

Explanation and Rationale for *N is for Nom: An Amazing Alphabet*

The large tracing font utilizes a **blue** outline for consonants and a **red** outline for vowels (a, e, i, o, u). The letter Y is half **blue** and half **red** to indicate that it can represent either a consonant or vowel sound.

The tracing lines are numbered to assist with proper letter formation. To trace them, begin by placing your finger on the number 1, then continue in numerical order (e.g. 2, 3, etc.).

The key words are primarily common words that most children are likely familiar with (e.g. *apple, book, cats*).

The target letter sound is at the beginning of key words, except for the letter X, which represents its most common sound /ks/ at the end of words (e.g. *fox*), and the letter Y, which represents a vowel sound at the end of words (e.g. *cry, baby*).

For consonants that can represent more than one sound, the key words were chosen to reflect the primary (most common) sound (e.g. “C spells /k/ as in *cat*” and “G spells /g/ as in *games*”). In literacy instruction, primary sounds are typically taught first, and then secondary (less common) sounds are introduced.

For each vowel (a, e, i, o, u), the first sentence contains what is commonly referred to as the short vowel sound (e.g. “an alligator eating apples”), and the second sentence contains what is commonly referred to as the long vowel sound (e.g. “acorns on an apron”).

In some dialects, a vowel sound may become nasalized (produced in the nose) if it is followed by a nasal consonant (e.g. /m/ or /n/). It is possible you may hear or produce a nasalized vowel in the key words *insect, on, umbrella*. If this is the case, focus on the other key words in those sentences: *itchy, octopus, up*.

The letter Y can represent either a consonant or a vowel sound. The first sentence contains the consonant sound (“yo-yos in the yard”), and the second sentence contains the two most common vowel sounds the letter Y represents (“a cry from the babyy”). Contrary to popular belief, the letter Y represents a vowel sound most of the time it occurs in writing.

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