

Research in Action

Knowledge of Letter Forms and Print Functions

Knowledge of the forms and functions of print serves as a foundation from which children become increasingly sensitive to letter shapes, names, sounds, and words. (—*International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*)

PHONICS



How the Alphabet Works

In *How the Alphabet Works*, you begin to introduce the students to the idea that letters and their associated sounds work together in a systematic way to create words. The activities in this section will help students gain insight into that system. Although the students have not yet attached sounds to the letters, the following activity will help them focus on the importance of the order of letters in words.

Letter Order

Make a Word

- Remind the students to sit in their Letter Expert groups. Give each group **Letter Cards** that match their Special Letters. As you hand out each card, say the name of the letter on the card and ask the students to hold up their hands if it is their letter. Have the **Letter Cards** for the vowels easily accessible.
- Write *most* on the board in extra-large lowercase letters and say it. Ask if any group has the first letter in the word. When they volunteer, ask a student to come up and stand in front of the *m* on the board, holding the Special Letter. Continue with the other letters. Produce the *Oo Letter Card* for someone to hold in the proper position. Stand behind the students and tap each student on the shoulder, saying “*m-o-s-t* spells *most*.”