

K-3 Teaching Suggestions for Teachers, Parents, and Caregivers

A New Take on ABCs - S is for Smiling Sunrise: An Alphabet Book of Goodness, Beauty and Wonder

For sparking curiosity and imagination, developing vocabulary and comprehension, and for supporting character development

General pre- or post-reading questions

GOODNESS

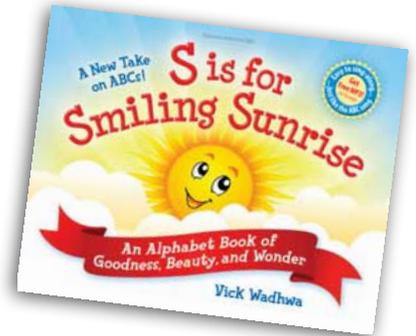
- What is the difference between good and bad behavior?
- Do you like being good? Why?
- Think about something good you did today. Did it make you feel good?

BEAUTY

- When something is full of beauty, it becomes beautiful. Look around and try to spot a few things that look beautiful. What makes them beautiful?
- Is beauty only outside, or is it also inside?

WONDER

- When we are full of wonder, we feel wonderful. What makes you feel wonderful? Why?



Rhyme related suggestions

A is for Artwork

Concepts: There are many different kinds of art. Art is often described as beautiful. Artwork is the process of making art. Any type of work can be transformed into artwork when we apply our interest and imagination to make the work beautiful.

Questions: What does the picture in the book show? What is art, and what is artwork? What are the types of artwork mentioned in the rhyme? Can you think of some more? What kinds of artwork do you like doing? Does doing artwork make you feel good?

Vocabulary: art, artwork, drawing, painting, singing, dancing, life, interesting

Activities: Do some type of artwork. Visit a museum to view some works of art.



B is for Butterflies

Concepts: Words often describe the objects or concepts they identify. For example, a butterfly is soft to the touch, like butter, and it can fly! People all over the world agree that butterflies are beautiful. Butterflies come in all kinds of remarkable colors and patterns, and they have a soft and friendly nature—butterflies are beautiful in many ways!

Questions: Have you seen butterflies flying around? How do they fly? Do you think they are beautiful? Have you ever touched a butterfly? Is it hard or soft? Why do you think it is called a butterfly? Isn't it wonderful that a butterfly's wings are so soft, and yet strong enough to fly?

Vocabulary: butterfly, flying, flutter, wings, soft, butter

Activities: Weather and season permitting, go outside and try to spot a butterfly. Visit a butterfly garden. Examine a butterfly specimen, if available.



C is for Colors

Concepts: Just as words are made of sounds, colors are made of light. Just as there are many words, there are many colors. And colors can have meaning, just like words. For example, while driving, a green traffic light means "go," and a red traffic light means "stop."

Questions: How many colors can you name? What are your favorite colors? Why do you like them? Do they make things look beautiful?

How would everything look if there were no colors, or only one color? Isn't it wonderful there are so many colors?

Vocabulary: colors, words, speaking, red, blue, green, yellow, pink, black, white, light

Activities: Identify various colors. Examine variations of colors. Do a coloring activity.

D is for Day

Concepts: Day is the time when it is light outside. Dawn is the beginning of day, when the sun is about to rise. Most animals and people are active during the day, and many animals naturally wake up at dawn. Every day is an opportunity to learn something new. It is very nice to get up every day with a feeling of thankfulness.

Questions: What is day, and what is dawn? How do you feel when you get up in the morning after a good night's sleep? Do you feel good and excited about the day? When something or someone makes us feel good, what should we say? Why should we say thank you every day?

Vocabulary: day, dawn, new, always, thanks

Activities: Identify day versus night in a variety of pictures. Discuss when and why to say thank you.

E is for Evening

Concepts: Evening is the period from sunset to bedtime, or the time when the sky gets darker and day turns to night. Most people have dinner in the evening, before they go to sleep. It is good manners to sit down nicely with others to have dinner.

Questions: What is evening? What do you do in the evening? When do you have dinner? Does it feel good to have dinner with your family? Who gives you dinner? Do you say thank you to them?

Vocabulary: evening, time, together, sunset, dinner

Activities: Identify evening in various pictures. Discuss dinner manners.



F is for Flowers

Concepts: Like butterflies, flowers are beautiful. They are beautiful not only because they look pretty, but also because they smell wonderful. Flowers invite us to pause in our busy lives and admire their beauty, and they can make us feel good and peaceful.

Questions: Do you like flowers? Why? Do you think flowers are beautiful? What is another nice thing about flowers? Can you name some flowers? How do you feel when you look at a flower?

Vocabulary: flowers, fragrant, beautiful, pause, happy, peaceful

Activities: Weather and season permitting, go outside to view different types of flowers. Examine some flower specimens. Identify different types of flowers.

G is for Gift

Concepts: Relationship between giving and receiving. Benefits of caring and sharing.

Questions: Do you like getting gifts? Do you like giving gifts to your friends? Is it good manners to give and share? Who do you like to share your toys and books with?

Vocabulary: gift, love, get and give, fun, instead

Activities: Select a gift for another child. Have your child or student help in wrapping the gift, and in handing it over.

H is for Heart

Concepts: Heart as a physical organ, as a sensory center for feeling love and emotions, and as a moral center for conscience. Bodily functions of the heart. Cultivation of love and appreciation for self and others. Mindfulness and observation of self.

Questions: Where is your heart? Can you draw it? Can you hear it sometimes? Can you feel it when you place your hand on your chest? Do you know your heart works very hard for you, day and night? Do you say thank you to your heart?

Vocabulary: heart, heart sounds (lub-a-dub, chug), touch, chest, feel, hug

Activities: Feel heartbeats by placing the palm of the hand on the chest. Listen to heartbeats by placing ear against another person's chest, or by using a toy stethoscope if available. Count heartbeats.



I is for Infant

Concepts: Process of growth over time (e.g., from sapling to tree, from infant to adult). Meaning of potential. Use of imagination to understand possibilities for future growth. Understanding that growth is not just physical, but also mental, emotional, etc.

Questions: What is another word for a little baby? Have you seen little babies sleeping? How do they look? What happens to babies over time? Do they grow and become stronger? Do you know your body is becoming big and strong as you grow up? How about your mind and heart?

Vocabulary: infant, sleep, rest, peace, potential, great, greatness, gracefulness

Activities: View pictures of family members from childhood to maturity. Plant seeds or saplings in a convenient location, and monitor their growth over time.



J is for Jewelry

Concepts: Outer and inner beauty. Beautiful clothes and jewelry as means of decorating the body, and beautiful thoughts and ideas as means of decorating the mind. Difference between dreams and goals. Using the imagination, heart, and mind to develop beautiful dreams. Choosing specific goals for growth, guided by both heart and mind. Working on goals to reach potential.

Questions: Have you seen people wearing jewelry? Does jewelry look beautiful? Do you know that thoughts, ideas, and dreams can be beautiful too? Do you know what you would like to be when you grow up? Is that a dream or a goal? Do you believe in it with your heart and mind? Is it a good and beautiful goal? Does thinking about this goal fill you with excitement and wonder?

Vocabulary: jewelry, jewels, gems, metals, dreams, goals, inner, heart, mind, align.

Activities: Use beads and string to make a necklace or bracelet. Discuss good and bad physical appearance versus good and bad behaviors.



K is for Kaleidoscope

Concepts: Colors, patterns, shapes. Variations of similar colors and patterns in nature that produce diversity. How diversity makes life beautiful.

Questions: Have you looked inside a kaleidoscope? What did you see? What happens when you turn the kaleidoscope? Isn't it amazing and wonderful?

Vocabulary: kaleidoscope, brilliant, shapes, tube, twist, turn, triangles.

Activities: Take turns looking into a kaleidoscope. Color or paint kaleidoscopic patterns. Assemble a kaleidoscope from a kit.

L is for Leaves

Concepts: Leaves are mostly green, due to presence of a green pigment (chlorophyll). Basic concept of photosynthesis - Leaves use sunlight to absorb energy, and use that energy for making food (sugar) molecules from air and water. Leaves as a food/energy source. Leaves as an inspiration for work, simplicity, and ease.

Questions: Do you like plants' leaves? Do you like looking at them? Do you know that leaves make food for plants every day? And because many animals eat plants, leaves make food for animals too! Do you know what leaves use to make food?

Vocabulary: leaves, waving, breeze, food, working, ease

Activities: Weather permitting, go outside and observe some leaves, or examine some specimens indoors. Discuss the food chain. Discuss how we eat leaves directly and indirectly.

M is for Moon

Concepts: Relationship between moon and night versus sun and day. Relationship between daytime and activities versus night and sleep. Variation in moon shapes (round versus crescent).

Questions: Do you like to look at the moon at night? Does it look beautiful? Why? Do you find its light comforting? Do you know that when the moon comes out at night, it's time to sleep?

Vocabulary: moon, merry, glowing, love, night, bedtime, "sweet dreams," "sleep tight"

Activities: Weather and schedule permitting, locate the moon in the evening or night sky. Look at the moon through binoculars or telescope, if available. Draw or paint a night scene with moon.



N is for Nature

Concepts: Nature is all around us, everywhere, all the time. Plants, animals, earth, oceans, air, celestial bodies, weather, seasons, etc. Distinction between nature and artificial objects and phenomena.

Questions: What do you think of when you think about nature? Can you name some parts of nature? Where do you find nature? Do you know that you, too, are a part of nature? Isn't nature amazing and wonderful?

Vocabulary: nature, forest, hill, river, sun, clouds, rain, snow, winter, spring, summer

Activities: Go outside, or look out from a window, and name some natural objects. Discuss natural phenomena, such as the weather.

O is for Ocean

Concepts: Vast quantities of water. Various types of fish, animals, and plants that live in the ocean.

Questions: Have you seen an ocean? What does an ocean have? Who lives in the ocean? Is the ocean part of nature too? Can you name some oceans?

Vocabulary: ocean, home, stay, fish, dolphins, deep, wide, miles

Activities: Watch a documentary about the world's oceans and marine life. When possible, visit a coastal area to see a large lake or ocean. Visit an aquarium.

P is for Park

Concepts: Places where we can experience nature safely. Outdoor activities that are best done in a park.

Questions: Do you enjoy going out to a park? What do you do there? What are some nice things about a park?

Vocabulary: park, playground, place, fun, watch, walk, hop, skip, jump, run

Activities: Discuss local parks that the child has visited. Go to a nearby park to enjoy the outdoors. Plan or point out some fun activities while at the park.



Q is for Quiet

Concepts: Play time versus quiet time. How quiet times are needed every day, particularly after noisy activities. Listening for various background sounds that usually go unnoticed during noisy times. Listening skills and mindfulness.

Questions: What is the difference between quiet and noisy? Which one do you like better? When you go to a library, do you like how quiet it is there? Is it good manners to be quiet when others are studying or working?

Vocabulary: quiet times, "listen close," birds, bugs, chirping

Activities: Observe a few minutes of silence and try to distinguish various background sounds in the environment. Experiment with some quiet times during the day, particularly after noisy activities.



R is for Rainbow

Concepts: Main colors in a rainbow: violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red (VIBGYOR). Where the colors come from (sunlight), and the many intermediate colors between the main colors. Connections between the words rainbow, rain, and bow. When and where to spot a rainbow (usually after rain or near a large waterfall, in a direction facing away from the sun).

Questions: Have you seen a rainbow? Isn't it beautiful? Why do you think we call it a rainbow? Can you name the colors in a rainbow? Can you count them?

Vocabulary: rainbow, shining, sky, curving, far, high

Activities: Use a glass prism to refract sunlight and produce a rainbow-like spectrum on white paper. Name the colors in a rainbow. Color or paint a rainbow with colors in the correct order.

S is for Sunrise

Concepts: Every new day begins with the increasing light and warmth of sunrise. Every day offers an opportunity to make a fresh new start, an invitation to play.

Questions: Have you ever seen a sunrise early in the morning? Why do you think it is called sunrise? During sunrise, is the sun going up or down? Does it feel good when the sun comes out in the morning?

Vocabulary: sunrise, smiling, warming, quick, ready, play

Activities: Compare sunrise to sunset. Use a large and a small ball to explain movements of sun and earth, and to explain sunrise and sunset.

T is for Tasty

Concepts: Healthy nutrition and hydration. Having food and water on a regular schedule helps us grow and stay healthy and strong. Some foods are healthy and others are not.



Questions: What foods do you find tasty? Why do you like them? Do you remember to drink water throughout the day? How many times do you eat food every day? How many times do you drink water every day? Why should we finish our food? Why should we drink plenty of water during the day?

Vocabulary: tasty, healthy, breakfast, lunch, dinner, drink, water

Activities: Identify healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, and unhealthy foods, such as most packaged chips and sugary drinks.

U is for Universe

Concepts: The universe contains everything that there is, including the earth, sun, moon, and stars. The universe is vast in every direction, with no known end. Concept of a beautifully intricate and orderly universe, which operates through natural laws and principles.

Questions: What is the universe? How big is it? What is in it? Who lives there? Where do we live?

Vocabulary: universe, sun, stars, earth, moon, planets, comets, galaxies

Activities: Visit a science museum or planetarium. If available, look through a telescope and try to spot a planet, such as Saturn with its rings.

V is for Virtues

Concepts: Virtues are good qualities that help us as well as others. Concept of conscience.

Questions: What are virtues? Can you name some of them? Why should we develop good qualities?

Vocabulary: virtues, goodness, heart, caring, sharing, honesty, "learn well," "be smart" (in a good way)

Activities: Discuss why we must speak the truth and help each other.



W is for Words

Concepts: Words are building blocks of human knowledge, learning, and communication. Words help us when used correctly, but can cause confusion, hurt, and anger when used incorrectly.

Questions: What are words, and what is language? What are words made of, and what is language made of? What do we do with words? Why should we choose our words carefully? Why is listening important?

Vocabulary: words, built, know, "listen deep," life, ease

Activities: Play a word game. Discuss some of the words in the book illustration. Download, print, and display "Words" poster from www.wordsbright.com at a convenient location.

X is for eXcellence

Concepts: Excellence is the habit of setting and achieving high standards in any activity. Excellence requires effort and practice. The sound of "ex" is same as the sound of the letter "x", so we can say, "X is for eXcellence."

Questions: What is excellence? What activity or school subject would you like to be excellent at? How will you become excellent?

Vocabulary: excellence, aiming, "reaching within," best, growing, "growing deep and high"

Activities: Pick a suitable game of skill and discuss the requirements for getting a high score.

Y is for Yacht

Concepts: A yacht moves with the help of breeze or wind, which pushes it forward. Similarly, we can move forward through life with the help of natural principles and good qualities.

Questions: What is a yacht? What makes the yacht move on water? What makes it go fast? What makes a kite fly? Do you think a yacht can move easily against the wind? What can we learn from this?

Vocabulary: yacht, sailing, sea, moving, gliding, breeze

Activities: Make a paper boat. Demonstrate, using a small tub of water, how the boat floats easily in the direction of water or air current.



Z is for Zebras

Concepts: Enjoying life in all its variety, having fun with simple observations

Questions: Have you seen a zebra in the zoo? What is the pattern on zebras called? What do you think zesty means? Does it sound like fun?

Vocabulary: zebra, zesty, fun

Activities: Color or paint zebra stripes. Visit the zoo.

Many of the concepts suggested in this document will require multiple discussions over time for children to grasp. Encouraging children to sing or memorize the rhymes in the book will help, and the free MP3 song version of the rhymes (available from www.wordsbright.com) was designed for this purpose.

The suggestions in this document are generally meant for children of kindergarten age and above. For teaching suggestions relevant to toddlers and preschoolers, please review the free Parents/Pre-K guide, available from www.wordsbright.com.

Do you have additional tips, suggestions, or observations based on your experience? Your feedback is always welcome at www.wordsbright.com. Thank you!

Thank you!