

Your child David wants to start practicing his name, “just like the big kids do”.
So you want to make a model for him. Do you write **D A V I D** or **D a v i d**?
It’s actually the second: D a v i d!

Why?

1. Take a look at the print on this page.
2. Take a look at the print in your child’s favourite books.

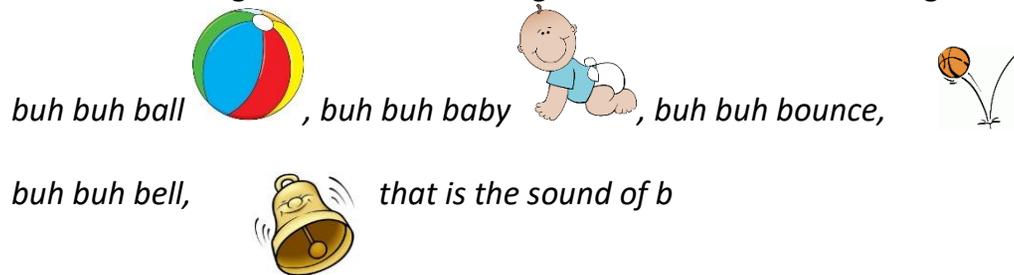
What did you notice?

95% of all print is lower case letters, not upper case letters.

If parents and educators focus on lower case letters first, children will recognize more on the pages of books being read to them, participate more in the reading and develop their confidence as beginning readers quicker.

If students are taught upper case letters first, they sometimes have trouble “unlearning” them and will place random capitals in their work in Grades 1, 2 and even Grade 3. Upper case letter teaching needs to come second. Students need to learn that upper case letters (capitals) play a *special role* and are used “sparingly” for names of people, streets, businesses, the beginnings of sentences, etc.

Parents and educators of young children need to focus on the **sounds** of letters more than anything. For example, when a child sees an “l” you can say: *That is an l. It makes the sound “lah”.* *This is a p, it makes the sound “puh”.* Knowing sounds will help young learners take more risks with reading and writing earlier. Research has shown that moving their bodies, learning songs and chants and providing visual connections while doing sound letter learning will increase understanding and retention!



If introduced to the 26 lower case letters and the 26 upper case letters all at once, the task of learning to print the alphabet can be overwhelming! That’s 52 different formations to learn. Parents and educators need to focus on the letters that appear most often first (s a t p i n) and then gradually add on more letters.

Enjoy the journey of your child learning to communicate on paper!