

MARIO'S EARLY YEARS™

FUN WITH LETTERS



Mario's Early Years
A LEARNING SERIES

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

WARNING:

Please read the enclosed consumer information & precautions booklet carefully before using your Nintendo® hardware system or Game Pak.

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SUPER NINTENDO
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Getting Started

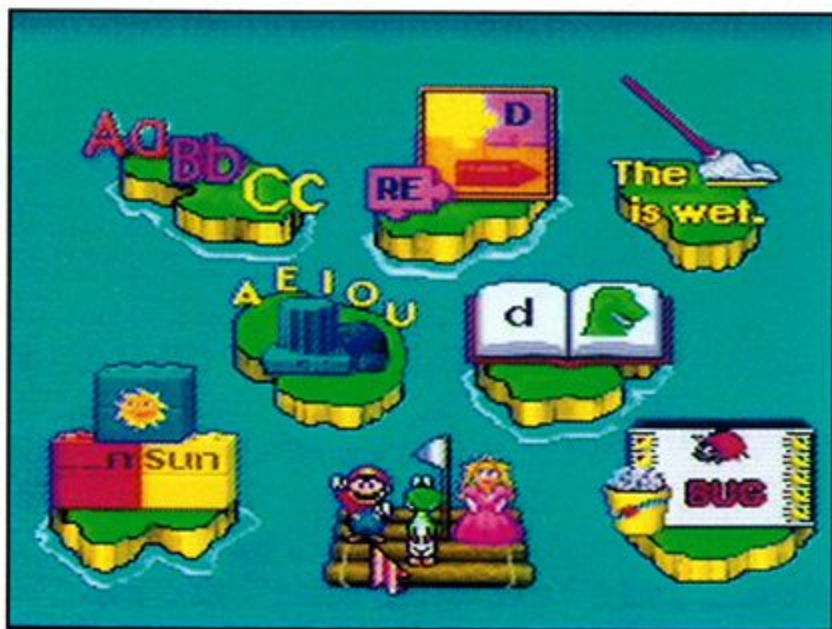
Fun With Letters is simple to play.

STARTING THE GAME

To start the game:

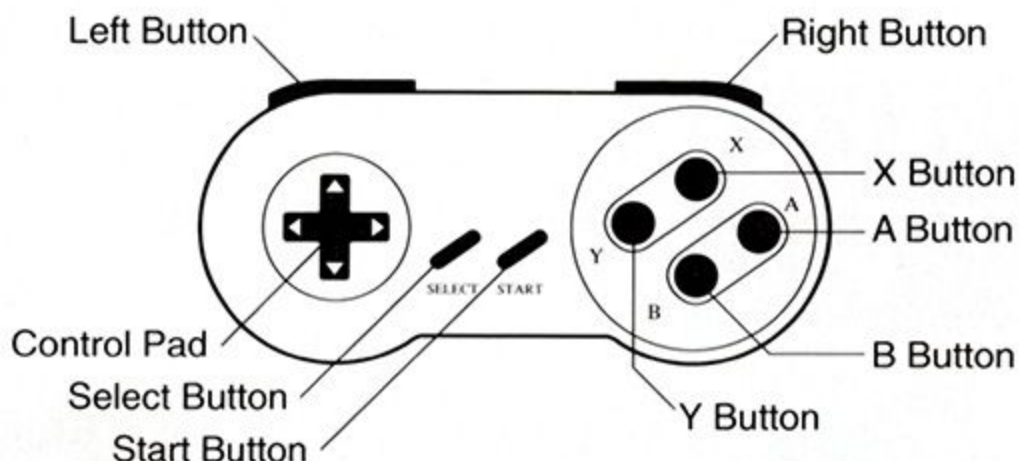
1. Make sure your Super Nintendo Entertainment System® (Super NES) is turned off.
2. Put the **Fun With Letters** game pak in your Super NES.
3. Turn on the Super NES.
4. At the title screen, press **Start**.
5. The World Menu appears.
6. To choose a character or a world, use your Game Controller or the new Super NES mouse.

See the **Game Controller** and **Using the Mouse** sections.



GAME CONTROLLER

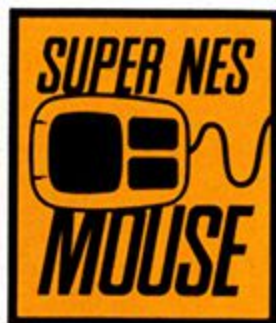
Most children prefer to use the Game Controller to play *Fun With Letters*.



At the title screen, press **Start** to begin the game. The game then operates on a simple point and choose basis. Just press the Control Pad arrows to point to an active area on the screen, then press **B** to choose that feature.

USING THE MOUSE

Fun With Letters also lets children use the new Super NES mouse.



The trick is to simply point and click. First, drag the mouse and point to an active area on the screen (the arrow flashes); then click a mouse button to choose that feature.

CHOOSING GAME FEATURES

When you point at an active screen feature with the Game Controller or the mouse, the onscreen pointer flashes. To choose that feature, press **B** (Game Controller) or click (mouse). Here are some of the fun features, your child can use:



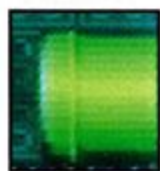
- Point and choose **Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool** on the raft to play the game with that character.



- Point and choose a world on the menu to go there. For example, this book is on Sound World.



- Point and choose objects on a world screen. The onscreen pointer flashes when your child points to an active object. Point and choose **Luigi** at the bottom of the screen to wake him up and learn.



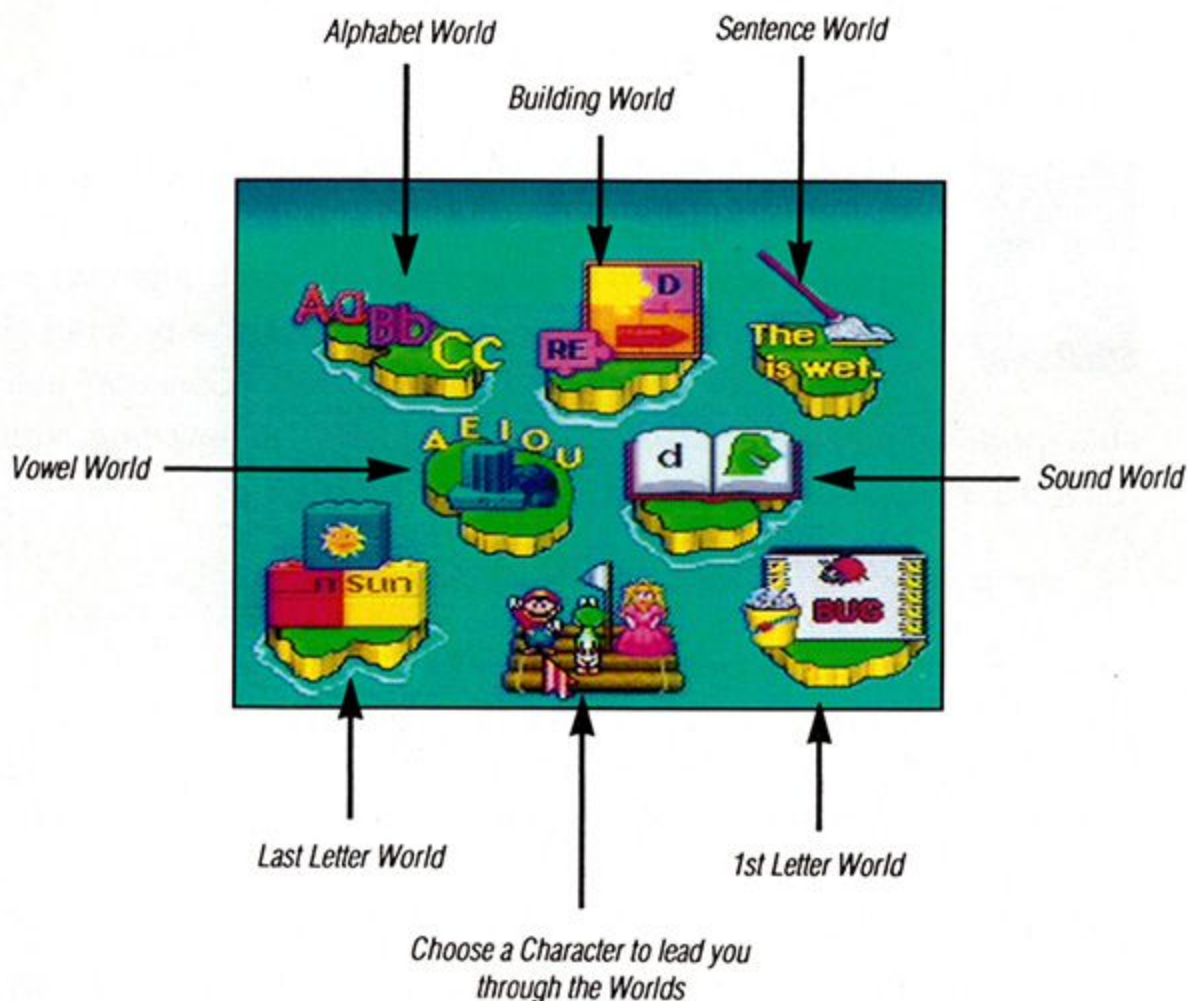
- Point and choose a **Green Exit Pipe** to move between levels in a world.



- Point and choose the **Blue Exit Pipe** to return to the World Menu.

About The Worlds

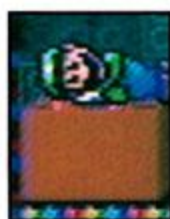
From the World Menu, just point and choose any world you like. There is no single right order!



To go to a world, choose its picture on the World Menu. See the following sections for details on each world.

DISCOVERY/LEARNING WORLDS

Discovery/Learning Worlds offer two ways of exploring. They are called **Discovery** and **Learning Modes**. **First Letter, Last Letter, Sound, Sentence, Building,** and **Vowel Worlds** all have **Discovery** and **Learning Modes**. **Alphabet World** is just for fun. In **Discovery Mode**, Luigi sleeps soundly! Your child can point and choose objects or characters to discover something. Encourage your child to experiment in **Discovery Mode**. This is a great way to introduce basic concepts.



To begin **Learning Mode**, choose the sleeping **Luigi** to wake him up. The program guides your child to pick characters or objects that teach a particular letter concept. For instance, it might say "Find the word that starts with the letter P." Consider using this mode to build your child's confidence, skills in listening, and following directions.

FUN FRIENDS

Find the **Fun Friends**! Some worlds have surprise creatures who appear like magic when your child points and chooses special spots on the screen. In **Learning Mode**, **Fun Friends** often pop up when your child gives a correct response.

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A WRONG ANSWER

In **Learning Mode**, a correct choice does something fun in Luigi's box at the bottom of the screen. If your child picks a wrong answer, the program simply tells the child what the object is and gently prompts your child to try again. **Fun With Letters** is very patient and non-punitive. If your child can't find the answer after three tries, sparks will fly near the right answer.

USING THE INFORMATION CENTER

In this manual, the chapter for each world includes an Information Center that offers three types of information about each world: **Early Years**, **Home Play**, and **What's Taught**.

Early Years

Describes the natural stages of learning in young children. Basically, play is the work of the child and discovery builds knowledge that leads to school readiness.

Home Play

Suggests activities for you and your child to enhance the letter concepts taught in the program.

Home Play's activities address the four major areas of a child's development, including movement and body awareness, eye-hand coordination, social skills, and language skills.

Play at home and around town heightens your child's senses, builds confidence, and fosters a sense of self-worth.

What's Taught

Explains the purpose behind each activity in a world. New learning happens constantly and is a gradual process.

No two children learn new ideas at the same speed. Yours may have fun repeating the same activity but may avoid others entirely. This is natural. Remember, spending time together is very important and will help you to discover your child's unique talents and special interests.

ALPHABET WORLD

This picture on the World Menu takes you to **Alphabet World**, which is a Fun World.



Young children start becoming aware of letters. They enjoy naming the letters. Learning the letter sounds as well as their names is a very important step in sounding out written words.



In **Alphabet World**, each upper and lower case letter appears with a picture. Your child hears the letter name, letter sound, and name of the object in the picture, while the Alphabet Song plays in the background.

Click the green pipe at the bottom right of the screen to return to the World menu.

Information Center

Early Years

Putting music to learning is enjoyed by most children. A special closeness will bring you and your child together while the **Alphabet World** unfolds. The background song makes learning the letters and the sounds of the alphabet fun

Home Play

Make pictures with your child of the characters and objects used in matching the letters of Mario's alphabet. You will notice that the first sound of each of these pictures begin with the letter of the alphabet being taught (e.g. Aa apple). Do this for each of the letters. Find other pictures that have object or characters starting with the various alphabet sounds. Cut these pictures out and have your child sort them with you into groups which begin with the same letters and sounds. Remember that it is not often easy for children to learn all of this information quickly. Upper case letters, lower case letters, sounds for the letter all takes patience and time to learn. Give correct answers and a great deal of praise to your child and watch confidence grow.

What's Taught

Alphabet World is simply about discovery and fun in exploring the letters of the alphabet in picture and sound. Spending time with your child in pointing out letters of the alphabet shows how much you value reading. Take your time and give lots of correct information. Don't be surprised if your child has to repeat many times. This is natural and leads to achievement and confidence in beginning reading. Letters can be confusing and some more difficult to learn than others. Spending a little time two or three times each week will make a difference. Just being together is most important of all.

SOUND WORLD



This picture on the World Menu takes your child to **Sound World**, which is a Discovery/Learning World.

This is how the first level of **Sound World** looks.



Before their first birthday, most children make sounds from every language in the world! As a child begins to read, sounds need to be associated with letters.

In **Sound World**, your child chooses objects, hears their starting sounds, and identifies objects with letter sounds.

Discovery Mode

Your child enters **Sound World** in Discovery mode. While Luigi rests peacefully, your child can click and discover various animals or objects and listen to their names and starting letters sounds.

Hint: Look for Fun Friends hidden somewhere on the screen!

Learning Mode

To explore Learning mode, your child can click the snoozing **Luigi** to wake him up. **Fun With Letters** now directs your child with phrases like "Choose the picture that starts with the sound d" (the sound of the letter d).

Your child can explore different scenes in which things are identified by the first letter sound they make. Correct responses to requests move pictures into the book. Incorrect responses are simply acknowledged and your child is gently prompted to try again. If your child has difficulty, don't worry! After three tries the correct choice sparkles.

Using the Exit Pipes

To change the scene but explore the same concept, click a **Green Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool moves between levels.

To return to the World Menu, click the **Blue Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool goes back to the World Menu.

Information Center

Early Years

Before the first birthday, your child probably made every sound of every language in the world. Sounds and syllables were babbled, imitated and jabbered. As a little baby, your child was most likely able to vocalize feelings using different sounds. Children need to be taught the concept of letters being attached to the sounds they make. Many two and three year olds love to have fun with letters and sounds. Your child may already be able to sing The Alphabet Song and attempt to "read" stories which have been read to them. By four years of age, some children begin to match words to pictures and write letters which are in their names. In **Sound World**, Mario bounces around and discovers the common sound of all the letters by finding objects whose names start with these sounds. For example your child and Mario match "ddd with dinosaur or sss with star." If your child is not yet ready to do this type of matching just have fun as Mario and Luigi discover how to match letters with sounds.

Home Play

Help your child identify letters wherever you go. When you are out walking or driving together, point out traffic or familiar fast food store signs along the way. At home, point to letters in the newspaper, in books and magazines and on groceries. Your child may enjoy tracing or cutting out some of these letters. Make play dough into letters of your child's

name or bake dough into letters. Alphabet soup or cereal with letters is great fun as well. Most children love grouping pictures found in comics or magazines which begin with the same sounds. If you spend a little time each week with your child on matching letters to the sounds they make, you will start a very positive attitude toward beginning reading. This will result in school success. Some children are not quite ready to understand the concept of this letter-to-sound match but you can still have fun giving them correct information and discover and explore with them how letters match to sounds.

What's Taught

In discovery mode, just have lots of fun matching letters to sounds. Build confidence in learning letters and sounds by always giving correct answers to your child. Feel good about learning letter names and the sounds they make by praising your child when letters and sounds are noticed. In learning mode, your child will be practicing and playing with Mario and his friends. Learning the letters and the sounds they make are important steps in beginning reading. Your child may not yet be ready to learn all of the letters so just have fun experiencing them together.

1ST LETTER WORLD



This picture on the Main Menu takes your child to **1st Letter World**, which is a Discovery/Learning World.

This is how the first level of **1st Letter World** looks.



During the toddler years, children start to notice differences between letters. When children realize that letters match sounds, they begin to see that reading is speech written down. Putting letters together with beginning sounds is an important step on the road to successful reading.

Discovery Mode

Your child enters **1st Letter World** in Discovery mode and can click on a picture to find out their first letter and that sound. For instance, your child can pick the princess and listen to what its first letter sounds like.

Hint: Encourage your child to find the Fun Friends by moving the pointer around on screens to find special spots!

Learning Mode

To explore Learning Mode, your child can click the snoozing **Luigi** to wake him up. **Fun With Letters** now directs your child with suggestions, such as "Find a word that starts with the letter P."

For correct responses, Fun Friends say something like "You found Princess Toadstool. That starts with P!" The object then moves onto Luigi's picture screen. Incorrect responses are acknowledged and your child is gently prompted to try again. If your child has difficulty, don't worry! **Fun With Letters** helps your child find the correct choice. After three tries the correct choice sparkles.

Using the Pipes

To change the scene but explore the same concept, click a **Green Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool moves between levels. To return to the World Menu, click the **Blue Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool goes back to the World Menu.

Information Center

Early Years

Your child has seen differences in letters ever since he or she was a toddler of 18 to 24 months old. Letters make sounds and when this match of letter-to-sound happens, children begin to see that reading is speech written down. How exciting this is to discover. By three or four years old, some children already notice that pictures of familiar things which begin with the same sound, go together. Most children love to play matching games where they hear words such as (bed, bat). Making words by putting letters together with these beginning sounds is another important step on the road to successful reading. Even if your child is not yet ready to do this alone, enjoy the experience together.

Home Play

The steady rhythm and repetition of similar sounds, letters and words is so much fun for children. Mario bounces and bonks in **1st Letter World** to a fun rhythm as well. Feel the rhythm of your child. Each child is unique. Present pictures cut out from magazines which start with the same letter and sound, with the same rhythm your child possesses. Use a sing-song voice when saying the names of these pictures and see how easily your child imitates the patterns you set. Together, make a letter (lower case) out of clay, play dough, paper, fabric or even pasta, and show your child how the letter and first sound of the pictures match up. Fun, entertainment and learning all at the same time!

What's Taught

Your child will enjoy seeing Mario, Yoshi, or the Princess Toadstool move around the computer screen bumping his or her head on the pictures of words which begin with the same sound. Confidence is being built and will grow in early reading as your child matches the beginning sounds of letters to pictures and words that are the same. Learning the sounds of several letters and seeing how those sounds occur in many words is the next important step in preparing to read. Just being with your child during these early reading activities shows that you value and enjoy reading.

LAST LETTER WORLD

This picture on the Main Menu takes your child to **Last Letter World**.



This is how the first level of **Last Letter World** looks.



When children start participating in group play they learn to start, take turns, and end activities, such as games, stories, and songs. Words also have beginnings and endings.

Hearing the sounds and matching them to the letters at the ends of words is an important step in early reading.

Discovery Mode

Your child enters **Last Letter World** in Discovery mode and can click three objects that end with the same letter, or click the object that ends with a different letter. (Try finding the Fun Friends!)

Learning Mode

To explore Learning mode, your child can click the snoozing **Luigi** to wake him up. **Fun With Letters** now directs your child with suggestions, such as "Show me a word that ends with the letter p." "You found cap. That ends with p, (sound of p) cap." The object moves onto Luigi's blocks at the bottom of the screen.

Incorrect responses are acknowledged and your child is gently prompted to try again. If your child has difficulty, don't worry! **Fun With Letters** helps your child find the correct choice. After three tries the correct choice sparkles.

Using the Exit Pipes

To change the scene but explore the same concept, click a **Green Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool moves between levels.

To return to the World Menu, click the **Blue Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool goes back to the World Menu.

Information Center

Early Years

By age four, most children generally do pretty well in participating in group play. This lets them learn to start, take turns and stop activities. For example, games, stories and songs begin and end. Words also have beginnings and endings. Your child may now be ready to discover with Mario the endings of words. Hearing the sounds and matching them with letters at the ending of words is a new step in learning what reading is about. Have fun pointing out the ends of words.

Home Play

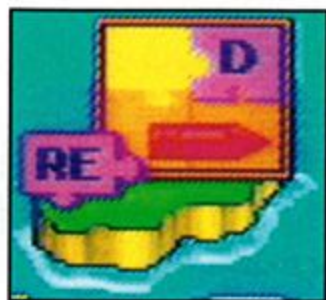
Talk about beginnings and endings at home. TV shows begin and end. The last word spoken on the phone by grandma was? The last word of favorite songs or rhymes is? You will have so much fun and be so creative with your child playing the ending games like these. This type of fun will lead to better listening of final words and then final sounds. Give your child correct sounds and give lots of praise and encouragement. Listening for the ending sounds of words is harder than hearing the beginnings of them. Be patient and watch confidence grow.

What's Taught

In discovery mode, just have fun and watch Mario get better and better at finding pictures with words that end with the same sound. In learning mode, hearing the final sounds of words will prepare your child for this new skill that is important in getting ready to read. The Super NES lets Mario and his friends try three times to correctly pick the right letter-to-sound match. Listening to the entire word with all of its sounds will result. This is an important skill in learning to read.

BUILDING WORLD

This picture on the Main Menu takes you to **Building World**.



This is how the first level of **Building World** looks.



Children start building sounds before they speak actual words. Putting familiar sounds together with consonants and vowels is part of learning how to read.

The theme in this world is helping Luigi make a puzzle.

Discovery Mode

Your child enters **Building World** in Discovery mode and can click a puzzle piece. A voice then tells your child the consonant sound and the vowel sound.

Hint: Trying finding the Fun Friends!

Learning

To explore Learning mode, your child can click the snoozing **Luigi** to wake him up. **Fun With Letters** now directs your child to a particular puzzle piece. A correct response moves the piece down to Luigi's board to solve the puzzle. Incorrect responses are acknowledged and your child is gently prompted to try again. If your child has difficulty, don't worry! **Fun With Letters** helps your child find the correct choice by making it sparkle.

Using the Exit Pipes

To change the scene but explore the same concept, click a **Green Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool moves between levels.

To return to the World Menu, click the **Blue Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool goes back to the World Menu.

Information Center

Early Years

Even before the first word was spoken, your child practiced saying all sorts of sounds. Babbling, combining vowel sounds and jabbering in word-like syllables, led to real words. Babies make certain sounds before others are made. There is a certain order to learning to talk. Your child has also been putting things together and taking them apart for a long time. For example, your child would perhaps enjoy clapping hands and banging together two objects. Mario will now help your child see that putting together familiar sounds with vowel sounds plays a part in learning how to read.

Home Play

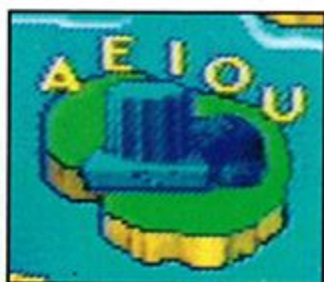
Learning to put together a consonant sound with a vowel sound is a great start to early reading. Use magnetic letters or cut out paper letters. Use the letters Mario has been playing with in **Building World**. Simply show your child that the first sounds starts with your mouth closed and the vowel is made with your mouth open. Children love this easy trick. Close/open, close/open... and the sounds rhyme as well, ba, la, fa, sa. See your child's confidence grow with Mario and friends as sounds they can make are put together with vowel sounds they are learning. It takes a little time to figure this out, so be patient and give lots of correct answers.

What's Taught

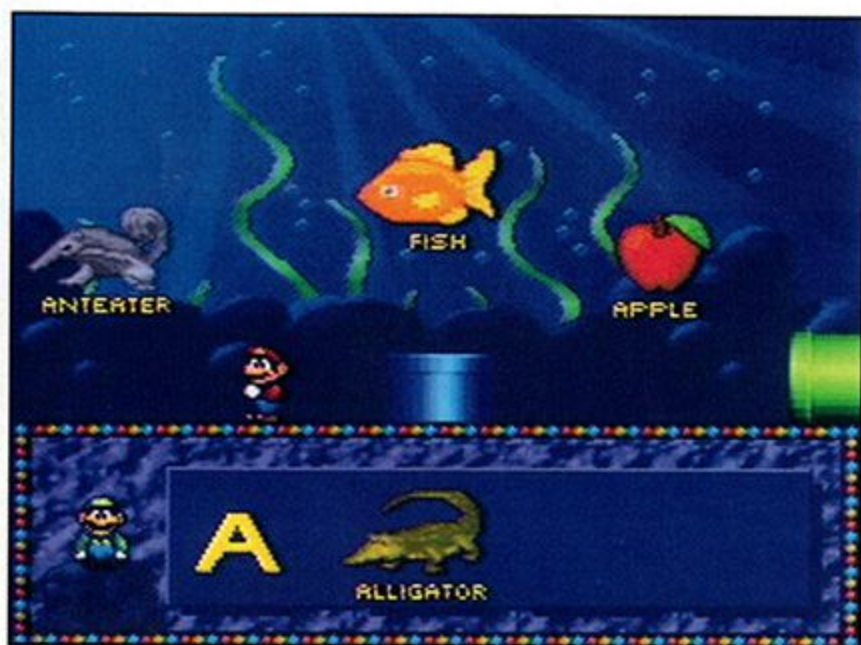
An important step to beginning reading is noticing that consonant sounds blend together with vowel sounds. Playing with the blending idea in discovery mode, Mario does what your child may have been doing for some time already. Consonant sounds go next to vowel sounds. In learning mode, just have fun. Praise your child for wanting to learn how to read. The putting together of sounds seems easy but takes patience and practice. Enjoy and build confidence in learning. Just put two sounds together and take them apart! Be patient and positive while providing correct answers to your child.

VOWEL WORLD

This picture on the World Menu takes you to **Vowel World**.



This is how **Vowel World** looks.



Children hear and listen to sounds from birth. After a while sounds are combined to form other sounds and real words. All of the words in **Vowel World** begin with A, E, I, O, or U. These are important familiar sounds and absolutely critical to reading.

Discovery Mode

Your child enters **Vowel World** in Discovery mode. There your child can click three objects that start with the same vowel, or click the object that starts with a consonant. (Watch the Fun Friends pop up in hilarious places when your child answers correctly.)

Learning Mode

To explore Learning mode, your child can click the snoozing **Luigi** to wake him up. **Fun With Letters** now directs your child.

Correct responses to requests move the objects to Luigi at the bottom of the screen. Incorrect responses are acknowledged and your child is gently prompted to try again. If your child has difficulty, don't worry! **Fun With Letters** helps your child find the correct choice by making it sparkle.

Using the Exit Pipes

To move between levels, use a **Green Exit Pipe**. To return to the World Menu, click the **Blue Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool goes back to the World Menu.

Information Center

Early Years

Your child has been listening to sounds in the world ever since birth. These sounds are confusing at first but eventually they fall into place and combine to make real words. These words turn into ideas and then your child's learning grows very rapidly. Mario helps your child listen to the beginning of words. All of the words in **Vowel World** start with the important five vowels. These sounds are familiar because as your child talks, these sounds are being used over and over again.

Home Play

Because every word has a vowel, it is easy to play "Point To The Vowel" with your child. On walks, at home, waiting in line for the movies, everywhere, words are seen. Each word has a vowel. One day, find all the "small a's", the next day, "e's", etc. Circle the vowels A, E, I, O, U, in a used child's magazine. Play "Find The Five Vowels" by putting only one letter, A, E, I, O or U, on three by five cards. Hide the cards around the house and have your child find them. Just as Mario and Luigi have found, finding words that begin with the five vowels, a, e, i, o, u, is fun and builds confidence in learning to read. Just spending time with your child in this manner shows how you feel about the importance of reading.

What's Taught

Learning the sounds of vowels is important to early reading because every word has a vowel. Finding words starting with vowels in discovery mode will teach your child the common sounds of these vowels. In learning mode, your youngster will feel more and more proud to show Mario how to find the beginning vowel sounds. Practice and praise is the best gift to give your child in beginning reading. Be patient, go slowly and enjoy the time together.

SENTENCE WORLD

This picture on the World Menu takes your child to **Sentence World**.



This is how the first level of **Sentence World** looks.



As children grow older, they become more skilled at communicating. They start with sounds, blends, words, then move on to phrases and finally sentences. Learning to read follows a similar progression. This is really where the process of reading takes off!

The object of this world is to find pictures of words to help Luigi make a sentence.

Discovery Mode

Your child enters **Sentence World** in Discovery mode and can click a picture to try and make a sentence. (Don't forget about Fun Friends!)

Learning Mode

To explore Learning mode, your child can click the snoozing **Luigi** to wake him up. **Fun With Letters** now directs your child to choose a specific object to make the sentence go with the picture. Correct answers move the word to Luigi's chalkboard to complete the sentence. Incorrect responses are acknowledged and your child is gently prompted to try again. If your child has difficulty, don't worry! **Fun With Letters** helps your child find the correct choice by making it sparkle.

Using the Exit Pipes

To move between levels, click a **Green Exit Pipe**. To return to the World Menu, click the **Blue Exit Pipe**. Mario, Yoshi, or Princess Toadstool goes back to the World Menu.

Information Center

Early Years

Your child has been communicating since birth. Stages in this process have included gestures, coos, cries, sounds, blends, words, phrases and sentences. Learning to read follows a similar order from sounds to symbols to blends to words and then ideas. Mario will be with your child finding words that complete sentences. Whole language experiences such as **Sentence World** come together to make thoughts. This process is called reading! Have fun with beginning reading and watch self-esteem grow.

Home Play

Find words that have vowels in the middle and consonants on either side of them. From magazines or cartoons, cut out pictures of words Mario uses in **Sentence World** (e.g., sun, pig, bug). Write the word for the pictures as well. Play a word-matching game. Your child may be able to actually read a few of these words since they start with sounds and letters that may be familiar by now. Encourage your child along the way. Give correct answers. If your child is just not ready yet just be patient. Beginning reading is a new idea and will lead to a great sense of accomplishment. Your excitement will rub off.

What's Taught

In discover mode, real sentences will be formed when Mario and Luigi find the right word to complete an idea. While playing in learning mode, your child will experience the thrill of beginning reading by picking words that fit into the story. These sentences can then be read to your child or with your child. A wonderful feeling of self-worth and confidence will build as your child learns to read. Enjoy, play and have fun in **Sentence World**. Spending time together showing how much you value reading is as important as learning words.

Technical Support

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Note To Parents

Dear Parents,

Mario's Early Years is a series of Super Nintendo® games that teach your child basic concepts, using language, sight, sound, and touch.

Fun With Letters presents reading basics in fresh and charming new ways. Since your child is probably new to Super Nintendo and can't read, here are some things you can do to help:

- Start by reading this manual to find out how to play the program.
- See **Getting Started** for the game controls.
- See the world chapters for details about what the program offers your child. For each world, this manual includes an Information Center that offers fun suggestions to reinforce the basic reading concepts presented in the game.
- Encourage your child to play the game and praise any accomplishments.

Please join in the fun, and watch your child gain confidence in prereading skills, playing **Fun With Letters**. In the process, you may discover a great way to spend creative time with your child, encourage new learning, and have some fun yourself!

Ciao,

Mario, Luigi, Yoshi, and Princess Toadstool



Limited Warranty

The Software Toolworks, Inc. warrants to the original purchaser of this product that the recording medium on which the Game Pak is recorded will be free from defects in material and workmanship for ninety (90) days from the date of purchase. Defective media returned by the purchaser during the ninety (90) day period will be replaced without charge, provided that the returned media have not been subjected to misuse, damage or excessive wear.

Return defective media to point of purchase. You must include a dated proof of purchase, a brief statement describing the defect, and your return address.

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