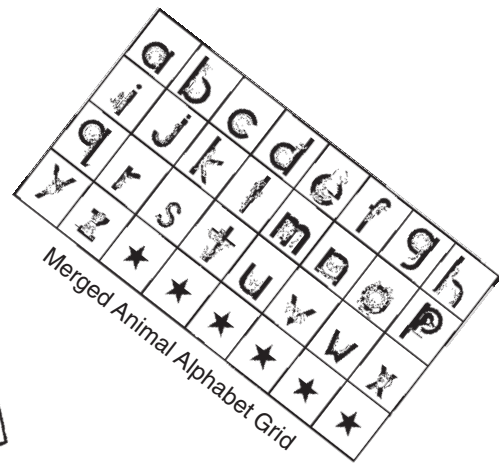
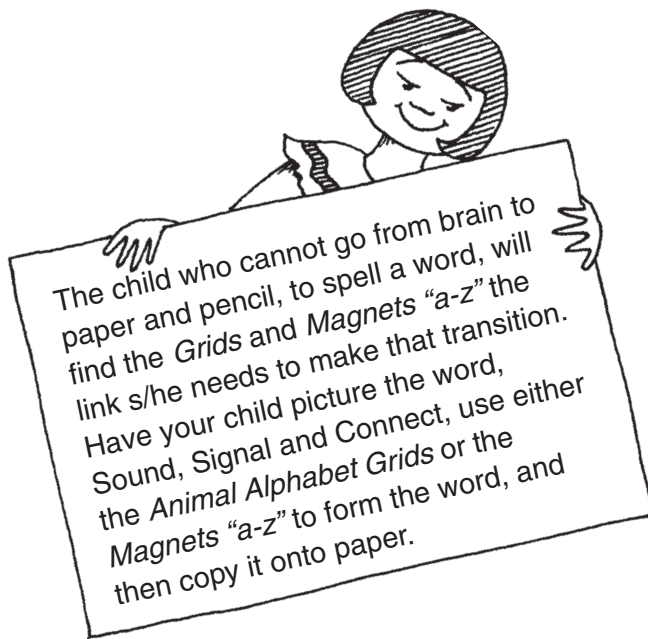


Chapter 7

The Animal Alphabet Grids and “a-z” Magnets



Animal Alphabet Grids

(Full instructions come with the *Alphabet Grids Package*)

There are five different reproducible *Alphabet Grids* included in the *Zoo-phonics® Parent Kit*. They are designed to give your child her/his own game board with which to manipulate the “a – z” Animal/Letters to reinforce alphabetic concepts for future reading, spelling, and writing. It can also be used to teach spelling and simple sentence structure, and for introducing capital letters at the appropriate time. You will notice that punctuation is included in the *Merged Capital* and plain *Capital Letter Grid Sets*.

You use one of the *Grids* as a game board, hereafter called the *Base Grid*. Take one of the *Grids* and cut it up. These game board pieces are called *Grid Pieces*. This little package packs an educational “wallop” when used correctly, creatively and often. First, just the fact that every child has a manipulative board with which to practice the alphabet or build words is wonderful. Your child will get the “feel” of how letters and letter sounds create words.



T : Remember that the Alphabet Grids in this Kit should be used as a Master. Make
I : copies of each and keep the Master in a safe place!
P

Grid Descriptions

1. The first *Alphabet Grid* is an *Animal Picture Grid*, with the Zoo-phonics Animals in the shape of lowercase letters. These Animals look like the ones on the *Animal/Letter Cards* (Set #1, yellow borders), but they have been reduced in size. The stars are used when you need a duplicate letter: mom = “mo* = mom”.
2. The second *Alphabet Grid* is the *Merged Animal/Letter Grid*. It shows the Animals merged on top of the lowercase letters like the reverse side of the *Animal Letter Cards* (Set #2, orange borders).
3. The third *Alphabet Grid* is the *Lowercase Letter Grid* and is comprised of lowercase letters only – no Animals. This is what children will see in books, etc. This is found on the reverse side of Card Set #2.
4. The fourth *Alphabet Grid* is a *Merged Capital Letter Grid* and is comprised of the Animals sitting on top of uppercase letters. This *Grid* also contains various punctuation marks for sentence structure. (This relates to Card Set #3, blue borders.)
5. The fifth *Alphabet Grid* is a *Capital Letter Grid* and is comprised of capital letters – no Animals. This *Grid* also contains various punctuation marks for sentence structure. (This relates to Card Set #3, reverse side.)

Sequential Use of the Alphabet Grids

Make sure your child knows her/his Animal friends well (the Shapes, Sounds and Signals) before using the *Alphabet Grids*. Because the *Grid Animals* are small, presenting the *Animal Picture Cards* first is a better presentation. Children can see the details of the Animal/Letters better if they first see the larger version.

Which Grids To Use First?

With any child (even children from the same family), readiness and abilities will differ. Each individual need can be met working with an *Alphabet Grid* that matches the developmental level of your child. For instance, one child might need just the *Animal Grid*, as s/he may not be quite ready for the letters. Another child may be ready to begin working with the letters in the *Merged* format. Follow the suggested sequence, allowing as much time as needed on any level.

The transitional nature of the *Alphabet Grids* allows the youngest child in the family to work with the older children in the family. These young children can start with *Animal Grid Pieces* placed on top of the *Animal Base Grid*. Then, as they progress, the *Animal Pieces* may be placed on top of the *Merged Animal/Letters*; and then the *Merged* on top of the *Letters*, thus making the transition into the lowercase letters.

When ready, the *Alphabet Grids* may be used as spelling boards, on which s/he can practice Signaling and spelling the reading vocabulary words or weekly spelling list.

How to Prepare the Alphabet Grids (Full instructions are given on the cover of the Alphabet Grids Packet)

1. Each child needs two *Alphabet Grids* – one cut into pieces, and one left uncut. Make extra Grid sets so that other family members can play.
2. Laminate both *Alphabet Grids* (before cutting up the one *Alphabet Grid*).
3. The *Alphabet Grid* that remains whole (not cut up) acts as a game board or *Base Grid*.
4. The second *Alphabet Grid* will be cut up into individual pieces. Make sure this *Alphabet Grid* is a slightly different color from the *Base Grid*. It makes it easier for eyes to discriminate between the *Grid Pieces* and the *Base Grid*. A soft green matched to a soft blue works. White *Grids* are a little hard on the eyes and are uninteresting.
5. With an indelible felt pen, write a number (the same number on each piece) on the back of each cut up *Piece*. This way, upon finding a *Grid Piece* on the floor, you can keep the sets organized. This will make your life much easier!
6. Place each set of *Grid Pieces* in an envelope with the corresponding number written on the outside. This becomes a set. Let each child in the family design her/his own envelope with an Animal theme.

Alphabet Grid Activities

Matching

Choose the appropriate *Alphabet Grids* (*Base Grid* and *Grid Pieces*) for your child to match. Before placing each piece on the *Base Grid*, have him/her give Sound and Signal.

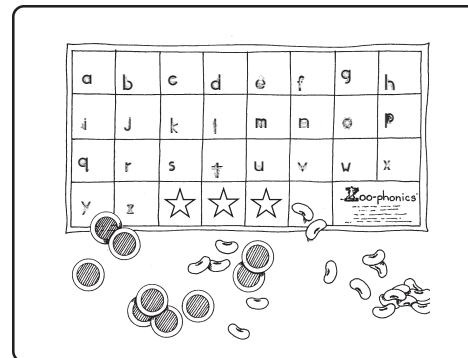
Suggested Sequence for Matching:

- 1) Animal cut ups placed on Animal Base.
- 2) Merged Animal cut ups placed on Animal Base.
- 3) Lowercase Letter cut ups placed on Merged Animal Base.
- 4) Merged Capital cut ups placed on Merged Animal (Lowercase) Letter Base.
- 5) Capital cut ups placed on Merged Capital Letter Base.
- 6) Capital cut ups placed on Lowercase Letter Base.

Alphabet Grid Bingo Games

Give each child the appropriate *Alphabet Grid* and 26 markers (beans, discs, buttons, etc.). Make sure to follow the suggested sequence. Vary the game in the following ways:

- a. The caller gives an Animal's name (Zeke Zebra). The players respond with Sound and Signal.
- b. The caller gives the Sound and Signal of a different Animal (Jerry Jellyfish). The players call out Jerry Jellyfish and Signal and Sound.
- c. The caller gives just the Signal. The players mark the correct square on the Grid, and then give Sound and Signal.
- d. The caller gives just the Sound. The players mark the correct square, and then give both Sound and Signal.



- e. Try a game of silent Bingo. The caller gives a silent Signal only. The players mark their *Grids* and respond with a silent Signal.
- f. After a game of “Make It Say...” or spelling practice, the players will “reset” the pieces onto their *Grids* and proceed with a game of Backdoor Bingo, using any variation above, (a – e). The players respond to the caller by picking up the correct *Grid Piece* and placing it in the envelope. They have reinforced their skills, cleaned up, and had fun at the same time.

When playing Backdoor Bingo, if a particular Animal/Letter cut up has already been called, the player may choose any Animal to Signal, and then place a star in the envelope.

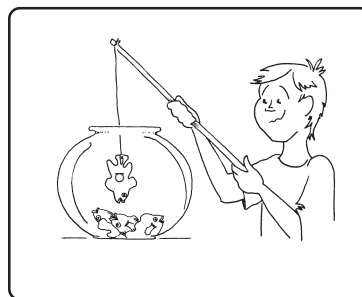
A Picture Safari!

Try this activity: Reduce the *Grid* (Animal or Merged) to 75%. Write the name of each participant at the top (when mom and dad play, any game is more fun). Place the *Zoo-phonics Animal Cards* around the room along with pictures from National Geographic, Ranger Rick magazines, Zoo-Books, etc. Now have the players locate as many Zoo-phonics Animals as they can find, within a certain time, and mark an “X” on top of those Animals. If they find the Animal more than once, they can add an extra “X” on the *Grid* picture for extra points. This activity can be a warm up for a real trip to the zoo.

The object is to use the *Grid* as a record keeper of all the discovered “Zoo-Animals.”

Go Fish!

Cut up an *Alphabet Grid* of choice and fill a fish bowl. Have the students pick a *Grid Piece* from the bowl and give the Sound and Signal. The fish bowl can be left on the table in case family members want to test their skills. You can place these in plastic eggs and hide them too.



Story time

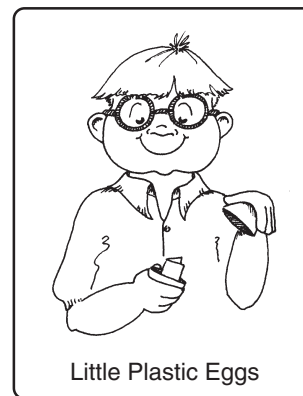
Read a familiar story to your child(ren). Say, “Listen carefully to the sounds that the words make.” Tell her/him that you are going to stop and ask what the first sound in a particular word is. Using the *Alphabet Grids*, have her/him hold up the correct initial sound. (This can be done with the *Zoo Magnets*, also.)

The Scotch Tape-Alphabet Grid Game

Run off several copies of one of the *Alphabet Grids* (your choice) for each child in the family. Cut them up and place the sets in envelopes. Have several rolls of removable transparent tape available around the room. The child(ren) are to label the items in the home by determining their initial sounds. Set a time limit of, perhaps, 10-15 minutes. Call time. Walk around the house together, looking at the “labels.” Determine the word it stands for, and then give Sound and Signal of the first letter. This is wonderful for the child who needs extra help pronouncing words. It is great for vocabulary development. A shoe box makes a great “a-z” storage container! Inexpensive too!

Scrambled Egg Matching or Spelling

You can make a matching or spelling game with *the Grid Pieces* and some plastic eggs. Start by choosing the task you want your child to learn or reinforce. Perhaps you want him or her to match the Animal Letters to the *Merged Animal Letters*. Simply make extra copies of the chosen Grids, and then cut them up. In each egg, fill 6 or so of the Animal Picture Letters, then their Merged counterparts. The child is to “crack open” the egg, Signal, Sound as s/he makes the matches. Please, always check his or her work. You can do the same for matching the *Merged* to the *plain Letters*; the *Merged Animal Letters* to the *Merged Capital Letters*; the *Merged Capital Letters* to the *plain Capital Letters*. Try unscrambling words. Place the cut up Grids in the egg to spell a certain CVC word. Tell the child what the word is, and s/he has to unscramble the Grid Letters to make the word. Always encourage your child to Sound and Signal and say the word (some day s/he won’t have to!). Remember, part of the fun is gently cracking the egg on the child’s head, mom or dad’s head or the table, then performing the task! Use the Word Lists found on Page 47, 50 and 61.



Little Plastic Eggs

Spell Words with Grid Pieces

For the child who is developmentally ready, give a simple word and have her/him use the cut-up *Grid Pieces* to make up the word. Check to see if the word is spelled correctly, and then glue those onto a piece of paper. Always encourage Signals and Sounds.

Using “a - z” Magnets with The Animal Alphabet Grids

(The Magnet Board is on the reverse side of the Chalkboard.)

Make sure you teach the Sounds, Shapes and Signals of the alphabet through the *Animal/Letter Cards* (Sets #1 and #2) FIRST before using the *Magnets*. Let the *Magnets* be a great “a – z” reinforcement tool. It then becomes a spelling board, so your child(ren) can manipulate the letters to form words.

Both the *Animal Alphabet Grids* and the *Magnets* offer a great alternative to the traditional way of writing words and sentences with paper and pencil. The set of *Magnets* features 26 Merged Animal/Letters and four stars for repeated letters. The *Magnets* can be used with the *Magnet Board* found on the reverse side of the *Chalkboard*, or on the refrigerator. You can place the *Magnets* on a cookie sheet (do not use aluminum) with the *Animal Alphabet Grids*. (Attach a copy of one of the laminated *Animal Alphabet Grids* to the cookie sheet with a small piece of rolled scotch tape. We suggest you make copies of the *Animal Alphabet Grids*, always keeping your master copy.)

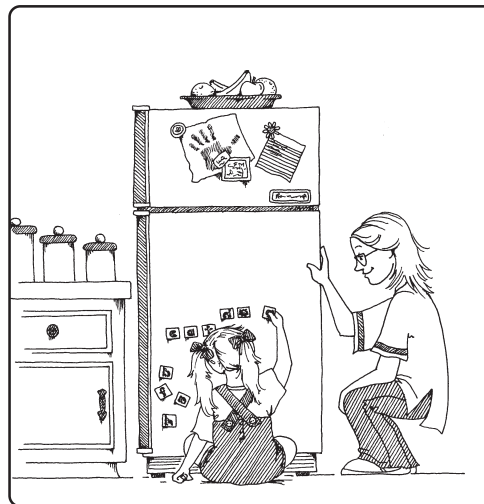
Activities

Play “Find the Animals.”

For a young child, have her/him find a specific *Magnet* from a selection of three and then six *Magnets*, gradually increasing the number from which to choose. Ask your child, “Can you find ‘allie alligator’?” as you give Sound and Signal. S/he will find “allie,” and place it on the *Magnet Board*, (or refrigerator) repeating Sound and Signal.

Variation 1: Ask the question using only the Name of the Animal. Have your child respond with Sound and Signal, and then find the correct *Magnet*.

Variation 2: Have her/him find a particular *Magnet* when you give only the Sound and Signal as a clue.



Variation 3: Call out the sound only.

Variation 4: Call out the letter name (only after letter sounds have been mastered!).

Match the Magnets to the Animal Alphabet Grid

(Roll tape and place in each corner of the *Grid*. Place the *Grid* on a cookie sheet or refrigerator.)

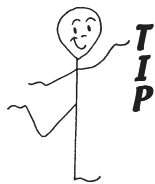
Step 1: Ask your child to match the *Magnets* to the *Animal Alphabet Grid* by giving Sound and Signal. When this is completed “a – z,” try Step 2.

Step 2: Call out an Animal Name (“allie alligator”). Your child will give Sound and Signal, and then remove the *Magnet* from the *Grid* and place it in the *Magnet* “baggie.” When your child is proficient at this, try Step 3.

Step 3: Give the Sound of a letter (“a,” for example), and ask your child to give the corresponding Animal Name. S/he then removes the *Magnet* from the *Grid* and places it in the baggie.

Play “What’s the First Sound You Hear?”

Have the *Magnet Board* available, with the *Magnets* spread out in front of the child, “a – z,” (or on the cookie sheet). Call out a word (“book,” for example). Ask, “What is the first Sound that you hear in the word?” Repeat the word, exaggerating the initial Sound. The child is to choose the correct Letter Magnet and place it on the *Magnet Board*. If it is correct, give lots of praise, and then Sound and Signal together. If it is incorrect, say the word and the initial sound again and then, together, Sound and Signal. If the child responds correctly, try another word. Allow the child to be the teacher if s/he is ready.



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 You can also place all the *Magnets* on one of the *Grids*, and ask for initial sounds
 of words (use the Word Lists on Page 35 and 49). The child can lift the *Magnet*
 from its place on the *Grid*. (You can call that “place” the Animal’s “habitat.”)

Variation: Hold the *Magnet Board* with the *Magnets* on the table or floor in front of you. This time, say a word and place the correct initial letter on the *Magnet Board* (don’t let her/him peek). Repeat the word. As soon as the child Sounds and Signals the first letter in the word correctly, show the letter on the Board. Give lots of praise, and perhaps a small treat or reward for each correct answer!

Printing Practice

Spread the *Magnets* out in front of your child. Call out an Animal/Letter either by Animal name, sound, or Silent Signal. The child is to grab the appropriate *Magnet*, put it on the *Chalkboard* (reverse of the *Magnet Board*), Signal and Sound, and then write the letter. If your child is very young, accept and praise any attempt. S/he will improve with age and practice. For more printing practice, you might want to purchase either the *Zoo-phonics® Computer Fonts* or the *Zoo-phonics® Activity Worksheets Level A*.

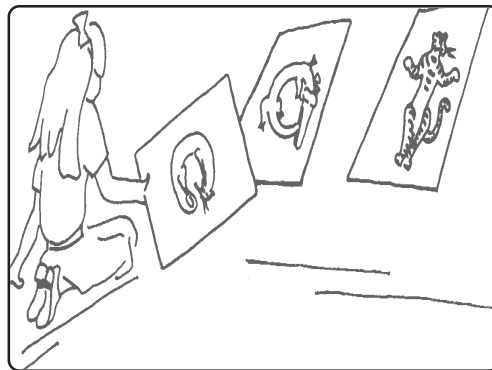
Recognize the Sounds at “Story Time”

Lay out the *Magnets*, “a – z.” Read a familiar story to your child. Exaggerate a particular word in the story. For example, “Once upon a time (t-ime). . .” This way, your child will really hear the initial sound. Repeat the sound several times, if necessary. S/he will place the correct *Magnet* on the Board (or lift it off the Board and show it), and give the Sound and Signal (“t”). You can then ask, “What other sounds do you hear in the word?” S/he, hopefully, will pick up the “m,” and maybe even the “i.” Give lots of praise for this. Continue reading and choose another word, exaggerating the initial letter sounds. Keep going until you see your child’s attention wane.

Play the “Make It Say...” Game with Magnets

You have already been introduced to this game with the *Animal/Letter Cards*, the *Merged Animal/Letter Cards* and the *Lowercase Letter Cards*. Now try it with the *Magnets* and the *Animal Alphabet Grid* attached to the cookie sheet. (If you need to, you can let your child know, through Sound and Signal, what Animal/Letter to choose.) Use the Word Lists on Page 47, 50 and 61.

- 1) Have your child match the *Magnets* to the *Animal Alphabet Grid*.
- 2) Start by calling out “a-t = at,” giving a strong Sound and Signal.
- 3) The child will pull down the “a” and “t” *Magnets*, place them on the *Magnet Board* next to the cookie sheet, and then Sound, Signal and Connect the word.



- 4) Now, ask her/him, “Can you Make it Say, ‘c-a-t = cat?’” giving Sound, Signal and Connecting the word. Use a strong Sound and Signal on the first letter.
- 5) Your child will pull down the “c” and place it to the left of the “a-t” on the *Magnet Board*.
- 6) Together Sound, Signal and Connect (say) the word “c-a-t = cat.”
- 7) Have the child replace the “c” on the cookie sheet and then ask, “Can you Make it Say, ‘h-a-t = hat?’” Continue with other “at” family words. Do not rush it. Spend more time with the *Animal Picture Cards*, if necessary.



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 : If your child needs help, trace your index finger below the *Magnet Letters*, left :
 : to right, as you sound out the word. You might want to place one of the stars on :
 : top of the first letter on the left to help your child always begin on the left side. :

Spell with the Magnet/Chalkboard

Spread the *Magnets* on the floor, place them on the cookie sheet, or on top of the *Grid*. Call out a simple CVC word. (Use the Word Lists on Page 47, 50 and 61.) The child will find the appropriate letters to spell the word. Sound and Signal the word together to double-check the child’s spelling. Ask her/him to use this word in a sentence. When developmentally ready, s/he can then write the word on the *Chalkboard* (the reverse side), or on paper. Check her/his work and give praise for a correct word or for the effort!

Read with the Magnet/Chalkboard

Have the *Magnets* spread out in front of you. Place a VC/CVC word on the *Magnet Board*. Your child is to read it. At first, s/he can use Body Signals to Sound Blend. In time, after much reinforcement, s/he will be able to quickly read the word without Signaling. That is the goal!