

by Sarah Morgan Major



Alphabet Tales

Ages 2 and up.

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Design, storyline, illustrations: Sarah Major

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Other titles by this author:

Kid-Friendly Computation series with titles: *Addition & Subtraction*, *Place Value*, & *Multiplication and Division*, *The Illustrated Book of Sounds and Their Spelling Patterns*.

Other educational work: Child1st stylized sight words and alphabet.

How to use this book...

For preschool-aged children, just enjoy the stories together, at most emphasizing the letter sounds. There is no need for any additional teaching goal, nor any reason to push any certain learning concept with these children. Preschool children will absorb the letter shapes and sounds as you read and re-read the stories together, and will enter kindergarten with a solid foundation for learning.

As always, a great follow-up to reading the stories is artwork. The processing that children do during creative times deepens the impressions gained during “instructional time.” Children hearing about Abner and the ants, for instance, might feel inspired to use crayons to draw the anthill and the ants that live inside it. (Refer to the booklet *Writing the Visual, Kinesthetic, & Auditory Alphabet* for ideas on follow-up activities to the stories.)

For kindergarten-aged children, use the stories to introduce letters and sounds. After hearing the stories, children will recognize each letter symbol (much as we recognize faces we know when we see a photo), and will easily relate each symbol to its corresponding sound. The story line and illustrations naturally tie the symbol to the sound, bypassing the need for memorization.

The *Alphabet Tales* are not in ABC order because they are intended to be an accompaniment to the *Easy-for-Me™ Teaching Manual*, which has a specific order for learning letter sounds and sight words. Please refer to the Easy-for-Me™ scope and sequence excerpt provided for you on page 4. Only the initial lessons are outlined – just enough to introduce the program.

In the Easy-for-Me™ Reading Curriculum our goal is to move beyond letter/sound recognition, and to get

children reading immediately. Successfully reading a book will motivate children to learn more sounds and more words. Taking letters out of sequence allows us to first teach the sounds that will form words children can use. Easy-for-Me™ takes the clutter out of teaching reading, presenting only the essentials in a way that is easily absorbed.

Although some children enjoy learning their ABC's, the accompanying pictures, and singing the ABC song, the more global and visual learners are actually hindered by this traditional approach. The task of memorizing isolated letter names, sounds, and representative pictures and trying to relate this information to reading becomes overwhelming. Picture spilling a large box full of blank puzzle pieces on the floor, and asking a five or six-year-old to make sense of it.

Once I tutored a child who had repeated 1st grade and still could not decode. When he saw the word “and,” he first said “A” (letter name), then he said “apple” (representative picture), and then he just shut down. He hated reading. We turned to the *Alphabet Tales*; he learned the hand motion for each sound, and immediately was decoding. It was significant to me that as he decoded, he unconsciously body spelled each sound. The visuals and motions not only taught him what he needed to know, they also provided the means for recall. We do not need to spend the kindergarten year memorizing letter names, letter sounds, and representative pictures, when we can omit that unnecessary process and go straight to reading. Words, after all, are made of SOUNDS, not letter names. Children who learn sounds first and begin to decode do learn the letter names, but in a way that does not confuse them. Similarly, children easily pick up the order of the letters, but that is not a skill essential to reading.

The Easy-for-Me™ Reading Curriculum provides parents and teachers with a powerful tool for teaching children to read, no matter the level of prior knowledge. The simple, concise lessons take children from the very first sound straight into the art of reading and writing. Each new concept taught is connected to the previous one so that no idea is unrelated. Children proceed through the learning process in a fashion that makes complete sense to them.

Students enjoying the Easy-for-Me™ program of study experience a careful balance between analyzing and decoding unknown words, and recognizing words on sight. Because of the direct link between reading and writing, spelling accuracy and reading comprehension are strengthened.

INITIAL LESSONS

LESSON 1- Letter Sound for Aa, sight word A

- Visual: Ants on an anthill
- Story for Aa
- Practice writing Aa
- Hand motions for Aa
- Show sight word card for A and use it in sentences orally.

LESSON 2- Letter Sound for Tt

- Visual: Tables
- Story for Tt
- Practice writing Tt
- Hand motion for Tt
- Review sound and motion for Aa
- Tie to commercial print by searching for both A and T in print.

LESSON 3- Blend A and T, sight word AT

- Blend the two sounds, A & T to make the word AT.
- Show the sight word card for AT.
- Body spell the word AT using the motions for A and T.
- Child writes his name, writes “at,” then draws a place he would like to go, so that he is making a tiny sentence: “Jaylen at [grandma’s house].”

LESSON 4- Letter Sound for Ff

- Visual: Flags
- Story for Ff
- Practice writing Ff
- Hand motion for Ff
- Review sound and motion for Aa and Tt, and body spell the word AT.
- Tie to commercial print.

LESSON 5- Blend F, A, and T to make “fat.”

- Review “at,” body spelling the word.
- Blend the letters to make the word “fat,” and body spell using hand motions.
- Writing: write “A fat” and then draw something fat to complete the sentence.

LESSON 6 - Letter Sound Cc

- Visual: Caves
- Story for Cc
- Practice writing: make a C and illustrate as a cave.
- Find examples of C in commercial print.

LESSON 7- Blend sounds for “cat”

- Review all sounds, spelling them with hand motions.
- Review AT, and “fat,” body spelling them.
- Blend the sounds for “cat.”
- Introduce *A Fat Cat*, body spell, then write it on paper and illustrate.



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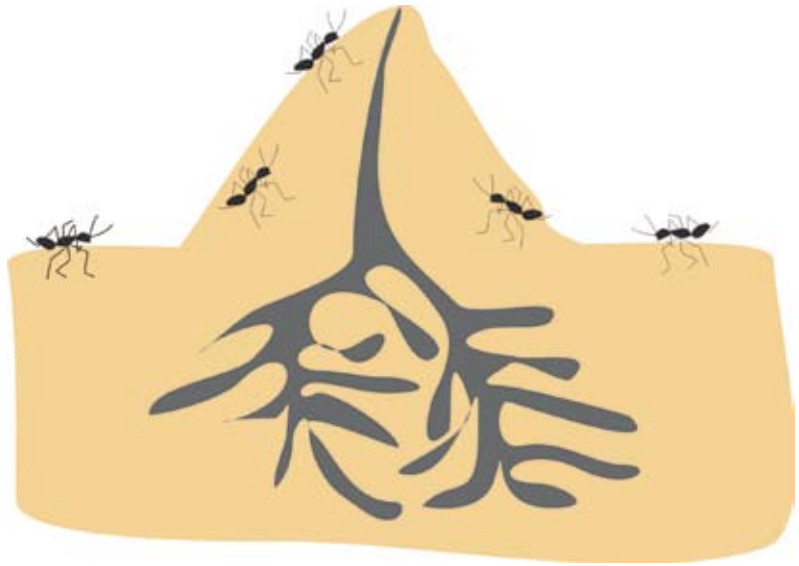
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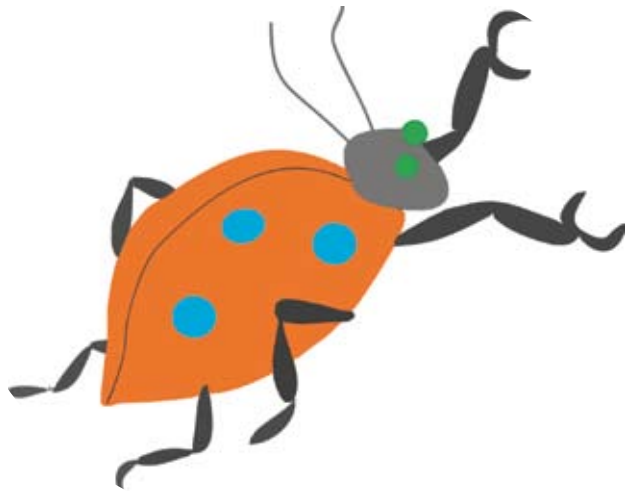


...in which Abner
meets the Ants

Behind the shed in Amy's yard rose an enormous anthill in which Anthony, Annette, Anne, Anton, Anabelle, and Abigail lived with their friends.



The busy ants dug tunnels under the ground. In some they stored their food, and in other tunnels they cared for the eggs that would hatch into brand new baby ants.



Far, far away in the neighbor's yard lived a big, clumsy fellow named Abner. Abner loved to explore, and while he was not very fast, he was very, very strong!

One beautiful day, Abner set out on a walk.

Soon he came to the biggest mountain he had ever seen!

“I didn’t know there was a mountain around here,” Abner said. “I will definitely have to climb it since it is right in my way!” Abner started to climb, but very soon he was exhausted!

“Whew! I don’t think I can make it to the top,” Abner said.

Suddenly he shouted, “I know! I will dig a tunnel through the mountain!”



Abner was not very fast, but he was very, very strong, so in a jiffy, he was coming out the other side.

But when Abner popped his head out, he saw a crowd of ants shouting and shaking their fists!

“Look what you did, you old meanie!” they hollered.

Abner was so frightened that he hid in the weeds, but he could still hear the ants.

“Our tunnels are ruined!” some complained.

“How are we going to get our food?” others cried.

“Now we can’t take care of our eggs!” everyone wailed.

Abner wasn’t scared anymore; he just felt terrible! What could he do?



Next thing the ants knew, here came that foolish, wobbly bug again!

“OH NO!” they all yelled.

But when they saw Abner was bringing a big donut, they cheered, “YAY, FOOD!”

As soon as Abner let go, however, the donut started rolling down the hill.

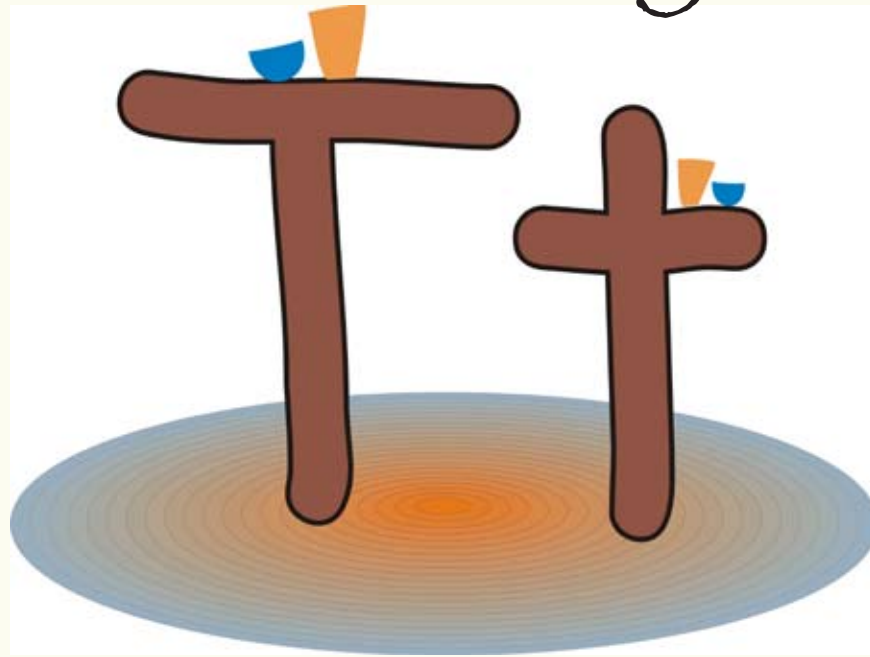
“OH NO!” yelled the ants again.

“Don’t worry! I can fix this with my stick,” Abner said calmly. Then Abner shoved his stick into the ground and the donut stayed put.



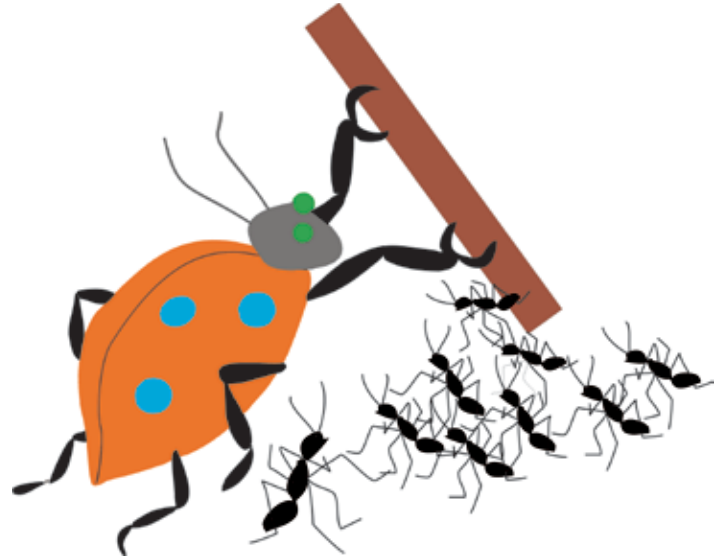
Abner helped the ants dig out their tunnels, and they became best friends!

The Story of



...in which there's
trouble with tables.

Abner and the ants liked to help each other. The ants looked for Abner when they needed help with something that required really big muscles.



And Abner always visited the anthill when he needed to discuss something.



One day, Abner invited Alexander over for dinner. He needed advice about finding a new place to live.

As it turned out, Alexander wanted Abner's help on a project they were planning at the anthill.

As soon as Alexander sat down to dinner, they noticed a big problem. Even standing on his chair, Alexander could not reach the table!



Abner was mortified. He had to do something, and fast!

First, Abner tried piling books on Alexander's chair, but Alexander felt like a big silly. Imagine a grown ant sitting on a pile of books!



Suddenly, Abner had a brilliant idea! He grasped the edges of Alexander's table, and gave a mighty shove.



With loud cracking sounds, the post popped right through the top. Now, Alexander's table was the perfect height!



So the friends sat down again and this time, they enjoyed a tasty meal.