



Smart Cookie Club
S T A Y · P L A Y · L E A R N

ABC Activity Pack

This week's activities help to enhance letter recognition & phonological awareness.

Children should have a strong foundation in hearing sounds along with recognizing letters. Singing along to 'ABC' is fun and will help with letter recognition but phonetic awareness is key. Children should understand words are made up of different sounds and that different letters represent the sounds that they make. When introducing letters, stress the sounds that the letter makes along with the letter name. For example, 'B' makes a 'buh' sound.

The ability to break a word up into individual sounds is called oral segmenting (eg. 'dog' is divided up into d-o-g). Oral blending is the reverse (eg. m-a-t blends into 'mat'). Playing oral blending and segmenting games with your child will help them with their literacy skills later on. If they have had practice discriminating sounds in words, along with linking sounds to letters, they will find it easier to sound out words in both reading and writing.

A helpful and fun way to fine-tune your child's phonetic listening skills and ability to blend and segment simple words is to clap them out by sound/syllable. For example, the next time you're getting dressed to go outside, ask "Can you put on your c-oa-t? (clap out sounds). Where is your other b-oo-t? There's your boot!"

The more exposure your child has, the more of an expert they will become.

[Teaching phonics at home - Video for Parents and Caregivers](#)

Click the titles below to follow the circle time links

WELCOME SONG
RECOGNIZING LETTERS GAME
DISAPPEARING LETTERS SCIENCE EXPERIMENT
SINGING AN ABC VARIATION
GOING ON A LETTER HUNT

Introduce the topic with letter excavation!

Materials needed: Baking tray, letter stickers, salt or corn flour, paintbrush (optional).

Activity instructions:

Use a baking pan to make a letter excavation game.

1. Stick letter stickers on the bottom of the pan.
2. Cover the stickers in the pan with a thin layer of salt or corn flour. You can also use sand or graham crumbs ~use what you have at home.
3. Invite your child to uncover the letters with a paintbrush (or their finger) as you label each letter with the sound it makes. "You found the M-M-M MMMM letter!"
4. Try to copy the letter by making marks in the salt or corn flour with your finger or the paintbrush. Pay attention to the direction your child is following and help them to make marks top to bottom and left to right.



Questions and conversation during this activity:

- "What do you notice about these two letters?"
- "How many letters have we all together? Let's count them together!"
- "What sound does the letter 'n' make? Can you think of any words that have the /n/ sound?"
- "That letter has a lot of straight lines. It doesn't have any curves."
- "Let's start at the top and move our finger/paintbrush down down down." (continue repeating the word 'down' until your child has finished their downward mark.)

Keep in mind your child's skill level and make sure to set them up for success while challenging their abilities. If you think this will be easy for your child, try choosing letters that are very similar or combine upper and lower case letters. If you think this will be challenging for your child, try to include all of the letters from your child's name.

I-Spy Discovery Bottles (Language & Literacy)

Materials needed: Water bottle, sand/flour/salt, small items (odds and ends) that will fit inside the bottle top.

Activity instructions:

1. Place odds and ends inside the empty water bottle.
2. Fill the water bottle with sand/flour/salt/rice/lentils or whatever you have on hand (leave some space at the top to allow the odds and ends to shift around).
3. Tape/glue the top of the water bottle sealing all items inside and invite your child to shake it up.
4. Identify the items inside ~ focusing on the sounds that the words make. For example, I spy a S-S-Star that starts with the /s/ sound just like your name S-S-Stella!
"What can you find?"



Make this activity harder by inviting your child to find something that starts with the /s/ sound. They can turn the bottle until they find an item beginning with that letter sound.

Name Recognition (Literacy)

Materials needed: Plastic eggs, paper squares, marker.

Activity instructions:

1. Use the marker to make the letters from your child's name on the paper squares.
2. Hide the paper squares inside the plastic eggs (one piece per egg).
3. Invite your child to open the eggs to find the letters in their name.
4. Order the letters to spell your name!

Try using magnet letters or another small letter set if you don't have any paper on hand.

For **younger children**, print your child's name on a piece of paper, spacing the letters to accommodate the size of your paper squares. This will act as a template for matching while your child begins to recognize and order the letters in their name.

Older children can use this game to practice spelling other words that have meaning to them, such as the names of family members or familiar objects.



Letter Matching Game (Math)

Materials needed: Paper and letter stickers (if you don't have letter stickers, or just want to keep it simple, [print this page](#) and cut out the pairs)

Activity instructions:

1. Use letter stickers to create your own letter matching game! If you don't have letter stickers at home you can print the [Smart Cookie Club Letter Matching Game](#), and cut out the letter squares.
2. Find and match the pairs, or play a memory game!

For younger toddlers, start by matching the uppercase letters only. As your child becomes familiar with upper case letters, they will begin to notice that lowercase letters also exist around them, which is when you can then begin to match upper to lower case letters.



Letter Matching Line (Math)

Materials needed: Tape, marker, magnet letters, baking sheet (or magnetic surface).

Activity instructions:

1. Make a line or shape with your tape on the baking sheet or magnetic surface.
2. Use your marker to print the letters of the alphabet on the tape.
3. Invite your child to match their magnet letters to the letters printed on the tape.



If you don't have magnet letters, you can use letter stickers as well. Just make sure to set up on a sticker friendly surface such as a cardboard box.

Alphabet Soup (Sensory)

Materials needed: Sensory bin or large bowl, water, magnet letters (or other waterproof letters), spoon or magnetic fishing rod, baking sheet, wipe off marker, towel.

Activity instructions:

1. Fill the bottom of your bin or bowl with 1-2 inches of water (if your container is full, you will have a lot more spills!).
2. Add your letters to the bin of water and place a towel under the bin.
3. Use your wipe off marker to make the alphabet on your baking sheet.
4. Invite your child to mix the silly alphabet soup and scoop or fish the letters out.
5. Match the soupy letters to the letters on your tray.



While younger children may mostly be interested in mixing the soup, parents and caregivers can comment on the letter sounds as they scoop or fish different letters out of the water. Parents can also model the action of matching some of the magnet letters to the letters on the tray as they comment on the curves and lines or shape of the letter.

Playdough Letters (Sensory)

Materials needed: Playdough ([Print our easy non-toxic play-dough recipe cards here!](#))

Activity instructions:

1. Roll out your playdough to make curves and lines.
2. Use your curves and lines to form letters.
3. Try making letters from your name, or make the uppercase letter and have your child make the lowercase letter to match.



Younger children may need a template to follow until they are more familiar with the shapes of each letter. [Click here to download and print Smart Cookie Club playdough letter templates for your child.](#)



Older children can make a letter maze by pressing the shape of a letter into the playdough, using their finger to make a

groove. Use a marble to roll over the groove and trace the letter's shape, helping them to follow the proper direction (top to bottom and left to right). Even if your child doesn't normally put things in their mouth, supervise this activity closely. Try using a ping pong, golf or larger ball with younger children.

Letter Bags (Sensory)

Materials needed: Ziplock Bag, gel (hair gel, aloe gel or even liquid soap), strong tape, permanent marker, pom poms.

Activity instructions:

1. Fill your ziplock bag with gel and add pom poms.
2. Seal the bag and tape the top closed to ensure it will not reopen during play.
3. Use your marker to draw a letter on the bag and tape to bag to a flat surface.
4. Invite your child to push all of the pom poms into the letter shape to form the letter.



OR

Activity instructions:

1. Fill your ziplock bag with coloured gel.
2. Seal the bag and tape the top closed to ensure it will not reopen during play.
3. Invite your child to push the gel around in the bag using their finger.
4. Try using your finger to form different letters.



Disappearing Letters (Science)

Materials needed: Paintbrush or sponge, container with water.

Activity Instructions:

1. Make letters and marks on the fence, brick or sidewalk using your paint brush (or sponge) with water.
2. Watch the letters or marks disappear as they dry.

Younger children will make marks (mark making is a stepping stone toward forming letters), to which you can comment on the curves and lines and how they might remind you of a curvy letter or a letter with many straight lines.

If you're unable to go outside, paint with water on a cardboard box or the inside of a flattened cereal box. Try painting water letters and marks on stones as an alternative!



Curves and Lines (Fine motor)

Materials needed: [Print-out curves and lines template](#). You can either use markers, stickers, scissors or many small objects (for example; buttons, coins, poker chips, jewels, etc).



Activity Instructions:

1. Talk about the different curves and lines on the paper.
2. Invite your child to cover, trace or cut [the curves and lines](#) using their markers, stickers, small objects or scissors. Make sure to supervise your child for safety when using small items.

Noticing and working with curves and lines helps toddlers & preschoolers recognize those shapes within letters.



Chalk Art (Creative)

Materials needed: Chalk, pavement or cardboard box.

Activity Instructions:

1. Use chalk to draw letters on the sidewalk or a cardboard box.
2. Challenge your child to make the letters in their name, other family member's names or simple words such as 'dog'. If your child asks you to spell something for them, try sounding it out and see if they are able to guess.

To adapt this activity for **younger children** you can draw the letters on the sidewalk and have your child trace or scribble over top of the letters using the chalk. You can also combine this activity with the science activity above. Children can trace the chalk letters with their paintbrush or make them disappear by painting over the chalk letters with water.

Try using stones or sticks to trace or cover the letters you have made with chalk.



Glueing Pom Letters (Creative)

Materials needed: Letter template, pom poms (or other glue-ables), glue, tongs or tweezers are optional.

Activity instructions:

1. Invite your child to spread the glue inside of the letter.
2. After the glue has been spread, put it aside and bring out the pom poms!
3. Stick the poms to the glue inside your letter shape.

Process over product! Although it is valuable at times to follow instructions, process-focused art is all about discovery. This allows your child to focus on being creative and learn to have the confidence to explore and experiment. Processed-focused art also provides plenty of opportunity to problem solve and indulge in sensory stimulation.



Building Letters (Building)

Materials needed: Old yoga mat or cardboard pieces, scissors, a set of letters for your child to use as a reference. .

Activity Instructions:

1. Cut up an old yoga mat or cut pieces from cardboard to make curves and lines.
All letters can be made with small and large curves and small and large lines.
2. [Print our Playdough Letter Mats](#) to use as a reference or use your own letter set.
3. Invite your child to reference and compare as they build different letters using curves and lines.

Comment on your child's structure as they work. "You are using a long straight line and a short straight line! Wonder which letter we could build with those pieces!!".



For younger children, start by offering the first letter in their name along with the corresponding pieces to build that letter. Increase the amount of letters and building pieces gradually to continue challenging your child over time and expand the level of difficulty.

Post Office (Cooperative play)

Set up a post office at home. Use envelopes, paper and markers and whatever else you might have to tie into the theme.

- Make your own mailbox by cutting a slot in the top of a recycled cardboard box (or use a tissue box or wipe container which already has a slot in the top).
- Use letter stickers or stamps to stick onto paper. Use post-it notes for stamps or delivery slips.
- Share some of the safe office supplies you have on hand such as a calculator, stapler or hole puncher.
- Sort foam letters (or letters cut from a magazine) into labelled envelopes.
- Add packages with addresses to be delivered (Keep it simple, for example your package might read "To: Mommy, Address: Home".)
- Do you have a small jacket and hat your child could use to dress up as a postal worker?



There are tons of ways to expand on this activity station. Look around your home to find recycled materials, safe office supplies and props. Invite your child to help you add one of the above items each day to enhance their play through the week. Adding a new item creates a sense of novelty, making it exciting all over again.

Go on a Letter Hunt! (Movement)

Materials needed: None!

Activity Instructions:

1. Look around with your child to find different letters in your environment.
2. Give hints to your child so they can try and guess what it is that you can see. Begin the game with very obvious choices to set your child up for success and gradually increase the level of difficulty.

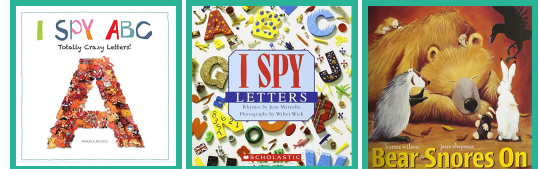
Make sure to pair the letter name with the letter's sound. For example "I spy with my little eye something that starts with an N which makes the /n/ sound." To this you might guess your neck or your nose.



You might find letters on the street, in your kitchen, or even your washroom. Be creative and look for shapes and formations that resemble letters. As your child becomes more aware of the letter characteristics you will be able to find letters all around you. For example: The letter O looks like a circle, so you could find other circles and pretend they are the letter O.

Book recommendations: (Click on the title to follow the link to Amazon)

- [I Spy ABC Totally Crazy Letters - by: Manuela Ancutici](#)
- [I Spy Letters - by: Jean Marzolo and Walter Wick](#)
- [Bear Snores On - by Karma Wilson and Jane Chapman](#)
and other rhyming books



I hope you have enjoyed these activities!
Please let me know if you have any comments or suggestions and feel free to share your photos and stories about these activities!

Activity Pack created and produced by Mary Wolff
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LEARNING THROUGH PLAY WITH
Smart Cookie Club
EVERY DAY!

