

2nd Edition

First Friends

1

Teacher's Book

Susan Iannuzzi

OXFORD

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Scope and Sequence	2
Introduction	4
Unit 1 Hello	14
Unit 2 My Classroom	22
Unit 3 My Toys	30
Unit 4 My Things	38
Unit 5 Shapes and Colours	46
Unit 6 My Farm	54
Unit 7 My Clothes	62
Unit 8 My Body	70
Unit 9 My Family	78
Unit 10 My Party	86
Progress checks (photocopiable)	94
Extra material (photocopiable)	108

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Level 1 Scope and Sequence

Topics & objectives	Vocabulary	Structure	Letters & phonics	Values & everyday English	Numbers	Songs & Projects
1 Hello Say hello and introduce yourself	Adam Baz Jig Pat Tess	I'm ... Hello Bye How are you? I'm fine, thank you. Point to, Stand up, Sit down, Clap	Aa /æ/ ant, apple Bb /b/ bag, bird	Being friendly Nice to see you. Nice to see you, too.	1 (one) - 2 (two)	Lesson 2 Hello, how are you? Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 Number song
2 My Classroom Ask about and identify things	bin board chair clock cupboard door floor picture table window	What's this? It's a ...	Cc /k/ cat, coat Dd /d/ date, dog	Listening to the teacher Please put away your books and come here. Miss.	3 (three) - 4 (four)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 One, two, three, four
3 My Toys Identify possessions	ball balloon bicycle boat car doll puzzle robot teddy bear train	This is my ... This is your ...	Ee /e/ egg, elephant Ff /f/ fan, fig	Sharing Let's share. Here you are. Here you go.	5 (five) - 6 (six)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 Doll and teddy bear
4 My Things - Ask someone's age - Ask about quantities	book crayon lunchbox notebook pen pencil pencil box rubber water bottle	How many? Plurals How old are you?	Gg /g/ girl, glove Hh /h/ hand, horse	Taking care of your things Take care of your ...	7 (seven) - 8 (eight)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 How many pencils? Lesson 6 Project: a number collage Count with me
5 Shapes and Colours Describe the shape and colour of objects	blue, brown, green, orange, pink, red, yellow circle diamond heart rectangle star square triangle	It's (red). It's a (blue) (triangle).	Ii /i/ insect, igloo Jj /dʒ/ jam, jar Kk /k/ kangaroo, kite	Being neat and tidy Clean up. Let's work together.	9 (nine) - 10 (ten)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 Ten birds

Topics & objectives	Vocabulary	Structure	Letters & phonics	Values & everyday English	Numbers	Songs & Projects
6 My Farm - Learn about different farm animals - Guess animals	bee cow chicken donkey duck flower goat goose horse sun	<i>Is it a ... ? Yes, it is. / No, it isn't.</i>	Ll /l/ lemon, lion Mm /m/ mango, moon Nn /n/ nose, nut	Being kind to nature <i>Be careful. Don't touch.</i>	11 (eleven) - 12 (twelve)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 Listen to the animal
7 My Clothes Ask about and describe clothes by colour	dress hat jumper pyjamas shirt shoes shorts skirt socks trousers	<i>What colour is it? It's ... What colour are they? They're ...</i>	Oo /ɒ/ octopus, ostrich Pp /p/ pear, pen Qq /kw/ queen, quilt	Helping out at home <i>Please pick up ... Please fold ... Sure, ...</i>	13 (thirteen) - 14 (fourteen)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 How many gloves?
8 My Body Identify and count parts of the body	arms ears eyes fingers hair head knees legs nose toes	<i>I've got ...</i>	Rr /r/ rabbit, radio Ss /s/ seesaw, star Tt /t/ tent, towel	Playing respectfully <i>Not so loud, please. Sorry, ...</i>	15 (fifteen) - 16 (sixteen)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 I've got ten fingers
9 My Family - Name family members - Describe family relationships	aunt baby brother cousin dad grandma grandpa mum sister uncle	<i>He / She is ... They are ...</i>	Uu /ʌ/ umbrella, up Vv /v/ van, volcano Ww /w/ watch, water	Respecting your elders <i>After you.</i>	17 (seventeen) - 18 (eighteen)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 Look at my pictures
10 My Party Talk about likes and dislikes	banana biscuit cake ice cream juice orange pizza sandwich sweet spaghetti	<i>I like ... I don't like ...</i>	Xx /ks/ X-ray, fox Yy /j/ yogurt, yo-yo Zz /z/ zebra, zero	Waiting your turn <i>Is it my turn? Just a minute, please.</i>	19 (nineteen) - 20 (twenty)	Lesson 3 Letter song Lesson 5 Happy birthday to you Lesson 6 Project: an alphabet mobile Alphabet song

Introduction

Welcome to the course

First Friends is a two-level course for kindergarten or pre-primary children. It is an engaging introduction to English which uses a range of activities, games and songs that motivate and help young learners to succeed in English.

The course is based on the principle that all children want to learn and can succeed in learning. *First Friends* provides children with a useful, age-appropriate vocabulary, basic structures, and the tools to develop solid literacy and numeracy skills. These are presented through entertaining and interesting characters who introduce the children to English through games, songs and stories.

Objectives

The key objectives of *First Friends* are:

- To develop language skills that will give children a solid foundation in English for their primary education.
- To develop a basic understanding of and ability to use English in meaningful, age-appropriate contexts.
- To foster a positive attitude toward learning English.
- To present the names and sounds of all the English letters so that children become familiar with the English alphabet.

Characters

Four lively characters introduce children to the world of English. They also model good behaviour.

Baz is a four-year-old boy in his first year of kindergarten. He is good-natured and kind. He does not always do the right thing, but he tries his best. Many of the children will identify with Baz as he tries to learn new things.

Tess is Baz's sporty and fun older sister. She is seven years old. She is eager to guide Baz and is forgiving of his mistakes.

Pat and **Jig** are the children's stuffed animals. They represent the pretend world of the child. When Pat and Jig are with the characters, they are soft plush toys, but when they are on their own, they have their own adventures in an imaginary toy world. Pat is sometimes a bit naughty, but earnest Jig keeps an eye out for him. Through their stories and adventures, Pat and Jig help to develop children's creativity and look at the world in a new way.

In addition to these four main characters, Tess and Baz's two-year-old brother **Adam** appears throughout the course. He is the baby of the family, and both Tess and Baz delight in taking care of him. Baz especially enjoys being the older brother. Towards the end of the first level, Tess's cousin **Mira** is introduced. She is quiet and shy. She appears in Level 2, along with Baz's outgoing new friend at school, **Sam**.

Components

Class Book

The Class Book is colourful, lively and easy to use. It is the main course component. It contains the vocabulary, stories, songs and games that will enable children to achieve the course objectives.

Each page of the Class Book corresponds to one lesson. There is a small box at the top of each page that indicates the activities for that page. This helps you to see what each lesson is about. Each instruction in the box corresponds to a section in the teaching notes for that lesson. The information in this box is not intended for the children.

The icon  indicates that there is an audio component for that activity, and the number following the icon is the CD track number.

Activity Book

The Activity Book provides practice of the material introduced in the Class Book. Each Activity Book page follows up on the material presented in the corresponding Class Book page.

The Activity Book is the main pencil and paper practice of the course. The Activity Book develops children's reading, writing, numeracy, language skills and fine motor skills through a variety of fun and motivating activities. It also incorporates oral language development as many of the activities include a 'Say' component. The activities are easy to do, underscoring the course philosophy that all children want to and can succeed. Thus the activities may be set up in class and completed at home.

The Activity Book also contains a review lesson for each unit, which consolidates the main literacy, numeracy and vocabulary content of the unit. It may be done in class as consolidation or preparation for a progress check. It may also be done at home for review.

At the back of the Activity Book are some extra resources: at Level 1 there is a Picture Dictionary, cut-outs of the course characters, and a page of all the song lyrics; and at Level 2 there is a numbers spread, a writing grid, a craft activity and a page of all the Level 2 song lyrics.

The Level 1 Picture Dictionary can either be completed after each letter is introduced, or used for home study, for example during the holidays.

The Level 1 cut-out characters can be used where appropriate to act out the dialogues in class. Children can either hold up a cut-out (instead of the flashcard of the character) or you could make some character badges (by sticking the cut-outs onto cardboard and sticking safety pins on the back) which children could wear during role-plays.

The Level 2 numbers spread is used to consolidate numbers 1–20, both numerals and written forms.

The Level 2 writing grid can be used for any extra writing practice the children need, for example extra practice of any letters they are having difficulty with.

The Level 2 craft activity (making a beach umbrella) consolidates the colours that children have learnt.

The page of song lyrics (both levels) is given as a resource for parents so that they can remind their children of the song lyrics if they wish to.

Maths Book (optional)

The Maths Book provides additional numeracy practice. It combines traditional numbers activities, such as counting and writing numbers, with engaging puzzles and games and fun activities.

By the end of Level 1, children will be able to:

- write the numbers from 1 to 20
- count objects to 20
- carry out simple picture additions and sums
- group objects to 20
- identify number sequences

By the end of Level 2, children will be able to:

- write the numbers from 1 to 100
- write the words for numbers from 1 to 30
- count objects to 100
- group objects to 100
- carry out sums
- identify more complex number sequences

The Maths Book is a flexible and easy-to-use component of *First Friends*. Its lessons may be done at any point in the unit.

The Maths Book is also based on the premise that all children can succeed, and therefore offers easy-to-do activities that can be completed in class or at home. No new vocabulary is presented through the Maths Book. All counting and number work is done through known vocabulary, with a special emphasis on the vocabulary presented in the corresponding unit of the Class Book. There are complete notes for each Maths Book activity at the end of the main notes for each unit in the Teacher's Book.

Teacher's Book (TB)

The Teacher's Book is clear and easy-to-use. It provides notes to cover up to eight teaching sessions per week (when all components are utilised fully), but if fewer sessions are available, the material can easily be adapted to fit, for example by omitting the Maths Book activities.

You can see at a glance the objectives and materials needed for each lesson. There is always a suggestion for a warm-up activity, which is followed by notes for the core activities listed in the Class Book and corresponding page of the Activity Book. Most lessons contain an optional activity should you want to give your children more practice or have extra time. Following the six core lessons of the Class Book, there are notes for the Activity Book Review page of each unit as well as complete notes for the Maths Book.

The TB also contains a wealth of photocopiable material. This consists of progress checks, phonics practice and (at Level 2) numbers practice. The photocopiable material augments the material in the Class Book and Activity Book. It contains games and other fun activities as well as further pencil and paper practice of key concepts.

There is a one-page progress check for each unit (pages 94–103). In addition, there is a two-page mid-year and two-page end-of-year progress check (pages 104–107).

The phonics practice photocopiables (pages 110–118) consolidate the letter forms and sounds in Level 1 through a variety of games and activities. In Level 2, this is expanded to include practice of word families.

Page 119 (TB1 only) contains a writing model for the English alphabet, showing the starting points and direction of the pen strokes for each letter.

The photocopiable material is clearly labelled and organized by unit so that you know when it is appropriate to use. There are also separate teaching notes for using the photocopiable pages (see page 108).

CDs

The Class Audio CD at each level contains all the audio material for the course, including all the new vocabulary, dialogues, songs and stories. The recordings feature only native speakers of English and expose your children to accurate and authentic models of presentation. This CD is for use by the teacher in class.

Website

The *First Friends* website contains a range of engaging activities that can be used at home, with parents, or in the classroom to consolidate learning.

The website contains:

- Animated stories
- The *First Friends* songs
- A picture dictionary supported by audio
- A range of games to practice the language of each unit

Classroom Presentation Tool

The Classroom Presentation Tool is software that allows teachers to present and manipulate course content in an engaging and interactive way. It can be used either on an interactive whiteboard (IWB) or on a projector. The Student Book pages can be viewed on screen.

Activities include:

- video resources such as story animations
- audio tracks, including for all songs and chants on page

Resource Pack

At each level there is a Resource Pack containing a wealth of flashcards and posters to support teaching in class:

Flashcards

Flashcards are an important teaching tool, and they are used in the majority of lessons in *First Friends*. They are used to present new vocabulary and letters, to conduct other activities and games, to check answers, and to act out dialogues and songs. The lesson notes give advice on how and when to use them. Each flashcard is numbered and each lesson specifies which flashcards are needed.

Level 1 has 124 flashcards:

98 Vocabulary flashcards with pictures of all new vocabulary
26 Phonics flashcards with pictures of one of the phonics words for each letter

Level 1 flashcard list

Vocabulary flashcards:

- 1 Tess
- 2 Baz
- 3 Adam
- 4 Pat
- 5 Jig
- 6 chair
- 7 window
- 8 clock
- 9 board
- 10 door
- 11 picture
- 12 cupboard
- 13 floor
- 14 bin
- 15 table
- 16 teddy bear
- 17 boat
- 18 ball
- 19 bicycle
- 20 balloon
- 21 robot
- 22 car
- 23 train
- 24 puzzle
- 25 doll
- 26 pen
- 27 lunchbox
- 28 crayon
- 29 pencil
- 30 rubber
- 31 pencil box
- 32 notebook
- 33 book
- 34 water bottle
- 35 circle
- 36 square
- 37 heart
- 38 triangle
- 39 rectangle
- 40 star
- 41 diamond
- 42 orange
- 43 yellow
- 44 blue
- 45 red
- 46 green
- 47 brown
- 48 pink
- 49 bee
- 50 flower
- 51 sun
- 52 cow
- 53 horse
- 54 donkey
- 55 chicken
- 56 duck
- 57 goose
- 58 goat
- 59 shirt
- 60 hat
- 61 trousers

- 62 shoes
- 63 jumper
- 64 pyjamas
- 65 dress
- 66 skirt
- 67 shorts
- 68 socks
- 69 legs
- 70 eyes
- 71 ears
- 72 head
- 73 nose
- 74 arms
- 75 fingers
- 76 hair
- 77 knees
- 78 toes
- 79 baby
- 80 uncle
- 81 mum
- 82 dad
- 83 grandma
- 84 grandpa
- 85 sister
- 86 brother
- 87 cousin
- 88 aunt
- 89 sweet
- 90 spaghetti
- 91 pizza
- 92 juice
- 93 orange
- 94 cake
- 95 banana
- 96 biscuit
- 97 ice cream
- 98 sandwich

Phonics flashcards:

- 99 A apple
- 100 B bird
- 101 C cat
- 102 D dog
- 103 E egg
- 104 F fan
- 105 G girl
- 106 H hand
- 107 I igloo
- 108 J jar
- 109 K kangaroo
- 110 L lion
- 111 M moon
- 112 N nose
- 113 O ostrich
- 114 P pen
- 115 Q queen
- 116 R radio
- 117 S star
- 118 T tent
- 119 U up
- 120 V volcano
- 121 W water
- 122 X fox
- 123 Y yogurt
- 124 Z zero

Level 2 has 110 flashcards:

93 Vocabulary flashcards with pictures of all new vocabulary

17 Phonics flashcards with digraphs / consonant – vowel – consonant patterns

Level 2 flashcard list

Vocabulary flashcards:

- 1 classroom
- 2 music room
- 3 school bus
- 4 seesaw
- 5 swing
- 6 sandbox
- 7 playground
- 8 guitar
- 9 friend
- 10 piano
- 11 teacher
- 12 sad
- 13 happy
- 14 hot
- 15 sleepy
- 16 scared
- 17 thirsty
- 18 tired
- 19 hungry
- 20 shy
- 21 cold
- 22 read
- 23 throw
- 24 catch
- 25 sing
- 26 climb
- 27 draw
- 28 jump
- 29 run
- 30 kick
- 31 write
- 32 bedroom
- 33 lamp
- 34 bathroom
- 35 plant
- 36 living room
- 37 TV
- 38 sofa
- 39 kitchen
- 40 cooker
- 41 dining room
- 42 fridge
- 43 bed
- 44 shelf
- 45 wardrobe
- 46 pillow
- 47 blanket
- 48 rug
- 49 in
- 50 behind
- 51 on
- 52 under
- 53 next to
- 54 sea
- 55 shell
- 56 beach
- 57 sandcastle
- 58 umbrella
- 59 crab
- 60 spade
- 61 bucket
- 62 sand
- 63 towel
- 64 bread
- 65 butter
- 66 milk
- 67 cheese
- 68 fish
- 69 rice
- 70 potato
- 71 chicken
- 72 salad
- 73 soup
- 74 parrot
- 75 crocodile
- 76 tiger
- 77 elephant
- 78 hippo
- 79 giraffe
- 80 zebra
- 81 lion
- 82 snake
- 83 monkey
- 84 teacher
- 85 doctor
- 86 farmer
- 87 taxi driver
- 88 nurse
- 89 police officer
- 90 pilot
- 91 builder
- 92 singer
- 93 firefighter

Phonics flashcards:

- 94 sheep
- 95 shoes
- 96 fish
- 97 thumb
- 98 bath
- 99 chocolate
- 100 beach
- 101 hat
- 102 mat
- 103 net
- 104 jet
- 105 big
- 106 fig
- 107 mop
- 108 top
- 109 bun
- 110 sun

Posters

There is a poster dedicated to each of the stories in Levels 1 and 2 of *First Friends*. You may wish to use these posters when you teach the stories. You can stick the poster at the front of the room and ask children to describe what is happening in each picture before they listen to the story on the CD. Leave the poster for visual support as children act out the story. If you prefer, use the posters to decorate your room.

At Level 1 there is also an attractive alphabet poster, which can be used to revise the alphabet and vocabulary, or simply to mark the progression of how many letters have been introduced so far.

Course structure

Each level of *First Friends* consists of 10 units.

Each unit has six core lessons comprised of a Class Book and an Activity Book component. The Activity Book offers an additional page of review practice, which can be combined with the Maths Book or photocopiable material to make a lesson.

For additional classroom periods, there are six Maths Book lessons, which can be used at any point during the unit. This material is very flexible. It can be used in class over one or two lessons or set up in class and assigned for home practice.

In addition, most lessons offer an optional activity. The notes for the optional activity are at the end of each lesson in the Teacher's Book. The optional activities provide extra practice and consolidation of what has been taught in the main Class Book / Activity Book lesson. They do not present new language or vocabulary. They can be used if you have extra time or if you feel your children need extra practice on a particular language item.

Topics

First Friends is a topic-based course. Each unit is centred on a different topic. This reduces the cognitive load on children since vocabulary is presented in meaningful groups or word families.

The topics chosen are relevant to kindergarten children and reflect their lives. As a result, they reassure, interest and motivate the children in the classroom.

Level 1 includes topics such as toys, clothes, food, family and the body. Level 2 includes topics such as school, feelings, actions, home, furniture, holidays, jobs and wild animals.

Cross-curricular features

The benefits of English instruction can be maximized by linking it with other parts of the curriculum. *First Friends* connects to other curricular areas in many ways. In both levels, children do cross-curricular craft projects which link with nature, social sciences, art and maths. In Level 2, *Explore* reading texts are introduced which familiarize the children with a range of fun cross-curricular topics through the medium of English.

Creative links are also promoted through the development of musical skills, including awareness of melody, rhythm and rhyme.

Values and Everyday English

First Friends recognizes that language instruction presents an opportunity to reinforce values such as cooperation, teamwork, health and respect for others. The photographic values pages present useful, functional language within the context of social values. These lessons model good social behaviour in situations that are relevant and familiar to young children. The dialogues, stories and illustrations also provide opportunities to address such values.

Unit structure

The simple and reliable unit structure makes *First Friends* an ideal course for experienced and novice teachers alike. Novice teachers can build confidence and rest assured that they are developing sound teaching skills while using the material. Similarly, more experienced teachers who are more confident and adept in the classroom can expand upon the solid framework provided.

Each unit has a one-page-per-lesson format, and each page / lesson has a specific role in the unit. This format is consistent across Levels 1 and 2.

Class Book structure

The first two pages of each unit of the Class Book depict a lively scene involving the course characters. These pages are used to present the target vocabulary and structure in context. They provide two lessons of material.

Lesson 1 is devoted to vocabulary, where there are typically ten new words for children to produce. Lesson 2 presents the key language structure of the unit in a dialogue format. The dialogue uses the structure in a natural way and is humorous so that children remain engaged as they are exposed to the new language.

Lesson 3 of each unit is for Phonics, and it provides material for literacy development, the alphabet in Level 1 and further phonics practice in Level 2. *First Friends* is carefully crafted so that children are not overwhelmed by too many new letters or phonic activities at once. There are never more than three new letters presented in any one unit of Level 1. Similarly, in Level 2, there is never more than one core word family. See page 8 for a description of word families and the phonics approach.

Lesson 4 focuses on values and everyday English. A dialogue using everyday English models good social behaviour and is illustrated photographically. Functional language related to the unit topic is presented and practised here.

Lesson 5 of each unit is devoted to numeracy, which is presented in Level 1 in conjunction with a song. Children learn the numbers from 1 to 20. Level 2 presents the numbers up to 100 and focuses on basic Maths skills such as pattern practice and sums.

Lesson 6 is the story lesson. Each story is a simple four-frame story which features the course characters or other characters in humorous, creative or thoughtful situations. The story text appears in speech bubbles; children are not expected to read all the words, but their appearance raises children's comfort with the written word in preparation for the reading of simple sentences, which is encouraged in Level 2. Children do not encounter any new language in these stories.

Activity Book structure

The Activity Book mirrors the transparent structure of the Class Book. The first and second pages reinforce the vocabulary, and where possible, the structure introduced in the unit. In some cases, further phonics practice is provided to prepare for the next lesson. The third page provides written practice of the letter or letters introduced in the Phonics pages. The fourth page reinforces the values taught in the unit, and the fifth page provides written practice of the numbers of the unit. The sixth page has activities which enable the children to practise the language and concepts of this and previous units before the review of the main literacy and numeracy concepts on the seventh page.

The four skills

First Friends develops the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Speaking

Children speak in every lesson. Speaking activities represent a wide range of formats, including listen and say, question and answer, role plays and communicative speaking.

Pronunciation is also addressed through songs and the Phonics pages. Attention is also given to techniques for pronouncing specific sounds that present problems for speakers of various languages, e.g. *p* and *b*.

First Friends uses the International Phonetics Alphabet for pronunciation models. See page 9.

Listening

Listening is an important skill for young children, and it is likely that a number of your children will begin to understand with confidence before they are able to speak with confidence.

From the outset of *First Friends*, children's listening skills are developed. Children listen to the dialogues and stories in each unit. The teaching notes always give suggestions for questions to ask your children about what they hear. Children are more likely to pay attention and focus if they know you will ask them about it.

Reading

First Friends teaches reading primarily using the phonics method. See below for an explanation of phonics.

In Level 1, children will:

- learn the left to right progression of English
- learn the sounds of the letters of the alphabet
- learn to recognize the letters of the alphabet in both lower case and capital letter forms
- learn the names of the letters
- learn to identify the starting sounds and letters of words
- learn to read high frequency words (e.g. colours) through the 'Look and say' method

In Level 2, children will:

- learn to read and identify the digraph sounds represented by *th*, *sh* and *ch*
- learn to blend simple phonic words in families with CVC (consonant – vowel – consonant) patterns

- learn to identify vowels
- learn to read high frequency words (e.g. numbers and additional colours) through the 'Look and say' method
- gain experience in following written text as it is heard

Writing

Writing is very controlled in *First Friends*. A controlled approach to writing helps to ensure that children's handwriting is neat and legible. It also helps to ensure that children form letters correctly at the print stage so that they are able to make the transition to joined-up handwriting easily. Writing is limited to the letters of the alphabet and simple words.

In Level 1, children will:

- do activities which reinforce the left-to-right direction of English writing
- do activities which develop fine motor control
- learn to write the lower-case and capital forms for all letters of the alphabet
- learn to write simple words

In Level 2, children will:

- practise writing the letters of the alphabet
- learn to write simple words
- develop further their pencil control and fine motor skills

Literacy development: phonics and 'Look and say'

First Friends adopts a phonics approach to literacy development.

The phonics approach is based on the letter / sound correspondence. In other words, each letter has a primary sound which enables the reader to decode or read the word. For example, the word *cat* consists of three letters (c, a, t) and three sounds (/k/ /æ/ /t/). If the reader understands the correspondence of the letters and the sounds, he or she is able to decode or read *cat*. Thus, knowing the letter sounds is extremely important, and is more important than the letter name. However, in many countries, letter names are also important. There are parental and cultural expectations that children should know the names as well as the sounds of the letters. As a result, *First Friends* teaches both the letter name and the letter sound.

In order to make the learning process easier and more enjoyable, *First Friends* uses a phonics song. The phonics song is used for each letter and it sets the letter name, its sound, and the phonics exemplar words to a memorable tune. Children only need to learn the song melody once so that they can focus on the letter in future.

In Level 2 the phonics instruction is expanded to include word families. Word families consist of simple consonant-vowel-consonant words that have the same vowel and final consonant, e.g. *cat*, *hat*, *mat*, *Pat*. Children apply the letter sounds learnt in Level 1 to read these words. There is one word family for each of the five vowels (*-at*, *-et*, *-ig*, *-op*, *-un*). Word families also provide an opportunity to develop rhyming skills, which can help children to become more attuned to the sounds and patterns of English.

As with Level 1, there is a phonics song, but for word families rather than individual letter sounds. The exemplar words

are set to a memorable tune, and the same melody is used for each word family. Again, children only need to learn the song melody once so that they can focus on the word families more easily.

Although the phonics method can provide a solid foundation in decoding words, it does have disadvantages. Some words cannot be decoded simply by blending their constituent sounds, e.g. *blue*, *one*, *two*, *the*, etc. For this reason, *First Friends* also uses the 'Look and say' (or 'Whole word') method.

In the 'Look and say' method, children are shown the word and are taught to associate it with its meaning. An example of this in *First Friends* is the teaching of the colours. Children are shown the flashcard for *blue* and its written form. They are taught to recognize the word and associate it with its meaning.

Phonetic key

A – /æ/ – apple	N – /n/ – nut
B – /b/ – bird	O – /ɒ/ – octopus
C – /k/ – cat	P – /p/ – pink
D – /d/ – dog	Q – /kw/ – queen
E – /e/ – egg	R – /r/ – rabbit
F – /f/ – fan	S – /s/ – sun
G – /g/ – goat	T – /t/ – ten
H – /h/ – hand	U – /ʌ/ – umbrella
I – /ɪ/ – insect	V – /v/ – van
J – /dʒ/ – jump	W – /w/ – water
K – /k/ – kite	X – /ks/ – box
L – /l/ – lemon	Y – /j/ – yellow
M – /m/ – moon	Z – /z/ – zebra

Level 2 reviews all sounds learnt in Level 1. The emphasis in Level 2 is on word families with the same vowel and final consonant:

/æ/ – cat
 /e/ – jet
 /ɪ/ – dig
 /ɒ/ – mop
 /ʌ/ – sun

Level 2 also introduces digraphs. These are letter combinations that have their own sound:

th – /θ/ – thumb
 sh – /ʃ/ – sheep
 ch – /tʃ/ – chair

Characteristics of young learners

Intellectual development

Kindergarten-age children are beginning to use logic to understand things they have experienced, seen or heard. However, they are not able to understand abstract rules or logic. As a result, abstract concepts and grammar are not taught overtly at this stage. Terms such as singular or plural are not used, and you will not find instructions to give grammar rules in the teaching notes. For example, when plurals are introduced in Unit 4 of Level 1, the notes avoid instructions such as 'to change a word from singular to plural, add the letter –s to the end.' The concept of plurals is taught using real objects, e.g. pens, and drawing children's attention to the difference in the way the words *pen* and *pens* are said.

Attention span

Young children have very short attention spans. They focus on here-and-now activities that are lively and fun. Their attention span can be maximized when visual stimulus is present. With this in mind, *First Friends* often recommends that flashcards be stuck to the board and remain there for support.

In order to keep the children engaged, do not spend too much time on any one activity. It may be beneficial to leave an activity unfinished in order to maintain class attention. You may also find that slowing down the pace or quickening the pace of your lessons will add variety and keep children interested.

Sensory input

Everyone has a different learning style or preferred way of learning. Auditory learners prefer listening to the CD or the teacher. Visual learners prefer looking at pictures. Tactile learners take in new information by touching and doing.

First Friends has a variety of activities that address the learning preferences of all children. There are opportunities to listen to stories and songs on CD, talk about pictures and posters, and act out role plays.

Fine motor skills development

Fine motor skills are still developing in young children. They are just beginning to use their hands and fingers for activities such as writing and drawing. These actions require coordination and control, which most young children typically do not possess. As a result, the handwriting and drawing of young children is often larger or malformed. It is important to recognize that such characteristics are a normal part of all children's development.

To assist in the development of fine motor skills, *First Friends* includes numerous tracing and drawing opportunities. Activities which require children to trace lines as they reinforce their new language skills are an important part of their coordination. Similarly, colouring activities help children to control their pencils.

It is very important to encourage children in their writing, tracing, copying and drawing. Do not worry if children are unable to trace, write, draw or colour neatly. These skills will emerge during their primary years.

Affective developmental factors

Not all children will be able to respond to you from the beginning of the year. Some may need a silent period in which they acclimatize to the new experience and absorb the language around them without being required to produce it.

Do not push children to speak if they do not feel comfortable. Some activities involve calling children to the front to sing or act. Choose children who are willing and eager to perform in front of the whole class.

Furthermore, young children flourish with praise. It raises their confidence and gives them positive reinforcement. Therefore, always praise correct responses and avoid harshly criticizing incorrect ones. You may simply say, 'That's almost right. Try again.'

General teaching procedures

Introducing language

The teaching notes give suggestions as to how to introduce all new language in each unit. However, you may wish to introduce language in other ways, for example, using real objects, pictures from magazines, or other means.

Teaching Phonics activities

The lesson notes contain step-by-step instructions for introducing each letter.

Level 1: Letters and sounds

The general procedures are as follows:

- Introduce the letter with a word beginning with that letter using a flashcard, a real object, etc.
- Write the letter on the board. Point to it and say the letter name, its sound, and the name of the exemplar word.
- Children repeat the word chorally and individually.
- Repeat with the capital letter.
- Ask children to suggest a few common names that begin with the sound. English names are also given in the notes.
- Tell children that they are going to learn how to write the letter.
- Stand with your back to the class as you use your finger to 'write' the capital form in the air. Write the letter exactly as it is presented in the Class Book (you may also wish to refer to TB page 119).
- Tell children to copy your action and write the capital letter in the air. Check that they are forming the letter correctly.
- Repeat the procedure for the lower case letter.
- Tell children to practise tracing over the letters in their books with their fingers.

Level 2: Word families

The general procedures are as follows:

- Introduce the word family with a word from the family using a flashcard, a real object, etc.
- Ask children to tell you the first sound of the word. Write it on the board.
- Repeat with the second and third sounds of the word.
- Introduce another word from the family. Repeat the procedure.
- Underline the vowel and final consonant in each word to draw children's attention to the similarity.

Teaching handwriting

Children need to be introduced gradually to handwriting. Tracing in the air and in their books with their fingers is a valuable exercise. The lesson notes contain step-by-step instructions for teaching each letter.

The general procedures are as follows:

- Draw writing lines on the board (you may wish to refer to TB page 109 for a model). Put dots on the lines to show the starting point(s) for forming the capital letter. Write the letter on the lines exactly as it is presented in the Class Book (you may also wish to refer to TB page 119).
- Tell children to practise tracing over the letters in their books with their fingers.

- Children trace and write the letters with their pencils. Check that they are holding their pencils correctly and forming the letters correctly.
- Repeat the procedure for the lower case letter.
- Draw more writing lines on the board. Call children to the board to write capital and small forms on the lines. Correct as necessary.

There is a photocopiable page of writing lines on TB page 109 so that you can give your children extra practice in handwriting.

Using stories

Pretending and playing are extremely important for young children. Stories encourage and facilitate pretending and playing. They enable children to use their imagination, make sense of the world, and express their feelings and thoughts. Stories also give a natural context for introducing and practising language. Each unit of *First Friends* includes a dedicated story lesson. In addition, Lesson 2 of every unit uses a little story to present the unit's key structure.

How to teach stories and presentation dialogues

There are step-by-step notes tailored to each story and dialogue. The general procedures are as follows:

- Establish the context for the story or dialogue by asking children questions about the pictures.
- Ask questions which give key information. These questions typically begin with: *Who? Where? What? and Why?*
- Children listen to the story or dialogue as they look at the pictures in their books.
- Children listen again and repeat chorally.
- Call children to the front to act out the story. Use props, e.g. flashcards, real objects, etc. to make it more fun. If you feel your children are able to, have them hold the cut-outs from AB1 page 77 as they act out stories with the course characters.

Teaching songs

Children enjoy songs, rhythms and melodies. As a result, these are an effective tool for teaching and practising language.

In addition to the phonics song, *First Friends* features at least one additional song in almost all units. At Level 1, many of these songs support the teaching of numbers.

There are step-by-step notes tailored to each song. The general procedures are as follows:

- Establish the context for the song by asking children questions about the pictures.
- Present any new language using real objects, flashcards, magazine pictures, drawing on the board, miming, etc.
- Children listen to the song as they look at the pictures in their books. You may find that it is easier to present the actions as children listen. This often helps children to remember the language more easily.
- Children sing along as they listen again.
- Call children to the front to do the actions and lead the song. Use props, e.g. flashcards, to make it more fun.

Doing arts and craft

Arts and crafts are important for young children. They encourage creativity and they also help to develop fine motor skills.

Many teachers are reluctant to do arts and crafts because they feel they are difficult to manage effectively. To help with this, *First Friends* includes craft activities that are easy to prepare for and do in the classroom. The following are general procedures to teach arts and crafts:

- Try the craft activity before class so that you are clear about the materials and the procedures.
- Before class, prepare for the craft activity by cutting out, measuring or grouping as many of the materials as you can. Cover all work surfaces with paper or plastic.
- During the lesson, give the instructions for each step of the craft activity before you give the materials for that step to the children. This will help children to focus on the instructions before they begin working.
- Don't hesitate to modify the activity to suit your children's needs or the time available in the lesson.

Assessment

First Friends provides for the continuous assessment of children's language performance in that each unit has a photocopiable progress check (see TB pages 94–103). In addition, there is a photocopiable mid-year progress check, covering Units 1–5 (see TB pages 104–105), and a final progress check, covering Units 6–10 (see TB pages 106–107).

Assessment helps you:

- to determine children's strengths and weaknesses
- to determine what the class have learnt and what needs more attention
- to monitor and follow the progress of individuals
- to monitor the effectiveness of your instruction
- to give feedback to children, parents and other teachers

The progress checks are traditional paper and pencil worksheets that cover the letters and numbers concepts of each unit. You can use the progress checks in different ways. Children can do them silently on their own, as a more formal assessment, or you may allow children to take them home and work on them over a period of several days.

Regardless of the way you choose to use them, model the first item of each activity with the class. Use one of the modelling procedures described in the unit notes, e.g. copying an item on the board, etc.

Although the progress checks are a good resource, you can assess your children in other ways as well. You can assess their understanding and ability to speak English. You may also want to assess letter and number understanding orally.

The *First Friends* photocopiable assessment form (see page 12) is intended for use in all units. No two *First Friends* classrooms are the same, so the assessment form can be tailored to each teacher's needs.

The lesson objectives are given at the start of the teaching notes for each lesson. Choose the objectives you wish to assess and write them in the box at the bottom of a photocopy of the assessment form. For example, for Unit 5, Lesson 1, you may decide that the first two lesson objectives (to identify basic shapes and to identify colours) are the ones you would like to assess. Write this information in the box

at the bottom of the form. Write the children's names in the first column. (You may find it useful to write the children's names on a photocopy, and then copy this again before filling in any objectives, so that you have a ready-made template for future assessment.) Each form allows you to assess up to eight objectives. You can either use one form per unit, or copy an extra form if you wish to assess more than eight objectives in any one unit.

You may not want to tell the children that they are being assessed as this may cause them to feel anxious.

Assessment at the kindergarten level is informative rather than evaluative. As such, children should not be given marks denoting excellence or poor performance. The following marking system is suggested:

O = OK. The child has met the objective.

E = Emerging. The child has partially met the objective.

N = Not at this time. The child has not met any aspect of the objective.

How to carry out assessment in the classroom:

- Divide the children into small groups. Assess one group at a time. The other groups should do a quiet activity such as colouring, drawing or writing.
- Assess your selected objectives using procedures children are familiar with, e.g. hold up a flashcard and ask a child *What's this?* The child responds *It's a triangle.* Show the child three different shapes. Point to the triangle. Ask *Is it a triangle?* The child responds *Yes. It's a triangle.*
- Vary the procedures slightly so that children do not repeat what the previous child has done. However, be sure that the procedures are consistent, i.e. they all require production, or they all require receptive understanding.
- In the column for each objective next to the child's name, indicate the child's performance.
- On TB page 13 there is a photocopiable achievement certificate to give to pupils at the end of the year, or whenever they have performed well in class.

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Help your child with English



Oxford Parents is a **new** website where your students' parents can find out how they can help their child with English. They can find lots of activities to do in the home or in everyday life. Even if the parent has little or no English, they can still find ways to help. We have lots of activities and videos to show parents how to do this.

Studies have shown that practising English outside the classroom can really help children become more confident using the language. If they speak English with their parents, they will see how English can be used in real-life situations and this can increase the students' motivation.

Parents can help by practising stories, songs, and vocabulary that the students have already learned in the classroom. Tell your students' parents to visit www.oup.com/elt/oxfordparents and have fun helping their children with English!