# 22 Distinguish Letters and Words

## Language Objectives

- Recognize the difference between a letter and a printed word.
- Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.

## Building Literacy

Distinguishing between letters and words is an important step in print awareness and reading readiness.

- Children learn that words are made up of letters arranged in a certain order.
- Children learn that letters in words are arranged without any spaces between them.
- Children begin to recognize that the letters and letter patterns in words represent the sounds of spoken language.

## Focus on Language

These English words are used in this lesson. Consider using examples or displaying pictures of each to make sure the English learners have these words in their vocabulary.

| | |
|---|---|
| cat | red |
| duck | pig |
| leg | pin |
| hat | bat |
| bird | tub |
| go | lap |
| cot | not |
| jump | bus |
| me | ten |
| fan | gas |
| at | lap |
| kite | pit |

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Not all languages use the Roman alphabet that is used in English. For example, Cantonese is written with standard Chinese characters where each character represents a syllable and has a meaning. Children from these language backgrounds may benefit from increased exposure to the English alphabet. Provide them with many hands-on experiences with alphabet blocks, plastic letters, and alphabet books, if needed.

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## show me

Have children look at p. 85 in their Targeted Lessons Student Book and point to the number 1. Put your finger on the pictures in this row as I say their names: *cat, duck*. Write the word *cat* on the board. Now look at the letters I wrote on the board. I wrote three letters. Touch the letters in turn and name then. This is a letter. The name of the letter is *c*. This is another letter. Its name is *a*. And this is a letter, too. This letter is called *t*. Point out that you have written the letters all together without any spaces between them. When I put the letters like this, I can make a word. This word is *cat*. Put your finger on the picture of the cat in your book.

Write the word *duck* next to *cat*, leaving an obvious space between the words. This is another word. See how the letters of this word are together, too, and how they are not next to the letters in *cat*. When I write words, I have to leave spaces between them. Indicate the spaces between the words. This word has four letters. Point to each letter as you name it: *d, u, c, k*. It is the word *duck*. Put your finger on the picture of the duck.

Now put your finger on the 2. What do you see in this box? (letters) How many letters do you see? (3) What do you notice about the letters? That's right, each letter is by itself. The letters are not in any special order. The letters don't make a word. Now put your finger on the 3. What do you see in this box? That's right, this is a word. There are three letters, but do you see how there are no spaces between them? The letters are put together in a special order to make a word. The word is *cat*. Today you will learn how to recognize the difference between letters and words.

22

Distinguish Letters and Words

show me

1.

2. t a c

3. cat

guide me

4. m leg s

5. hat bird w

6. go f d

PHONOLOGICAL AND PRINT AWARENESS 85

## TEACHING STRATEGIES

If children have difficulty distinguishing letters and words, prepare a set of letter and word cards for them to sort. Start with a few of each and spread out the cards face up. Ask: Which is a letter? or Which is a word? Have the child pick up the appropriate card and place it in an area you have designated. As children become more comfortable, you can increase the number of cards. Then spread out all the cards in random order and have children sort them independently. Put all the letters in one pile and all the words in another.

## guide me

**Recognize Letters and Words** Have children point to the 4. What is the first thing you see in this row? Is it a letter or a word? (letter) How do you know? (It is by itself.) Yes, it is the letter *m*. Now put your finger on the next thing in the row. Is it a letter or a word? (word) How do you know? (There are three letters; they have no spaces between them.) Yes, when you put the letters *l, e, g*, together you get the word *leg*. Now look at the last thing in the row. Is it a letter or a word? (letter) How do you know? (It's by itself.) Draw a circle around the word. Guide children to recognize the difference between a letter, which is by itself, and a word that has several letters put together with no spaces between them.

It's your turn to tell which are letters and which are words. Put your finger on the 5. Look across the row. Draw a circle around the letter. Guide children to recognize that the last thing in the row, *w*, is a letter. Continue with row 6, asking children to circle the word. Guide children to recognize that *go* is a word because it has letters put together with no spaces between them.

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## work time

**Task 1** Have children look at p. 86 from the Targeted Lessons Student Book and find the 7. There are letters and words in this row. Look at them carefully. Which are letters? Circle them. Check to see that children circled *h* and *r*. How do you know they are letters? (They are by themselves.) Continue similarly with row 8. Tell children to circle the words in the row. (*me, fan*) How do you know they are words? (They have letters put together with no spaces between them.)

**Task 2** Find the 9 and point to it. There are letters and words all mixed up in this box. Draw a circle around each letter. Draw a line under each word. Check children as they work independently and offer assistance as needed.

22 Distinguish Letters and Words

work time

7. h cot jump r

8. me v fan l

9. kite at

j n

red o

u x

pig z

86 PHONOLOGICAL AND PRINT AWARENESS

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

If children have difficulty distinguishing letters and words, write each letter and word from page 86 on an index card. When writing the words, be sure to put the letters close together. Place several cards in front of each child and give "Simon Says" directions. For example: Simon says, "Hold up a letter." How do you know it's a letter? Simon says, "Point to a word." How do you know it's a word?

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## guide me

**Recognize Sequences of Letters** Have children look at p. 87 from the Targeted Lessons Student Book. Find the 10 and put your finger on the first group of letters. Now look at the other groups of letters in the row. Which group of letters has letters in the same order as the first group? (the second group) How do you know? That's right, the first letters in both groups look the same, the second letters in both groups look the same, and the third letters in both groups look the same. Draw a circle around the second group of letters because those letters have the same order as the first group.

Find the 11 and look at the first group of letters. Then look at the other groups of letters in the row. Which group of letters has letters in the same order as the first group? (the third, or last, group) Draw a circle around it. Continue with 12, 13, and 14. Guide children to look at the first group of letters in each row and then find and circle the group of letters with the same order.

Distinguish Letters and Words 22

guide me

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10. | pin | pin | nip |
| 11. | bat | tab | bat |
| 12. | tub | but | tub |
| 13. | lap | lap | pal |
| 14. | not | ton | not |

PHONOLOGICAL AND PRINT AWARENESS 87

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## work time

Have children look at p. 88 from the Targeted Lessons Student Book and point to the 15. Look at the letters in the first word. Now look at the other groups of letters in the row. Circle the group of letters that are in the same order as the first word.

To complete the remainder of the page, tell children to look at the first word in each row and circle the group of letters that are in the same order as the first word.

22 Distinguish Letters and Words

work time

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15. | bus | sub | bus |
| 16. | ten | ten | net |
| 17. | gas | sag | gas |
| 18. | lap | pal | lap |
| 19. | pit | pit | tip |

88 PHONOLOGICAL AND PRINT AWARENESS

## check for understanding

Let's see what you learned about recognizing the difference between letters and words. I'm going to write something on the board. Then you'll tell me which are letters and which are words. Ready? Let's start with this. Write the following letters and words on the board:

t p e

pet bug box

Have children identify which are letters and tell how they know. Have children identify which are words and tell how they know. Continue the activity by having children compare other groups of letters and words and tell which are words.

## reflect

Have children turn and talk to a partner about what they have learned. What did you learn about recognizing the difference between letters and words? If time permits, allow children to choose a book from the classroom or school library. Have them identify a few words on a page and count the letters that make up each word.

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## show me

1.

2. t a c

3. cat

## guide me

4. m leg s

5. hat bird w

6. go f d

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## work time

7. h cot jump r

8. me v fan l

9. kite at

j n

red o

u x

pig z

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## guide me

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10. | pin | pin | nip |
| 11. | bat | tab | bat |
| 12. | tub | but | tub |
| 13. | lap | lap | pal |
| 14. | not | ton | not |

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## work time

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15. | bus | sub | bus |
| 16. | ten | ten | net |
| 17. | gas | sag | gas |
| 18. | lap | pal | lap |
| 19. | pit | pit | tip |

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