

Multimodal Teaching and Learning Lesson Topics and Ideas

This booklet is a sampler of interactive teacher-led conversational learning areas that can be elicited from the simplest of sentences. This example is from the Vowels book. **Adam is an astronaut.**

Every sound, word and sentence in the books in this series has the same rich potential.

In the teaching notes on the following pages, the teacher's words are in non-italics, and the explanatory commentaries to the teacher are in italics.

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Say: a a astronaut, ay ay acorn etc

a as in hat

a a

astronaut



Adam is **a**n **a**stronaut.

1 The sounds of A and a

Listen to the a sounds as I read slowly and move my hand under the words as I read.

Look at my mouth as I say the a sound.

How many ay letters are in the sentence?

Why is there a big/capital A at the beginning of the sentence but not in the other words?

Teach the upper and lower case letter partners in as many ways as possible.

2 Vowels

Let's say the alphabet slowly in basic letter sounds on this Alphabet Chart. (*Echo teacher in one, three and five-letter alphabetically correct groups.*)

Let's do this again, but this time let's work out which letter sounds can be said with your mouth wide open and which ones need your mouth and tongue to move.

Open-mouthed voiced sounds are vowels.

Consonants can be unvoiced or unvoiced but need a tongue or mouth movement.

Do you have vowels in your name? What letter names and sounds do they have?

3 Consonants

Let's say the letter sounds that are not vowels.

Feel how your tongue and lips trap the air to make these sounds.

These letters and sounds are called consonants.

Do you have any consonants in your name? *etc*

Adam is an astronaut.

This is the first sentence in Stage 2 of Vowels in the Reading Works Series.

This is a sample of interactive teacher-led conversational learning areas that can be elicited from the word

Adam

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Ask questions that lead learners to discover, think about, use and remember selected points.

Modify, adjust and expand to suit your needs.

4 Experiment

Hold your nose and say these sentences slowly.

Adam is an astronaut

My mum might take me to the museum *(do this a few words at a time)*
next Monday to see the mountain lions.

Discovery: The sounds *m* and *n* cannot be made if the nose is blocked. These *m* and *n* sounds are called nasal stop letters.

Nasal means nose, as in nasal drops and nasal drips.

5 The sentence (and the incorrect run-on sentence)

A **sentence** is a complete idea put into words. A sentence ends in a full stop. A full stop is a good place to take a breath.

Teach more experienced learners how to avoid the grammatically incorrect run-on sentence.

An example of a run-on sentence: I like books they are very interesting.

6 Upper case letters

Look at these (random selection from classroom-library) books to find all the capital letters. What do you notice? (*They come at the beginning of every sentence and after a full stop and a space.*)

Now look at these maps and atlases. What do you notice?

(Names of places start with a capital letter. Similarly days, months, ships, newspapers etc.)

Look at the written names of everyone in our class. What do you notice? The first letter of a person's name is called their initial.

What are the initials of your whole name? Let's say them loudly one by one around our class circle.

7 Letter names

Learn the upper and lower case letter shape partners and their letter names (over several weeks).

Can you say the letter names of your name? This is spelling. (*Leads to letter-order memorisation.*)

Spell orally a variety of other words to a partner or around the class while looking at the word. Discuss sounds. Use picture dictionaries from class library.

Watch while I write the sentence about Adam. Say the letter names as I write.

(Write the words but without spaces between the words.) What's wrong? Elicit the need for a space between words.

Collect alphabet books as a class project. Children select, share and discuss with a partner.

8 The schwa in more detail

The second a in Adam is the schwa sound. It sounds like a short soft grunt. (*Go into enough depth to suit learners.*)

The schwa is very popular because it is the most-used vowel sound in English. The schwa symbol is ə.

Say the word Adam. Look at the mouth of your partner while you say Adam slowly. What did you discover?

Every vowel letter has many different sounds and many partners. The schwa sound can be represented by any and all vowels, including y as a vowel.

Here are some examples of the schwa sound shown beside its vowel letter. Can someone come out and draw a circle around the vowels that match the letter at the beginning of the row?

I will now say the words. Listen to the loud and soft parts of each word I say.

Do again but underline the loud syllables.

What can you hear and see?

ɑ comma atlas giant alphabet

e carpet basket taken dozen

i artist pencil animal uniform

o pilot computer control cotton

u circus August supply cactus

Discoveries to discuss:

The schwa is always heard in the unstressed syllable, and in unstressed one-syllable words when they are in a sentence.

Examples: Did you hear a loud bang when the tree branch fell? I will go to see what the damage is straight away. (schwa is blue)

Adam *continued*

9 The consonant/vowel pattern in Adam

If I said that words have consonant and vowel patterns, the pattern for Adam would be vowel, consonant, schwa vowel, consonant.

Look at your own name. Work with a partner to discover the vowel and consonant pattern for your first name. This is the cv pattern for my family name. (*Teacher does own name.*)

We use the v and c letters as short-cut abbreviations for the words vowel and consonant. Can you say the pattern of vowel and consonant for the whole Adam sentence. Practise it in your head a few times first.

10 Your name—revision on another day

Can you remember what a vowel is and what a consonant is?

If I write v and c on the board, what am I thinking about?

Is there a schwa sound in your family name?

What vowel letter does it go with?

11 More ideas for c v c patterns

Collect words to find their v and c patterns.

Design a booklet with a partner to write in the words you have found. Add some illustrations.

Have a completed booklet sharing session.

12 Syllables

The word Adam has two syllables. Clap and say Ad-am to hear and feel these syllables. One is loud and one is soft.

How many syllables are there in your name? Say your name and clap the syllables (word parts) around the circle. Come in on time. Listen to know when it is your turn. Don't be late? (*Do several times after mixing the circle positions.*)

What about the word chocolate when I clap its syllables? How many claps?

What about astronaut? (*three*) Does anyone's name also have three syllables?

Can you clap and say the syllables for Adam is an astronaut? Notice the slow slow slow slow quick-quick slow pattern. Say/write/read in music: taa taa taa taa ti-ti taa or



13 Handwriting terminology

Look at the height of the letters in Adam. Two are tall and two are short. The small ones have a funny name: x-size. Why, do you think?

There is a handwriting similarity between a and d. Can you see it when I write them on the board? *Discuss other letter similarities if appropriate. Teaching correct pencil hold and letter formation is vitally important for beginner writers.*

Tall letters are called ascenders. How many ascenders in Adam? Descenders go below the writing line. Does Adam have any descenders? Upper case letters are ascenders.

The upper case A is made as two sideways down stroke lines and one horizontal line. The pencil is lifted between each of these three lines. The m letter is written without a pencil lift.

14 The letter s has two sounds

Listen to these two long sounds I make: s and z. Say them with me. What happens in your mouth when you say them? Listen carefully to hear the difference. Now feel your throat to feel a buzzy vibration of your vocal folds when you say z. Do the same for s. (*No vibration means unvoiced.*)

Say sue. Now say zoo. Practise saying these words softly and slowly with a partner.

Experiment: Hold up one finger for sue, and two fingers for zoo. Hold up your index finger when I say a word with s.

Hold up your little finger when I say a word with the z sound.

Say *is* and *astronaut*.

Do you hear something interesting about *is* and *astronaut*? (*Say slowly and linger on each s.*)

Both have the letter s, but the written letter s in the word **is** has a voiced z sound, while the s letter in *astronaut* has a an unvoiced s sound.

Advanced exploration:

Let's try and work out a rule for saying s or z? Here are some clue words to think about while I say them and write them on the board.

Clue 1 words: sun sat dots its wets jets Saturday this lips mouse cats mist fast bats stops pats

Clue 2 words: is as his has hers Tuesday roses was mums bags runs trees girls passes daisies

Adam is an astronaut.

Interactive teacher-led learning
conversational topics that can springboard from the
words

is astronaut an

15 an

Can you think of any words with **an** in them?

One is something you need for holding things.

can
fan
began
hand
January

16 The **an** rule

Can you notice anything when I write these words?

Teacher writes up for all to see:
an apple, an egg, an igloo, an idea,
an umbrella.

What if I write/say *a apple, a egg?* (*etc*)

Lead questioning to elicit why **an** is needed before words that begin with a vowel.

14 continued i

Deduced rule 1. The s sound happens for first letter s words. It also comes after a voiceless sound such as p t k f and the voiceless s and th.

Examples: pups writes books laughs graphs cliffs myths tablecloths wishes months

Deduced rule 2. The z sound for the letter s comes after a voiced sound.

Examples: rubs cards rags halls poems pens kings gloves girls/boys plays sees flies judges quizzes dishes pushes

14 continued ii

Some words have both the s and z sounds:
says sausages sandals misses sandwiches bosses passes

Discuss tongue positions and how much air is pushed out of the mouth for the s and z sounds.

17 Creative assessment

Can you read these words? (*discussed*)

an on in

Circle Talk: Make up a sentence using one or two of these words. In a minute, we'll go around the circle for everyone to say their sentence.

(*Teacher models good and not so good examples. Discussions on what determines a good sentence and how to add 'polish'.*)

Educational benefits that this method provides (regarding the listening to and saying of improvised sentences) include:

- oral language confidence-building
- creative thinking
- visualisation to make mind pictures
- self-talk experience
- comprehension through active listening
- learning how to draft, edit, rearrange and rehearse spoken language in the mind
- long-term vocabulary development; syntax usage and memory retention
- instant teacher assessment for re-teaching, revision and launching new material tailored to stretch all learners to enable everyone to feel successful
- this method allows speech skills to be taught en route so best possible clarity and fluency are the norm.

18 as-tro-naut

Discussions would cover the following ideas (and more) within the timespan of many lessons and incorporated across many subject areas.

- *astro* refers to the stars, planets and objects in space and outer space.
- *naut* means sailor.
- *astro* is a prefix;
naut is a suffix.

If you were an astronaut, where would you like to go? Look at space books to find real astronomy words such as Milky Way, comet ...

Adam is an astronaut.

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astronaut

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20 Picture Talk — Vocabulary

helmet

spacesuit

weightless

antenna

spacewalk

umbilical cord

oxygen

vacuum

(colours, shapes, directions)

afterburner

cartoon illustration (*compare with NASA pictures*)

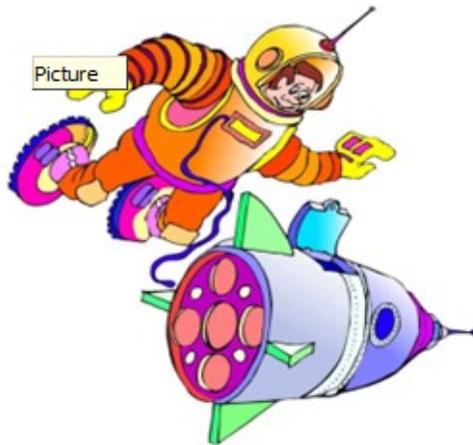
19 Word analyses

In the word astronaut, the letter *o* says its own name — not *o* as on orange. Some other words where the *o* says its own name are go, no, so. Can you write any on the big whiteboard?

The digraph *au* in this word says *or*. A digraph means partner letters that make a new sound when they go together. Some more words with the digraph *au* are automatic, August, author and because. Say them to hear the *au* sound.

In astronaut, there are two *t* letters. They are the only ascenders in this word, and there are no descenders. All the other letters are x-size.

All letters in *astronaut* are lower case. Can you remember what lower case means?



21 Creative thinking; Improvisations

Listening to and creating sentences helps develop vocabulary, thinking and visualisation skills. Reading success requires all three elements to be well established.

Make up a sentence that starts with 'In space I can see ... (*meteors, comets, planets, stars, constellations, the Milky Way. Teacher models examples.*) Research space books.

Let's play with our sentence ... How about these. (*Write and discuss each new format.*)

Sally is an astronaut. My dad is not an astronaut. My dog Fred cannot be an astronaut.

What is hard about being an astronaut?

What is good about being an astronaut?

'Do you like being an astronaut, Adam?' *etc.*

22 Drawing and language

Draw a cartoon-style rocket using the ideas in this picture. Sit with and chat to a partner while you draw. Talk about shapes and colours.