

gone, Oscar's little brother provides the Letterland explanation for the irregular o sound in words like done, come and love where the o sounds different. This baby brother is just too little to say Oscar's sound properly!

done **love**

Fourth, while the Yo-Yo Man makes his usual 'yyy...' sound at the beginning of words like yes, he leaves his yo-yos behind when he is working for other letters (that is, when he is making an i or e sound instead of his own 'yyy...' sound). So at the end of words like n or very the empty-sack version of y fits best.

yes

my **very**

Keep it fun! The information given above will be useful when children ask questions such as 'Which e (or which y) shall I use?' But do not let them feel that they must get everything right all the time. Ensuring that there is pleasure in handling and linking the letters together in an atmosphere of play is your best way to support your child's learning.

Letterland Linking Letters

Learning tools The 80 letter cards in your set are much more than just a collection of letters. They are learning tools, each in their own right. Children of pre-school ages will simply enjoy playing with them without needing to understand what each picture means. School age children will recognise their 'Letterland friends' signalling the sounds they make in words. Here are a few guidelines for those who are completely new to Letterland.

Each letter in the Letterland alphabet is represented by a different illustration, or pictogram. Because letter sounds can vary, depending upon the spelling of a word, Letterland also contains some special pictograms to represent these changes.

The 26 Letter characters and five Vowel Men are the main characters in Letterland. The 'short' sounds of the five vowels are represented by the following pictograms.

a

Annie Apple

e

Eddy Elephant

i

Impy Ink

o

Oscar Orange

u

Uppy Umbrella

These 5 characters belong to the Vowel Men – the only people in Letterland who ever say their alphabet names in words.

a

Mr A

e

Mr E

i

Mr I

o

Mr O

u

Mr U

Use the Vowel Men letters in words such as:

apron, we, kind, old and **use**.

Irregular parts of words Your set of letters also includes a number of plain vowels because many words need more than one vowel. They are also useful for setting out words like **her** (where neither the Eddy Elephant pictogram nor the Mr E pictogram fits the sound in this word). For less regular parts of *any* word, simply choose plain letters.



ff

Double consonants Ten of the consonant pictograms look like duplicates, but look closely! They are not all identical. For example you have

Ticking Tom as well as Ticking Tess, and Naughty Nicola (Naughty Nick's next-door neighbour) as well as Naughty Nick himself. You also have Bouncy Barbara, Munching Maria, Poor Patsy, Sally Snake and Zoe Zebra. Spot the only difference – eyelashes on the females!

nn

There is Fireman Fred's best friend, Fireman Frank, too, and Golden Girl's good old Golden Granny and Lamp Lady Lucy's lively friend Lamp Lady Linda. The final one is Diana Duck whose beak is different from Dippy Duck. These additional characters make spelling words with double consonants more interesting. They also put the right sound on your lips repeatedly whenever, for example, you talk with your child about Bouncy Ben's best friend Bouncy Barbara, or any of the others.

bb

More special letters Your set also includes a special royal umbrella (silent u) because the Quarrelsome Queen (q) refuses to appear in words without it. And there are four other special letters. Children who know more about Letterland from school will recognise them right away.

qu

First, there is a red silent magic **e** which sends magic sparks over other vowels to change their sounds – for example, add the magic **e** to the word **tap**. It makes Annie Apple disappear in the magic sparks and Mr A appear in her place, making **tape**.

tap → **tape**

In fact the short **a** now becomes a long **a**. In Letterland terms this is called 'the Vowel Man saying his name'. Similarly, add a Magic **e** to **hop**; Oscar Orange disappears and Mr O appears to say his name in **hope**.

hop → **hope**

Second, there is a grey **e** to signal any **e** which is simply silent, as in **blue**, **house** or **have**.

house

blue **have**

Third, there is Oscar Orange's Bothersome Little Brother, White Noise.