

Blueberry Hill Books

Sample Daily Routine for Literary Instruction:

MEET AND GREET - a few seconds

I had a principal who did this with her staff. Even as an adult it was a nice way to start the day. Children begin each day with a personal interaction that shows you care about them.

Begin teaching as each child enters the classroom. Place a word (letter) on the door. Ask each student to trace and tell you the word (letter) as they enter the room.

THE WORD WORK ASSEMBLY LINE - 10 minutes **(THE ALPHABET ASSEMBLY LINE)**

When students have a routine to follow and know what is expected of them from the moment they enter the room, it gets the day off to a good start. The *Word Work* or *Alphabet Assembly Line* employs all the senses and provides lots of practice to help students learn how to print words or letter names.

Show your students how to use one material at a time. Don't introduce a new material until they can use previously introduced materials independently.

Choose from: Playdoh, dry erase boards and markers, a salt box, a MagnaDoodle, foam or magnetic letters for word building and letter sorting, smelly markers, etc.

To begin the assembly line:

1. Greet the students as they enter the classroom and have them trace and say the name of the letter you have placed on the door.

Put a green dot at the top left starting position to remind students they always begin at the top and go to the right when printing a letter.

2. Begin with one station and when your students are ready, increase it to three stations. Tell your students to practice saying the name of the word (letter) aloud as they build or write it and to ask a friend for help if they forget how to say their word (letter).

3. You can vary the material in the assembly line, but the fourth and last station should always remain. Ask your students to write their word (letter) on a small cardboard 'ticket' and bring it up to the carpet. Use a pencil so as not to damage clothing if the paper gets wet.

4. Move from the door to the carpet and ask the students to tell you their word (letter) before they put it in their pocket.

5. Ask your students to take their word (letter) out and to use the letter name throughout the day, i.e. lining up for recess, coming in from recess, or at home time. To make it even more memorable, have "*Word Alerts*" or "*Letter Alerts*" where you ring a bell and have everyone stop what they are doing to take out their letter. The teacher can focus on selecting children who need more practice at these times to say the letter out loud.

6. Tell parents to ask their children about the word (letter) in their pocket.

7. Show the students how they can give hints to help their parents guess which word (letter) they have in their pocket.

8. Later, this can become a *Word Work* center activity.

MORNING MESSAGE/ POEMS & SONGS - 10 minutes

Begin each day with a poem or song. As you read or sing, point to the words on a big chart. Use this time to review strategies, letters, initial sounds, and words that have been taught. Select a focus each day and limit your teaching to one strategy. Later, students will follow along in their individual poetry books (pg. 13 - [Level 1, 2, 3 Guidebook](#)). Companion poems for the BBH storybooks can be found in the [guidebooks](#).

LANGUAGE ARTS CENTERS - 30 minutes

A detailed description is in the [Level 1, 2, 3 Guidebook](#) (pgs. 10-24)

Centers provide children with the variety and movement suited for their 5-6 year old developmental level. Begin by introducing two center activities consecutively, so that expectations can be clearly taught. When independence is mastered run the two centers concurrently and introduce a third center time following the first two centers (center time will now take 45 minutes). When the students can work through three centers independently, begin guided reading lessons during center time (centers will now take 60 minutes). This will create groups of approximately six in a class of 24 students.

Do not wait to begin guided reading; just do it at another time (see *Choice Time* below).

MEETING OF THE MINDS – 3-5 minutes

As center time concludes, gather everyone on the carpet to check to see if each center has been cleaned up

(actually do this at each switch time!) and to talk about what has been learned. Did anyone get to practice a strategy, a letter? (Stick to your focus goal here.) Allow students a short amount of time for sharing.

RECESS

If you are one of those teachers who work through recess, go get a cup of tea and take a little break – you've earned it!

THE NAME GAME – 5 minutes

Students will be motivated to come to the carpet quickly for this one!

A detailed description can be found on pg. 22 of the [Level 1, 2, 3 Guidebook](#).

Use students' names to build letter and word knowledge. This is a whole class activity that can later be used as a center activity as well.

LANGUAGE ARTS GROUP LESSON – 15 minutes

Do you hear what I hear?

At the beginning of the year it is a good idea to begin with phonemic awareness activities as well as phonics lessons.

Phonemic awareness is the ability to distinguish the sounds or phonemes in words. Activities in phonemic awareness do not have to be linked to letters of the alphabet. For example, an activity could involve saying a word and then saying it again slowly to stretch out the sounds. Talk to the students about what slow motion means and use a rubber band as a visual. Stretch the rubber band as you stretch out the word. Rather than segmenting the sounds try to stretch the word out in a smooth fashion.

Phonics instruction links the sounds to letters of the alphabet. Pick letters to begin instruction that have the letter sound in their name. For example: Bb, Ss, Mm and Tt. In comparison, letters like Hh and Ww are more difficult and should be left until later.

Explain to your students that letters have a name and can make sounds – just like them! Some letters can make sounds. Some of them only make one sound and others can make more than one sound.

Word Work – Begin with the concept of a word, where the beginning and end of it is. Once your students have a working knowledge of most of the consonant letters and sounds, begin looking at how words work. There are suggestions for the main words from each book in the [guidebooks](#) and on the inside front cover of each book.

WRITING/DRAWING ACTIVITY – 30 minutes

While writing is often part of center time, it is important to allow time for writing instruction. Writing is one of the best ways to teach early reading concepts such as the concept of a letter, a word, a space, directional movement, first and last, etc.

Allow time for students to share what they have written either with a partner or with the class.

CHOICE TIME - 20 – 30 minutes

Use this time at the beginning of the year to begin guided reading on an individual basis. The Level 1 book [Big Birds, Little Birds](#) is a good choice for working on 1:1 match. For a suggested order for introducing the Level 1 BBH storybooks see pg. 55 in the [Level 1, 2, 3 guidebook](#). The guidebook also contains a blockplan with suggested strategies, prompts and center activities for the Level 1 to 3 books (pgs. 56-67). As the year progresses, *Choice Time* will end to create more available time for centers with a guided reading component.

LUNCH

MATH

SOCIAL STUDIES/SCIENCE/HEALTH

PREP. TIME

ART (WILL CANCEL OUT SOME OF THE DAILY ROUTINE)

RECESS

WORD WALL - 5 minutes

Begin by putting the letters up as headings.

If possible, set up the Word Wall so that it is accessible to your students. (See pg. 16 in the [Level 1, 2, 3 Guidebook](#) for more detail.)

Use a wizard or bird puppet to create a *Word Wizard* or *Word Bird* to add new words to the Word Wall.

STRATEGY WALL

As each new strategy is introduced, create a visual up on a wall for everyone to see.

PRINTING - 20 minutes

Introduce a new letter each day. The majority of the text the children will be reading consists mainly of lowercase letters, so it makes sense to teach lowercase letters in the printing lesson first. It is a good idea to show the students the letter's uppercase 'buddy' and talk about the sound the letter makes as well.

STORYTIME - 20 minutes

Cherish this time at the end of the day! It is an extremely powerful teaching opportunity!!

It is very important to read to your students to model reading with expression and build the receptive vocabulary that they will need to go beyond the emergent levelled storybooks.

Use this time to introduce or review an early reading strategy: i.e. "That didn't make sense to me. I'm going to try that again." This is also an ideal time to teach higher level comprehension strategies. A good one to begin with is *Making Connections*. (See *E-mail # 1 – Getting Started for teaching suggestions*.)

Vocabulary development happens naturally at story time. Record interesting words and use them during your conversations with students. Use vocabulary such as setting, main character, problem, solution and ending when talking about the story. The graphic organizers from the [guidebook](#) (see Blackline Masters) can be enlarged on a photocopy machine and used to structure a retelling of the story.