



The Print Alphabet Flip Chart Kit

Please use the following inventory list to make sure you return all of the items to this kit.

What Goes In This Kit?

- Print Alphabet Flip Chart & Dry Erase Marker

- Guide to Using the Print Alphabet Flip Chart:
 - Who Should Use the Print Alphabet Flip Chart?
 - General Teaching Strategies & Sample Goals
 - Tech Tips: Accessing the Print Flip Chart
 - Fun Writing Activities
 - Student Writing Samples

- Directions for Making Your Own Print Alphabet Flip Chart

*When using this kit, may also consider using:

- 1-2 single message devices (i.e. Big Mack or Chipper)
- 1-2 switches
- Adapted closet lights for students using switches who need visual feedback

Kit Updated 10/12/04



Guide to Using the Print Alphabet Flip Chart

Who Should Use This?

The Alphabet Flip Chart (Hanser, 2003) is intended for students who have some vision, as well as significant motor difficulties. It is often used by students who are unable to hold a pencil or those who are unable to physically manipulate a keyboard. For students who have such challenges, using their eyes can be the easiest. The Print Alphabet Flip Chart is an alternative for students who do not have the visual skills needed to be successful with the Color Coded Eye Gaze Frame. Hearing is not required to use the Flip Chart.

Students DO NOT need to know how to independently read or spell words in order to use this. This kit can be used as a way for students to explore the alphabet, in an effort to simulate the hundreds of hours that typical kids have with drawing and writing with a pencil.

How Does The Print Alphabet Flip Chart Work?

Students should be positioned with as much support as possible to promote their most optimal head/eye control. For some, this may mean being seated in the wheelchair. For others, this may mean being curled up in a caregiver's lap.

The partner faces the student and holds the Print Alphabet Flip Chart where the student can easily see the letters. Because students cannot directly point to letters themselves, "partner assisted scanning" is used to allow them to select letters. We, the assisting partner, are in charge of scanning/pointing to the various pages/letters for the student. When we are pointing to what they want, the student indicates their choice in a way that is the easiest. We write down their selection in a place that is easy for them to see as they continue on. Helpers can write on the wipe off surface of the Flip Chart, or, on a piece of paper attached with tape. Whichever you choose, it is essential to keep a copy of the student's writing. A variety of ways of doing partner assisted scanning are described in Tech Tips.



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

General Teaching Strategies & Sample Goals

MODEL, MODEL, MODEL

Watching peers and adults engaged in an activity or completing a skill is a primary means by which children learn. Language and communication in particular require modeling. Children learning to use this Print Alphabet Flip Chart will require that people in the family/classroom model the use of it for the student with significant disabilities.

Do “Think Outlouds”

As experienced readers/writers, there are a lot of basic things we have learned about literacy that are unspoken and assumed. Things such as: what writing is for; the functions of writings (lists, letters); and the relationship between letters, sounds, and words; are not obvious to children who are just getting started accessing the alphabet. Given vision, hearing, and motor issues, many students with significant disabilities have even more difficulty understanding this hidden information. Therefore, talking/signing about what you're doing and why will provide an important learning support.

Provide DAILY Opportunities

Skills can't be learned without regular, successful practice. Children without disabilities write every day from the time they enter school, and many write every day beginning when they are very young and begin using crayons, markers, and chalk at home. Students with significant disabilities rarely have this level of opportunity – a fact that greatly influences their literacy learning progress. Daily opportunities to use the alphabet display in the way a very beginning writer might scribble or otherwise explore writing tools is important.

AVOID Testing and Known-Answer Questions

Examples of testing or known-answer questions are: “Find the letter ___”, “Show me the letter ___.” These should be avoided as students are just beginning to learn how to manipulate the alphabet. Instead, ask them to write; work with them to interpret their selections; and write down the letters they select on a piece of paper, white board, computer, or something the child can see.



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

Connect The Print to Things the Student Knows About

Writing is about constructing meaning with print. When connecting the print to things the student already knows, it helps them make sense of the print. For example, Jake writes: "mmh ymp." His mom comments/signs: "Wow, you've written a lot of Ms—that's the first letter of your brother's name—Max!"

Keep Copies of Students' Written Work and Celebrate!

Start accumulating a pile of student writings to share and revisit. Date them and put them up in places for all to see - especially the student. Don't forget the refrigerator door!

Sample Goals for Emergent Writers:

Demonstrates engagement with facilitator during modeling of writing by visually tracking/participating with HUH with decreased levels of prompting.

Engages in independent writing using adapted tools for increased periods of time.

Engages in independent writing using adapted tools with increased intent and sophistication. (starts to include any of the following: use of spaces, different letter combinations, increased level of detail included)

Demonstrates sustained attention while writing is being re-read/signed by partner, as measured by increased periods of time.



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

Tech Tips: Accessing the Print Alphabet Flip Chart

No Tech Partner Assisted Scanning

"No tech" means that the student will indicate their preferences using natural gestures, and no equipment. Have the student use their most reliable natural communication as their way of indicating a choice. Common strategies are: smiling, raising eyebrows, vocalizing, or lifting an arm.

While holding the Print Alphabet Flip Chart up, the partner slowly flips from page to page. Once the student sees the page they want, they indicate their selection. Then, the partner slowly points to each letter on the page and the student indicates their desired letter. The partner immediately writes down the student's selection. After scanning through the letters, the partner also scans through the symbols, "Turn the Page," "Add a Space," "Not What I Meant," and "Finished."

In some cases, students' natural communications are not clear and reliable. It may be helpful to provide more feedback and clarification through using a single message device as described below.

1 Switch Partner Assisted Scanning

This can be accomplished using 1 single message device, such as the BigMack (Ablenet) or the Chipper (Adaptivation). Record on it: "that's it", "I want that" or "that's the one." Position the single message device in a place that is the easiest for them to touch. You can also plug a switch into it. The partner slowly flips from page to page. Once the student sees the page they want, they activate the single message device. Then, the partner slowly points to each letter on that page and the student indicates their desired letter using the single message device. The partner immediately writes down the student's selection. After scanning through the letters, the partner also scans through the symbols, "Turn the Page," "Add a Space," "Not What I Meant," and "Finished."

Using this method, the partner controls the speed and movement through the pages and letters. This can be tough for some students as it requires them to react within a specific time. If that is a problem for your student, using 2 switch partner assisted scanning may be helpful in decreasing reaction time demands.



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

2 Switch Partner Assisted Scanning

This can be accomplished using 2 single message devices, such as the BigMack (Ablenet) or the Chipper (Adaptivation). The student uses one device as the "MOVER" to tell the partner to turn to the next page or to point to the next letter. The student uses the other device as the "PICKER" to select a particular page or letter.

- Record the "MOVER" device with a message such as: "next," "move" or "go." It may even be helpful to color code it green for "go."
- Record the "PICKER" device with a message such as: "that's it" or "I want that." It may even be helpful to color code it red for "stop here."
- Position the 2 single message devices in places where the student can easily press them. It's helpful if the "MOVER" switch is in place where they can repeatedly hit the switch. (Switches can also be plugged into the single message devices).

When starting, each time the student presses the "MOVER" device, the partner flips the page. The partner does not flip to the next page until the student says so; this decreases anticipation and gives the student the opportunity to checkout the letters without fear of having the page changed. The student repeatedly hits the "MOVER" switch to get to the page they want. Then, they press the "PICKER" switch to indicate their page preference. Once the student picks a page, the partner puts their finger on the first letter of the chosen page and the student repeatedly presses the "MOVER" switch to advance the partner's finger through the letters one by one. When the partner's finger is on the desired letter, the student presses the "PICKER" switch to indicate their letter preference. The partner immediately writes down the student's selection. After scanning through the letters, the partner also scans through the symbols, "Turn the Page," "Add a Space," "Not What I Meant," and "Finished."



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

2 Switch Partner Assisted Scanning with Visual Feedback

For students with hearing loss, switch adapted, colored closet lights can be substituted for the single message devices. Students can press a switch to signal the green light, to tell the partner to keep moving through pages/letters. A red light can be used to pick or stop on a page or letter.

A Couple Extra Tips:

Be prepared for students to not make a selection the first couple of times through. Like any of us, students need to see what the choices are before they pick something. Just start over and scan through the choices again.

Model the use of the symbols so that the students begin to learn what they mean.

Minimize the YES/NO questions and try to silently flip and point through the Print Alphabet Flip Chart. We want students to be focusing on the letters and thinking about their writing. If we ask them too many questions, we may overload them with too much language.

While the symbols for "Turn the page," "Not What I meant," "Finished" and "Add a Space" have been attached to the Chart, when creating your own, they could certainly be placed in other positions. This could be placed on the chart or on a single message device depending on the needs of the student.



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

Fun Writing Activities

Letter Writing

- ***Alphabet Scavenger Hunt***- Student picks a letter and then you have to find something in that room that begins with that letter. Write down things as you find them and talk about them.
- ***Words About Things I Know***- Student picks a letter and then together you make a list of words that begin with that letter - that are related to things the student knows. Write them down and talk about them. It can be especially motivating to select ***actions, pictures and foods*** that the student is familiar with. Can later create a short letter/object book with the things you talk about.
- ***Tongue Twisters***- Student picks a letter and then you make up a short tongue twister using that letter. Write it down and talk about it. These can also be typed into a talking word processor for the student to reread later (using a switch as needed).
- ***Wheel of Fortune/Hangman*** - You think of a short word or phrase that the student is familiar with and draw the lines for the letters. Give student the category that it is in (person, place, animal). As the student picks letters, you either write them on the correct line or in a separate space where un-needed letters are collected. As the letters are selected, you could cover them on the Print Alphabet Flip Chart with small sticky-notes - this will help the child know which letter it is not. Keep track of how many letters the student must select in order to complete the word. Make it fun by recording a game show buzzer on a single message device, and ask the student to indicate when they are ready to pick another letter (Free sound effects available on web).



Created by The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB #7335, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds
Under Contract With the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Exceptional Children

Writing Activities

- **Write Picture Captions-** Offer the student things such as favorite photos from a family photo album or pictures from a magazine or wordless book. Ask the student to pick one and then write about it. Don't expect students who are just getting started to write words or correct sentences. As students get started, they are likely to select random letters that are quite difficult to relate to the photo or picture selected.
- **Start a Journal-** Most typical early writers experience writing in a journal. They often draw a picture and write about it – beginning well before they can actually spell any words or even write letters correctly. The same activity can be modified for students with significant disabilities. Ask the student to write by selecting letters from the Print Alphabet Flip Chart, record the exact selections in a journal, and keep adding to it over time.
- **Create a Remnant/Scrap Book-** Collect remnants (food labels, movie tickets, receipts, napkin from McDonald's), pictures, or objects that reflect the activities, experiences, and events that occur in the student's every day life. Have the student choose a remnant to write about. Glue their choice into a journal, or slip them into plastic page protectors, and have the student use the Print Alphabet Flip Chart to write about it. Record exactly what the student chooses. Talk about it and add the date.
- **Sign Name for a Real Purpose-** It can be motivating to have students sign their name for a purpose, such as on artwork, reminder notes to family members, and holiday/special occasion cards. Record exactly what they choose on the Print Alphabet Flip Chart. DO NOT provide a model for the student to copy while name writing, but make sure there are lots of models of name writing and use throughout the day.



Student Writing Samples: By Jake

Student: 13 year old with cerebral palsy and deaf-blindness
Environment: Home
Task: Free Writing and Journal Writing (first explorations with the Print Alphabet Flip Chart)
Tools: Print Alphabet Flip Chart with 2 switch partner assisted scanning (used 2 switches plugged into 2 colored closet lights)

6/29/04 Free Writing

ejk

6/29/04 Free Writing

kquj

7/1/04 Free Writing

zomjhaacvn

7/14/04 Free Writing

aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagnv

7/14/04 Chose to Write About Going to Movies (Movie Stub in Remnant Book)

**aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaabbbbbbbcddeeeeeefffffffffff
ffffffgggggiiijjkkmooqtxxxxxxy**