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The ABCs of Finding Information



You ask your teacher a question. What does she tell you? "Look it up!" There are a lot of places to look for information. There are books, phone books, encyclopedias, and dictionaries.

Usually, words in these books are arranged in alphabetical order. You know the ABCs. But do you know how to use them to help you find what you are looking for? There are a few easy rules to follow.

The first rule is that words are put in alphabetical order by their first letters. For example, dog will come before egg. D comes before E in the alphabet.

Sometimes two or more words begin with the same letter. Look at the second letter in each word. Which of them comes first in the alphabet? For example, dish would come before dog. I comes before O in the alphabet.

How would you put these words in alphabetical order: shot, ship, share? The first two letters are the same in all of them. You guessed it. You have to go to the third letter. The right way would be share, ship, shot. A comes before I which comes before O in the alphabet.

The last rule is simple. If two words begin with the same letters, the shorter word comes first. For example, take the words six and sixty. They start with the same three letters. But, according to the rule, six would come first.

Knowing how to use alphabetical order can make work easier. It can help you look up things like words or phone numbers. It can help you organize information. Practice using alphabetical order. Follow the rules you learned.

The ABCs of Finding Information

Questions

_____ 1. Which word would come first in alphabetical order - tree or grass?

A. tree
B. grass

_____ 2. Which of these is in correct alphabetical order?

A. dime, dollar
B. dollar, dime

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_____ 3. If two words have the same first and second letters, you have to go to:

A. the last letter of the word
B. the third letter of the word

_____ 4. If two words begin with the same two letters, which one comes first?

A. the shorter word
B. the longer word

5. Name two books that are arranged in alphabetical order.

_____

_____

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How many of these can you write about? Think! Write! Check all the ones you answered.

- ☐ Tell about three ways you can use alphabetical order every day.
- ☐ Write down the names of your four best friends. Put them in alphabetical order.

Don't stop writing. Use a blank piece of paper to continue.