Imletteration™ Explanation

Imletteration is the key that unlocks the challenge of reading those annoying "sight words." A sight word contains one or more letters that don't make the sound that it *should* make. For example, each vowel has two sounds, short and long. Yet some of them actually make many more. Letters 'a' and 'o' can make nine sounds each!

To explain imletteration, I'll be using the letter 'a'. Short 'a' as in "apple". And long 'a' is the name of the letter 'a' as in "ape." Then, we have words like **ball** and **ago**. The 'a' sounds in these words are neither short nor long. Because they don't follow the rules, they are put in the enormous category of "sight words." Before children can go very far in reading, they must memorize list after list of sight words which get increasingly more difficult.

Imletteration takes the clues children have *already* learned in the previous books and uses them to solve the nonsense that is "sight words." In the word "**ball**," and the word "**ago**," the 'a' does not sound like apple or ape. So, when your child comes upon the word "ball," this is a typical conversation between you and your child:

Child reads: "bal" (rhyming with "gal and using the short 'a' sound).
Parent: No, that's not right.
Child: "bale" (using the long 'a' sound).
Parent: No, that's not it either.
Child: What does it say then?
Parent: It says "ball."
Child: But that's letter 'o's sound.
Parent: I know, but that's what 'a' says in this word.
Child: How come?
Parent: I don't know. That's just the way it is.

Your child is left feeling confused and frustrated. How many of you have had conversations similar to this one? Yes, it goes on in homes all across the country many times a day! But, what's the solution to this problem?
Is there one? Well, there hasn't been until now! That's where **imletteration** comes into play. Seriously! It's like a game.

After having written "ABC's See What They Say," where I turned all the letter *shapes* into their *own* picture clues, I went on to make my *own* fonts to put the picture clues right on the letters. This is how I wrote my blending book, "ABC's See How to Chop and Blend." And then my "Phrases" and "Stories" books.

Children have learned a for apple; ᴀ̣ for octopus (you can see some of its arms); and ᴜ̂ for umbrella.

When trying to come up with some sort of way to teach sight words that would made sense, and didn't require any memorizing of lists, it struck me that I had already been putting picture clues on letters, so why not use clues for sight words too! For example: when 'a' makes letter 'o's sound, it would simply wear letter 'o's costume! Then when children are learning to read a word like "ball" it would be written

like this: b̲ᴀll, and when they come to the word "ago," where 'a' sounds like 'u' as in 'up,' they would see

ᴀ̂ go. Pretty ingenious, right? A definite aHA Moment for me! When children *see* sight words using the costumes they already know, it takes away **all** frustration from the fact that at least half the words are breaking the rules.

The simple definition for the word imletteration is this: Imletteration is taken from the word impersonation where a person dresses and talks like another person. For example, a boy could impersonate a cowboy by wearing cowboy boots and a hat and saying, "Howdy pardner!" The letters like to do this too, especially the vowels. They get tired of always making their own short and long sounds, so they borrow each other's costumes and say each other's sounds. But, because they are *letters* and not people, we call it im**letter**ation, and not im**person**ation.

And, that's all that's needed to remove the frustration and confusion from learning the crazy English language. Now when your child asks, "How Come?" Parent (or Teacher) says, "Because 'a' is imlettering letter 'o.' Child says, "Oh." And then reads on, perfectly satisfied with that answer. And Parent is happy for having an answer to give.