Point to the spellings a and a_e on the card and tell the students that today they will read words with these two spellings for the /æ/ sound.

Have the students say the /æ/ sound as you point to each spelling. Explain that the blank in a_e means that a consonant goes in between the two letters and that the e helps the a say its name. As an example, write ate on the board and read the word. Point out the consonant between the letters a and e. Other example words are cake, date, and same. Draw an arrow from the e to the a to show that the e makes or signals the a to say the /æ/ sound.

Initial /æ/

Say some words with the /æ/ sound and have the students signal thumbs-up if a word has the /æ/ sound at the beginning and hide their thumbs if it doesn’t. Use these words:

- ape
- ice
- eat
- acorn
- apron
- under
- use
- April
- Amy

Middle /ær/

Now say some words with the /æ/ sound in the middle and have the students signal thumbs-up if they hear the /æ/ sound and hide their thumbs if they don’t. Use the following words:

- bake
- sell
- tickle
- cave
- hop
- grape
- book
- duck
- sale
- hat
- lake
- pin
- plate
- stop
- brick
- ant
- paper
- state

Encourage the students to think of other words with the /æ/ sound. Finally, review the Long A Card and spellings.