



How to use
Ladybird Readers

Starter Level

How to use Ladybird Readers Starter Level

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Starter Level Components



Each **Reader** starts by introducing the Picture words (see page 6), followed by two versions of the same simple story: a wordless story and one with words. Activities help to develop children's language skills.

An **Activity Book** accompanies each Reader. It gives children further opportunities to practice the language, and helps them to progress from recognizing single letters, to reading and writing words and sentences.

A box of **Flashcards** contains all the Picture words used in every Reader.

Audio to accompany the Readers and Activity Books is available to download in British and American English from the *Ladybird Readers* website (below).

Title-specific **Teacher's Resources** can also be found on the website. These provide a guide to lesson objectives, as well as flexible plans for using the Readers in the classroom or at home. They may run over a number of lessons depending on the length and frequency of your sessions.

Answer Keys for all the activities in the Readers and Activity Books are also available to download.

Listening **Reading** **Speaking** **Spelling and writing** **Singing**

To download **Audio** components, **Answer Keys** and **Teacher's Resources**, and for more information on the series, visit www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

Starter Level Structure

The *Ladybird Readers* Starter level gently introduces children to the phonics approach to reading, using familiar themes such as family, friends, animals, and food in the playful, imaginative context of storytelling.

Each Reader focuses on a set of carefully contextualized sounds within familiar words. These sounds are divided into two groups: focus sounds and secondary sounds.

The Starter level has two sub-levels.

- **Starter A** looks at simple sound-letter combinations, such as the /a/ sound in **bat** and **cat**. It covers the 26 letters of the alphabet, and introduces children to some common sounds of these letters.
- **Starter B** explores more difficult sound-letter combinations, such as the /igh/ sound in **night** and **fright**.

Starter	Title	Theme	Focus sounds
A	Ted in Bed	colors	a, e, i, o, b, d, l, t
A	The Fun Run	school	u, f, g, j, k, m, r, s, ss, ll
A	The Zoo	zoo animals	v, w, x, z, long oo, long i_e
A	Dom Dog and his Boat	clothes and animals	o, oa, ck
A	Nicky and Poppy (July 2017)	favorite food	p, y, qu, n, c, h, ng

Starter	Title	Theme	Focus sounds
B	Doctor Panda	parts of the body	h, ee, long oo, short oo
B	Brother Blue	family	er, igh, th
B	The Old Boat	the sea	x, long ea, ay, sh, ph
B	Farmer Carl	countryside and town	long oo, short oo, ar, er, ow
B	In the Mud (July 2017)	friends	m, oi, ue, or, ear
B	Gus is Hot! (July 2017)	in the sun	ch, h, u, f, long i, short i
B	The Big Fish (July 2017)	sea animals	s, t, ea, ai, ay

Phonics in English Language Teaching

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read by helping them to understand the relationships between letters, sounds, and words. It is a popular teaching method for native English speakers, and is increasingly used with children who are learning English as a foreign language. This is because it gives children the tools they need to improve their reading, writing, and pronunciation.

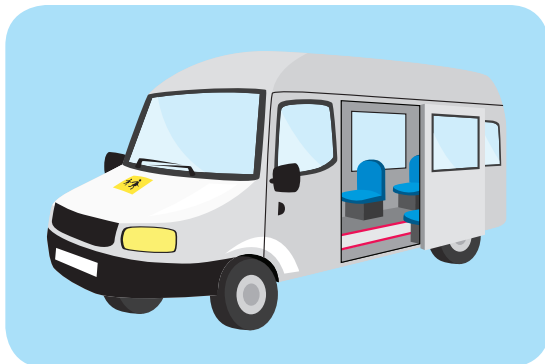
The English alphabet has 26 letters, but approximately 42 related sounds. Phonics teaching helps children to identify sounds that relate to individual letters, such as /a/ in **cat**, as well as sounds that relate to combinations of letters, such as /ear/ in **bear**.

With this understanding, children will be able to read, spell, and pronounce new and more complex words in the future.

Children learn how to read by blending sounds to make a word:

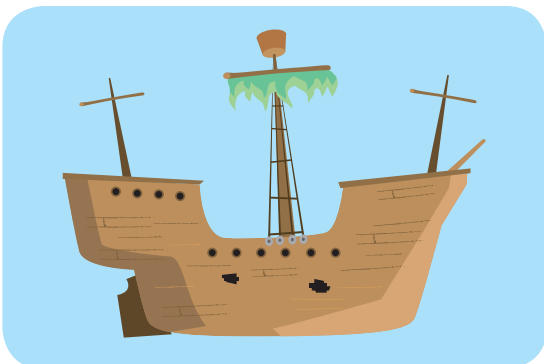


hat → h/a/t → “hat”



bus → b/u/s → “bus”

They learn how to spell by segmenting a word into sounds:



“boat” → b/oa/t → boat



“book” → b/oo/k → book

How can I introduce phonics?

Phonics teaching can be introduced in the classroom or at home using short activities and games.

Make children aware of sounds common in English and the children’s first language wherever possible. Use words the children know to highlight and identify sounds.

1 Use Flashcards or objects



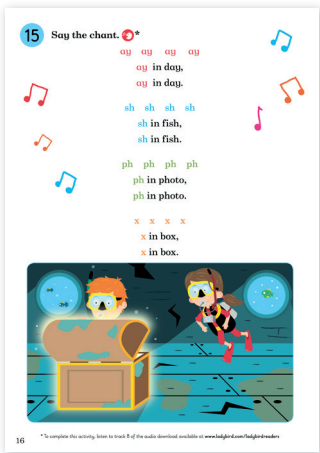
- **Find the sound:** stick a selection of Flashcards on the wall, or put them down on the floor or table. Ask the children to find words with a particular sound, such as /e/. Try using a different sound each day.
- **Sound pairs:** ask the children to sort through the Flashcards to find words with matching sounds, such as *book* and *cook*, or *farm* and *food*.
- **Sound craft:** select a sound of the week. Draw, paint, and decorate a large cut-out of the letters that represent the sound. The children should find objects or Flashcards containing that sound to create a sound display table.

2 Use chants, songs, and rhymes

Help the children to become familiar with natural rhythm and rhyme, by learning traditional nursery rhymes, songs, and chants.

A phonics chant is included at the back of every *Ladybird Readers Starter Activity Book*, and audio downloads of the chants are available on the website:

www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders



3 Use story books or graded readers

Storytelling helps children to develop linguistically, cognitively, and emotionally. Stories explore familiar themes and provide a playful and imaginative context for children to experiment with the sounds of English.

They contain high-frequency words, such as animals, family, and food, as well as words such as *dragon*, *pirate*, and *giant*, which inspire children’s imaginations.





The *Ladybird Readers Starter* level uses age-appropriate, engaging storytelling to introduce a phonics approach to reading.


Inside a Starter Reader


Picture words (Reader pages 4—5)


Picture words



Ella Elephant


Liz



Vick Vet



Zippy Zebra



lion



ox


Letters and sounds: v w x z oo i_e
Theme: zoo animals



drink



camel



leg


trunk


cut


water


wet


zoo

Use these words to help you with the activity on page 16.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Look at the story (Reader pages 6—15)


Vick Vet


Liz


lion


ox


camel


zoo



The **Picture words** pages familiarize the children with key vocabulary and characters in the story. The words are visually represented on the page and can be listened to in the audio download.

These pages also feature a list of the main letters and sounds, the theme of the story, and an alphabet trail for reference.

The aim of the Picture words pages is to prepare the children for the language in the story, and to help them anticipate the story content. These pages can be used:

- to explore the theme
- to access learners’ previous knowledge
- to pre-teach unfamiliar vocabulary
- to focus on letters and sounds
- to predict and discuss story content and outcomes.

Activities

- Listen to the audio and point to the pictures.
- Group the words. Ask, “Can you see any animals?”, “Who are the people in the story?”, “Where are they?”, “What parts of the animals can you see?”, “Which animal do you like best?”
- Recognize sounds. Ask, “Can you find any /w/ words?”, “Can you find any /c/ words?” Ask children to create sound groups.
- Predict what happens next. Ask, “What do you think will happen in the story?”

The **Look at the story** pages contain the book illustrations and the Picture words, but have no story text. Looking at these pages prepares the children for reading and listening to the full story. It allows the children to start building an idea of the storyline and the role of each character.

Activity page (Reader page 16)

The **Activity page** consolidates the main focus sounds in the story. The aim of this activity is to provide further practice in differentiating and associating sounds with letters, words, and pictures.

The Picture words page will help the children to complete this activity.

Activities

- Encourage the children to find the Picture words in the illustrations. Prompt them by asking questions, such as “How many animals can you see?”, “What is Vick Vet doing?”, “Why is Zippy Zebra sad?”
- Give the children time to look at the pictures and turn the pages. Ask them to talk about the scenes.
- Mime animals, people, or actions from the story. Ask the children to point to them in the pictures.
- Use the Flashcards and say, “Find a /p/ word”. Make headbands for some of the children to wear, with a key sound on each one. Give the rest of the children a Flashcard. They must find the child with their sound and sit together in groups.

Read the story (Reader pages 17—27)



The **Read the story** pages can be read aloud or listened to in the audio download.

The first time you read the story, you may prefer it to be an extended listening activity for the children, so they can listen carefully and enjoy the story without interruption. Encourage the children to listen to you, rather than look at the pages of their own book.

This way, the children will see the expression you put into your reading. They will learn how your voice changes when making statements and asking questions, and how the dialogue sounds different to narration. For example, you might read the page above in a happy, cheerful voice.

The second time you read or listen to the story, the children could do one of the activities on the right.

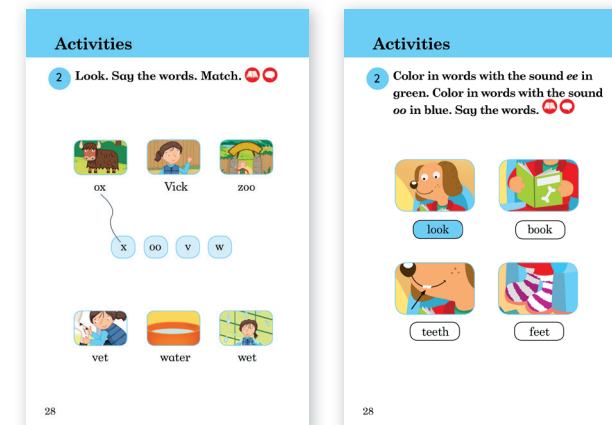
Activities

- Ask the children to make actions to represent the characters or animals.
- Stop and ask questions to see if the children understand the story: “Is she happy?”, “Why?”, “Why not?”
- Divide the children into word- or sound groups. When they hear their word or sound they should stand up.
- Ask the children to listen to the story and shout “Stop!” when they hear words with a particular sound. Congratulate them, and then continue the story.
- Use the **finger following** method. Although children may do this incorrectly at first, it will help them to practice reading English from left to right.

Reader activities (Reader pages 28—31)

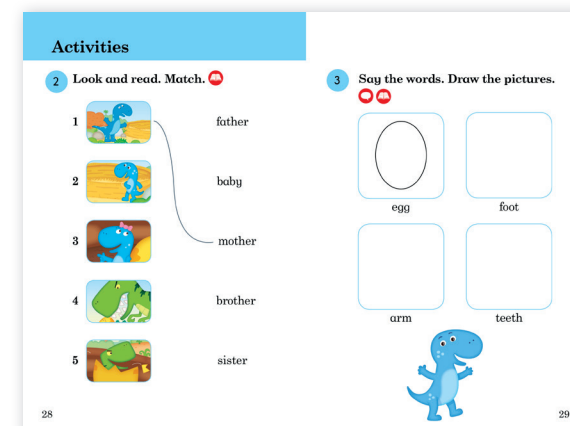
Phonics

The Starter Readers include a wide range of phonics activities, which require the children to differentiate and associate sounds in words. Other phonics activities ask the children to find and circle a particular sound in words, or to circle words that have the same sound.



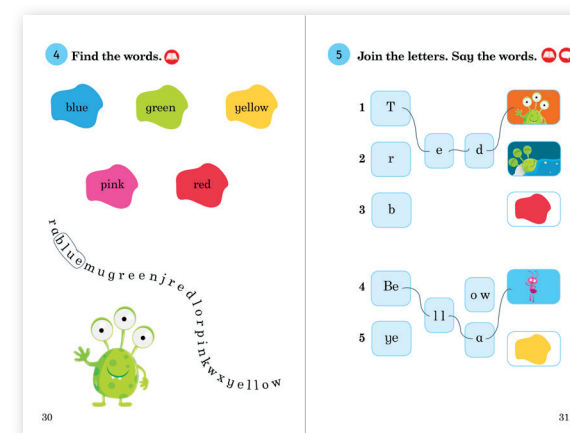
Comprehension of meaning

There are also activities to check comprehension of the story content. These activities focus mainly on the Picture words. Children are often asked to decide whether the words match the pictures, or to read the words and draw pictures.



Decoding words and building sentences

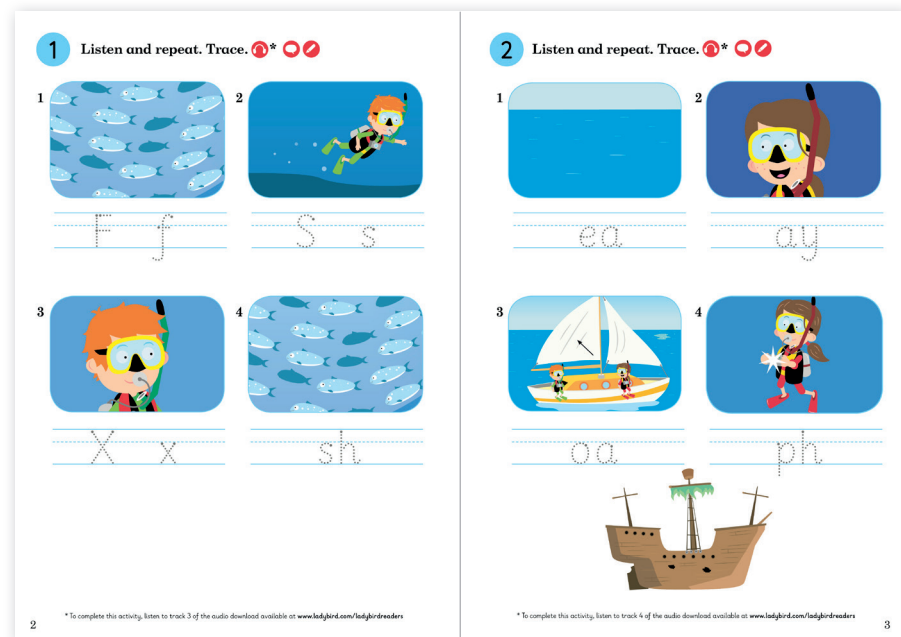
These activities work on children’s reading, spelling, and writing skills, and also feature the Picture words. They include activities such as blending and segmenting words, or building sentences. Other activities ask children to find and circle key words in word snakes, join letters to form words from picture prompts, or reorder jumbled letters to form words.



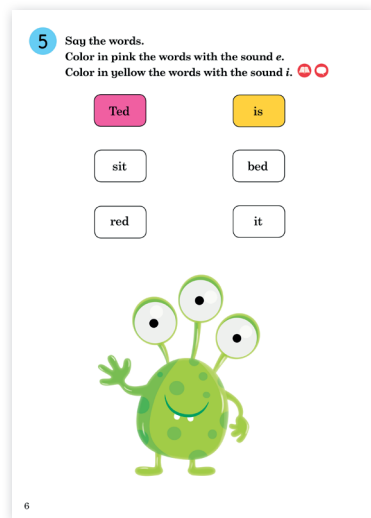
Answer Keys to all the activities are available to download from the website:
www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

Inside a Starter Activity Book

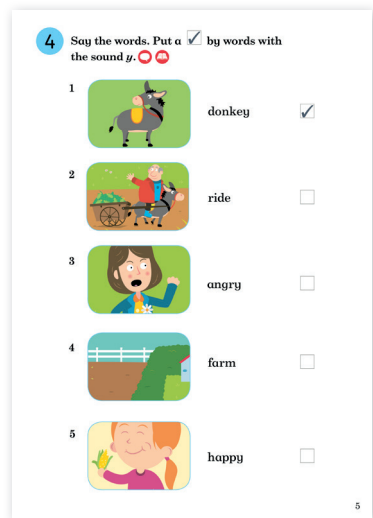
Phonics focus (Activity Book pages 2—6)



Phonics activities are also included in the Activity Book. These provide further practice of the focus sounds in the story, as well as developing the children's sound recognition, association, and differentiation skills. The phonics activities in the Activity Book also involve other skills, such as pre-writing. Children listen to and repeat the sounds, and trace the associated letters.



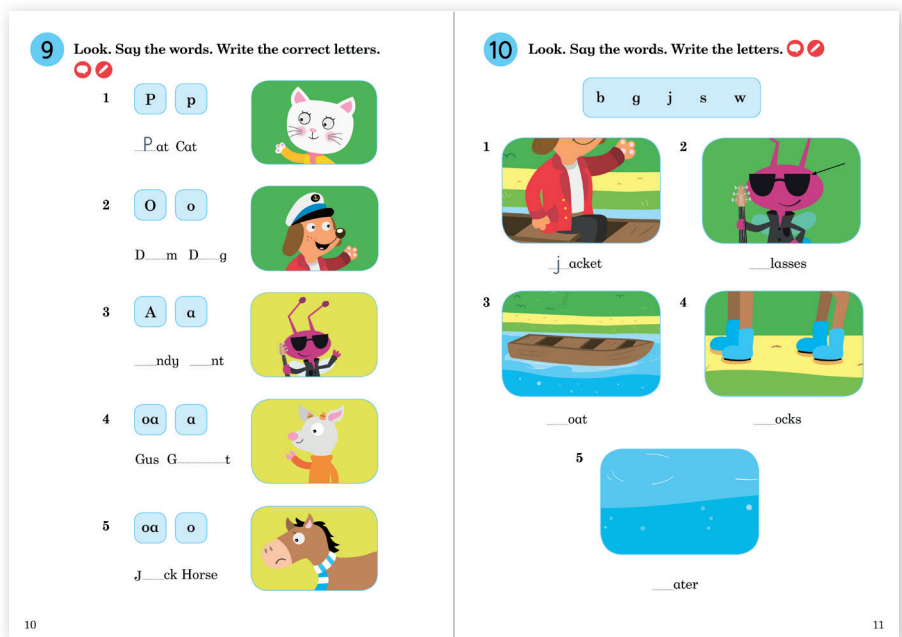
Sound association activities ask children to color in words that have the same sound.



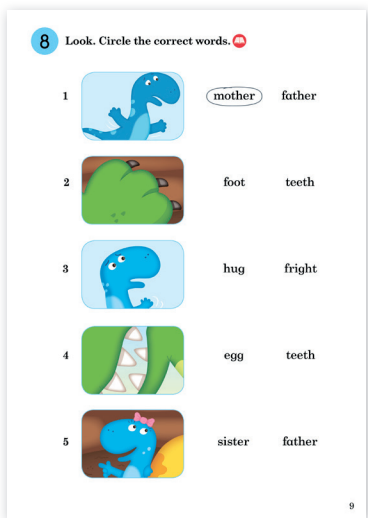
Sound differentiation activities help children to differentiate between sounds and relate them to a written word.

Answer Keys to all the activities are available to download from the website:
www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

Reading and writing (Activity Book pages 7—15)

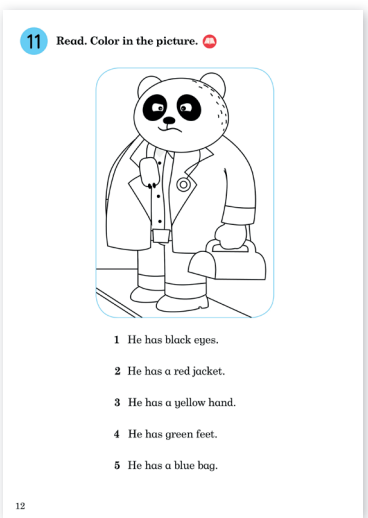


The **Reading and writing** activities have been carefully designed to scaffold children's progression in reading and writing. The early activities reinforce the spelling of key words, while later activities develop the children's ability to read and complete sentences.



At word level (pages 7—11), activities check the children's comprehension of key story words. Activities include:

- read and draw/match/write
- read and circle the correct words.

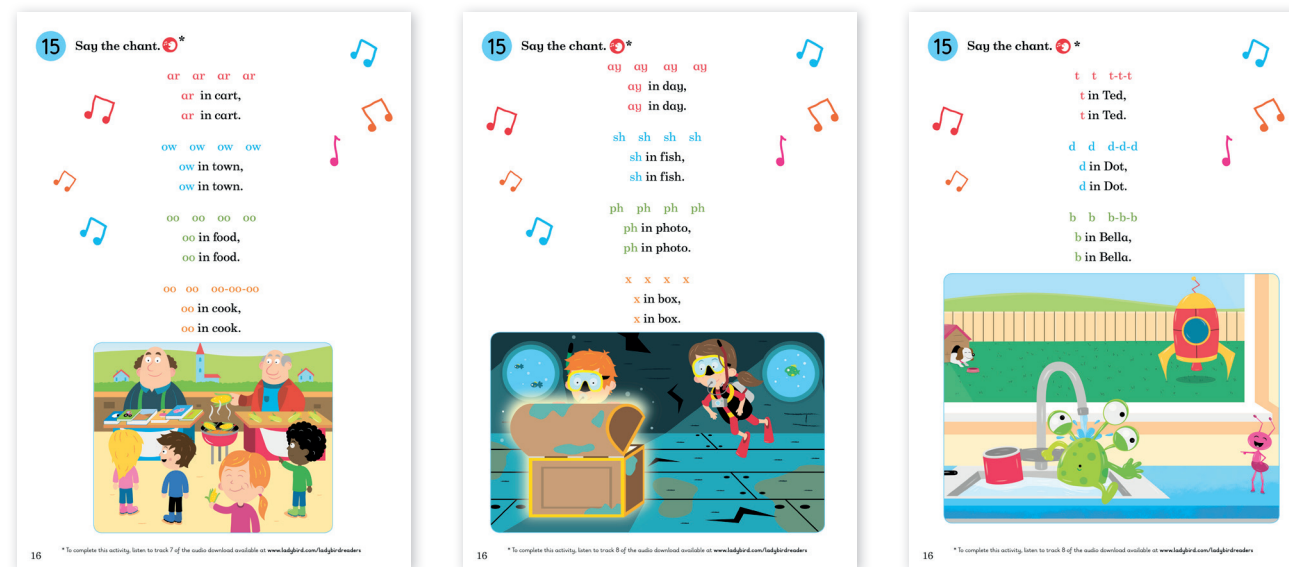


At sentence level (pages 12—15), activities provide practice in recognizing and completing sentences. Activities include:

- read the sentences and color the picture
- read and circle the correct word/sentence
- write the correct words.

Answer Keys to all the activities are available to download from the website:
www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

Using Chants



Saying and repeating **chants** contributes to children's cognitive development. It helps to reinforce literacy and numeracy skills, and to develop children's memory. The chants also support children's physical development—acting out the chant can improve coordination, and develop fine and gross motor skills.

Children's linguistic skills are improved, as chants support phonemic awareness, drawing attention to the pronunciation of individual sounds, and the intonation and rhythm of the English language. They are also easy to memorize.

Above all else, the chants are fun and sociable. They encourage cooperation and are suitable for different learning styles.

The chants on page 16 of the *Ladybird Readers Activity Books* provide a grand finale which children will love. They target the focus sounds used in the story, and provide meaningful, fun repetition through catchy rhythms.

Activities

- Before listening, children can match sounds in the chants to Flashcards of the words with those sounds.
- Make sound cards to hold up and match with the Flashcards.
- Divide the children into sound- and word groups. Give each sound group a sound from the chant, and each word group a word from the chant. When listening to the chant, the sound groups should join in with their sound, and the word groups should chant their word.
- After listening to the chants, encourage the children to think of more words with the key sounds. They could even make a new chant by substituting the words in the recorded chants with their own.

Audio recordings of the chants are available to download from:
www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

Using Flashcards



The **Flashcards** are a valuable teaching tool, and can be used in many different ways.

Activities

● Discovery bag

Choose Flashcards for words you would like to pre-teach or revise with the children, and put them in a brightly colored bag or box. Slowly take each card out of the bag or box, and ask the children to say the word.

● Find me a...?

Place the Flashcards on the wall. Mime a word for the children to point to. Once the children are confident in this, ask them to mime the words for their partner to guess.

● Whispering game

Ask the children to sit in a circle, and place the Flashcards in the middle of the circle, on the floor. Whisper one of the Flashcard words to the child on your left. The whisper is passed from child to child. The last child picks up the card representing the word they heard. Next time, whisper a word to the second child on your left, and so on.

● Who has got the...?

Ask a number of children to stand at the front of the room. Give each of these children a Flashcard to hold behind their back. Ask, "Who has got the...?", and encourage the other children to guess. They should shout out the name of a child at the front, who then shows their Flashcard. Continue until the children remember who has each word.

● Categories

Drop all the Flashcards on the floor (as if by mistake), and ask each child to pick one Flashcard up. The children should take it in turns to show their Flashcard, and say what it is. Then, encourage the children to put their cards into categories. Ask, "Who has got an animal?", "Who has got a fruit?"

● Sound matching

Give a Flashcard to each child. Ask the children to find another child who has a card with a sound that matches theirs.

Drama Activities with Ladybird Readers

Role-play and drama are powerful teaching tools through which children can develop their communication skills in a second language. Drama brings language to life, and makes it real, purposeful, and personal. It also helps to develop children's interpersonal skills as they collaborate, make decisions, organize, and delegate roles.

Starting out in drama

You can begin to familiarize the class with drama activities through mime, gestures, sound, and imitation.

Activities

- Use an English-speaking puppet to encourage the children to speak independently about everyday topics, such as their likes and dislikes. This can generate self-confidence, and prepare children for more involved drama activities.
- Encourage the children to mime actions as you read the story. This helps them to make the connection between language and physical expression.
- Prompt the children to think of an action to represent each Picture word. They could make their actions as they listen to the story.
- Ask the children to make animal noises or sound effects to accompany the story.
- Encourage the children to imitate voices from the story, using expression and intonation to show that a character is happy, sad, angry, or excited.

Extended drama activities

Once the children feel more confident speaking English, you can move on to slightly more advanced techniques. These include simple role-play and drama, using language related to the Readers, such as "Can I go in the boat?", "Yes, you can." If the Reader has plenty of dialogue, the children can act out the story.



A role-play script for each Starter Reader is available to download from the website: www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

Managing drama activities

Setting up a role-play or drama activity carefully will help it to succeed, so try to consider the following in your planning.

- Use the available space effectively (move chairs and tables to create a stage).
- Establish a clear framework with a step-by-step lesson plan.
- Think about the language the children will need and practice this in advance.
- Prepare props, such as drawings, objects, backdrops, puppets, or masks.

Making props

Making props for role-play and drama is something that the children can be involved in. This type of activity helps to bring the language and story context to life. It provides another opportunity to revisit and reinforce key language, and is a sociable, collaborative, and creative way to explore the story. There are all kinds of craft activities you could use, depending on the story context.

Activities

● Reusing items

Some props will be existing items that children can find and reuse. These might include empty food packages, hats, scarves, bags, glasses, shells, leaves, feathers, or any other easily obtainable item.

● Create a prop box

Prop boxes can be grouped by theme, such as on the farm, at the zoo, at the doctors, or on the beach. These props will spark the children's imagination, encouraging them to initiate role-play and exploration.

● Masks

Make, color, or paint simple face masks for the children to wear during role-play. These could be animal masks or character masks. Card or felt are good materials to use.

● Headbands

These are a useful alternative to masks, and can be made out of card. Children can draw and decorate them according to the language and story context.

● Puppets

Simple finger or stick puppets really capture the interest of young children. They help to foster children's social interaction with their peers, and are ideal to use in chants, acting, and role-play.

● Origami

Children are fascinated by the way that something familiar and tangible can be made from just a piece of paper. Dogs, cats, boats, and hats are particularly straightforward, and can be decorated and used in drama activities.



Buying Ladybird Readers

The *Ladybird Readers* series covers five levels, and is designed to take children from Pre-A1 to A2 in the CEFR framework. It provides practice activities for children working towards the **Cambridge English: Young Learners** Starters, Movers, and Flyers exams.



**Starter
A and B**

Pre-A1
50—100 words

Level 1

Pre-A1
YLE Starters
100—200 words

Level 2

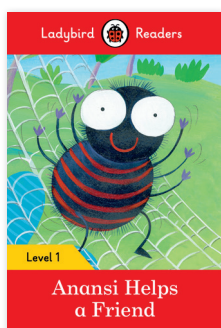
A1
YLE Movers
200—300 words

Level 3

A1+
YLE Movers
300—600 words

Level 4

A2
YLE Flyers
600—900 words



To order **Ladybird Readers**, please contact your local distributor.

More details can be found at:

www.ladybird.com/ladybirdreaders

