

Did you know...



Children who go to kindergarten knowing the shapes and names of the letters of the alphabet have a much easier time learning to read.

By the time your child begins kindergarten he or she should know most of the letters of the alphabet, especially those in his or her name. Your child should be able to identify letters in *any* order, not just in order from A, B, C, D, E...

There are many ways to learn and practice letter recognition, and they should be more play-based than drills. When children can make a connection with the letter because of what it represents, they are able to keep and use that information in a meaningful way.

Here's how...

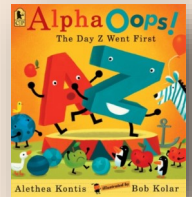


- ✦ Young children usually learn the letters in their name first. They are their favorite letters! Write your child's name where he or she can see it often, and have your child write his or her name in their own way.
- ✦ Point out and name letters when reading books, signs, or labels. There are many signs out in the community which have letters that children recognize and relate to.
- ✦ Sing the alphabet song together and play with rhymes. Sing the song in different ways so the letter sounds are clearer— soft, loud, deep, high, slow, fast or to different tunes.
- ✦ Read alphabet books with your child.

Read



***Alpha Oops!: The Day Z Went First*, by Alethea Kontis**



This book is perfect for those kids who are still trying to learn the sounds each letter makes. The letter Z stands up for himself and gets to go first! But chaos results when the letters are presented in anything but the normal order. Can you guess which letter will come next?



Find out what happens to the letters at Halloween in the sequel: *Alpha Oops!: H Is for Halloween*.

Choosing Books



Some alphabet books to look for at the library:

ABC, I Like Me! by Nancy Carlson

Alphabet Rescue, by Audrey Wood

Alphabet Under Construction, by Denise Fleming

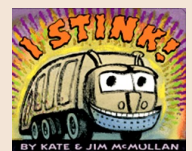
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault

Eating the Alphabet, by Lois Ehlert

Shout! Shout it Out! by Denise Fleming

Z Is for Moose, by Kelly Bingham

I Stink! by Kate McMullan



Talk



Use words with your child such as “first,” “next,” “last,” “second,” “final,” etc. to describe a sequence or order.

Write



Encourage your child to practice writing letters at home with this easy-to-make chalkboard from www.cometogetherkids.com:

1. Get a sheet of dark construction paper, a foam paintbrush and some white glue.
2. Using the brush, cover the entire sheet of paper with a thin layer of glue.
3. Let it dry completely, then prepare your chalkboard by rubbing the side of a piece of chalk over the whole surface and wiping it off.



Play



Letter Matching Game

On index cards (or paper) write each letter of your child’s name on a separate card. Do this again, to make two sets.

Shuffle the cards and place them face down in a square or rectangle grid. Ask your child to turn over two cards.

If the cards match, the child names the letter and keeps the cards. If the cards do not match, the child turns the cards back over and tries again.

Play continues until all matches have been made.

Level up: When this game becomes easy for your child, add some letters that are not in his name. Keep the total number of cards to around 12.

Sing



A word about the ABC song...

**A B C D E F G, H I J K Elemenopea
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

UVWXY and Z.

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!