

LEARNING TIME

A is for Australia

by Frané Lessac

This award-winning alphabet book by Frané Lessac takes us on a 'factastic' trip around Australia. Discover new places and rediscover familiar ones, as you open this unique and informative picture book. Frané Lessac's illustrations are bright and friendly with just the right amount of detail.



Key Message for Parents | Children Are Born Ready to Learn

The structure of the brain begins to develop before birth and continues into adulthood. Children are constantly learning and the experiences a child has provides the blueprint for their future growth and development.

At this age children are more curious than ever, seeking answers to questions, investigating and trying things out for themselves. Sometimes we don't always have the answers, so be honest and tell your child, that you do not know and take the opportunity to find out the answer together. This engages the child in their own learning journey. Having access to a wide range of different experiences helps children to learn about the world around them. Share with parents a range of opportunities to explore in your city or town, for example, parks, museums, libraries, beaches and community centres. A useful link to share with parents living in Adelaide is www.playandgo.com.au which lists monthly activities such as theatre productions, festivals, exhibitions and other special events for children and families.

Learning Outcomes | Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

We can help children become confident learners by:

- Creating conditions in which children are inspired to participate and learn. A beautiful environment, with sensory-based resources, toys and books generates wonder and curiosity
- Providing play activities which develop a wide range of skills such as; fine and gross motor skills (holding a crayon, turning pages in a book, climbing, dancing etc.), cognitive skills (memory, imagination, focus and attention etc.) and social skills (sharing, interacting with other children and understanding feelings and emotions of others)
- Posing questions that challenge and extend thinking skills and foster a sense of curiosity and inquiry.

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Themes within this story

- Australia
- Alphabet
- Environment

Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their children. Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

Good Morning

Good morning to you
 Good morning to you
 Good morning everybody
 and welcome to you!



Song

Highway Number 1 - The Shenanigans

This is a fun, easy to follow circle song. A simple action is introduced at each verse, as well as a different Australian capital city. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndBliNdXmU>

I travelled round Australia on highway number 1 (*Walk/march around in a circle*) I travelled round Australia just to have some fun (*stop*)
 And when I got to Sydney (*take 4 steps into the middle of the circle*)
 I stopped to see someone (*take 4 steps back out*)
 and she said... (*Do the following actions on the spot*) Walk, walk and run, run, run
 Walk, walk and run, run, run
 Walk, walk and run, run, run on highway number 1!

Repeat with other cities:

I travelled round Australia on highway number 1 (*Walk/march around in a circle*) I travelled round Australia, just to have some fun
 And when I got to Brisbane (Darwin, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, and Melbourne)

The actions are introduced at each city as follows:

- Walk, walk and run, run, run
- Heel, toe and stamp
- Side together wiggle
- Jump, jump and clap, clap, clap
- Skip, skip and bump
- Gallop, gallop, jump
- Hop, hop, hop and stomp



More Songs to Sing

- The wheels on the bus (change the words to reflect Australian animals or places)
- G'day Song http://raisingchildren.net.au/baby_karaoke/baby_karaoke_landing.html

Before Reading

Have a large map of Australia, an atlas handy or even a globe on hand. Point to Australia and ask "Who knows what country this is?" or "What do we know about Australia?" Prompt if you need with questions like; What sort of animals live in Australia? What is the weather like?

Talk about the size and geographical features, where do we live? Can the children find Adelaide? Who has been to other places in Australia?

During Reading

With 26 double spreads, it is quite a long read if you have a young group. To shorten this book and still get its informative value, have a bag of letters and get a different child to draw out a letter. Decide how many letters draw out and read, depending on the interests and focus of the group. Or, if you have a small group then use the first letter of each child's name to select which alphabet pages to read.

The illustrations are rich in detail and provide lots of information about each place. As you come to each letter, encourage those children who have been to each place to share their experiences.

After Reading

Let's sing the ABC song! Twenty-six places is a lot to remember but see what the children can recall. Who can remember what place was for the letter B, or D or T (or the letters that were drawn) Prompt where necessary.

You might like to learn some Australian Sign Language to accompany this song.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KUQ4NiCoOU>

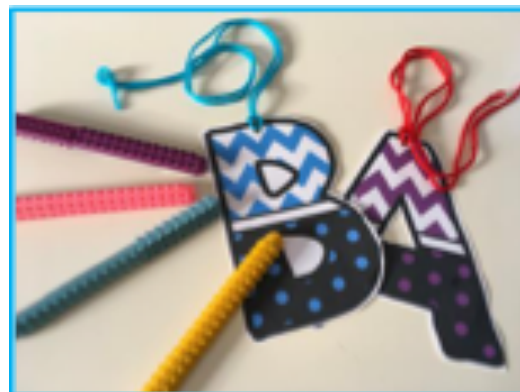
Activity Time

Alphabet name letters

What letter does each child's name start with? Print out the alphabet and photocopy accordingly.

What you need:

- Alphabet template
- Stickers
- Markers
- Hole punch
- Ribbon



What to do:

1. Give each child their letter and get them to decorate the back of them with pictures and information about themselves! For example:
 - How many people live in their house?
 - What pets do they have?
 - What is their favourite food or colour?
2. Punch a hole at the top and thread some ribbon to hang

Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. The Little Big Book Club suggests the following books to support learning in this area:

- ***I'm Australian Too*** by Mem Fox
- ***To Get To Me*** by Eleanor Kerr and Judith Rossell
- ***Australian Animals ABC*** by Bambi Smyth
- ***Grug ABC*** by Ted Prior

Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush) or your preferred choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action) Say goodbye, say goodbye This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

