



**DEVI
SANSTHAN**
Dignity Education
Vision International

Leave no one behind

dignityeducation.org

ACCELERATING LEARNING

for all

Teacher

Handbook



Thank you for using Accelerating Learning for All (ALFA) to make a huge difference in the lives of your students by helping them become foundationally literate and numerate swiftly.

FLN is the key to future learning – children need to learn to read, so they can then read to learn. In the wake of the Covid pandemic, a shocking 70% of 10-year-olds in low-and-middle-income countries around the world are not able to read a simple passage with understanding. We urgently need to act to ensure that no child is left behind, and all are able to achieve their potential.

Rapid learning is the need of the hour, and ALFA is one such research-based program which enables children to learn reading, writing and arithmetic in a matter of months, not years. Best of all, ALFA enables children to learn not just these crucial '3Rs' but 21st century '6C' skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity, character and citizenship.

This handbook is here to help guide you on your journey towards an ALFA classroom. I'm sure you and your students will be filled with joy and excitement as we work together for a fully literate world.

Warm regards,



Sunita Gandhi

Founder & CEO, DEVI Sansthan
Dignity Education Vision International
Chief Advisor, Academics, City Montessori School
(World's largest school)
Former Economist, The World Bank, USA
PhD (Physics), Cambridge University, UK



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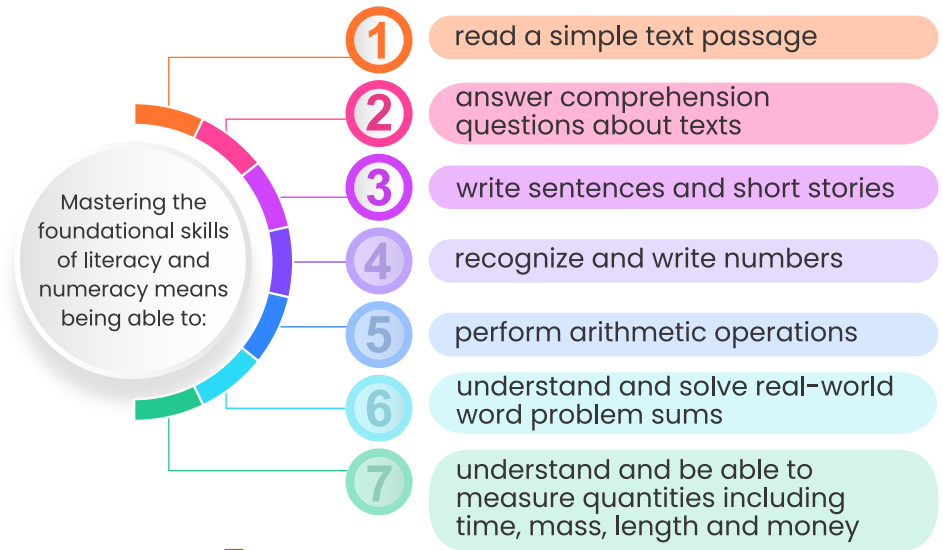
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ALfA has been endorsed
by many eminent leaders.
Scan the [QR code](#) to see a video of *Hon.
Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh***
discuss the program.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF ALfA

The ALfA booklets are appropriate for children of all ages who have not yet mastered basic literacy and numeracy. We want our learners to acquire at least a Grade 3 level of reading, writing and arithmetic. A detailed mapping of how the ALfA modules meet the NIPUN dakshatas is given on page 21.

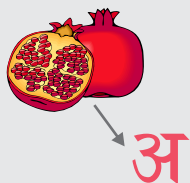


PRINCIPLES OF ALfA

ALfA is based on extensive international psychological and educational research. There are three simple principles for creating an ALfA classroom:



Paired learning. When a single teacher addresses the whole class, many students often struggle to follow and participate. But when sitting in pairs, even the shiest student becomes an active learner. The process of helping each other learn is crucial to developing the 6C skills. Paired learning is also more enjoyable than just listening to the teacher, leading to higher student attendance and engagement.

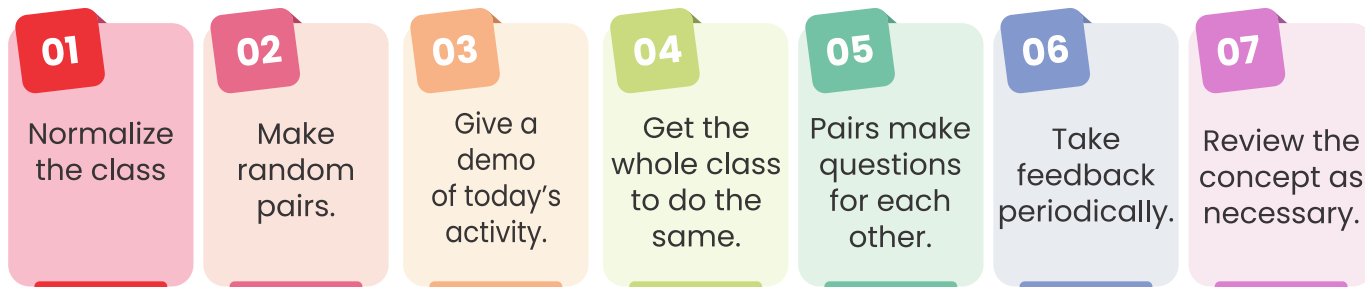


Known to Unknown. The traditional education system teaches an abstraction first before connecting to real life (A for Apple). ALfA flips this, moving from known to unknown. In literacy, this means picture → sound → sound symbol. In numeracy, this means concrete → pictorial → abstract.



Asking questions. The role of a traditional teacher is to tell their student answers; but an ALfA teacher asks questions which foster the students' thinking. In pairs, students also make their own questions and ask each other, which engages them more deeply in the learning process.

ALfA CLASSROOM STEPS



- 1. Normalize the class** Children are used to working in a traditional classroom, where they are passive learners. As you embark on your ALfA journey, you will have to explain and demonstrate the 'new norms' of the class: working in pairs, taking turns, asking each other questions and cooperating instead of competing.
- 2. Make random pairs** The heart of the ALfA process is paired learning, so it's crucial to start by making pairs in a fun, non-judgmental way.

Why Pairs? In ALfA, we make new random pairs every day, for several reasons:

- It ensures no child feels demotivated by being labelled 'strong' or 'weak' and grouped accordingly. Such labels lead to a fixed rather than a growth mindset.
- Making fresh pairs every day is enjoyable, children are excited by the surprise factor of not knowing who they will be working with on a given day.
- Over the course of a few months, children get a chance to work with most or all other students in the class, thus developing their collaboration skills. It's particularly helpful if, for instance, there is a special needs child in the class, for every one of his/her classmates to get the chance to work with them.

How to make pairs? There are many techniques to make random pairs, for instance:

- **Lottery.** Ask children to write their own names on chits of paper or ice-cream sticks (if a child can't write their own name, their friend can help). Bring all the names to a central desk and mix them in a bowl. Have a child pull two names at random; these two become a pair.



- **Musical chairs.** Arrange pairs of chairs around the class. Play a song and have students dance around the class while it is playing. The moment it stops, they need to sit in the chair closest to them, forming a pair with whoever else is there.



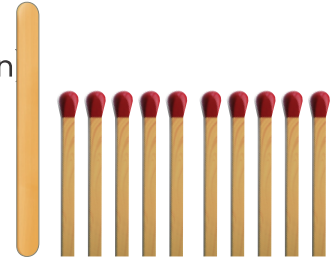
Occasionally, you will form a pair that is clearly 'not working' – if the two are fighting, for instance. You may need to 're-pair' a few kids. As children get more used to working in the ALfA approach, this should happen less frequently.

3. Give a demonstration of today's activity

Call a student forward to be a pair with you, and give a demonstration of what you are expecting the whole class to do.

Each module has a pictorial representation of a few words or a maths question. Call a pair to the front to work through this – one child asking questions and the other responding; then swapping roles. There may be some processes you need to explain to the whole class by demonstrating from the front – for instance:

- In subtraction, if there are not enough matchsticks to be removed then we will have to exchange an ice-cream stick (ten for ten matchsticks (ones).
- In reading four letter words, first combine the first two letters, then combine the third and fourth; before joining together the two syllables.



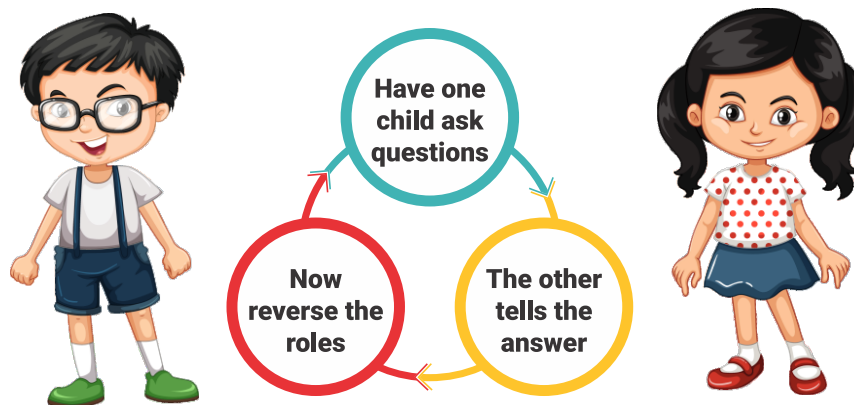
4. Get the whole class to do the same

After a pair of children have demonstrated the process from the front, have everyone work through the same question in their own pairs. This helps them become confident in the process – repeating what they've already seen done. Monitor the class to see how each pair is doing. If a pair struggles, encourage them to seek help from another pair rather than directly from you.

5. Invite pairs to work at their own pace, making questions for each other

In literacy, this means pairs can work on different modules – taking turns to read a word or a line each. In numeracy, there is usually a broad scope of different levels that children can work on a single module at. For instance, in the 'ascending & descending numbers' activity, some pairs can work with two-digit numbers while others can do with three- or four-digit numbers.

The process of making new questions for each other, beyond what is given in the book, gives children a chance to exercise their creativity, and excites them as active participants. Instead of you giving the whole class homework, you can ask children to choose a couple questions to give their partner as homework.



6. Take feedback periodically

While teaching, the teacher must know:

- How much the students are learning
- Which parts they are not understanding so well
- Who exactly is having trouble in understanding

A common traditional way to take feedback on learning levels is to ask the whole class a question and have children who know the answer raise their hands. The teacher then selects one child to answer. This method is problematic because it doesn't give an accurate picture of the classroom's learning – some children who raise their hands may not actually know the answer, whereas others who didn't raise their hands may know it. It also involves only a single student in giving the answer.



Another traditional way to take feedback is to give an exam or test. This involves the whole class, however, it is very time-consuming for the teacher to mark, and takes a long time for students to get their results. The results are usually given as a subject average, which is not detailed enough for the students or teacher to know which specific topics require revision. Students often find exams stressful, detracting from the joy of learning.



A better way is to take whole class instant low-stakes feedback. This can be done by asking a multiple-choice question and asking children 'stand up if you think option A'; then 'stand up if you think option B' etc. This enables a quick headcount to see what proportion of the class got the right answer. It's vital for such feedback to be low-stakes; and to encourage children to say what they think rather than copying their friends. Periodic formative tests are also useful, if done using a technology (such as OMR scanning with the Pragati app, or Quizizz) which enables instant, detailed feedback.

7. Review the concept as necessary

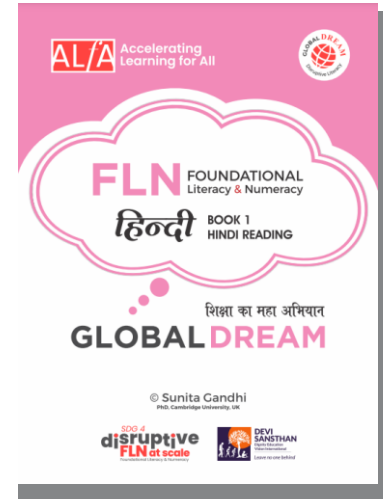
Depending on the feedback, make fresh pairs and do more activities as needed to ensure everyone has learnt key concepts.

If the whole class has mastered the concepts, it's time to move on. However, if some of the students are still struggling, it is helpful to make fresh pairs and continue. If much of the class is struggling, it might be helpful to choose a different activity to help convey the same concept. For instance, if many children are still unclear about tens and ones after the clapping and snapping activity, maybe ice-cream sticks and matchsticks will help them.

HOW TO TEACH READING (BOOK 1)

32 Page Booklet | Completion in 30 Days

Phonics (focusing on decoding letters and blending them together to form words) has been shown to be more effective than a whole language approach (which emphasizes recognition of sight words). ALfA uses a 'cognitive phonics' approach to teaching reading – students ask questions of each other so are constantly exercising their cognition about the sounds of words.



MODULE 1 10 Letters | 6 + 36 Words

Ask. Wait. Don't Tell. पूछिये। इंतजार करिये। बताइये नहीं।

यह क्या है? **ब स प र अ ब**

इसकी पहली आवाज क्या है? **बस पर अब**

इन आवाजों को जोड़कर क्या शब्द है? **घर तक चल**

MODULE 2

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| बच | बल | सब | सत | सर | सच | पक | पच | रब |
| रस | रच | तप | तर | तल | तब | कर | कब | कप |
| कल | कस | चर | लत | लब | अघ | चक | बक | सप |
| पल | अप | पस | लपक | कसर | असर | अकल | बसर | सबर |

Prompts शिक्षार्थियों की जोड़ियों बनाने

- मापदूरा-1 में शिक्षार्थी चित्रों द्वारा 10 अक्षर सीखते हैं (ब, स, प, र, अ, प, त, क, च, ल) और 6 शब्द पढ़ना सीखते हैं (बस पर अब घर तक चल)।
- इस 'ब से बसल' नहीं बोलते हैं बल्कि शिक्षार्थी एक-दूसरे से पूछते हैं, 'यह किस चीज का चित्र है?' और 'इसकी पहली आवाज क्या है?'। शिक्षार्थी चित्र द्वारा अक्षर और शब्द सीखते हैं किना रचना लागू।
- जब शिक्षार्थी 'ब' और 'स' को पहचान लेते हैं, वह उन्हें जोड़कर नया शब्द बनाते हैं। इसी प्रक्रिया से वह बाकी शब्द भी सीखते हैं।
- मापदूरा-2 में शिक्षार्थी ऊर्धी 10 अक्षरों से नये शब्द बनाना सीखते हैं, किना चित्रों की सहायता से। इससे उनकी अक्षरों की पहचान मजबूत होती है।

Module 1: Students learn to associate pictures with sounds with letters (decoding), and then join letters together to form words (blending) through a series of questions:

- What picture is this?
- What is its first sound?
- What do these sounds join together to make?

Learners repeat this process, swapping roles of asking and answering the questions to decode and blend the words.

Module 2: Students practice the letters they have learnt, forming new words. The pair can take turns reading one word at a time. If they can't recognize the letter, they shouldn't be told – instead, search for it in module 1.

Prompts: Instructions for teacher and students

With ALfA your students can achieve foundational literacy and numeracy in just 90 instructional days!



Reading
(Book 1)



Writing
(Book 2)



Numeracy
(Book 3)



Scan this QR code for a video on

HOW TO TEACH READING



MODULES 1 – 10 (5 Pages)

All letters, words without matras

- Each page introduces 9–10 new letters.
- Modules 5–8 introduce some difficult letters like gya, na, ksha, tra. Encourage students to ask other pairs for help if needed.



Modules 11–18 (5 Pages)

Practice passages without matras

Speed reading passages, each containing all the letters of the alphabet, which students can race to read in under a minute.

Module 18 shows the alphabetical order of the letters. There is no need to learn the alphabet first—it is better to make words from the very first.

रहम

भगवन कर सब पर करम,
सब वतन, बन एक चमन ।
मत लड़-झगड़, कर शरम,
हर तरफ बस, अब अमन ।



Modules 19–42 (12 Pages)

All matras (including Chandrabindu, ref, paden etc)

- Each matra is introduced through some pictures.
- Students are given practice through rhyming words—they can read one word at a time each.
- The module at the bottom of each page gives further practice—they can read one line each.



Modules 43–51 (6 Pages)

Comprehension passages, role plays

- Students ask each other questions and respond, developing their reading fluency and understanding.
- Short poems, stories and newspaper clippings to build a love of reading



राजू, तुम आज कहाँ जा रहे हो?

प्रिया मैं स्कूल जा रहा हूँ।



आपको कौन-सा विषय सबसे अच्छा लगता है?

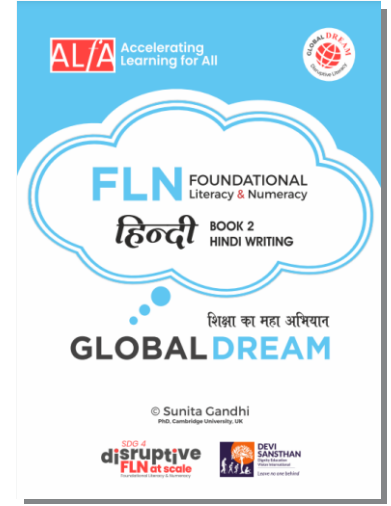
मुझे हिंदी कहानियाँ पढ़ना पसंद है।
आपको क्या पसंद है?






















HOW TO TEACH WRITING (BOOK 2)

12 Page Booklet | Completion in 15 Days

ALfA teaches reading before writing, because it is much easier when you can read what you are writing. Rather than simply copying what the teacher has written, ALfA uses fun writing activities which help students develop their creativity and critical thinking.



MODULE 6

| ANIMALS पशु | | | BIRDS पक्षियाँ | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| बिल्ली | कुत्ता | गाय | कबूतर | गौरैया | तोता |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| बकरी | घोड़ा | बन्दर | कौआ | सारस | मुर्गी |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| हाथी | ऊँट | बाघ | बतख | मोर | हंस |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| शेर | भालू | जेबरा | चील | उल्लू | शुतुरमुँग |

| Verbs क्रिया | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|
| कूदना | दौड़ना | चढ़ना | शिकार करना | खाना |
| टहलना | जन्म देना | शिशु पालना | अंडा देना | |
| दहाड़ना | भौंकना | पीना | तैरना | दूध देना |
| भार उठाना | पकड़ना | नाचना | उड़ना | |

Prompts शिक्षार्थियों की जोड़ियाँ बनायें

- जानवरों और पक्षियों के बारे में वाक्य लिखें, जैसे: शेर शिकार करता है। मोर नाचता है।
- एक दूसरे से प्रश्न पूछें, जैसे: कौन-से जीव अण्डे देते हैं? कौन-से पक्षी तैरते हैं?
- अपना पसंदीदा जानवर या पक्षी के बारे में पाँच वाक्य लिखिए।

Children pair up and give each other thematic dictations, for instance on animals and birds

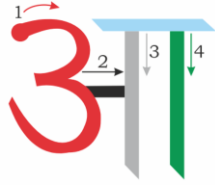
Extension activities, such as forming sentences using given verbs.

Prompts: Children are also prompted for extension activities, such as asking each other to categorise animals - making lists of those who can and cannot swim, run, eat meat etc. Children express themselves creatively, writing five lines about a favourite animal or bird.

ALfA Implementation began in Shamli district, Uttar Pradesh in August 2022.

Scan the **QR code** to see the remarkable achievements of students in **ALfA**.





Modules 1-4 (4 Pages)













Writing letters and matras

- Modules show the letter formation order.
- Young learners can use a tray of sand or flour, or write on the floor with chalk.

Modules 5-6 (2 Pages)

Build vocabulary and construct simple sentences.

- Modules thematically build vocabulary of fruits, vegetables, animals, birds.
- Grammatical concepts like verbs and adjectives are introduced.
- Working in pairs, children write and respond to questions.

| FRUITS फल | | | VEGETABLES सब्जियाँ | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| सेब | केला | आम | आलू | टमाटर | बैंगन |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| अनानास | अंगूर | तरबूज | फूलगोभी | बन्दगोभी | गाजर |

एक दूसरे से प्रश्न पूछें, जैसे: आपका पसंदीदा फल कौन सा है? कौन सी सब्जी का रंग नारंगी होता है?



- रस
- सरल
- नल
- सच
- जाल



- नाक
- जनक
- नारी
- मीना
- खेत

Modules 7-8 (2 Pages)

Fun activities for writing creativity.

- Children make as many words as they can from a given set of letters.
- Children use given words to compose sentences and short stories.
- They make more such exercises for each other.

Modules 9-10 (2 Pages)

Writing in everyday life.

- Children learn how to write addresses.
- Children recognise various symbols and write about them.

श्री राजेश शर्मा

4/88 विपुल खण्ड

गोमती नगर

लखनऊ 226010

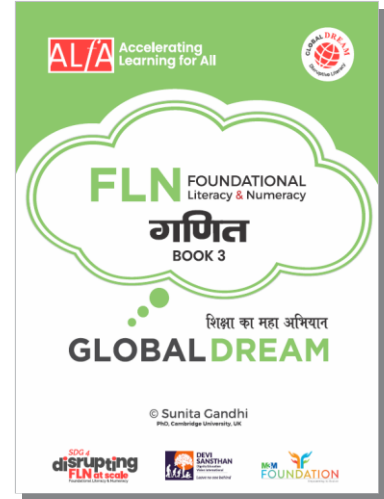
उत्तर प्रदेश



HOW TO TEACH ARITHMETIC (Book 3)

28 Page Booklet | Completion in 45 Days

Many students find maths difficult, abstract and boring; lacking relevance and connection. In contrast, ALFA numeracy brings maths to life with fun, hands-on activities. Use of concrete objects and children asking questions of each other help build a much deeper level of understanding.



ALFA is not designed for a specific grade, but can be used across different school classes.

Balvatika to Grade 3: NIPUN competencies

Grade 3 & 5: Helping children perform well in National Achievement Survey

Any Grade: Gap-filling and bridging to curriculum level.

Level indicates the grade level which the module is appropriate for.

- Level A = Balvatika & Grade 1
- Level B = Grade 2 & 3
- Level C = Grade 4 & 5

मॉड्यूल 17: हम 1000 तक संख्याएँ समझते हैं

Level B

11

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>हज़ार</p> <p>1000</p> <p>पैर पटक</p> | <p>सैकड़ा</p> <p>100</p> <p>ऊपर ताली</p> | <p>दहाई</p> <p>10</p> <p>ताली</p> | <p>इकाई</p> <p>1</p> <p>चुटकी</p> |
|--|---|--|--|

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 100 | 100 100 | 100 100 100 | 100 100 100 100 | 100 100 100 100 100 |
| 100 एक सौ | 200 दो सौ | 300 तीन सौ | 400 चार सौ | 500 पाँच सौ |
| 100 100 100 | 100 100 100 100 | 100 100 100 100 | 100 100 100 100 | 100 100 100 100 |
| 600 छः सौ | 700 सात सौ | 800 आठ सौ | 900 नौ सौ | 1000 एक हज़ार |

- अनुबोधन** जोड़ी बनाकर निम्नलिखित क्रियाओं को मिलकर करें और एक दूसरे के लिए प्रश्न बनायें, जैसे कि नीचे दिये गये हैं।
- संख्याओं को सैकड़ा (1 सौ, 2 सौ, 3 सौ) में बोलें तथा ऊपर दिए गए चित्र कार्ड का उपयोग करके 100 से 1000 तक की संख्या दिखायें।
 - उपरोक्तानुसार 100 के चिट्ठे बनायें। अनियमित ढंग से कुछ चिट्ठे चुनें, गिनकर बतायें कि कितने सैकड़ें हैं और उसके बाद लिखें।
 - अपनी नोटबुक में क्रम से 100, 200 आदि 1000 तक लिखें।
 - चुटकी, ताली, ऊपर ताली और पैर पटक से एक दूसरे के लिए नई-नई संख्याएँ बनायें और बतायें।

ऐसे ही प्रश्न एक दूसरे हेतु बनायें और करें।

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 100 | 200 | 300 | 400 | 500 | 600 | 700 | 800 | 900 | 1000 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|

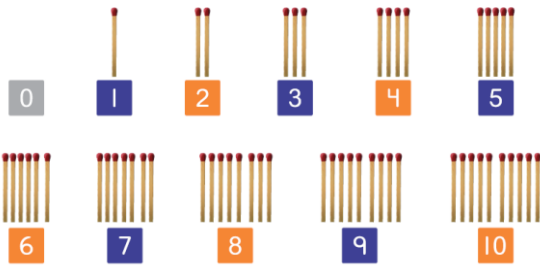
Simple-to-understand pictorial representation. Most of the modules can be engaged with at varying depths. For instance, here the clapping and snapping activity can be done with two, three or even four-digit numbers.

Prompts describing the activity & encouraging each pair to make their own questions.



Scan this QR CODE for a video on HOW TO TEACH NUMERACY



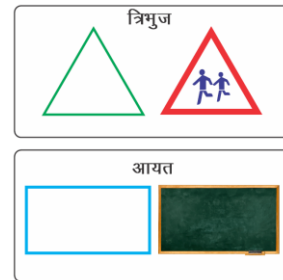


Modules 1-6 (3 Pages)

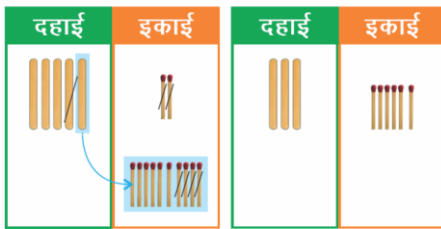
- Counting & writing numbers to 20
- Comparisons by size, weight etc.
- Patterns

Modules 7-12 (3 Pages)

- Counting to 100, using claps and snaps
- Shapes (2D & 3D)
- Near & far, under & over etc.



आलिया के पास ₹52 है। उसने ₹16 खर्च कर दिये। अब आलिया के पास कितनी धनराशि बची है?



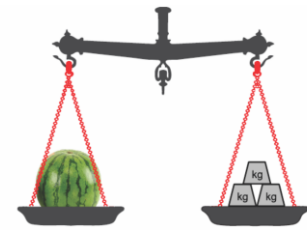
$$52 - 16 = 36$$

Modules 3-24 (7 Pages)

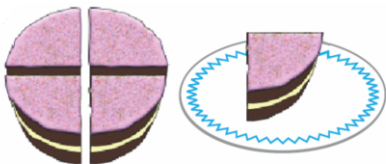
- Addition: single & two digit, with & without carrying
- Subtraction: single & two digit, with & without borrowing
- Numbers in Thousands
- Multiplication: single & two digits
- Division by grouping & long division

Modules 25-37 (7 Pages)

- Calendars, telling the time
- Length: metric & irregular measurements
- Weight: kilograms & grams
- Volume: litres & ml



इस तरबूज का भार _____ किग्रा है।



$$\frac{1}{4} \quad 4 \text{ में से } 1 \text{ भाग}$$

Modules 38-46 (5 Pages)

- Word problems & number stories
- Place value, ascending & descending order
- Fractions, number bonds
- Roman numerals
- Spelling number names

HOW TO TEACH ENGLISH

20 + 32 Pages (2 Booklets) | Completion in 90 Days

English is a harder language to learn compared to Hindi, because it is not phonetic. English **Book 1** proceeds similarly to Hindi Book 1 – introducing letters using pictures, and helping students read simple single-syllable words. Throughout Book 1, apart from a handful of sight words, all words are phonetic, with each letter making only its most common sound. ALfA focuses on the sound a letter makes, not its name.



Book 2 teaches consonant combinations and diphthongs, building learners up to be able to read more complex words. It proceeds to developing reading comprehension and fluency through short passages and role plays. It concludes with teaching writing through creative activities.

- Each lesson focuses on a single vowel sound.
- ALfA phonics is different from traditional phonics:

- (a) It moves from known (picture) to unknown (letter)
- (b) Children blend sounds to make words themselves.

LESSON 1: 'a' words

Step 1

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| c | a | t | b | g | m |

Step 2

c a t → **cat**
 b a g → **bag**
 m a t → **mat**

Step 3

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| am | at | bam | bat | cab | cam | gab |
| gag | mac | mag | mam | tab | tam | tag |

Mentor Notes

- Call a student to the front and do a demo with them of asking 'what is this', 'what is its first sound' and 'what do these sounds join together to make'.
- Help the learners form random pairs. For example, ask everyone to write their name on separate bits of paper, shuffle them, and draw two at a time – these two will sit together.
- Give out a book to each pair, and have the learners take turns to ask each other questions and read.

<https://youtu.be/ZDeLdFmVUPI>
Learn the concept of: Three Letter Words

Global Dream Disruptive Literacy & Numeracy Book 1: Introduction to Letters

DEVI SANJAYAN Deputy Education Vision International

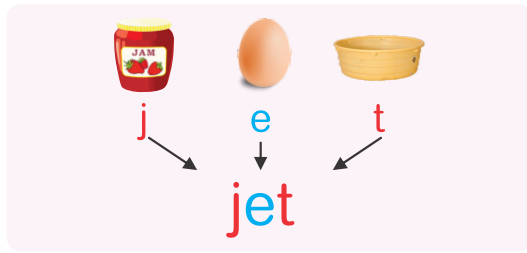
Each lesson introduces 4-6 letters. If the students aren't familiar with the pictures associated with each letter, then you may need to do some activities to introduce them.

Children take turns to ask each other questions:

- What is this picture?
- What is its first sound?
- What do these sounds join together to make?

The box at the bottom enables children to practice the same letters with new words.

Prompts explain the process and also provide links to more resources.

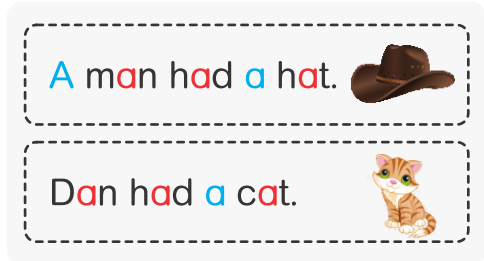


Book 1 Lessons 1–5 (5 pages)

- Introduces the 26 letters using pictures.
- Purely single syllable phonetic words.

Book 1 Practice 1–4 & Reading 1–8 (12 pages)

- Reading practice grouped by vowel sound.
- The alphabetical order of letters.
- Reading practice with same-structure sentences 'He has a...', 'I have a...'
- Short poems with comprehension questions.

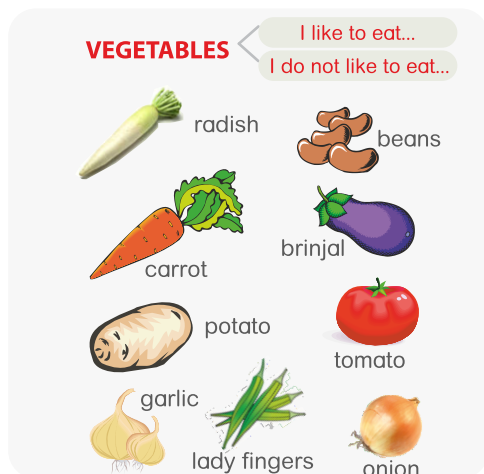


ball all

A ball is round.
Tom will call Pam.
Jan will stop at the mall.
Bill will sit up on the wall.

Book 2 Phonics Practice (12 pages)

- Consonant combinations such as th, ch, ph, ng, ck, etc introduced with pictures.
- Short & long 'oo'. Silent e
- Reading practice of various sounds, such as 'ai', 'ea', 'au', 'old', 'alk' etc.



Book 2 Vocabulary & Comprehension (10 pages)

- Thematic vocabulary building: fruits, vegetables, household objects, transport, verbs.
- Sentence-building exercises: 'Do you have a ____?', 'Yes I have a ____.' etc.
- Short stories with comprehension questions for children to ask each other
- Self-introduction, compare and contrast exercises.

Book 2 Role plays & Writing (8 pages)

- Role plays for children to do in pairs, reading one part each.
- Rhymes with comprehension questions and activities.
- Pen strokes order for writing small & capital letters.

Sona: Let us play 'catch, catch'!
Raju: We will run fast.
Sona: No, we will not run fast.
Raju: Yes, we might fall down.

ENCOURAGEMENT VS PRAISE/REPRIMAND

In the ALfA process, we never reprimand children for getting the wrong answer or reading incorrectly. Research shows that fear is highly detrimental to learning.

ALfA also draws a distinction between language of praise and encouragement. Giving students rewards – verbal or otherwise – can reduce their intrinsic love of learning. Praising some students and not others can also foster division within the classroom. When giving positive feedback to learners, we should be conscious of several factors.

| Question to ask ourselves | What NOT to say (Praise) | What to say (Encouragement) |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Does my statement encourage all children not just some? | “You are the best in the class.” | “Wonderful to see you working so nicely together.” |
| Does it lead to more effort? | “You are smart.” | “What can you do next?” |
| Is it specific enough to be useful? | “That’s the best poem.” | “The way you used rhyme and rhythm in your poem was fantastic.” |
| Does it make child the locus of control? | “You have pleased me.” | “It looks like you’re really enjoying yourself” |

With **ALfA**

NIPUN goals

can be completed in as little as

45 INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

Scan the **QR CODE** to see how.



DIFFERENT MODALITIES FOR ALfA IMPLEMENTATION

There are many different modalities for ALfA implementation:

- **Paper Books:**

This is the most common form of ALfA implementation, in which every pair of students has their own book. Different pairs can be working on different modules at the same time.

- **e-Books:**

In a classroom with the facility of a laptop and projector screen/smart board, ALfA eBooks can also be used. An upside of this approach is that it saves paper and expense. A downside is that each pair now must work on the same module, pointing to the screen and asking questions of each other.

WAYS ALfA IS GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

ALfA saves paper, helping conserve resources:

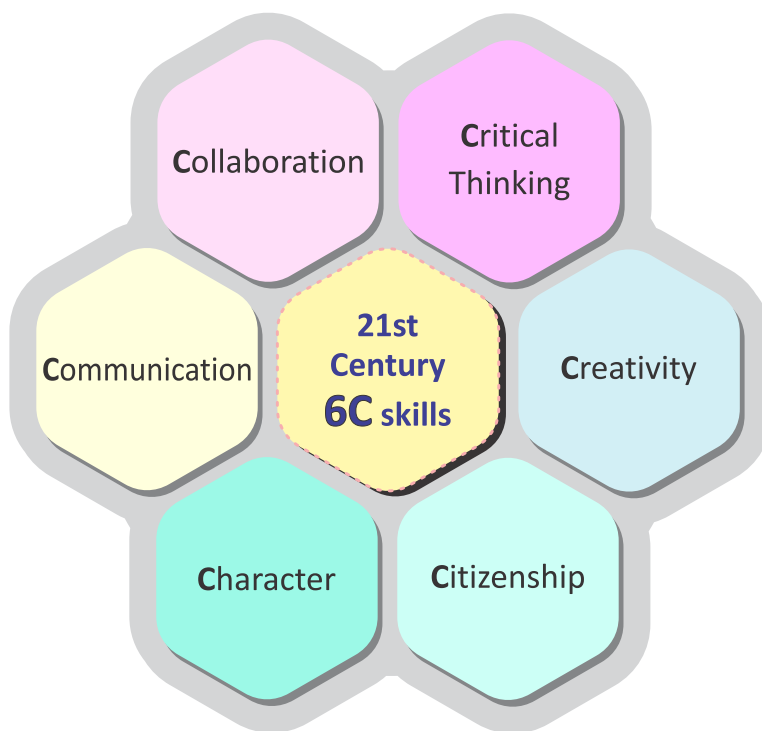
- ALfA booklets are much thinner than most textbooks. ALfA takes students to foundational literacy & numeracy (FLN) in a total of just 72 pages – 32 for reading, 12 for writing and 28 for numeracy.
- ALfA booklets are shared between two children. They are also kept in the school, rather than given to children to take home; helping conserve and reuse them for longer.
- ALfA booklets enable students to do a lot of work in their own notebooks. Workbooks, which require thicker paper, are not used.
- Apart from the booklets, ALfA learning materials are recyclable (newspapers) or biodegradable (ice-cream sticks and matchsticks). We also encourage use of zero-cost materials that students can bring from their environment or home: leaves, buttons, beans, pebbles.



HOW ALfA DEVELOPS 6C SKILLS

ALfA develops the 6C skills of the twenty-first century. These skills cannot be taught from a textbook, but only learnt through practical experience. For instance:

- Children develop their **communication** and **collaboration** skills by working in pairs.
- By working with many different children over the course of a few weeks, including those of diverse backgrounds, students develop their **citizenship** and **character**. Helping others learn entails much patience.
- Through many hands-on activities and making questions for each other, children develop their **creativity** and **critical thinking**.



SETTING UP AN ALFA CLASSROOM

Where possible, set up the physical environment of the classroom in a way that's conducive to ALfA. This includes:

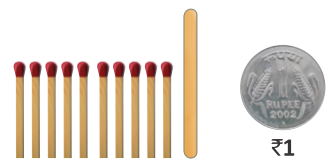
- Have children facing each other rather than the front.
- Have children's work displayed on classroom walls.
- Keep some floorspace clear for games and activities that require it.

LIST OF LEARNING MATERIALS

Different learning materials will be required at various stages of the ALfA process. A list is provided here for reference:

We provide:

- Book 3 Module 1 onwards *Matchsticks (ones)*
- Book 3 Module 4 onwards *Ice-cream sticks (tens)*
- Book 3 Module 10 *Hundred Board*
- Book 3 Module 29-30 *Toy money (shopping activity)*



You/Children arrange:

- Book 1 Module 51 *Newspapers (reading practice)*
- Book 2 Module 1-4 *Sand/flour in a tray (writing practice)*
- Book 3 Module 6 *Common objects like beans, buttons, pencils etc. (for use in patterns)*
- Book 3 Module 7 & 39 *Newspapers/rough paper (for cutting shapes; making fractions)*
- Book 3 Module 8 *Objects representing different 3D shapes (e.g. gluestick, eraser, icecream cone, etc.)*
- Book 3 Module 27 *Calendar (can be from previous year)*
- Book 3 Module 28 *Clock*
- Book 3 Module 31 *Box and ball (understanding positions)*
- Book 3 Module 33 *Tape measure*
- Book 3 Module 35 *Water bottles/jugs/dippers of varying size (volume)*
- Book 3 Module 37 *Weighing scale (weight)*



COMMON QUESTIONS IN AN ALfA CLASSROOM

Any change comes with its share of challenges, and ALfA is no different. Here are some of the common difficulties you may face as you seek to implement ALfA in your classroom:

- **Some children already have FLN skills – what will they learn from ALfA?** In Grades 3 to 5, there may already be a portion of children who have mastered foundational skills. The ALfA books may superficially seem too easy for them. However, the process of paired learning builds their 21st century skills: helping other students builds their collaboration and communication skills (page 6). ALfA modules can also be engaged with at various levels: for instance, when making words from a set of letters, some pairs maybe able to make longer words than others. The ALfA process is engaging and flexible enough that everyone will find something interesting for themselves in it.
- **What if two 'weak' children are sitting together?** ALfA refuses to categorise children as 'weak' or 'strong', but it's true that in any classroom there will be a mix of learning levels. If two children working together both don't understand what they're doing, they can ask another pair for help. With new random pairings every day, children will soon get a chance to work with others.
- **Why is the class sometimes so noisy?** ALfA classrooms are often noisy, as children interact with each other in pairs. This clashes with our traditional conception of a 'good class' as one in which students do their individual work silently. As teachers we have to get used to a new normal of accepting 'productive noise'. However, we can also tell students to 'turn the volume down'.
- **Can parents understand and accept the ALfA classroom?** Parents, who have themselves been brought up in a traditional education system, will sometimes struggle to understand an ALfA classroom. Common objections include 'there's not enough written work' and 'how will they learn if the teacher doesn't explain'? Initially, you may need to discuss with parents that ALfA is underpinned by extensive educational research. Before long, the learning outcomes of students will speak for themselves.
- **What if children speak their local dialect or can't recognise the pictures?** ALfA is currently available in 15 Indian and 10 international languages. We encourage focusing on mother tongue literacy in early years. If ALfA is not available in your local language, we would love to collaborate with you to help develop – reach out to us via our website. When using the Hindi or English version of ALfA, if children can't understand the prompts, you will have to explain. You may also need to build their vocabulary so they can recognise the pictures used in Book 1, before they are able to learn decoding and blending.
- **What about special needs children?** Some children have special learning needs (hyper, shy, autistic, dyslexic, etc.) and struggle to focus in a traditional classroom. ALfA helps such children to also become actively involved in the learning process.

MAPPING OF NIPUN DAKSHATAS AND ALFA MODULES– LITERACY

| | Balvatika | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Alfa Modules |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--------------|
| Language competency | Read some letters and recognise their sounds. Start recognising sight words | Re-arrange the letters of a given word to form a new word | Read and follow directions given in the lesson | B1M1-18 | |
| Reading Speed | Read some simple two letter words | Read short sentences of 4-5 simple words | Read an 8-10 sentence age-appropriate unknown passage at 45-60 words per minute | Read age-appropriate unknown passages at 60 words per minute | B1M1-51 |
| Reading Comprehension | Try to read with the help of pictures | Answer questions after listening to a story | Read stories, describe and repeat them | Answer 3 out of 4 questions correctly after reading a story. Gain knowledge from known books & textbooks | B1M43-51 |
| Writing correctly | Try to write some letters | Write words with correct spelling | Recognise nouns, verbs and full stops | Write grammatically correct paragraphs and short stories | B2M1-8 |
| Writing in everyday life | Recognise & write first name | Write whole name | Write simple sentences about oneself | Write messages for various purposes | B2M9-10 |

MAPPING OF NIPUN DAKSHATAS AND ALFA MODULES– NUMERACY

| | Balvatika | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 5 (NAS) | ALFA Modules |
|--|---|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| Recognising & writing numbers up to... | 10 | 99 | 999 | 9999 | | 1-4, 12, 17-18, 46 |
| Addition and subtraction of numbers up to... | | 9 | 99 | 999 | Apply operations of 'Large numbers' in daily life situations | 13-16, 19-20 |
| Multiplication and division | | | Times tables from 2 to 4 | Times tables from 2 to 10. Division facts | | 21-24, 44 |
| Measurement | | Use irregular units like handspans, rods, cups, spoons, etc. to estimate or measure | | Use metric measures like metre, kilometre, gram, kilogram, litre, etc | Estimate & measure area & volume. Convert different units | 32-37 |
| Shapes | | Notice 3D shapes in the environment | Recognise and describe 2D shapes | Describe geometric properties of 2D & 3D shapes | Identify & classifies angles. | 7-8, 25-26 |
| Time & Date | | | | Tell the time (hours & half hours) and recognise dates on a calendar | Calculates time intervals | 27 & 28 |
| Fractions | | | | Recognise quarters | Identify equivalent fractions. Convert fractions into decimals & vice versa | 39 & 40 |
| Patterns & Word problems | Arrange numbers in sequence. Sort objects | Make and solve simple word problems and number stories | | Describe and construct simple patterns in numbers and shapes | Identifies patterns in triangular and square numbers | 6, 38, 42 |
| Data analysis & representation | Use descriptors like longer, longest, etc | Use descriptors like long, far, in/out, above/below etc | | Use descriptors like near/ | Collect data & represent in tabular and graphical form | 5, 31 |

ROLES OF AN ALfA TEACHER

Your role is no longer that of an instructor, but rather one of a galvanizer. This means to:

- **Arrange learning materials:** Read ahead in the ALfA books and collect learning materials required in advance (full list given on **page 18** of this handbook). You can also ask children to bring what's required.
- **Pair up children randomly:** Set up the physical classroom environment to be conducive to pairs (for instance, chairs facing each other rather than the front). Pair children randomly afresh every day (as described on **page 5**).
- **Norm setting:** Children are used to working in a teacher-centred classroom. Initially you will need to deliberately set new norms – of sitting in pairs, taking turns, making questions for each other. This may take a few weeks of frequent explanation and demonstration.
- **Foster a caring environment:** A positive classroom environment begins with positive teacher attitudes. One of your most crucial roles is to help set social norms of empathy and collaboration. To help every child feel motivated, you will be using language of encouragement rather than praise or reprimand (as described on **page 16**).
- **Take regular feedback:** While children are teaching each other in pairs, it's still vital for you to keep track of their learning. At regular intervals, take feedback/diagnostic tests from the whole class (as described on **page 7**).

HOW DOES ALfA MAKE A TEACHER'S WORK EASIER?

In the traditional education system, teachers often feel overburdened by work – lengthy lesson plans, talking until the throat is hoarse, lots of homework and tests to correct. In ALfA, the teacher works smarter not harder – producing bigger learning gains for less effort. Here are some ways ALfA makes your job easier:

- ALfA books are well structured with easy-to-use modules along with teacher prompts. Apart from arranging materials ahead of time, extensive planning is not required.
- The ALfA teacher doesn't have to 'teach' or lecture. Instead, you need to facilitate pair learning.
- Children devise their own questions – you don't need to write a lot of questions on the board. There's also no need to give homework questions; children choose questions to give each other for homework.



TEACHING STYLE REMINDER

| I Do... | I Do Not... |
|--|---|
| Ensure children ask questions of each other | Make children 'repeat after me', or bring a single child forward to 'teach' the class |
| Make random pairs every day (page 5) | Teach the whole class or make groups by ability level |
| Encourage two children (a pair) to share one book | Give every child a book, or use one book for the whole class |
| Arrange learning materials ahead of time, including telling children to bring things from home (see list on page 18) | Avoid doing activities because materials were not arranged in time |
| Give students time to think and let them discover the answer themselves | Tell them the answer |
| Teach students to take turns and ask each other | Have students come to me for help |
| Respect students, use a language of encouragement for all (page 16) | Discourage or compare students with each other; praise some and scold others |
| Start all children at the first lesson and then allow them to progress at different paces | Have them memorize the alphabet or do writing before they can read. Make everyone go at the same pace |
| Take whole classroom instant feedback (page 7) | Ask questions when only some children respond |



**DEVI
SANSTHAN**
Dignity Education
Vision International
Leave no one behind

SDG 4
**disruptive
FLN at scale**
Foundational Literacy & Numeracy



ALFA
Teacher
Handbook

DEVI Sansthan (Dignity Education Vision International) is a small NGO with a big vision: to help India and the world achieve universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). DEVI is pioneering transformative pedagogies, empowering teachers, and leveraging policy change to enable rapid gains towards literacy for all.



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