



IS FOR TIMETABLE

A timetable is a listing of the train arrival and departure times.

VICTORIA STATION

PLATFORM	ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES	TIMES			STATUS
1	CHICAGO	05:45	ARRIVE	DELAYED	
2	OKLAHOMA CITY	04:20	DEPART	ON TIME	
3	DALLAS	12:45	DEPART	ON TIME	
4	FORT WORTH	02:32	DEPART	DELAYED	
5	SAN ANTONIO	05:25	DEPART	DELAYED	

USING ALPHABET BOOKS TO TEACH

Alphabet books meet a wide range of students' needs and interests. They not only provide emergent readers with opportunities for oral and written language development but also allow older students to experience a unique genre of books. Alphabet books can be used to introduce or provide an overview of a subject, to research a topic, or to get children interested in new vocabulary, art forms, or writing styles.

Many of you who are using this book may be interested in teaching a group of children, and others of you—especially parents—will be thinking only about how to reach one or just a few children. The tips we offer here should cover both of these audiences and give every parent, teacher, or child ideas for using this book in many different ways and for having fun with the words and pictures again and again.

- **Just enjoy.** Alphabet books, like picture books, are unique because children do not need to know the story or plot. For this reason, ABC books are great tools for encouraging independent exploration and sharing. Invite your child to “read” the book to you, even if she cannot decode the words or recall all of the terms.
- **Practice and learn.** As the child becomes familiar with the vocabulary and pictures in the book, ask him to go through and name everything he sees or remembers and tell you the names of the letters. Let him decide whether or not you should read the definitions.
- **Keep going.** On each page, parents and teachers can stop reading and ask the child to name other words that begin with the letter. Start with other train words and then move to other words in general.

- **Make it challenging.** Ask your child (or your students) to find other pictures on each page that represent the target letter (e.g., cupola on the caboose).
- **Encourage authorship.** After reading several different alphabet books, have the child create her own. After reading this book, the child may want to create her own railroad or train alphabet book or one on transportation in general. Or she may want to pick a completely different topic.
- **Investigate.** Ask the child to find out more about his favorite terms or illustrations. Look on the Internet for more photos of train bridges, or look through other books to research the Orient Express.
- **Read it again.** Having children read the same book repeatedly is a good way to improve reading fluency. Read *A Is for "All Aboard!"* several times with the child and then encourage her to read it to others.
- **Read as a team.** Read the book to the child. Then read again but, this time, have the child read right along with you as much as he can. This practice of reading in unison—called *choral reading*—is another great way to encourage and practice fluent reading.
- **Keep it fresh.** If your child enjoys reading this book over and over again, try to add something novel each time. On one occasion, point out the cover, the back cover, the title page, and the title. During another reading, ask the child to notice details in certain pictures or prompt her to predict or recall what she will find on the next page. All of this will help to build reading and writing skills.
- **Don't stop with this book.** Make many different alphabet books available to children so that they learn new vocabulary and content as well as letters and sounds.

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