



# Knowing Your Letters



**Letter Knowledge** is knowing that letters are different from each other, that the same letter can look different, and that each letter has a name and is related to specific sounds.

Children become familiar with the way letters look before they attach a sound to the letter.

Letter Knowledge begins in younger children by talking about shapes, and the concept of same and different.



When you are on the go, sometimes your children are not so cooperative. Make running errands more fun by having your child check off letters as they find them.

This fun activity keeps hands and minds busy. The simpleness of this activity makes it easily adjustable for all ages and levels.

**Materials:** paper plate, marker, and scissors.

1. Write letters around the edge of the plate.
2. Then cut in between each letter.
3. You can make one for upper case letters, lower case letters, shapes, sight words, and colors. The possibilities are endless. You could also turn it into a fun math activity by doing numbers or equations.
4. Give your child a plate and when you are out on the town or at a park (pretty much wherever) they simply fold down the letter as they spot it in their surroundings.



## Alphabet I-Spy Bottle

**Materials:** Empty Bottle  
Glitter or Rice

Small foam alphabet pieces  
Hot Glue Gun

There are two sets of letters in the bottle and some other surprises, different colored shaped buttons.

Hot glue the top on to eliminate the jar from being spilled everywhere.

- Have your child look for the alphabet letters in order.
- Have them find objects by color.
- Have them find the letters in their name





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Children learn best when what they are learning relates to them. When exposing them to letters, start with their name or with a topic that interests them.

Point out the beginning letter of a word in the title that would have meaning to the child and to what you are doing. For example, if you are talking about bears and the word bear is in the title, you could point to the letter b and say its name and sound.



## Alphabet Match

This is a fun hands-on activity for kids to help recognize and learn their alphabet letters. It is also a great opportunity to introduce upper case and lower case letters and match them in a fun puzzle like activity.

### Materials:

**26 bottle tops**

**Colored makers**

**A large sheet of paper**

**Foam letters**

1. Trace around the bottle tops onto the paper
2. Write the lower case alphabet letters inside the circles
3. The foam letters are upper case (or capital letters) and the letters written on the paper are lower case, the aim of the activity is to match the two letters together, Aa, Bb, Cc, etc.

## Extend the Play!

1. Cover only the letters that are written on a blue bottle top.
2. Cover only the letters that have a tail, such as a g, j, p, q and y.
3. Cover only the letters that make a round shape, such as a, b, d, g, o, p, and q.
4. Cover the letters that are in your name.
5. Make a pattern and cover every second or third letter.
6. Can you make a word, such as dog, man, car or cat?
7. Lay all the bottle tops out in order of the alphabet. Sing the song to help you!
8. Cover letters that are all the same color, such as, all of the blue letters, all of the green letters.



## Magnet Letter Match

You will need:

**Magnet Letters** (Letter pieces from a puzzle or letters you cut out of cardboard or cardstock)

**Construction Paper**

Put magnetic letters on a piece of construction paper and leave it out in the sun. When the exposed paper fades, you have an easy letter matching game!



*Mengle Memorial Library*  
324 Main Street  
Brockway, PA 15824

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Children can learn about letters in different ways—by noticing them all around. They can make their bodies or fingers into letters, use magnetic letters, or make letters out of play dough

## Playdough Snake Letters

Write a large letter on a piece of paper. Show your child how to roll the playdough in order to create a “snake.” Then have them trace the shape of the letter using the playdough snake!



## Playdough Recipe

1/4 cup salt    1 cup flour  
1/4 cup water    food color

Have your child mix the flour and salt in a bowl. Add water. Knead and squeeze the dough to make a clay consistency. You may need to add more water.

**Note:** This dough doesn't last as long as the cooked recipes.

**While you have the playdough out, you can try adding a pre-writing exercise.**



1. Flatten out a medium sized piece of play dough on a flat surface.
2. Use a sharp object to draw a letter, number, or shape on the flattened area. Make sure that the letter is large enough to be easily recognizable when filled with straws.
3. Cut straws to about one inch in length. If they are much longer they will be too easy to knock over, and your child will have a difficult time getting his or her hand into the area.
4. Show your child how to insert the straws along the outline of the symbol until it is full.

## Pipe Cleaner Letters

Decide what letters you want to create.

Talk about how the letter might be formed.

You might even want to write the letters down on a piece of paper first so your child can see what the shape looks like and how to match it with a pipe cleaner.



## Tracing Letters

Trace letters with a variety of things you have around the house: M&Ms, Legos, buttons, cereal, beads, wooden blocks, pretzel sticks, pipe cleaners, etc.



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Making letter recognition meaningful for preschoolers is crucial. Getting your child to automatically recognize letters is great, but children will retain information much more once they have had a variety of experiences with those letters.

The more multisensory you make an activity, the more likely your child is to retain the information.

## **Squishy Bag** - A tactile/multisensory approach to pre-writing and writing skills

This is a great activity for practicing pre-writing skills, such as, "down", "over", "around", etc., shapes, and even more advanced writing skills - like letters. In addition, it offers a great therapeutic/calming effect for some children and can be a sensory activity just for the sake of sensory.



### **Materials:**

Gallon size Ziploc bag    Glitter (optional)  
Food coloring                Hair gel (paint or shaving cream)

1. Squeeze in the hair gel (the entire bottle), add food coloring and glitter
2. Mix it all together, put it on a piece of white paper, and start writing.

## **Letter Boxes & Scavenger Hunt**



**Materials:** Baby food containers (or other small containers)  
Letter stickers

1. Let your child put the letter stickers on each box. If your child is too small to do this, you can put them on. Chose to do the letters your child hears on a daily basis—"D" for Daddy, "M" for Mommy, and the first letter of their name. You can do as many or as few boxes as you would like.
2. Go on a scavenger hunt and start filling them! Young children need direction by emphasizing the beginning sounds of the items you chose. Older children would be able to do this activity more independently. Opening and closing the boxes is a great fine-motor practice for your child. This also services as a learning opportunity for sizes—whether things are too big or too little to fit in the boxes.
3. A shoebox would be a great place to keep the containers. Empty them out every so often and let your child have a new adventure looking for things that begin with each letter.

\*A variation of this activity for 5+ years could also include looking for letters in newspapers and magazines.

