

Reading and Learning (Literacy)



Enjoy time together. Build a pillow fort, play board games, or read a book.





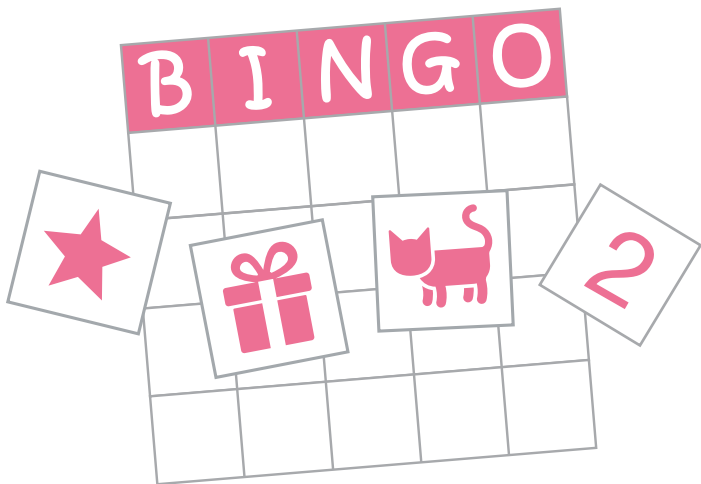
BINGO!

How it helps

Hand-eye coordination; focus; counting; adding and subtracting.

What you need

Paper; stickers, a bingo dabber, or markers; smaller pieces of paper to use as cards





BINGO!

What to do













- Draw a grid on a sheet of paper, 5 squares across and 5 squares down. Write B I N G O across the top row, with one letter in each square.
- Draw different letters, numbers, or shapes, filling all the remaining squares.
- Make one card to match each symbol you've drawn and put the cards in a bowl.
- Together with your child, choose a card from the bowl. Using a sticker, bingo dabber, or marker, find the matching symbol on the grid and cover it. Repeat until you have BINGO. (BINGO could be one straight line of covered symbols, or the whole card filled.)

Tip

- Make the BINGO card personal to your family with symbols chosen by your child.



BINGO!

B	I	N	G	O
		A		3
		D		2
		B		4
		C		1

Follow your child's lead during play.





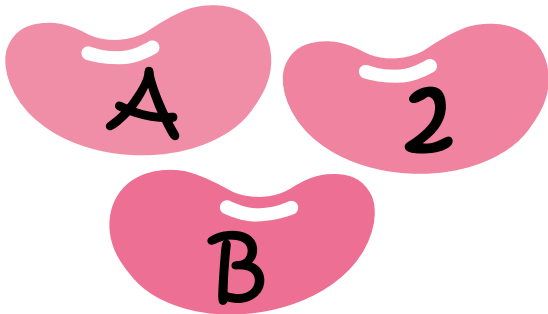
Full of Beans

How it helps

Early reading skills such as matching letters to sounds and knowing the order of the alphabet; early math skills such as recognizing numbers, ordering them, and counting.

What you need

Permanent marker; light-coloured beans; a basket or bowl.





Full of Beans

What to do

- Write a letter on each bean. Place them in the basket. Ask your child to pull out a bean and say the letter.
- Write numbers on the beans. Play “I Spy.” “I spy with my little eye...the number 4.” Your child finds the right bean.

Make it harder

- With your child, arrange the letters to spell words such as “dog” and “sun.” Spell your child’s name.
- Arrange the beans in the order of the alphabet, continuing to ask your child, “What comes next?”
- Play simple math games. “What do two beans plus one bean make?”

Tip

- Early on, use only a small number of beans until your child starts remembering the names of letters and numbers.



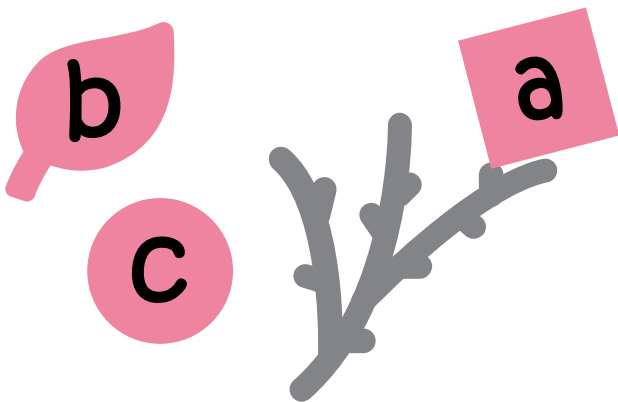
Make an Alphabet Tree

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing letters; early math skills such as recognizing numbers and counting; hand-eye coordination.

What you need

Construction paper in brown and green (or fall leaf colours); ruler; markers; scissors; glue stick.





Make an Alphabet Tree

What to do

- Help your child come up with shapes to form a tree. A large rectangle could be the tree trunk, smaller rectangles could be the branches, and circles, diamonds, or triangles could be leaves.
- Draw and cut out the shapes.
- For the leaves, cut out 26 shapes, at least as big as a coin.
- Glue the shapes onto a piece of paper to form the tree and let it dry.
- Work with your child to write each letter of the alphabet on the leaves.
- Have your child practice saying the name of the letter and the sound it makes.

Tip

- While doing this art project, read a related book, such as *The Alphabet Tree* by Leo Leonni or *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault.



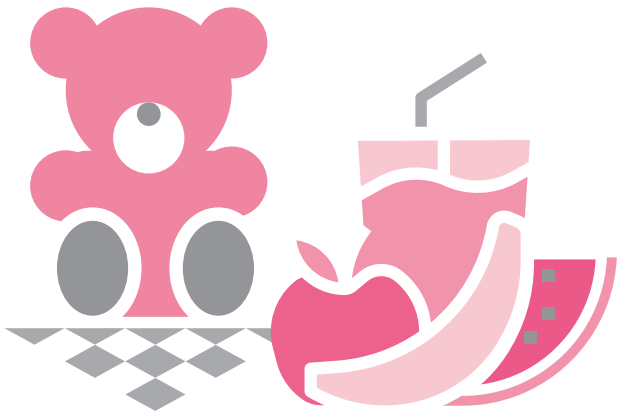
Time for a Picnic!

How it helps

Social and emotional development through taking turns and using imagination; early math skills; learning about healthy eating.

What you need

A blanket; a light meal or snacks; plates; utensils; a basket; pillows; books; stuffed animals or dolls.





Time for a Picnic!

What to do

- Place the picnic blanket on the floor.
- Prepare some light food that is easy to eat, such as cut up fruit and vegetables, crackers and cheese or hummus, sandwiches, and drinks. Pack the food in a basket if you have one.
- Sit down and enjoy a picnic together!

Tips

- Use this time to talk to your child about her favourite things or her day, or read a book or tell a story.
- This is a great activity for a rainy or winter day. In summer, take it outside.
- Have your child help plan the picnic, wash the vegetables, count the plates, etc.
- Invite stuffed animals or dolls to the picnic.



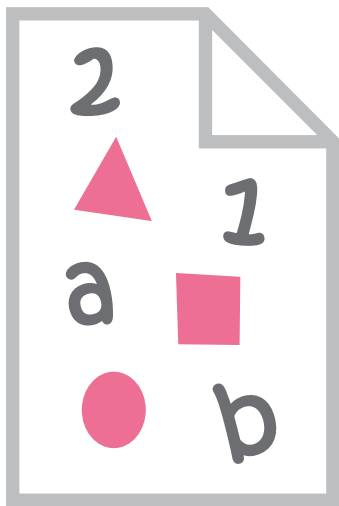
Seek and Stick!

How it helps

Early reading and math skills such as recognizing letters, numbers, and shapes

What you need

A sheet of paper; markers, stickers, or a bingo dabber





Seek and Stick!

What to do

- Draw a few different shapes, letters, or numbers on the paper. Start by using 3 or fewer of the same symbols (all letters or all numbers).
- Hand your child a marker, sticker, or bingo dabber, and ask him to find all the As, all the triangles, or all the number 1s, for example. Once he finds one, he can circle it, put a sticker on it, or dab over it.

Make it harder

- As your child grows more confident, add more shapes, letters, or numbers.
- Practice counting and do math. Ask your child to count all the number 3s on the page, or add up all the number 2s.



Come on Back, Letters!

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds, learning the order of the alphabet, and making simple words; communication skills; when using numbers, early math skills

What you need

Magnetic letters and a magnetic board (or use your fridge or dishwasher)





Come on Back, Letters!

What to do

- Lay out the letters in the order of the alphabet.
- Ask your child to find certain letters, or a letter that begins a certain word or ends a word. She removes the letter and hides it from view.
- Make up a sentence using the letter name and sound the letter makes and call for the letter to come back to the board. “Let B bounce back to the board!” Have your child repeat your sentence and put the letter back.

Make it harder

- Find something in the house that begins with the same letter you removed.

Tips

- Early on, use only a small number of letters.
- Try using numbers. Remove the number then find a matching number of objects in the room.



My Alphabet Book

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing letters and words; language development

What you need

Construction paper; glue stick; child-safe scissors; markers; hole punch; stickers; magazines, newspapers, and/or pictures printed from your computer; yarn or a stapler to keep book together





My Alphabet Book

What to do

- Have your child pick 26 pages of construction paper. Write one letter of the alphabet at the top of each page.
- Use magazines, newspapers and photos. Starting with A, ask your child to look for pictures or words that begin with A.
- Help print a large A on the page. Glue on photos and words. Repeat for all letters.
- Put the 26 pages in order from A to Z. Decorate a cover and help your child add a title and his name. Staple the pages or use a hole punch and yarn.

Tips

- For tougher letters, like X, help your child by finding pictures on the computer.
- Try making similar books with different themes: animals, food, vehicles, nature, words, etc.



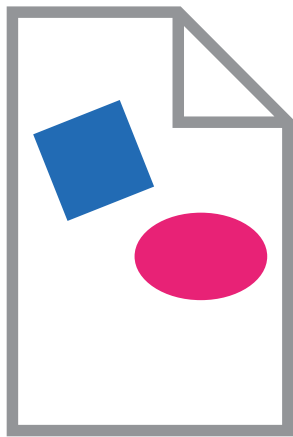
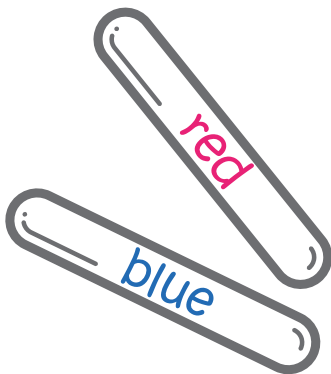
Match the Sticks

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing letters and words; early math skills such as learning shapes and numbers

What you need

Popsicle sticks; markers to label popsicle sticks; construction paper or paper coloured with crayons/markers





Match the Sticks

What to do

- Write the name of a different colour on each popsicle stick. Colour names should match the colours of your paper.
- Cut a shape from the coloured paper (circle, square, or a popsicle shape). Write the name of that colour on the shape.
- Ask your child to match the paper colour with the correct popsicle stick.

Tip

- Use the same idea and try matching numbers with written words (1 and one).



Sights and Sounds

How it helps

Early reading skills; communication skills; listening skills; memory skills; using imagination; paying attention and focusing

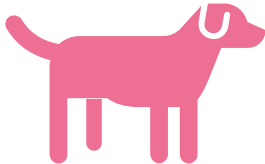
What you need

Nothing. You can use toys, books, or items around the house or outdoors as ideas for words and sounds.

Chug - chug - chug



Grr - grr - grr





Sights and Sounds

What to do

- Say a word to your child and ask him to make the sound. “What sound does a dog make?” Child says, “woof,” “grr,” or “bark.”
- Repeat using different words. Animals: from the farm, wild animals, pets, birds, frogs, insects, dinosaurs. Vehicles: a car, truck, firetruck, train, boat, spaceship. Nature sounds: rain, wind, water dripping, thunder, splashing in a puddle. Emotions: someone who is happy, sad, angry. Funny or imaginary sounds: a musical instrument, a tickle monster, a dragon.

Tips

- Take turns. Let your child say words so that you can make sounds, too.
- Play while waiting in line, or in the car.
- Keep introducing new words.



Let's Spell!

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing letters and matching letters to sounds; memory skills

What you need

Strips of paper, some long, some short; child-safe scissors; pencil or marker. Use thick paper (card stock or a cereal box) if you have it.





Let's Spell!

What to do

- Write your child's name or a word on a long strip of paper.
- Write a single letter on each short strip (letters that match the letters in the name or word you chose).
- Give your child the letters that make up the name or the word. Ask her to match the single letters to the word on the long strip. She can place the letters on top.

Make it harder

- Have your child arrange the letters without using the long strip.
- Try uppercase letters (SAM) and lowercase letters (Sam).
- Use the name of family members and friends.

Tip

- Make the letters large enough to handle easily.



Rhyme Time

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing words that sound alike; developing language skills; memory skills; following directions

What you need

This rhyme/song: “Teddy Bear Teddy Bear says touch your toes. Teddy Bear Teddy Bear says touch your nose.”





Rhyme Time

What to do

- With your child, say the rhyme and do the actions.
- Change the words to rhyme other body parts or actions (hips and lips; skin and chin; make a frown and sit down; reach for the sky and wave goodbye)

Make it harder

- Tell your child to do the action **ONLY** if he hears “Teddy Bear Says” first. Practice slowly then speed up.

Tips

- Change the words to another animal or person, such as “Green Gecko says.”
- Visit your library and read a book about Teddy Bears or write a story about a Teddy Bear. It’s ok if it just looks like scribbles! Ask your child to tell you the story.



What is in My Bag?

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing words that sound alike; listening skills; language skills

What you need

A bag with a drawstring and objects found around the house or outdoors





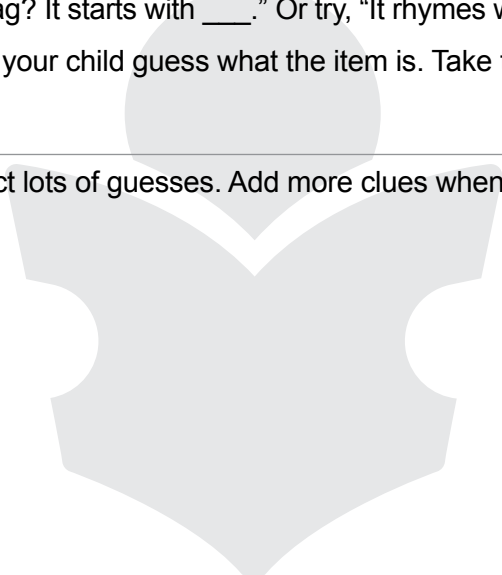
What is in My Bag?

What to do

- Hide an item in the bag. Say to your child, “What is in my bag? It starts with ____.” Or try, “It rhymes with ____.”
- Have your child guess what the item is. Take turns.

Tip

- Expect lots of guesses. Add more clues when needed.





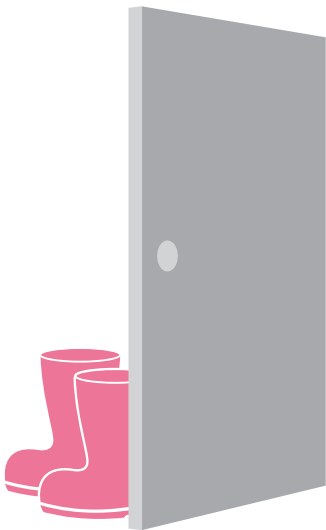
Tell Me Where

How it helps

Developing language skills; memory skills; social skills such as taking turns; paying attention and focusing

What you need

Nothing needed





Tell Me Where

What to do

- Ask your child questions and get her to point to or show you an object. “Where is your nose?” or “Where are your boots?”
- Repeat using different words. Body parts; clothing items; outdoor objects such as a tree, a cloud, a bird, a car, flowers, a bicycle, a plane flying; indoor objects such as your backpack, the fridge. Get your child to say different words and take turns playing.

Tips

- Play in the car or while waiting in line.
- Keep introducing harder words.



Guess the Letter

How it helps

Early reading skills such as recognizing letters and matching letters and sounds; memory skills; paying attention and focusing

What you need

Plastic zip sandwich bag; glitter; hair styling gel; food colouring

A = aah





Guess the Letter

What to do

- In the sandwich bag, mix the glitter, gel, and food colouring. This is your tracing pad.
- Using your finger, trace a letter on the bag. “What is the letter I am thinking of?” Offer clues. “This letter sounds like aah.” (A) “This letter sounds like yuh.” (Y)
- As your child gets more confident, say a letter and ask her to trace it on the bag. “Make a letter D.” “What word begins with the letter D?” Help when needed. “Letter D. Dog starts with D.”

Make it harder

- Trace the first letter or two of a word. Ask your child to guess the word. Offer clues. “We put them on our feet” (socks, shoes) “Hens lay them.” (eggs)
- Write the end of a word and have your child guess what the word is. (“_ _ e e” for tree)