

THE ALPHABET

Knowing the letters of the alphabet is one of the first steps in learning to read. Here are ways to give your child practice in forming and reading letters.

Salt or Sand Tray

Put coarse salt or sand in a shoebox or tray. Show your child a letter and name it, then have him/her form the letter in salt or sand and name it.

Alphabet Fun

When traveling by train, car, bus, or even out walking with your child, ask him/her to look carefully at street signs, billboards, store signs, car license plates, and so on. When your child spots an “a” on a sign, talk about it, then continue with “b”. Continue with the other letters. On long trips, offer a prize to the family member who finds the entire alphabet.

Shopping Carts

Draw pictures of large shopping carts. Label each cart with a letter of the alphabet. Have your child cut out pictures from old magazines that begin with the letters indicated and glue them in the appropriate carts.

Sandpaper Letters

Cut letters of the alphabet from sandpaper and glue each one on thick paper. Make an arrow to show where you begin forming the letter and guide your child’s finger while he/she traces the letter and names it.

Alphabet Story

Make up a story with your child starting with a word that begins with “a”. Each succeeding word starts with the next letter of the alphabet. Alternate turns. Example: You might say, “A”; your child gives “baby”; you continue with “can”, and so on.

Find A Letter

Print an upper or lower case letter in the center of a piece of paper. Ask your child to find letters that are the same as the center one. Paste them on the paper around the original letter. Your child will see that the same letter can look very different depending on where and how it is printed.

Newspaper Hunt

Give your child a section of the newspaper or a magazine. Encourage him/her to circle as many A’s as possible (or any other letter - on at a time).