

## Using the Alphabet – Activities and Games

This activity should last a few minutes. It should always be fun!

Mastery of alphabetical order is very important. The children must be able to recite the alphabet and know which name applies to which letter – quickly and automatically so that they can look up information or use a dictionary or any filing system.

- Using the alphabet arc reminds your child of the twenty six letters and the physical act of putting them in order puts them in an orderly frame of mind.
- Use capital letters initially, to avoid orientation and direction problems of b,d,p,q,n,u. Make sure that the children gradually use both capital and lower case letters.
- Put out the letters in the correct order to form the shape of an arc. Place M and N in the middle at the top of the arc. Place ABC at the start and XYZ at the end of the arc. Fill in the other letters.
- Put some of the letters in a big bag, identify the letters by feel, saying the name.
- Touch and name / give sound of each letter.
- Say the alphabet in different rhythms – in twos, accenting the first of each pair A/B C/D E/F etc.
- Say in twos accenting the second of each pair AB, CD, EF etc.
- Say in threes.
- Use the rhythm of the child's name.
- Say the alphabet backwards.
- Make the shape of the letters using whiteboard, sand, in the air, pencil, pens etc.
- Ask the child to close their eyes – remove a letter – which letter is missing?
- Write three letters on paper, ask the child to repeat them, turn paper over and get the child to repeat the order. Move on to more letters to put in order.
- Sit the child facing M and N, while the child's eyes are closed, ask them to point in the direction of different letters.

- Use for sound blending activities.
- Use for generating rhyming words.
- Use for alphabetical order work, begin with familiar words. Use a dictionary and demonstrate how to find where the letters are in the book.

## Memory Work

### Visual Sequential Memory

- Show / write for the child a card with letters, e.g. BKK, abc, fkhn – turn the card over, leave it at a table, child gets out letters and refers back to card to check.
- Start with 2 or 3 letters in alphabetical order, then out of sequence. Extend their memory by adding one more letter when they can manage.
- Discuss how they remembered and discuss strategies to aid memory that may appeal, tactile, semantic, (putting meaning to each letter.)
- Extend memory by remembering for 10/ 15/ 20 seconds before getting out letters. Increase complexity by interposing a task or action, e.g. count to 5, walk around table, write your name, say a nursery rhyme before putting out letters.

### Auditory Sequential Memory

- Say a series of letters to the child, e.g. EMRX – child repeats the sequence and then take the letters from the arc. Start with 2 letters. There are lots of things to remember – orientation of letters, sequence of letters and so on.
- Increase the tasks in complexity as for visual sequencing.

## Language

Using the letters in alphabet work can include familiarity of:

Name / sound

Vowel / consonant

26 letters in the alphabet

Upper / lower case letters

Syllables

Alphabetical order and so on