

Did you know...



Children who know the shapes and names of the letters of the alphabet and how to write them have a much easier time learning to read. This early literacy skill is called “letter knowledge.”

Children learn to recognize letters more easily if they can identify shapes and have had experience sorting objects into *same* and *different*. Once children can name the upper and lowercase letters, they begin learning the sounds that go with them. At this age they also begin learning how to write the letters. This takes a lot of practice, but it can be done in fun ways throughout daily routines.

Here's how...

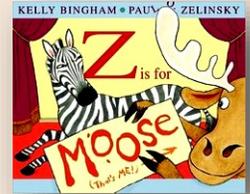


- ❖ Point out letters as you're reading books with your child, or as you are out and about in the community. It is fun to play “I Spy” games and try to find specific letters on signs or storefronts.
- ❖ Read alphabet books. Many of them focus on themes, such as bugs or trucks that might be of interest to your child.
- ❖ Encourage your child to write in real-life ways: writing thank you notes, making lists, creating a schedule, etc. Don't worry so much about spelling; at this age your child is focused on learning to form letters.
- ❖ Read with your child every day. Learning to enjoy reading will provide her with the opportunities she needs to practice letter identification and letter sounds.

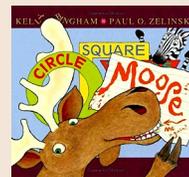
Read



Z Is for Moose, by Kelly Bingham



Zebra is putting together a display of things that start with each letter of the alphabet. His friend, Moose, is having a hard time waiting for his turn to be in the spotlight. How will he react when Zebra doesn't use him for the letter M? It's a funny journey finding out how Z ends up standing for Moose!



Have more adventures with Zebra and Moose in this book about shapes, also by Kelly Bingham: *Circle, Square, Moose*.

Choose Books



More books that teach Letter Knowledge...

LMNO Peas and *LMNO Pea-quell*, by Keith Baker

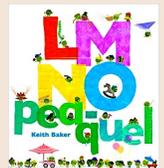
Bugs A to Z, by Caroline Lawton

Almost an Animal Alphabet, by Katie Viggers

Discovering Nature's Alphabet, by Krystina Castella and Brian Boyl

P Is for Potato: An Idaho Alphabet, by Joy and Stan Steiner

The Hidden Alphabet, by Laura Vaccaro Seeger



Talk



Play “I Spy” with the first letter of your child’s name. “I spy with my little eye a “B” on that sign!” “Can you spy other letter B’s?” You can also play the game with letter sounds. “I spy with my little eye something that begins with a ‘buh’ sound, just like your name.” If your child knows the beginning sounds pretty well, play the game with ending sounds.

Write



If holding or writing with a pencil is challenging for your child, try some of these activities to help practice a “tripod” hold (thumb on one side, second two fingers on other side):

- Pick up small objects with tweezers
- Tear strips of paper into tiny squares
- Clip clothespins onto cardboard
- Use scissors to cut shapes from scrap



Play



The Alphabet Beat

First clap your hands. Then stomp your feet.

Everybody do the alphabet beat.

Apple, Apple, Apple— a-a-a

Apple, Apple, Apple— a-a-a

Wave your arms high. Swing your arms low.

The alphabet beat is the way to go.

Blue, Blue, Blue—b-b-b Blue,

Blue, Blue—b-b-b

Move to the left. Move to the right.

The alphabet beat is way out of sight.

Car, Car, Car—c-c-c Car,

Car, Car—c-c-c

Now give a high five to a nearby friend.

The alphabet beat has come to the end!

Repeat, continuing on through the alphabet...

~from mrsjonesroom.com



Sing



A word about the ABC song...

**A B C D E F G, H I J K ElemenPea
Q R S, T U V, W, X, Y and Z**

Parents often think their child “knows” the alphabet because they can sing the ABC song and/or recite the alphabet, or because the child can point to the letters in order while singing or saying the alphabet.

Being able to do those things can show that a child has some knowledge about the alphabet, but children with good letter knowledge can identify letters in any order.

Sing

Instead of singing to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” try singing to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”

ABCDEFG

HIJ

KLM

NOPQRST

At your library...



Don’t have a library card? You can still visit your library for storytimes or to read with your child. Ask your librarian about how to apply for your own card today!