

A is for Alaska: Written by kids for kids

A little book of rhyming facts to learn about your state . . .
See all the ways from A to Z that kids believe it’s great!

Explore the beauty of your state with an ABC book that helps young readers see Alaska through the eyes of kids just like them. Written by kids for kids, *A is for Alaska* offers an approachable, child-friendly way for kids to explore state facts. Readers can expand on what they read to create their own couplets and research their state even more deeply.

Alaska ABCs:

These are the ABC words from the book. Can you think of other Alaska-themed words for each letter?

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| A - Anchorage | J - Juneau | S - Salmon |
| B - Bear | K - Kayak | T - Tundra |
| C - Caribou | L - Lake | U - Ulu |
| D - Denali | M - Mosquito | V - Vegetable |
| E - Eagles | N - Northern Lights | W - Whale |
| F - Fairbanks | O - Otter | X - eXtreme Sports |
| G - Gold Rush | P - Pipeline | Y - Yup'ik |
| H - Homestead | Q - Qiviut | Z - Alaska Zoo |
| I - Iditarod | R - Raven | |

Rhyming couplets: (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4)

Each page of *A is for Alaska* has one letter of the alphabet and shows a feature of this great state that starts with that letter. A rhyming couplet tells about the feature, and a photo shows what it looks like.

A **rhyming couplet** is two lines that have the same meter and end in words that rhyme. But what is meter? **Meter** is like the beat or rhythm of a poem. You can clap your hands along to the stressed part of each word as you say the lines. Say the words below, and clap where you see each X.

X X X X
Twinkle, twinkle little star,

X X X X
How I wonder what you are.

That little nursery rhyme we all know so well is a rhyming couplet! It has two lines—one right after the other—that have the same meter (rhythm) and end in rhyming words. In this case, the rhyming words are *star* and *are*. In fact, almost all nursery rhymes are made of couplets. You’re already an expert and you didn’t even know it!

Practice:

Complete these couplets with a second line that has the same meter and ends in a rhyming word. Pay attention to the meters (they aren’t all the same).

- The pine tree stands up on the hill . . .
(hint: Some words that rhyme with *hill* are *will, spill, mill, fill* . . .)
- The wolf looks up to see the moon and howls into the sky . . .
(hint: Some words that rhyme with *sky* are *by, fly, my, high* . . .)
- A malamute is quite a dog; he pulls a heavy sleigh . . .
(hint: Some words that rhyme with *sleigh* are *may, day, play, gray* . . .)



Writing state couplets: (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4)

1. List features of your state for each letter. This may be done with a partner or group.
2. Pick one feature, and write a rhyming couplet about it. Use the couplets in *A is for Alaska* as examples. Remember meter and rhyming. Both are important to make the writing sound right.
3. Read your final couplet out loud. Do you stumble when you read the lines? Often, that means you need to work on the meter. Move words around or say things a differently so it reads smoothly.

Example: This couplet sounds a little off when I read it. Can you fix it?

*Puffins dive into the water and swish
to catch schools of fish*

Look at the meter, and try adding and moving around words to say the same thing while keeping a matching rhythm in each line:

*Puffins dive and swoop and swish,
To feast on schools of feeder fish.*



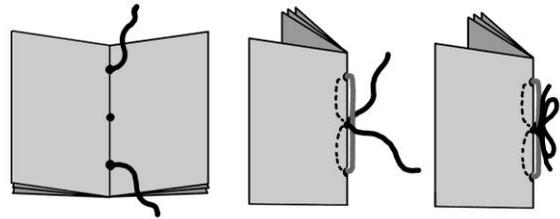
4. As a class or table group, put together your own ABC. Each page starts with: "(A, B, C, etc.) is for (your feature)." The next two lines will be your couplet. See *A is for Alaska* for examples.
5. Draw pictures or collect photos to go with each page.

Bookbinding:

Bind your couplets into a book that you can share in your class library.

You will need (for each book):

- 7 sheets of construction paper
- One long-reach hole punch or an awl for an adult to use to poke holes in the paper
- One 24-inch piece of ribbon, cord, or twine



Directions:

1. Carefully fold your stack of construction paper in half to make your book.
2. Unfold the pages, but keep them stacked with the fold in the middle. Make three holes: one in the center, and one halfway from the center to each end.
3. Pull ribbon, cord, or twine through each of the outside holes, leaving the ends pointing toward the center of the book. (See the first image above.)
4. Thread both ends up through the center hole, so the loose ends are now toward the back of the book. (See the second image above.)
5. Tie a bow, and you're done. (See the third image above.)

More state projects:

1. For a larger project, create your own personal A-Z book filled with couplets about your state. Draw pictures or collect photos to go with each page. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2)
2. Create a song, rap, or other performance to present your couplets to the class or community. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.5)
3. Choose one feature from the alphabet list you created with your class or group. Research the feature thoroughly. Write an expository paragraph to summarize why that feature is important in Alaskan culture, history, or ecology. Post the paragraphs in the classroom, or include them in an expanded class state ABC book. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7)

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the See My State series!



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