual children as you support their drawing and emergent writing.
- paper-based activities: children will produce their own paper-based work in the *Rainbow letter* activity, the *Read and do* activities, and the second sequence picture activity (called *More sequencing pictures*).

It is vitally important that children never feel that you are assessing them or their work. Young children find it almost impossible to learn in an environment where they feel frightened, anxious or insecure. Your job is to build their confidence together with their skills and knowledge so they can show you their very best work.

Language learning opportunities throughout the day

The Stellar programme gives structured activities for different parts of the day. However, we know that language learning happens all day in classrooms where teachers are responsive to children and allow rich to-and-fro conversations. It is so important for you to be responsive to what interests your children. Transition times, show and tell, snack times and morning ring all provide excellent opportunities to build language through questions, comments and conversations. On the next page, we give ideas for how you can maximise language learning during two much-loved Grade R activities – *Show and tell* and *Story time*.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 5 2019/03/04 08:57

Show and tell

Show and tell is a much-loved part of the daily programme in Grade R. Children bring something from home to share with their class: it can be anything from a photograph of a family member to a story book to an autumn leaf newly fallen. It is important that this does not become a time for children to show off new possessions like clothes or expensive toys.

STEPS

1. Children sit in a circle with you. (This can be the whole class, or a small group depending on how you structure this activity.)
2. Begin: "*Aren't we lucky! Three children have brought something for Show and Tell today. Let's sit quietly and listen attentively.*"
3. Ask each child to tell the group about what they have brought.
4. Affirm the child's choice of object. For example: "*I love picking up shells; they remind me of summer!*"
5. Listen actively to the child speaking. Make eye contact.
6. Repeat and then elaborate on what they say about their object.
7. Draw them out by asking specific questions and listen carefully to their answers. Ask if anyone else has a question.
8. Once all the children have spoken about their object, do a quick memory and comprehension quiz:
   - *Who told us about ... ?*
   - *Where did ... get her ... ?*
   - *Someone in the group explained why ... Can you remember the reason?*

Rules for Show and tell:

- *Take turns to talk.*
- *Look at the person speaking.*
- *Listen carefully to what each person is saying and think about it.*

Story time: Reading aloud for enjoyment

The Stellar programme is story-based. We have written simple stories and adapted folk tales as the basis for learning activities over two weeks.

It is also important for children to hear stories for pure enjoyment. There needs to be time in the day when children are read stories with rich language and beautiful illustrations, with no expectations or activities. We want children to truly 'be in the moment' – to become absorbed in a story and to experience the magic of books.

We propose that reading aloud happens at the end of every day. You will need to plan ahead to line up a selection of storybooks that you and the children will love. See our website for some recommendations.

STEPS

Before reading

1. Show children the cover of the book. Ask them to predict what the story will be about.
2. Take a picture walk through the book, looking at the pictures and predicting the story. (If the story has a delightful surprise, you may want to skip the picture walk or stop half way through!)
3. Link the story to the children's own knowledge and experience.
4. Introduce a few key words from the story.
5. Read the title of the story and the name of the author and illustrator.

During reading

1. Read with expression, using different voices for different characters.
2. Keep eye contact with the children.
3. Use dramatic pauses to make the story exciting.
4. Show the children the pictures as you read each page.
5. Keep the children involved by asking them, "*What do you think will happen now?*"
6. Enjoy the experience of sharing the story with your children!

After reading

1. Simply enjoy the magic of a shared story.
2. Discuss which character or part of the story they liked the most.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 6 2019/03/04 08:57

Supporting multilingualism

It is likely that the children in your class speak a wealth of different languages at home. This means that some children's mother tongue is different from the Home Language chosen by the school. Although Stellar is a Home Language programme, we know that all children benefit from rich multilingual teaching spaces. Wherever possible, we encourage you to allow children to use their own language with peers, while they are building confidence using the new language of the classroom. Early in the school year, children who speak more than one language can be invited to assist with translating your instructions and children's responses. The voices of young children should never be silenced because they are not yet able to speak the language of the classroom. A second language should always build on the first, rather than replace it.

Although you will introduce the Stellar story in the language of instruction at the school, second language learners will benefit from hearing the same story in their own language. If you don't feel confident telling the story in this way, you could invite a parent to tell the story to the class in their language. Translations of the stories are free to download from the Wordworks website.

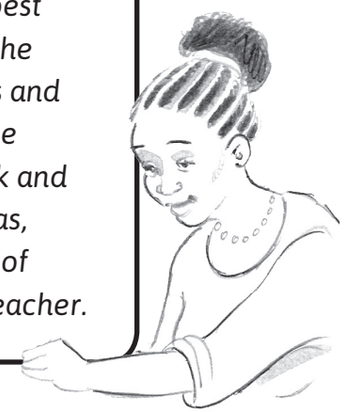
In some of the Stellar activities, we encourage you to work with words from more than one language. This gives you the opportunity to talk with your children about our multilingual world. It also allows you to acknowledge the contribution of children who bring language diversity to your classroom – give them a chance to shine! We encourage you to have fun with words from the story, and build your own knowledge of other languages. Try to introduce some vocabulary words from the Stellar stories in different languages to ensure comprehension for those learning a second language, and to broaden the knowledge base of your monolingual children.

Parents

It's very important for parents to be involved in their children's learning, particularly when children are young. When parents are positive about what happens at school, this helps children hold two very important parts of their world together – the home part and the school part. When parents pay attention to their children talking and reading, writing and drawing, then children will believe these activities are valued and important.

The *Stellar Teacher's Guide for parent meetings* has been developed to help you get parents interested in your Grade R classroom, especially with your implementation of the Stellar Home Language programme. Even if you never organise parent meetings, there are many simple ways to encourage parental involvement in children's learning. Look out for the suggestions to send little books home for children to read to their parents, possibilities for parents to assist with storytelling and games in the classroom, and the ever-important idea that parents talk and read with their children!

Research has shown that one of the best measures of quality in classrooms is the level of interaction between teachers and children. Make your classroom a place where children are encouraged to ask and answer questions and share their ideas, and where they are given the benefit of meaningful conversation with their teacher.



2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 7 2019/03/04 08:57

Ali and the paint

Two eyes to see
Two eyes to see,
Two ears to hear,
Two legs to walk and run;
Here are my hands –
Give yours to me –
Time for stories everyone!

Once upon a time, Mr and Mrs Ibrahim owned a shop. They worked in the shop every day. One day Mrs Ibrahim came home from work. She had two presents in her bag – one for Musa and one for his little brother, Ali.

She took one present out of her bag. It was a big, round shape. Mommy read the card. It said: "Dear Ali, Love from Mommy and Daddy." What do you think was in the present? Ali opened his present. Yes, it was a ball; a lovely red ball! Ali said: "Thank you, Mommy!" and he took the ball and went out to play with his friends.

Mommy read the card on the other present. It said: "Dear Musa, Love from Mommy and Daddy". Musa looked at his present. It was a rectangle shape. He took the rectangular present and opened it and this is what he found. There was a paintbrush and four jars of paint – red, yellow, blue and green! Musa was so happy because he loved to paint pictures. He said: "Thank you, Mommy. I am so happy. I will paint a picture for you and one for Daddy."

When he had finished painting, Musa put the paints back in the box and put the box on the table. Where did he put the paints? Yes! In the box, on the table. Musa went out to play with his friends.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 8 2019/03/04 08:57

While he was out, something happened. Listen – I will tell you. Little Ali came inside and he saw the rectangular box on the table. He wanted to see what was inside the box. So, he pushed the chair next to the table and... what do you think he did? Yes! He climbed onto the chair and then he climbed onto the table. Now, what do you think he did? Yes! He opened the box and took out the red paint, the blue paint and the green paint.

And then do you know what he did? Ali opened the green paint and he rubbed it on his nose. Show me your nose and show me how he rubbed green paint on his nose. Then he opened the red paint and he rubbed the red paint on his tummy. Show me how you rub red paint on your tummy. Mmmm! It felt so good! Then he opened the blue paint and he rubbed the blue paint all over his toes. Can you wiggle your toes?

Now, little Ali had green paint on his... nose; red paint on his... tummy; and blue paint on his... toes. He waved his hands like this and he laughed and laughed. Do you know what colour paint was left in the box? Yes! The

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 9 2019/03/04 08:57

yellow paint was left in the box. But Ali did not take the yellow paint because just then Mrs Ibrahim came in and she saw him.

Ali laughed and clapped his hands. Mrs Ibrahim said: “Ali! What are you doing?” And then she smiled and said: “Your nose is green. Your tummy is red. Your toes are blue. And I love you!”

Mrs Ibrahim took Ali outside and she washed his nose. She washed his tummy. She washed his toes. She put the paints inside the cupboard so Ali could not get them again.

And that is the end of the story.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 10 2019/03/04 08:57

VOCABULARY LIST
blue; green; yellow; red; nose; tummy; toes; chair; table; paint; ball; box; present; climb; open; laugh; wash; rub; clap; wiggle; inside; outside; onto; in; on; next to; round; rectangle

Your nose is green;

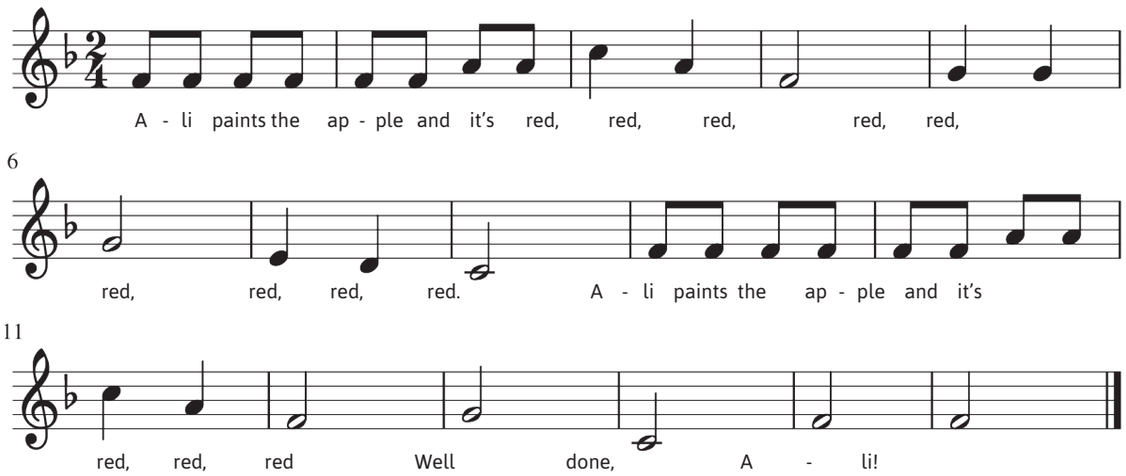
Your tummy is red;

Your toes are blue –

And I love you!

Ali paints the apple

To the tune of "The wheels on the bus ..."



Ali paints the apple and it's red,
red, red,
red, red, red,
red, red, red.
Ali paints the apple and it's red,
red, red
Well done, Ali!

Ali paints the sky and it's blue,
blue, blue,
blue, blue, blue,
blue, blue, blue.
Ali paints the sky and it's blue,
blue, blue,
Well done, Ali!

Ali paints the tree and it's green,
green, green,
green, green, green,
green, green, green.
Ali paints the tree and it's green,
green, green,
Well done, Ali!

Ali paints the sun and it's yellow,
yellow, yellow,
yellow, yellow, yellow,
yellow, yellow, yellow.
Ali paints the sun and it's yellow,
yellow, yellow,
Well done, Ali!

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 11 2019/03/04 08:57

Two-week planner: Week 1

ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
SHOW AND TELL	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
WHOLE CLASS LETTERS AND SOUNDS ACTIVITIES	Tell the story for the first time. Introducing a letter from the story (**b**)	Forming the letter (multisensory activities)
WHOLE CLASS STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES	Storytelling and building vocabulary	Storytelling and singing
ROTATION GROUP ACTIVITIES	**Group 1** Practising the letter (**b**)	**Group 1** Creative play (Art and construction)
	Group 2 Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 2** Practising the letter (**b**)
	Group 3 Independent reading	**Group 3** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
	Group 4 Letter puzzles and games	**Group 4** Independent reading
	Group 5 Creative play (Art and construction)	**Group 5** Letter puzzles and games
STORY TIME	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 12 2019/03/04 08:57

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
Letter boxes	Listening for beginning and end sounds	Blending and segmenting (syllables)
Storytelling and role play	Sequencing pictures	Shared writing and reading
Group 1 Letter puzzles and games	**Group 1** Independent reading	**Group 1** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
Group 2 Creative play (Art and construction)	**Group 2** Letter puzzles and games	**Group 2** Independent reading
Group 3 Practising the letter (**b**)	**Group 3** Creative play (Art and construction)	**Group 3** Letter puzzles and games
Group 4 Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 4** Practising the letter (**b**)	**Group 4** Creative play (Art and construction)
Group 5 Independent reading	**Group 5** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 5** Practising the letter (**b**)
Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 13 2019/03/04 08:57

Two-week planner: Week 2

ACTIVITY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
SHOW AND TELL	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
WHOLE CLASS LETTERS AND SOUNDS ACTIVITIES	Introducing a letter from the story (**c**)	Forming the letter (multisensory activities)
WHOLE CLASS STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES	More sequencing pictures	Shared reading: Big Book
ROTATION GROUP ACTIVITIES	**Group 1** Practising the letter (**c**)	**Group 1** Creative play (Fantasy play)
	Group 2 Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 2** Practising the letter (**c**)
	Group 3 Independent reading	**Group 3** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
	Group 4 Letter puzzles and games	**Group 4** Independent reading
	Group 5 Creative play (Fantasy play)	**Group 5** Letter puzzles and games
STORY TIME	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 14 2019/03/04 08:57

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.	Enjoy a few show and tell presentations.
Letter boxes	Listening for beginning and end sounds	Blending and segmenting (syllables)
Read and do	Shared writing and reading	Listen and do
Group 1 Letter puzzles and games	**Group 1** Independent reading	**Group 1** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)
Group 2 Creative play (Fantasy play)	**Group 2** Letter puzzles and games	**Group 2** Independent reading
Group 3 Practising the letter (**c**)	**Group 3** Creative play (Fantasy play)	**Group 3** Letter puzzles and games
Group 4 Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 4** Practising the letter (**c**)	**Group 4** Creative play (Fantasy play)
Group 5 Independent reading	**Group 5** Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)	**Group 5** Practising the letter (**c**)
Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.	Read a new book aloud every day.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 15 2019/03/04 08:57

Introduction to letters and sounds activities

The world of letters and sounds

We know from research that children who know something about letters and the sounds they make are likely to learn to read and write more easily than children who have limited letter–sound knowledge. However, we are not suggesting that children in Grade R should be taught about letters in a formal way. The Stellar programme includes many fun, age-appropriate ways to build children's knowledge of letters.

We don't believe Grade R children should be drilled or chant the alphabet, copy letters from a board or practise writing letters between lines or on paper with a pencil. In the Stellar programme, children learn how to form letters through big movements and through experiences that involve all of their senses. We know that children learn best when something has meaning to them, so we take care to link letters and sounds to stories – and to new words, pictures and objects. Children learn about language while building their knowledge of letters.

In addition to learning about the relationships between letters and sounds, research has shown that it is vital for children to become aware of sounds in spoken language (phonological awareness). If children don't learn to pay attention to sounds in spoken language, they might know what they want to write, but not be able to hear the sounds in words in order to write them. The letters and sounds section of the Stellar programme includes many oral activities that help children to develop this awareness.

We have included multilingual lists of words from the story in an activity to develop children's ability to break words up into syllables, and to blend syllables to make words. Research tells us that young children who learn to pay attention to sounds in words in one language can transfer this skill to another language. Most importantly, children come to know that there is so much to learn about words from all languages – and so much fun to be had while playing with words!

Spending time on these activities will take Grade R children on a journey of exploration into the world of letters and sounds, which will ensure that they are well-prepared to meet the demands of the Grade 1 curriculum.

Teaching letters and sounds

The Stellar programme focuses on a new letter every week. The letters that have been selected for each story are different for each language because they are linked to words in the story. It is ideal to introduce a new letter by linking it to words from a familiar story, but if you must teach letters in a different order, you can still make use of the ideas for teaching letters in the Stellar Programme.

Plan for the letters and sounds activities to take approximately 15 minutes every day. We have given you activities to use from Monday to Friday. The Week 1 activities are repeated in Week 2, with a focus on a new letter. The whole class usually does these activities together at the beginning of the daily programme. However, you can focus on letters and sounds at any time in your everyday routine, particularly during outdoor play and transition times (lining up outside the toilet; preparing for lunch time and so on). Use opportunities to point out letters in the environment and ask children what letters they see around them. This helps children to see how we use letters as clues to read things around us.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 16 2019/03/04 08:57

Resources to make for the letters and sounds activities

Play dough mats

Put copies of the letter templates in the **Resources** into plastic sleeves. Children can use the printed letter as a guide when forming play dough letters. Play dough mats can also be downloaded and printed from websites such as www.sparklebox.co.uk.

Whiteboards

Insert a piece of cardboard or paper into a plastic sleeve. Children can use a whiteboard marker to practise 'writing' big letters. These can be cleaned easily with a cloth or tissue.

A set of letter boxes

Fill empty ice-cream containers with objects (or pictures of objects) that start with a specific sound. For example, the **g** box will contain objects whose names begin with the sound **/g/**.

Use the word lists to help you choose items for the boxes. Label each letter box using the letter templates. It is best to trace letters onto a sensory material like felt, sandpaper or corrugated cardboard. Cut out the letter and stick it onto the lid of the letter box. Stick a smaller letter on the side of the box so that you can easily identify the box you need when the letter boxes are stacked on a shelf.

*It is not necessary to make a letter box for every letter of the alphabet. Finding appropriate objects for the letters **q**, **x**, **y** and **z** can be difficult and children will learn these letters as they encounter them in print when they are learning to read. Very few words begin with vowels in English, and vowels make different sounds in different words, so letter boxes are not a good way to introduce vowels.*

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 17 2019/03/04 08:57

LETTERS AND SOUNDS

MONDAY Introducing a letter from the story

Letter–sound knowledge: Children learn about two new letters linked to words from the story. In Week 1, the focus letter is b, and in Week 2, the focus letter is c.

YOU WILL NEED
Ali and the paint story on page 8; big alphabet chart; board

*Tell the story of **Ali and the paint** on page 8.*

STEPS

Listening for sounds

1 Ask the children to sit on the mat and listen carefully to you. Say these words from the story: "*ball, box, boy, blue*". Ask the children where they have heard the words before.

2 Say to the children: "*Can you hear what sound these words start with: b-b-ball, b-b-boy, b-b-box, b-b-blue? Yes, you are right! They start with the sound **/b/**. Listen carefully, here are some more words that start with **/b/**: banana, breakfast, beautiful, brave, big, beetle, bucket, bell.*" (Emphasise the beginning sound as you say these words, for example: b-b-banana, b-b-breakfast.)

Saying the sound

1 Say the sound **/b/** clearly and tell the children to watch your mouth carefully as you make the sound.

2 Ask the children to say the sound **/b/:** "***b-b-b-b-b-b***". Make this fun: say it softly, loudly, to the wall, to the ceiling and to each other. Make sure the children are saying the sound of the letter and not the letter name **b** ('bee').

3 Teach the children an action associated with the sound. For example: the children can pretend to bounce a ball while saying "***b-b-b-b-b***".

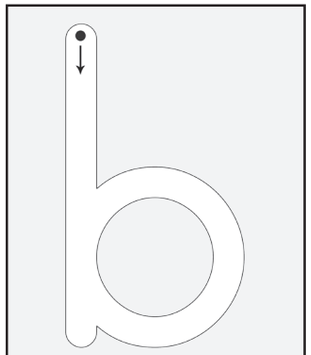
Thinking of words beginning with the sound

1 Ask the children if anyone's name starts with **/b/** or if they can think of any other words that start with the sound **/b/**.

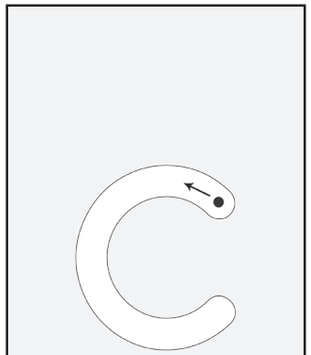
2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 18 2019/03/04 08:58

Forming the letter

1 Ask the children if they know how to write a letter that makes the sound **/b/**.
2 Show the children how to form the letter **b**. Write a large letter on the board as you say: "*Start at the dot, go down, then up and around.*"
3 Let the children practise the letter formation in the air, on the carpet, on their hands and so on.



Start at the dot, go down, then up and around.



Start at the dot, go around.

Linking the letter to the alphabet chart

1 If you have an alphabet chart in your class, show the children the letter **b** on the alphabet chart. Explain that this letter also has a name: 'bee'. This will help them to link the sounds they are learning with the letter names and the alphabet song.

*These activity steps focus on the letter **b** which is the focus in Week 1.*
*In Week 2, follow the same steps but focus on the letter **c**.*
Here are some ideas:

- *Say these words from the story that start with the sound **/c/**: card, cupboard, climb, clap, colours.*
- *Other **/c/** words: candle, cucumber, cough, cabbage, cream, candle, carrot, carpet.*
- *When you form **c** with the children say: "Start at the dot, go round."*
- *Teach the children an action associated with the sound. For example: pretend you are crunching a carrot and say: "c-c-c-c."*
- *If you have an alphabet chart in your class, show the children the letter **c** on the alphabet chart. Explain that this letter also has a name: 'cee'.*

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 19 2019/03/04 08:58

LETTERS AND SOUNDS

TUESDAY Forming the letter (multisensory activities)

Letter–sound knowledge: Children learn to form the focus letters using different materials which give them a rich sensory experience that helps them to remember the shape of the letter.

STEPS

1. Begin by modelling how to write the focus letter: ask the children if they can remember words that start with the focus letter. Remember to say the sound the letter makes (**/b/**) and not the name of the letter ('bee').
2. Show the children how to form the letter. Write a large letter on the board or in the air. Say the following as you model forming the letter **b** in Week 1: *"Start at the dot, go down, then up and around."* In Week 2, say the following as you show the children how to form the letter **c**: *"Start at the dot, go round."*
3. Let the children practise the letter formation in the air, on the carpet, on each other's backs or on their hands.
4. Once you have modelled how to write the letter, choose from the following activities to give children the experience of forming these letters using big movements and as many of their senses as possible.

*In Week 1, the focus letter is **b**.*

*In Week 2, the focus letter is **c**.*

Chalk letters

YOU WILL NEED
A large piece of chalk

STEPS

1. Go outside and give each child a piece of large chalk.
2. Ask the children to write a letter in chalk on the bricks/wall/paving.
3. Encourage the children to say the sound the letter makes as they write the letter.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 20 2019/03/04 08:58

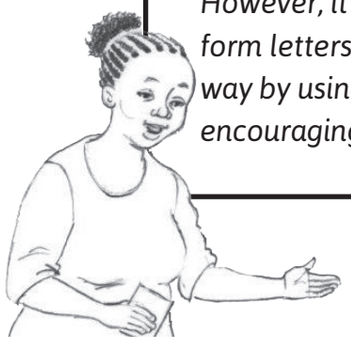
Water letters

YOU WILL NEED
Water; paintbrushes

STEPS

1. Go outside and give each child a container with water and a paintbrush.
2. Ask the children to paint a letter in water on the bricks/wall/paving.
3. Encourage the children to say the sound the letter makes as they write the letter.

Formal handwriting practice is part of the Grade 1 curriculum; it is not appropriate for Grade R learners. However, it is important that children are taught how to form letters correctly. You can do this in a relaxed and fun way by using these creative, multisensory activities and encouraging children to write letters as big as they can.



Sand letters

YOU WILL NEED
Sand trays or a sandy area outside

STEPS

1. Divide the children into small groups and give each group a sand tray. Alternatively, take the children outside to a sandy area.
2. Ask the children to write a letter in the sand with their finger or a small twig.
3. Encourage the children to say the sound the letter makes as they write the letter.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 21 2019/03/04 08:58

Play dough letters

YOU WILL NEED
Play dough (recipe on page 50); play dough mats

STEPS

1. Give each child a ball of play dough. Ask the children to roll the play dough into long sausage shapes.
2. Put copies of the letter templates in a plastic sleeve. Show the children how to form a letter out of play dough using the printed letter as a guide.
3. Encourage the children to make their own letter and to trace over the play dough letter with their finger while saying the sound the letter makes.

Whiteboard letters

YOU WILL NEED
Whiteboards; marker pens; pieces of cloth

STEPS

1. Give each child a whiteboard and let them write the letter while saying the sound the letter makes.
2. The children can repeat this many times. At the beginning of the activity, encourage them to write letters that take up the whole page. Once they feel confident, they can try writing smaller letters.

*Ask the children to collect objects and pictures from home that start with the sound **/b/**. Before you put each object in the letterbox, introduce it to the class, and let the children touch it, name it and talk about it.*

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 22 2019/03/04 08:58

LETTERS AND SOUNDS

WEDNESDAY Letter boxes

Letter–sound knowledge: The children build their knowledge of the focus letters by linking them to the beginning sounds of the names of objects.

YOU WILL NEED

Small mirror; two letter boxes (see page 17) containing objects or pictures of objects that start with the following letters:
Week 1 **b**: bed; bicycle; bottle; bib; bugs; beetle; bell; butterfly; baboon; ballerina; brush; bracelets; baby; bread; binoculars; box; basket; bat; ball; bird; boy; bus; bee
Week 2 **c**: coat hanger; camel; cricket bat; crown; crocodile; cards; car; caterpillar; curler; cup; candle; cupcake; cake; cupboard; cat; cap; computer

STEPS

Naming objects

1. Ask the children to sit on the mat and let them hold the objects or pictures of objects and pass them around.
2. Ask them for the names of the objects in English. If there are children whose first language is not English, ask them to tell the class what they call the object in their home language. Then give the word in English.
3. Ask questions about the objects: "*Have you seen one of these? What do we use this for? What colour is it? How does it feel?*"

Listening for beginning sounds

1. Revise the names of the objects while emphasising the beginning sound, for example: b-b-bug, b-b-brush, b-b-bottle.
2. Say to the children: "*Listen to this word: b-b-bottle. Can you hear what sound 'bottle' starts with? What is the first sound of the word?*"
3. Encourage the children to emphasise the beginning sound when they say a word. Use a mirror so that they can see how their mouths move when they make the sound.

Linking the sound with a letter

1. Once the children have practised the new sound, then show them the letter on the letter box and say: "*This is how we write **b**.*" Let the children trace over the letter on the lid with their fingers.
2. Demonstrate to the children how to 'write' the letter with their finger: in the air, on their hands and on a child's back. The children can also make letters with their bodies (note that some letters are easier than others to form with one's body!).

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 23 2019/03/04 08:58

LETTERS AND SOUNDS

THURSDAY

Listening for beginning and end sounds

Phonological awareness: Children learn to hear and identify beginning and end sounds in words.

Begin today's listening activity by saying: "Let's close our eyes and be quiet for a few minutes while we listen carefully to the sounds around us."

I spy with my little eye … something from the story

YOU WILL NEED
Puppets from the story or objects or pictures of some of the things from the story displayed where the children can clearly see them

STEPS

1 Ask the children to sit on the mat and listen carefully to you. Tell them that you are going to play '**I spy**' with objects that come from the story of ***Ali and the paint***. Let them look at the displayed puppets, objects and pictures.

2 Choose something from the story without telling the children what you are thinking of. Then, very clearly, give the children the first sound of the word as a clue. For example: if you are thinking of 'ball', say: "*I spy with my little eye something that starts with* ***/b/***".

3 Children must look at the display for things that start with that sound. If they guess 'ball' correctly, it is their turn to look for something and say: "*I spy…*"

I spy with my little eye *is an excellent game to help children to start focusing on and hearing beginning sounds in words. Remember to say the beginning sound, and not the name of the letter. For example, for 'table' say the sound* ***/t/*** *and not the name* ***t*** *('tee').*

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 24 2019/03/04 08:58

LETTERS AND SOUNDS

FRIDAY

Blending and segmenting (syllables)

Phonological awareness: Children learn to blend syllables to make words and segment words into syllables.

YOU WILL NEED
Multisyllabic words relating to the story: rectangle; table; paintbrush; present; stomach; cupboard; paper; yellow

Jumping frog (multisyllabic words)

STEPS

1. Ask the children to sit on the mat and choose one child to be the 'frog'.
2. Say one of the words from the list and model how to break it into syllables. For example, for rectangle: say clearly **rec | tan | gle**
3. Ask the 'frog' to jump for each of the syllables: **rec** (one jump) **tan** (one jump) **gle** (one jump).
4. Ask the children to put the syllables together to say a word: **rec | tan | gle = rectangle.**
5. Ask the 'frog' to hop again. This time the children will clap each time the 'frog' jumps. Then the class will say the word together.
6. Let the children take turns to listen to each of the ten words from the list above and break it into syllables. The 'frog' must hop the syllables while the class claps.

To help promote multilingualism and affirm children's home languages, try this activity with a few of these multisyllabic words. Ask children to help with your pronunciation.

***Xhosa**: isitulo* (chair)*; itafile* (table)*; ipeyinti* (paint)*; ibhola* (ball)*; impumlo* (nose)*; ibhokisi* (box)*; isipho* (gift)*; hleka* (laugh)*; qhwaba* (clap)*; hlamba* (wash)

***Afrikaans**: winkel* (shop)*; geskenk* (gift)*; liefde* (love)*; pakkie* (package)*; reghoekig* (square)*; prentjie* (picture)*; skilder* (paint)*; verfkwas* (paintbrush)*; neusie* (nose)*; glimlag* (smile)

If the children in your class speak other languages, ask them to give you a word from the story in their language.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 25 2019/03/04 08:58

Introduction to story-based activities

Moving from oral to written language

Storytelling (Monday, Week 1)

Stellar is a story-based programme that takes children on a journey from spoken to written language. The children's first encounter with the story is when they hear the story being told by their teacher with puppets to make the characters come alive. Although you will have the printed version of the story, please understand that it is a script to guide you, rather than a text to be read to the children. It is important that you speak directly to the children as you tell them the story, rather than focusing on the printed words.

Singing and role play (Tuesday and Wednesday, Week 1)

After hearing the story being told, children will have a chance to sing a song related to the story. Songs are a wonderful way to develop language skills and some children find it easier to remember new language through melody, rhythm and rhyme. After singing, children participate in role playing the story as it is narrated. This gives them a chance to participate in the telling of the story in an active way and use the words and phrases of the different characters. It also requires them to think about the story sequence – what happens next.

Story sequencing (Thursday, Week 1; Monday, Week 2)

Once children have heard the story being told, and participated in singing and acting out the story, they have an opportunity to think carefully about the events in the story and to sequence these in the correct order. Telling a story in the correct sequence is a very important skill, and something that can be challenging for young children. When children understand that stories are made up of sequenced events, they are able to plan their own stories to have a beginning, middle and end. They learn to ask themselves, "What do I want to happen next?"

The sequencing of the events in the story is first led by you as the teacher, as you guide children's conversations about how the story started and what came next. At first you work with big colourful pictures in the whole class. Later on, the children are encouraged to sequence the events more independently. This provides a useful assessment opportunity.

Writing inspired by the story (Friday, Week 1)

Building on the oral telling of the story, the singing, role play and sequencing of events, children have a chance to discuss their ideas related to something in the story, and then see how these ideas can be written down. This activity begins with rich discussions and sharing of ideas, with contributions from as many children as possible. As you model the writing process, using the children's words and ideas, they see that what we say can be written down. This will give them the confidence to start trying to write themselves – even if they begin with scribbles and made-up letters!

Shared reading (Friday, Week 1; Tuesday, Week 2)

Shared writing provides an ideal text for shared reading as the text contains ideas and words that are very familiar to the children. It is important to take the time to read over the text you have written together, pointing to each word as you read so that children start noticing how our speech is made up of different words, with spaces between each word.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 26 2019/03/04 08:58

In addition to reading the texts they have co-written with you, children will have another opportunity to see how reading works when you read the Big Book in the second week. Here they will encounter the same, familiar story but in print form. When you read the Big Book to them they will see how words on a page link with the words you say. The story in the Big Book is a simplified version, so that children feel confident to try to 'read' it themselves. This gives them the experience of being a reader – even if they are just reciting the words in the book from memory.

Read and do (Wednesday, Week 2)

While shared reading activities are teacher-led, children benefit from trying to 'read' and make sense of text themselves. The Read and do activity gives children a chance to read pictures and symbols and follow what the symbols tell them to do. This provides another assessment opportunity.

Listening (Friday, Week 2)

The two-week cycle of story-based activities ends with a whole class listening activity to support the development of children's ability to pay attention, follow instructions and understand what they hear.

Using story-based activities to build vocabulary

Some teachers have initially been concerned that it may become boring for children if the activities for two weeks are based on one story. However, teachers have repeatedly reported the benefit of having so many ways for children to engage with new language. We know that in order to learn new vocabulary and make it their own, children need to hear and use words often and different contexts. Children often understand words before they have the confidence to use them, so it is important that we do not move on to another theme or story before they have had the chance to develop a deep and lasting knowledge of new words.

Although children will learn new language and word meanings through all of the activities in the Stellar programme, we have selected new words from each story for you to focus on. These are listed on the last page of the story section under the heading Vocabulary list. The list includes a combination of common, everyday words and more difficult words. As a teacher, you know your children best, so choose to focus on words that are appropriate for the children in your class. Be especially aware of what will be helpful for children who are learning in a second language, and remember to extend children whose basic vocabulary is strong.

When you are working through the activities with the children, remember to draw their attention to the words you have introduced. Ask them what they know about these words, and how they say a particular word in their own language. Build on children's natural curiosity by encouraging an interest in word meanings in your class. This is one of the most important building blocks for comprehension.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 27 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 1 STORY-BASED

MONDAY Storytelling and building vocabulary

Children hear the *Ali and the paint* story while learning new vocabulary.

YOU WILL NEED

- Puppets and props: Musa, Ali and Mrs Ibrahim; four jars of paint; a red ball or picture of a ball; a box; a paint brush
- Objects or picture cards for a few words from the vocabulary list
- Story, rhyme and vocabulary listed on pages 8–11.

STEPS

Before you tell the story

1 Say the rhyme ***Two eyes to see*** with the children, to focus the class on the story to come.

2 Introduce the story to the children: "*The title of our story is **Ali and the paint.***"

3 Relate the story to the children's lives: talk about the children's families and discuss the ages of their siblings.

4 Introduce the characters, for example: "*This is Mommy/Mrs Ibrahim, Ali's mother. This is Musa, Ali's brother, and this is Ali.*" Ask the children to say good morning to them. Ask the children: "*Who do you think is the youngest? Why do you think this? How old are Musa and Ali?.*" (Musa is 8 years old and Ali is 3 years old.)

In this story, there are many opportunities to demonstrate the meanings of 'position words' such as: in, on, next to, onto. While you tell the story, use the puppets and props to show what these words mean. Later, ask the children to follow instructions using these words.
For example: "Ben, will you pretend you are Ali? Push the chair next to the table. Now, climb onto the chair. Now, climb onto the table."

5 Introduce two or three new words from the vocabulary list: "*Before we begin, I want to tell you the meanings of some new words which we will find in the story.*"

- Discuss what each word means, using simple language.
- Where possible, show children an object or a picture to illustrate what the word means.
- Ask children who speak different languages at home, to say the word in their own language.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 28 2019/03/04 08:58

While you tell the story

1. Make sure you tell the story in a lively way to keep the children's attention. Do actions, use props and tell the story in different voices.
2. Ask children to predict what happens next in the story and involve them through open-ended questions, such as: "*I wonder what Ali's Mommy is going to do when she sees what he has done?*"
3. Emphasise new vocabulary. Give short explanations if you feel it will help the children to understand the story. Ask if anyone can remember the meaning of a new word.

After you tell the story

1. Ask questions to check and consolidate children's understanding, such as: "*What did Ali do when Musa went outside to play?*" Praise and elaborate on even the simplest answers. For example: "*Yes, that's right. Ali wanted to see what was in the rectangular box. He climbed onto the chair and then he climbed up on the table to get the paints.*"
2. Ask open ended questions to stimulate discussion: "*Have you ever got up to mischief like Ali? What did you do? What did your Mommy do?*"
3. Consolidate new vocabulary from the story by asking questions about a word, for example: "*What is a ... ? Can you point to a ... ? What is a ... used for?*"
4. Talk about the category the new words belong to, for example: 'colour words' or 'position words'.

Children learn language skills and vocabulary from listening to stories, even if they are not fluent in that language. It is important that all children feel proud of their language and background while being encouraged to learn the language of instruction.

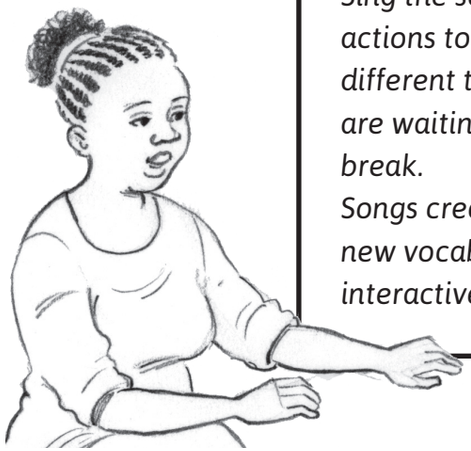
2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 29
2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 1 STORY-BASED

TUESDAY Storytelling and singing

Children learn the language of the story by listening to the story again and singing a song related to the story.

YOU WILL NEED
Words and music for the song ***Ali paints the apple ...*** (page 11)



Sing the song every day! Remember to do the actions too. Let the children sing the song at different times of the day, such as when they are waiting on the carpet or lining up after break.
Songs create opportunities for reinforcing new vocabulary and language in a fun and interactive way.

STEPS

1. Re-tell the story using the puppets. Ask questions as you tell the story. Encourage the children to predict what will happen next.
2. Sing the song to the children.
3. Teach the song in small parts – it may be difficult for the children to remember all the words at once.
4. Teach the children the actions for each line of the song.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 30 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 1 STORY-BASED

WEDNESDAY Storytelling and role play

Children take on different roles and use the story language themselves while the story is narrated.

YOU WILL NEED
Puppets; colour paint pots; a paintbrush; a box; a ball; a table; a chair

STEPS

1 Sing ***Ali paints the apple...*** (page 11).
2 Choose three children to play the characters in the story (Ali; Musa; Mrs Ibrahim).
3 Talk about each character in the story. Tell the children who they are going to be in the role play.
4 Discuss the props that will be used to tell the story.
5 Explain to the children that you (the teacher) are going to be the storyteller, also known as the narrator. The acting children are going to act out everything you say. Help them to organise where they are going to stand.
6 Start the story like this: "*Once upon a time, Mr and Mrs Ibrahim owned a shop. They worked in the shop every day. One day, Mrs Ibrahim came from work and she had two presents, one for Musa and one for Ali.*" The child acting as Mrs Ibrahim pretends to give a present to Musa and Ali.
7 Continue telling the story in this way. The children do the actions to match the narrator's words: "*Ali pushed the chair next to the table.*" Ali pretends to push the chair, and so on.
8 The rest of the class watches the role play.
9 If there is time, you may want to repeat the role play with different children.

The more children hear the story language, the more confident they will become about using new vocabulary and phrases. Children will be able to incorporate this new language into their own speech as they act out the story. Later they will use it in other situations.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 31 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 1 STORY-BASED

THURSDAY Sequencing pictures

Children learn that stories are made up of a sequence of events by re-telling the story using pictures.

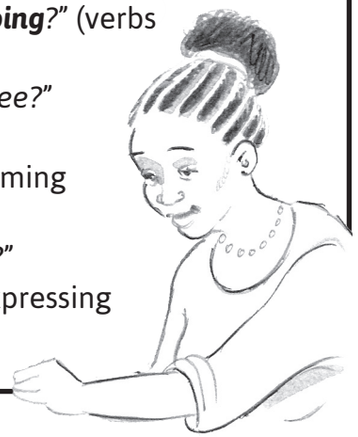
YOU WILL NEED
Big sequence pictures in the Story Pack

STEPS

1. Sing ***Ali paints the apple …*** (page 11).
2. Choose one of the sequence pictures and hold it up.
3. Ask the children what they see and talk about the picture in detail.
4. Once you have discussed each picture, stick it on the board so the children can see it. Make sure the pictures are not in sequence at this stage of the activity.
5. After talking about all the pictures, ask the children: "*Are the pictures in the correct order?*"
6. Ask the children to point out the picture for the beginning of the story.
7. Work together to rearrange the sequence of the pictures so the story makes sense.
8. Keep the children actively involved in this process. Ask questions like: "*What happened next? Who can remember the next part of the story?*"

These are useful questions to ask about each picture:

- "***Who*** *can you see?*" (characters)
- "***What*** *is he/she/it* ***doing****?*" (verbs and actions)
- "***What*** *else can you see?*" (looking again)
- "***Where*** *is the …?*" (naming places/position)
- "***Why*** *do you think …?*" (creative thinking, expressing opinions)



9. When the pictures are in the correct order, invite a few children to retell the story in the correct sequence.
10. If you have extra time, muddle up the order again and repeat the activity.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 32 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 1 STORY-BASED

FRIDAY Shared writing and reading

Children learn how their words and ideas can be recorded as you model the writing of gift cards.

YOU WILL NEED
An A4 photocopy of the activity page per child (page 54); coloured pencils/crayons; scissors; one box covered with wrapping paper with a written gift card attached to it; one box covered with wrapping paper with no gift card; one blank gift card

STEPS

1 Retell the story using the puppets.
2 Show the 'present' with the written card attached. Read the card: "*Dear Ali Love from Mommy and Daddy*". Ask the children to think about why we give gift cards with presents.
3 Show the 'present' with no card. Ask the children whose present it is. (It is Musa's.) We think it is Musa's but we don't know because the present doesn't have a gift card attached.
4 Ask the children to help you think about words for the gift card. (Use a blank commercial gift card or make one with a piece of blank paper.) Talk about how to start a card and how to finish it. Think aloud as you write the children's ideas in the card.
5 Give each child an activity page and show the children how to fold the page on the dotted line. Ask the children to imagine that this is a present for them. Show them the wrapping paper and gift tag. Talk about some ideas. Give them a few minutes to think about a present they would like.
6 Tell the children to draw their present on the blank side of the paper.
7 Let the children colour in the wrapping paper. While the children are busy, walk around and ask each child who their present is from and write on the gift tag. For example: put "*To Lolo Love from Mommy*".
8 When the children are finished, put them in pairs and let them show and tell each other about their presents.

For some children, Grade R is the first time they will do a drawing activity. For others, their prior experience may have been very limited. And for some children, drawing can be a very challenging task. These children will need much encouragement to trust their ability to draw. Never criticise – always praise a child's effort.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 33 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

MONDAY More sequencing pictures

Children consolidate their own story knowledge by sequencing pictures more independently.

YOU WILL NEED

- Sequence pictures in the Story Pack
- A black and white photocopy of small sequence pictures (page 55) for each child; additional white paper for each child; scissors; glue
- Photocopied and folded little book for each child (page 56)
- Set up the tables beforehand with a set of black and white pictures for each child and enough pairs of scissors and glue for all the children to use.

STEPS

On the mat

1. Begin with the children sitting on the mat. Choose children to stand in front of the class, each holding one of the colour sequence pictures. Make sure that the pictures are not in the correct order.
2. Ask the children if the pictures are in the right order. Ask them to point out the picture which should be at the beginning of the story.
3. Together as a group, move the children that are holding the pictures until the story makes sense. Ask questions such as: "*What happened next? Who can remember the next part of the story?*"
4. Once you have sequenced the story using the colour pictures, children will need to move to their tables and sit in small groups.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 34 2019/03/04 08:58

At their tables

1 Ask the children to cut out the black and white pictures, arrange them in the correct order and then glue them on a blank page. Walk around the class and assist where necessary. This activity is useful for assessing the children's ability to put the main events of the story in the correct order.
2 Once children have completed their sequence pictures, give each child a little book. Encourage them to look at the cover and read the title of the story with them.
3 Take the children on a picture walk through the little book, helping them to notice that the pictures in the book are the same as the sequence pictures.
4 If there is time, children should 'read' their little book to a partner in the class.
5 Encourage the children to take the books home to read with their families.

Children will expand their vocabulary by saying as well as hearing new words. Reading this little book at home will give the children many opportunities to say the new words they have learnt from the story.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 35 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

TUESDAY Shared reading: Big Book

Children learn about reading a familiar story in print as you model the reading process.

YOU WILL NEED
Ali and the paint Big Book

STEPS

1. Say the rhyme ***Two eyes to see*** with the children, to focus the class on the story to come.
2. Encourage the children to look at the cover picture and talk about what they see and recognise.
3. Read the title of the story to the class. Point to each word as you read. Read it again and ask the children to read with you.
4. Take the children on a picture walk through the book, discussing the pictures and allowing children to ask questions.
5. Allow the children to talk about the story and make connections to the language and experiences from the week before.
6. Point out the page numbers as you go and talk about what number will come next.
7. When you have 'walked' through the whole book, go back to the beginning and read the title again.
8. Turn the pages and read each sentence in a clear, steady and natural voice.

Take your time reading the story. Pause often and give the children time to discuss the pictures and words as you read.

Children can participate in the process of reading long before they can read independently. Each time an adult reads a book with them, they 'read' the pictures, they hear the same or similar words in the same order and begin to get an idea of what it means to be a reader.

9. Point to each word as you read.
10. Point out any letters the children may know and reinforce the focus letters for this story.
11. Read the book again and encourage the children to 'read' with you.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 36 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

WEDNESDAY Read and do

Children learn to interpret written and picture cues and follow instructions.

YOU WILL NEED
Four large pieces of white cardboard or paper (labelled ‘red’, ‘blue’, ‘green’ and ‘yellow’); write these words on the corresponding colour cards; a picture of an object in that colour on each piece of cardboard; magazines; scissors and glue

When you have completed the activity, you will have four bright posters representing different colours. It is valuable for children to see their work displayed with pride, as it gives them a sense of ownership in the learning environment.

STEPS

1. Show the children the four boards and ask them to ‘read’ the colour word on each board. Make a connection to the paint colours in the story. Ask the children which colour does not feature in the story.
2. Talk about the example pictures and how they match the colour.
3. Explain that each child must find one colour picture to paste on each of the colour boards.
4. Demonstrate how to look through a magazine to find pictures to match the four colours.
5. Explain that when the children have found a picture matching one of the colours, they must cut it out.
6. When they have had enough time, ask all the children with pictures that match the colour red to raise their hands. Ask a child to collect these pictures and help you to glue them on the matching board. Talk about the board, naming the objects and giving credit to the children. Say something like: “*Look – a shiny red car! Who found this picture? Well done Sara!*”
7. Go through the same process with the other colours.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 37 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

THURSDAY Shared writing and reading

Children learn how their words and ideas can be recorded as you model the writing of a story.

YOU WILL NEED
A piece of paper; a thick black marker pen

STEPS

1 Begin by talking about Ali's little brother and how he got up to mischief with the paint. Then ask who in the class has little children in their family. Ask the children to tell a story about mischief that their younger brothers, sisters or cousins got up to. Or they could tell a story about when they were playful and naughty when they were smaller. You might need to tell your own short story about a young child in your family that did something funny. Try to avoid stories where children did dangerous things or were severely punished for their mischievousness.

2 Once you have heard some of the children's stories, discuss with the children which of the stories you will write as a class story. The child who told the story can lead, but welcome contributions from other children too. Start by asking the children to think of a title for their story. Listen to a few suggestions and then agree on what you will write, saying each word as you write it.

3 Then say: "*Let's begin with the characters or the people in the story. What were their names? Who can remember where the story took place?*" Discuss and agree before writing down the children's words. You may begin with the words 'Once upon a time' or 'One day'.

4 Say to the children: "*Now that we have written the beginning of our story, who can remember what happened in the middle? There was a problem, wasn't there? Stories often have a problem in the middle – this is what makes the story exciting!*" Write down the children's words, then go back and read the story from the beginning.

5 Then say: "*Now we need to think how the story ended – who can remember how the problem was solved?*" Write down the children's words and then finish with the words: 'The End'. Read the story from the beginning, pointing to each word as you read.

6 If there is time, you can ask some of the children to illustrate the story. Stick the story on the wall.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 38 2019/03/04 08:58

WEEK 2 STORY-BASED

FRIDAY Listen and do

Children learn to listen carefully and follow verbal instructions.

Remember to give one instruction at a time. Keep a steady pace but let everyone finish before giving the next instruction.

YOU WILL NEED
Per child: a blank page; four coloured crayons (red, green, yellow and blue)

STEPS

1 Seat children at tables and settle everyone down so that the class is quiet and calm.

2 Begin today's listening activity by saying: "*Let's close our eyes and be quiet for a few minutes while we listen carefully to the sounds around us.*"

3 Now hold up each crayon and say the name of the colour. Ask the children to pick up the matching crayon in front of them. Speak in a clear, steady voice.

4 Now give the instructions slowly and clearly:
- *"Pick up your red crayon. Draw a red circle."*
- *"Pick up your green crayon. Draw a green triangle."*
- *"Pick up your yellow crayon. Draw a yellow square."*
- *"Pick up your blue crayon. Draw a blue rectangle."*

Here is another listening activity. Select a group of four children. Say to the children: "Listen carefully and follow these instructions":
- *"Stand up; lift one leg; hop to the door; say Boo!"*
- *"Put your hands on your hips; turn around; wink at your friend; sit down."*

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 39 2019/03/04 08:58

Introduction to rotation group activities

Helping children to work independently and in groups

There are five group activities for each story. These activities are repeated in the second week, with some new activities added in Week 2.

Before beginning the activities, talk to the whole class about what they will do in each activity. The children might find it difficult to work independently and manage themselves initially, but as they become familiar with each other, the classroom rules and the activities, you will find they need less guidance.

The importance of rules

Negotiate some rules for rotation group activities. Allowing the children to come up with some suggestions will help them to take pride in the rules. Make sure the rules are clearly displayed and include drawings next to the written words as a reminder to children.

Here are some suggestions:

Rules for fantasy play area

- Share and take turns
- Don't push or pull each other
- Clean hands
- Take good care of our dress-up clothes and props
- Don't hurt each other's feelings
- Talk in quiet voices
- Tidy up after playing

Rotating the activities

Children will do a different activity each day, so by the end of the week they will have done all five activities. Plan carefully and prepare everything in advance.

You may choose to begin the year with all the children doing the same activity on one day, and then another activity on the next day. This will reduce your daily preparation and allow you to give instructions to all the children at the same time.

However, as soon as you feel your class is ready, we advise that you rotate the groups between activities, with each group doing a different activity on a day.

Our two-week planner (page 12) shows how each group does all the activities in a week.

*Four of the groups will be busy with activities that need less teacher guidance so that you can focus on the group that is doing **Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)**. Therefore you will be able to interact meaningfully with each of the groups in a week, giving you an opportunity to connect with the children and assess their individual progress.*

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 40 2019/03/04 08:58

Overview of the activities

Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)

Focus your time on the group doing this activity as this group is likely to need the most support. You might need to help children decide what they want to draw, and guide them with prompts without telling them how to draw! Talk with them about their drawings and encourage them to 'write' something themselves or tell you what to write on their behalf.

Display the pictures at the children's eye level around the classroom. Don't choose only the most advanced work to display. It is important to affirm every child's work throughout the year. Once all the children have done this activity, you could bind all the drawings together to make a class book which the children can 'read'.

Creative play

Art and construction (Week 1)

Encourage children to talk with each other about what they are making and how it links to the story. You can give the children freedom with a wide range of materials or you can structure the activity by providing selected materials.

Fantasy play (Week 2)

Fantasy play can be noisy, but remember that when children play in this way, they have to negotiate roles and explain what they are doing. They also learn about representation - that one thing can stand for another. This will help them to understand that the writing on a page stands for the words we speak.

Some children might find it difficult to negotiate with others for roles and the sequence of events as they play. Try spending time with them guiding their play and interacting with children who are shy to join in.

Letter puzzles and games

Set up the puzzles and games before the lesson. The children might find it difficult to play the games independently at the beginning of the year. You may want to play one game with the whole class a few times before setting it up as a small group rotation activity. You may like to invite some parents to help manage the game activity.

Practising the letter

Children need regular practice to become confident with the letters of the alphabet. This activity gives children the practice they need to form letters correctly and connect a letter to the sound it makes and to objects that begin with that sound. Begin by setting up one activity for the group. As the year progresses and children become familiar with the activities, you can set up more than one activity.

Independent reading

Choose different types of storybooks, picture books, magazines, shopping brochures, picture dictionaries, atlases, non-fiction and recipe books for the children to 'read'. Include reading material that reflects the different languages and cultures in your class. Include content that connects with the theme of the story. Include copies of the Big Book, little books and sequence pictures. If you are able to spend some time with this group during rotation activities, you might try sitting next to a child and saying, "That looks like a lovely book. Can you read some of it to me?"

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 41 2019/03/04 08:58

ROTATION GROUPS

ACTIVITY

Drawing and emergent writing (teacher-guided)

Children learn to record their ideas through drawing and emergent writing, as you write what they say about their drawings.

YOU WILL NEED
A blank A4 page for each child; crayons

Week 1: My favourite part of the story

STEPS

1. Write **Ali and the paint** at the top of each child's page before the lesson.
2. Ask the children to point to the words of the title as you read them together.
3. Ask the children to think about the story and discuss the part that they like best. Give some suggestions. For example: "*Did you like the part when Ali climbed up to reach the paint?*" Encourage the children to draw their favourite part of the story.
4. Make a comment or ask a question about the drawing, such as: "*Keep trying – you are doing so well*" or "*Look at that little boy climbing on the chair! What do you think is going to happen next?*"
5. Ask the children if they would like to write something about their picture or if they would like you to write for them. If they would like you to write for them, keep them involved by asking them to say the words slowly as you write them down.
6. Thinking aloud as you write the child's sentence for example: "*Ali … climbed … onto … the … What word did you want to say next? Chair. I am going to write chair.*"
7. Write exactly what the child tells you, word for word or ask the child if they agree before making any changes to their wording. Remember to write neatly and clearly.
8. When you have finished writing, encourage the child to read the sentence with you. Point to each word as you read and acknowledge their efforts.

As children begin to understand the writing process, they may be more willing to write their own ideas. It is normal for their writing to include scribbles, letters, numbers or shapes. If a child spontaneously scribbles or tries to write, ask them to tell you what they have written and affirm their efforts.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 42 2019/03/04 08:58

Week 2: My own idea

STEPS

1. Write ***A funny thing happened to me*** at the top of each child's blank page before the lesson.
2. Ask the children to point to the words of the title as you read them together.
3. Remind the children that Ali climbed up onto the table and painted himself with different colours. Ask the children: "*Have you ever done something funny like Ali? What did you do? Can you remember something funny that another little child did?*" Ask the children to draw what they did or what happened.
4. Make a comment or ask a question about the drawing, such as: "*Oh, I cut my mom's curtains when I was little!*" or "*Gosh that looks funny! What is happening here?*"
5. Ask the children if they would like to write something about their picture or if they would like you to write for them. If they would like you to write for them, keep them involved by asking them to say the words slowly as you write them down.
6. Think aloud as you write the child's sentence for example: "*I... cut pictures out of a magazine... I was sitting on my mommy's bed ... and ... I cut ... her blankets by mistake.*"

Take care not to encourage stories about horrible punishments and consequences; this drawing is about a happy memory of a funny occasion.

Here's another idea linked to the story: write ***My dream present*** *on the children's pages and follow the steps for Week 2, but ask your class to draw a present or gift that they dream of receiving.*

7. Write exactly what the child tells you, word for word. Remember to write neatly and clearly.
8. When you have finished writing, encourage the child to read the sentence with you. Point to each word as you read and acknowledge their efforts.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 43 2019/03/04 08:58

ROTATION GROUPS

ACTIVITY Creative play

Children build on the story language and theme through pretend play and art and construction activities.

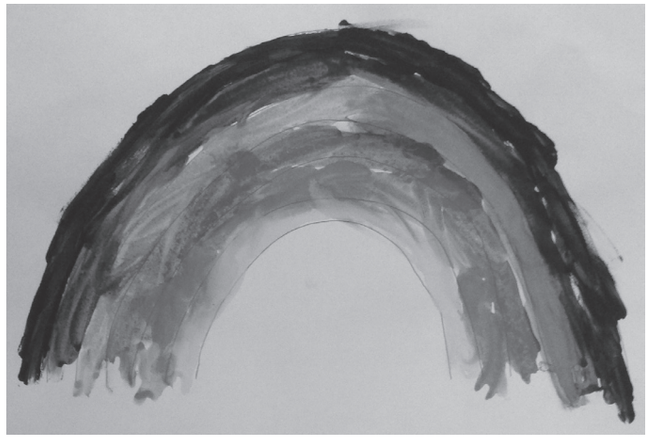
YOU WILL NEED
Pictures or books showing beautiful rainbows; large white pieces of paper; coloured paint

Week 1: Art and construction

STEPS

1. Ask children to look at pictures of rainbows and to point to the colours of the paint in the story.
2. Tell the children that they are going to paint a rainbow on the big piece of paper to make lovely gift wrap.
3. Show the children that they will be painting with their fingers, like Ali did in the story.
4. Remind the children to use all the colours to make a rainbow, and not just one colour.
5. Encourage the children to use the whole page and to paint a big rainbow.

Finger painting encourages the children to identify with Ali's character in the story. It can be a messy activity so make sure that the children are working in a suitable space with easy access to washing up facilities.



2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 44 2019/03/04 08:58

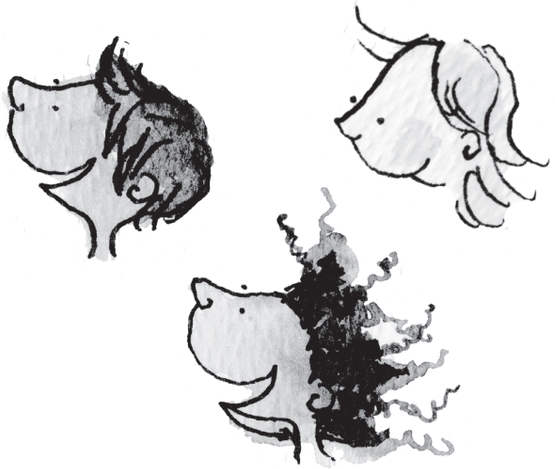
Week 2: Fantasy play

STEPS

1. Lead the group to the fantasy corner and settle them down quickly.
2. Read the rules for the fantasy corner to the children.
3. Show the children the new props in the fantasy corner this week. Discuss that Sam and Ali were given presents by their Mom. Do the children in your class get presents in their family? Many people give presents when there is a birthday or when it's Christmas or Eid or New Year – or maybe just when there is a party.
4. Say: "*Today you are going to play **It's a party**!*".
5. Now start them off by saying: "*There is going to be a party and the guests are coming soon! But look, the party is not ready! Is the food all set out? Are the decorations up? Who can help get the gift tags ready? (Point to the crayons). Who is going to help make the muffins? (Point to the play dough).*"
6. Visit the corner at least once to observe and encourage the children's game. For example, if they have spent some time preparing the party, you could arrive and knock at the door and say "*Hello! Here I am! Thank you for inviting me to this lovely party. Oh, wow, everything looks beautiful. I am so hungry, please show me what I can have to eat!*"

YOU WILL NEED

The following props: boxes covered in the wrapping paper the children made in Week 1; party equipment such as balloons and streamers, paper plates, paper cups, birthday candles, plastic cool drink bottles, etc.; paper, crayons and scissors; play dough



2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 45 2019/03/04 08:58

ROTATION GROUPS

ACTIVITY

Letter puzzles and games

Children consolidate their letter–sound knowledge as they do puzzles and play games.

YOU WILL NEED
A set of letter puzzles (page 57)

Letter puzzles

STEPS

1. Pick up a puzzle piece with a letter on it and say the sound that the letter makes. Show the children how you look for a picture that starts with that sound: "*This letter makes the sound* ***/s/****; let's look for a picture that starts with* ***/s/****… look there is a snake!*" Try and fit the pieces together. Show the children how they fit.
2. You could also begin by picking up a picture, naming it, saying the beginning sound and then looking for the corresponding letter: "*Here is a butterfly… butterfly starts with* ***/b/****. Let's look for a letter that says* ***/b/****.*"
3. Repeat this process, but choose a picture that is incorrect and show the children that the puzzle pieces do not fit.

Two games are available, depending on the levels of the children in your class. Start with the letter puzzles and only if you think your class is ready, introduce the post box game as an extra activity. Those children who don't know any letters or their sounds can begin by just trying to fit the puzzle pieces together. This will slowly build awareness of letters and beginning sounds in words. Encourage children to work in pairs so that they can learn from each other.

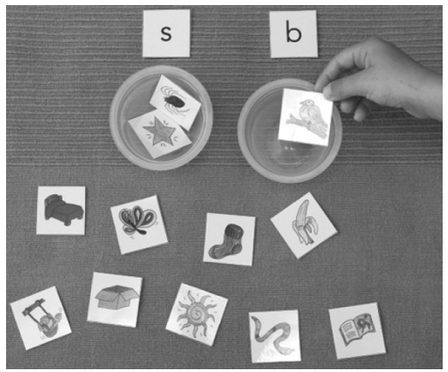
2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 46 2019/03/04 08:58

Post box game

YOU WILL NEED
Letters printed on card; picture cards that start with the corresponding sounds – choose two letters that have been taught in class already (page 52); small containers or 'post boxes' (page 59); Prestik

STEPS

1. Stick letter cards on the sides of the post boxes.
2. Spread the picture cards on the table.
3. Explain the rules of the game to the children:
   - Each child has a turn to pick up a picture card. The child holding the picture card must name the object in the picture and say the beginning sound.
   - The group agrees or gently corrects the child.
   - The child now places the picture card in the correct container.
   - The group agrees or gently corrects the child.
   - The game ends when all the cards have been posted.
4. If you have time, go through one of the containers with the group, saying the beginning sound of each object and confirming that it was correctly posted.



2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 47
2019/03/04 08:58

ROTATION GROUPS

ACTIVITY Practising the letter

Children work independently to practise the formation of the focus letters and draw objects that start with the focus sounds.

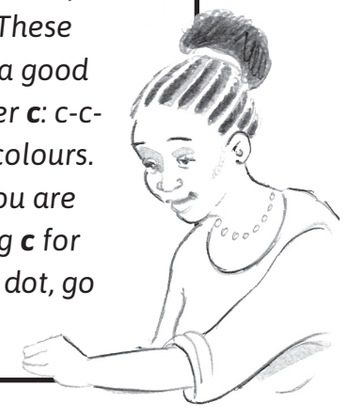
YOU WILL NEED
An activity page per child with a letter written on the page (photocopy the activity page on page 52 or write the letter as large as possible on pieces of paper); coloured pencils or crayons (six to eight different colours)

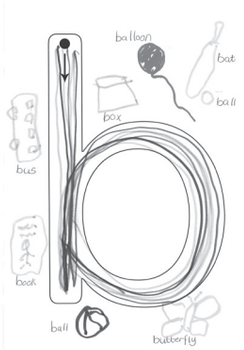
Rainbow letters

STEPS

1. In Week 1, practise the letter **b**. Point to the letter **b** and say: "*Do you remember this letter? It makes the sound* **/b/** *like in b-b-boy, b-b-ball, b-b-box.*" Ask the children to say **b-b-b-b-b** with you.
2. Ask the children to trace the shape of the letter with their fingers, starting from the dot: "*Start at the dot, go down, then up and around.*"
3. Explain to the children that they will be making rainbow letters. This means they will write over the letter on their page – each time in a different colour.
4. Ask the children to think of things that start with the sound **/b/** and to draw as many **/b/** pictures as they can on their page.

The activity steps focus on the letter ***b*** *and should be used in Week 1. In Week 2, follow the same steps, but focus on the letter* ***c****. These words from the story are a good way to introduce the letter* ***c****: c-c-climb, c-c-cupboard, c-c-colours. Remember to say what you are doing if you model writing* ***c*** *for the children: "Start at the dot, go around."*





2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 48 2019/03/04 08:58

ROTATION GROUPS

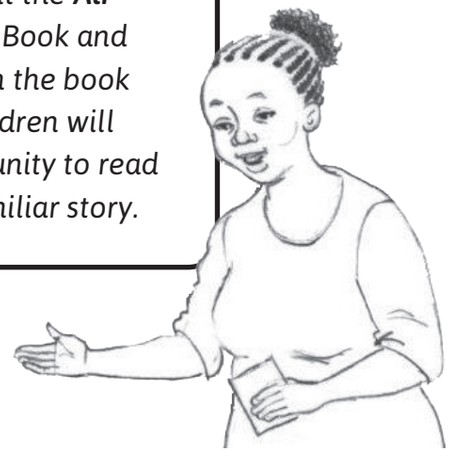
ACTIVITY Independent reading

Children learn to read independently and enjoy books and other printed material.

STEPS

1. Lead the group to the book corner and settle them down quickly.
2. Read the rules for the book corner to the children
3. Show the children what is new in the book corner this week. Ask them: *"Why do you think I have chosen these books/magazines/leaflets?"*
4. Spend a few minutes motivating and helping children to choose something they would like to read.
5. Visit the corner at least once to observe and encourage the children's reading.

*You could also put the **Ali and the paint** Big Book and sequence cards in the book corner. Some children will value the opportunity to read and retell the familiar story.*



2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 49 2019/03/04 08:58

Resources

How to make play dough

YOU WILL NEED
2 cups flour; 1 cup salt; 2 cups water; 2 dessert spoons oil; 4 teaspoons cream of tartar (available at supermarkets and chemists); food colouring

STEPS

1. Mix all ingredients and cook over heat until the dough comes away from the sides of the pot.
2. Store in an airtight container once it has cooled.

Show the children how to warm up the play dough by squeezing it in their hands. This is a good exercise for the children's hand muscles. Divide the play dough into enough plastic bags so that each child has a ball to work with. Children roll the play dough into a ball at the end of each activity. Pack it away in the bag to keep it fresh.

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 50

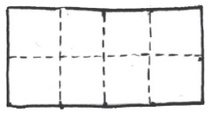
2019/03/04 08:58

How to make a little book

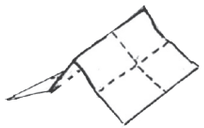
YOU WILL NEED
Photocopy of the little book for this story

STEPS

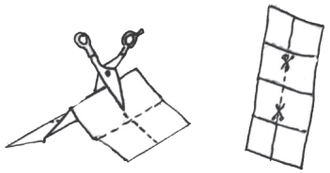
1 Fold an A4 page into eight pieces. Unfold.



2 Fold the page in half.

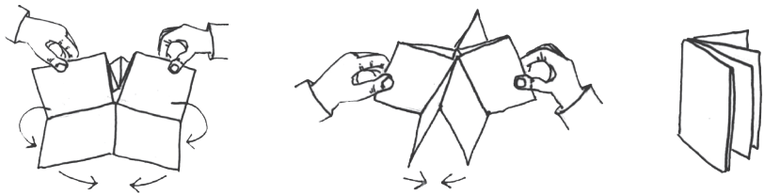


3 Cut on the middle fold.



4 Hold the page between your finger and your thumb on both sides.

5 Bring your hands down and together.



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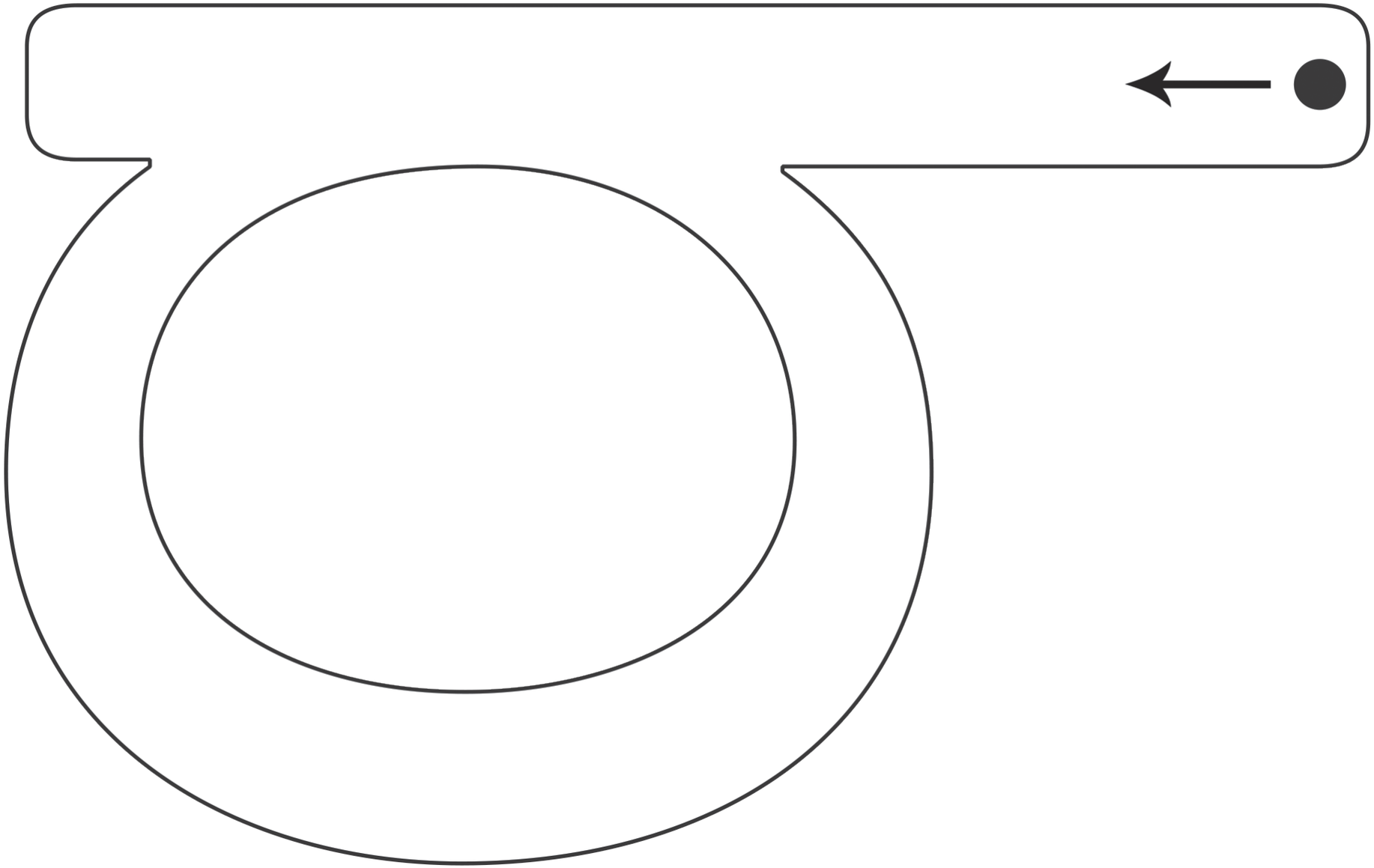

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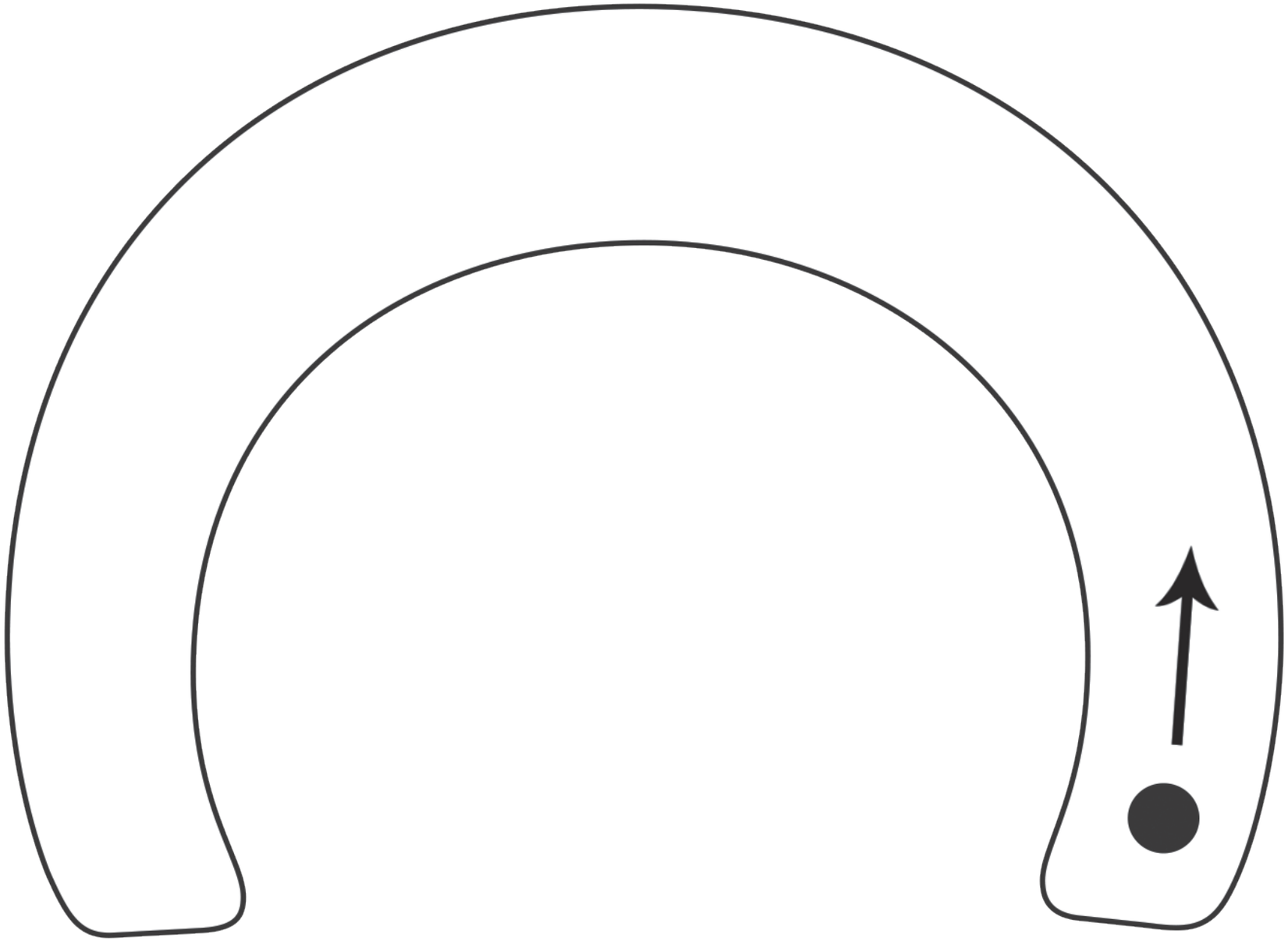

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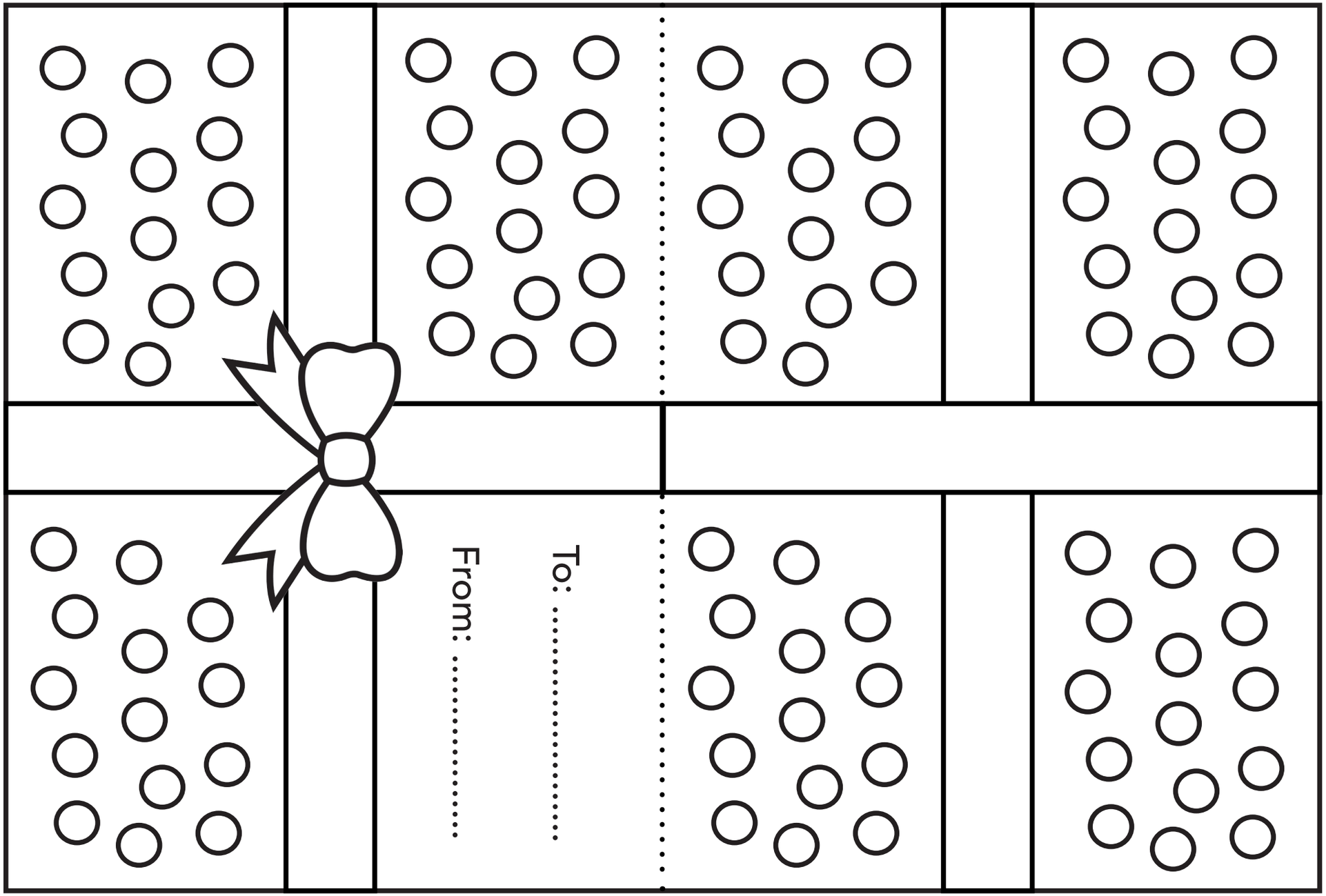

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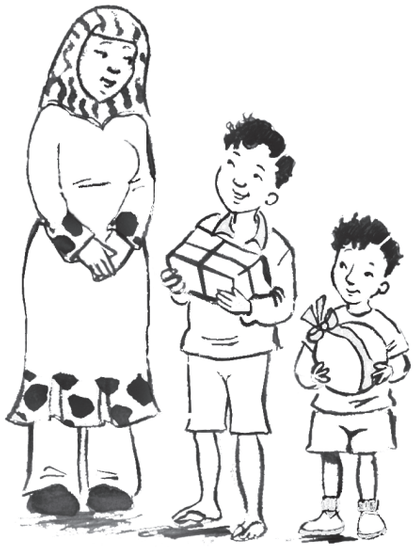

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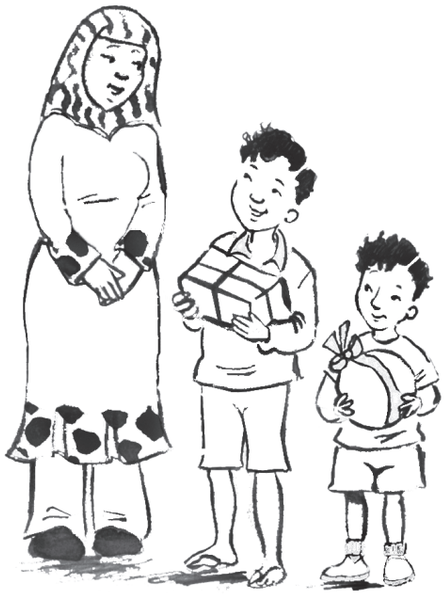

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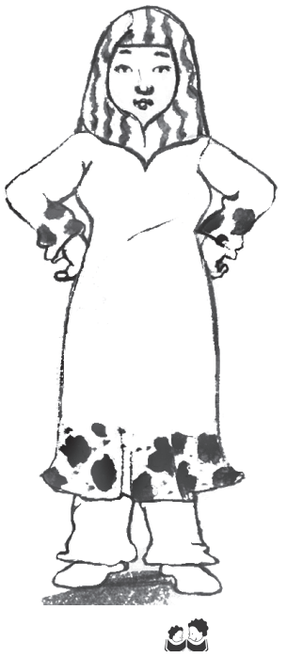

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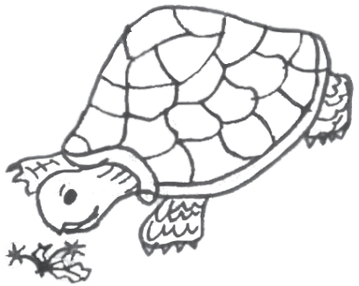

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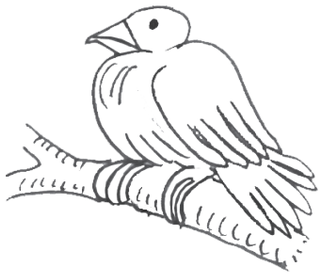

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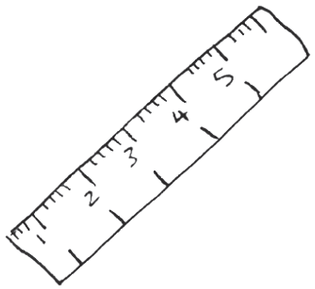

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2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 57

2019/03/04 08:58

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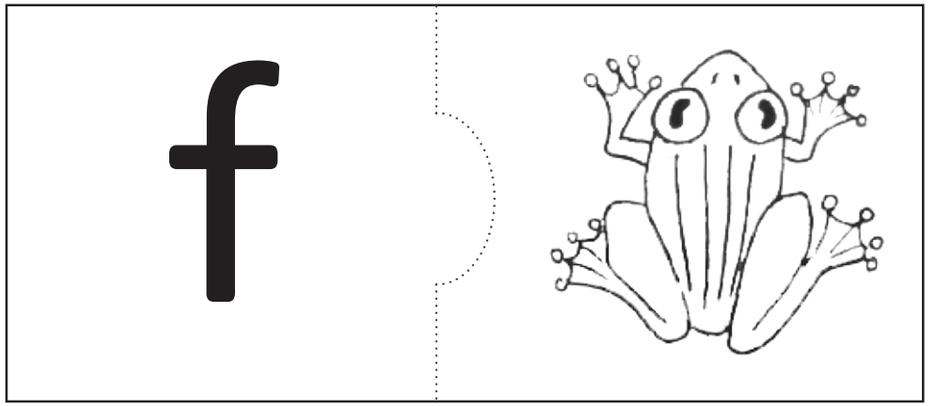

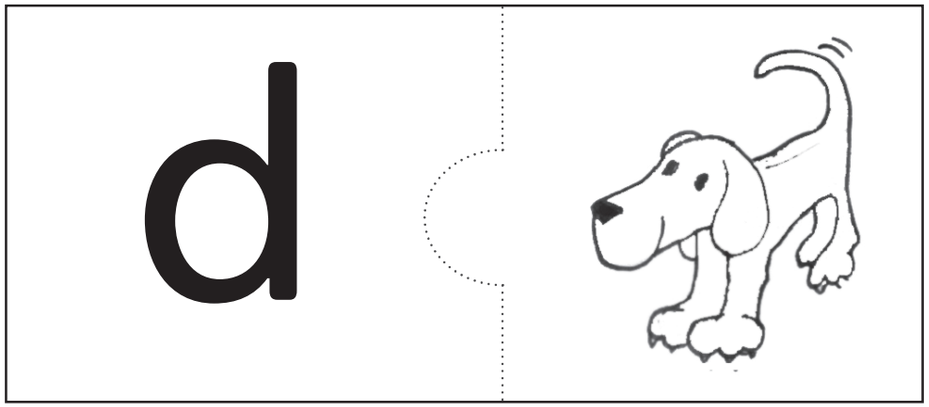

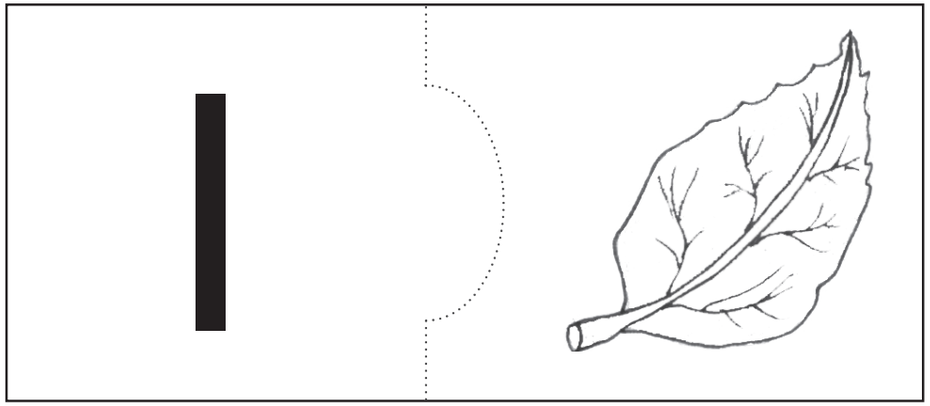

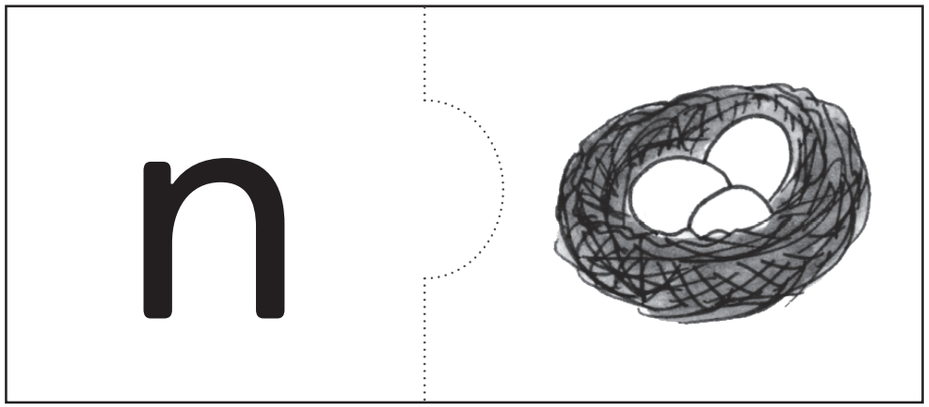

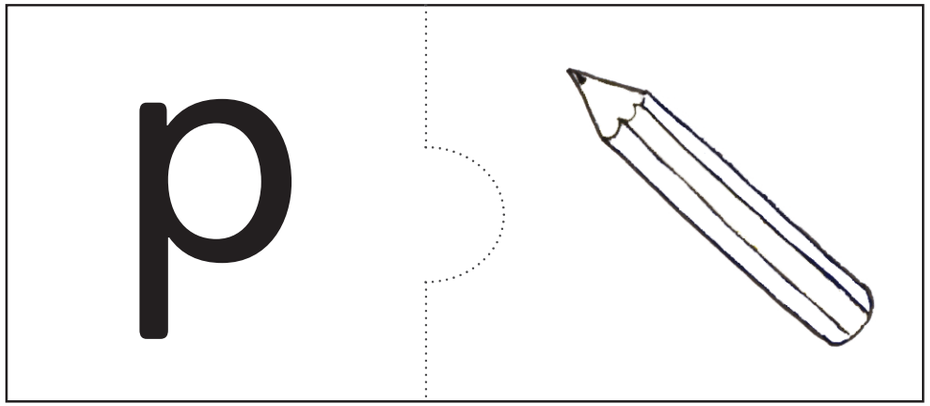

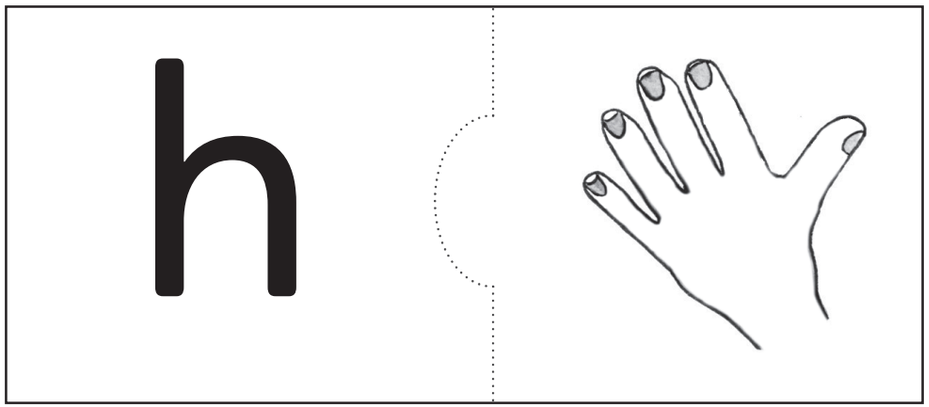

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 58

2019/03/04 08:58

Fold back

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2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 60

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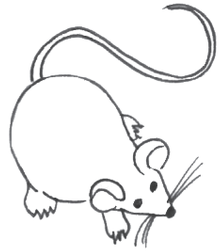
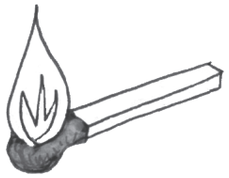
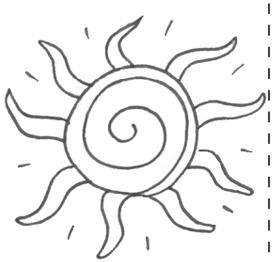
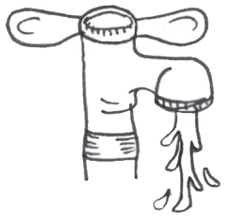
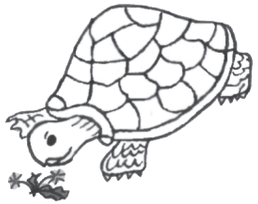
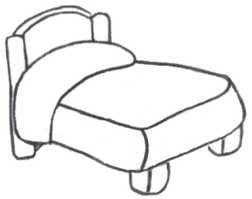
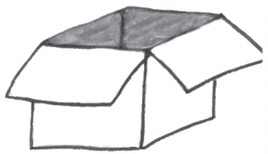
m						
s						
t						
b						

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 61 2019/03/04 08:58

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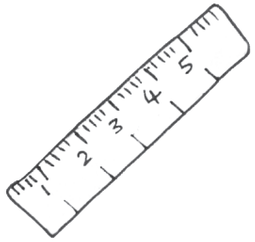
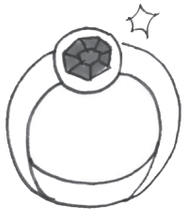
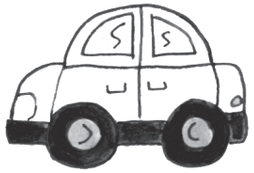
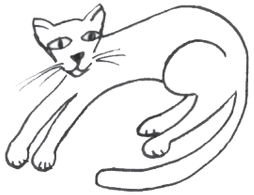
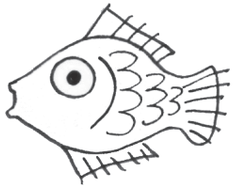
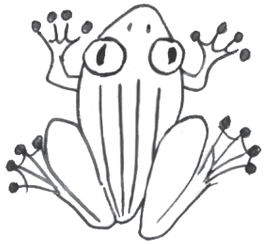
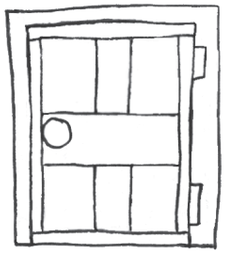
r						
c						
f						
d						

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 62

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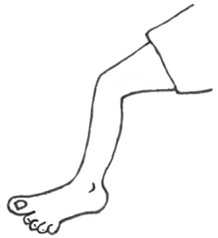
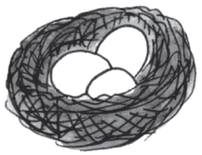
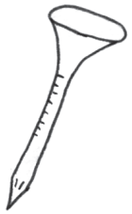
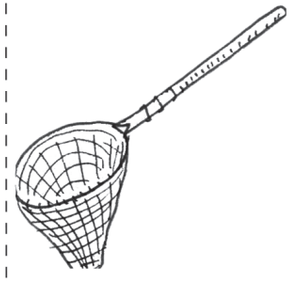
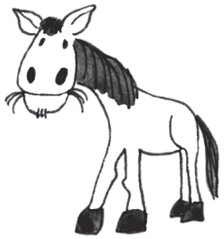
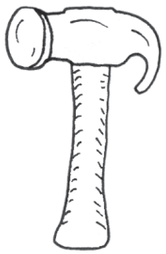
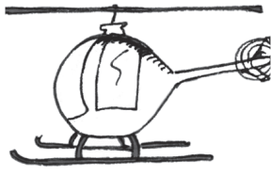
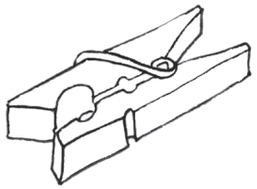
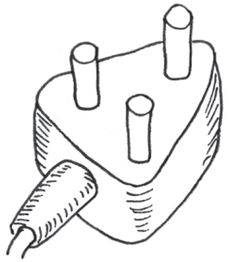
l						
n						
h						
p						

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 63

2019/03/04 08:58

My notes

2 Ali and the paint_E.indd 64 2019/03/04 08:58