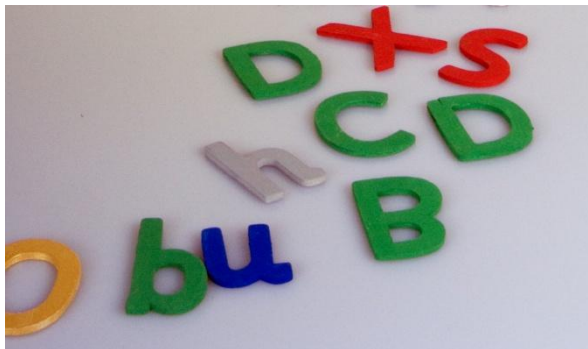


Building the Ark

Language focus	Standard alphabetical order
Learning skills	Breaking a long list into smaller chunks to help the memory
Time	10 minutes initially, thereafter a few minutes in subsequent lessons.
Preparation and equipment	An alphabet set.

This is an opportunity to revisit the letter names as you introduce (or reinforce) alphabetical order. The letters can be made out of any material, or even just printed or written on separate bits of paper.



Warm-Up: Lay out the letters randomly and ask the learners to take it in turns to pick one up and name it. To check how well they already know alphabetical order, ask them which are the first and last letters of the alphabet, and see if they can line them up in correct order. It's usually best to use an arc, so that all the letters remain in view without having to scan too far. Some students may already be able to put the letters in order, some may only know part of the alphabet. Those who are confident of alphabetical order can be teamed with the less confident students to support them in this activity.

Example Procedure (elementary level):

- 1) Pick up A and Z and place them at opposite ends of the arc. Place M and N in the middle, allowing space for the other letters to be slotted in.
Ask a learner what comes after A and make sure that they name 'B' as they place it in the right place. Go around the group asking learners to place the next letter, always naming it as they go. When the alphabet arc is complete, go through it, naming each letter, and encourage the learners to name them with you.
- 2) Muddle up the letters again and ask a learner to pick out A and Z, and place them as the beginning and end markers. Pick up B and place it next to A, saying 'A, B' as you do so. Go around the group as before, but this time students should pick up two letters and place them in the arc together as a unit.
- 3) When the arc is complete, again go through the alphabet, but name the letters in pairs. Try and maintain a good steady pace, stressing the rhythm.
- 4) If the learners still have energy, repeat the procedure, placing 3 letters at a time. Otherwise, leave this to another lesson.

Make it easier: Just do the first half of the alphabet to start with: A – M. Make sure this is secure before moving on to N – Z.

Make it harder: Start with the 2-letter sequence and work up to 3-letters and 4-letters at a time. Ask learners to name the letter and say its primary sound as well.

Differentiate: Ask students to place different numbers of letters as you nominate them. You could hold up cards with numbers on (or just fingers) to indicate how many they should place.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ