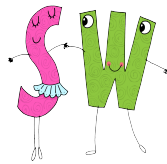


PLAY & LEARN:

The Letter Blues book



Sing.



Play.



Love.®

Alphabet learning actually begins from birth. When parents read aloud to their children from the start, they are exposing them to letters and language within the context of colorful and engaging books. Children who consistently enjoy the intimacy of reading with a caring adult learn to love stories. They understand that books contain print, and that print is made up of letters.

There are fun ways to teach individual letters for every age. Babies love sound play, and enjoy imitating letter sounds. Add a gentle bounce or rock as you say or sing “buh-buh-buh-BABY!” or “duh-duh-duh-DADDY!” Toddlers enjoy colorful picture books with objects they can label by pointing to them on the page. The focus for toddlers is on increasing their vocabulary and exposing them to print in books. However, you can easily include a simple statement such as: “B is for ‘ball’ ... let’s make that sound together!” as you read. Preschoolers might like to trace large letters in print with their finger or a marker. Introduce her to the letters of her name, and provide ample praise for any letters she can recall. Alphabet puzzles or refrigerator magnets are also great for letter awareness. Embed simple letter lessons within your daily routines. What is for lunch? “Peach starts with ‘P’!”

There is no evidence that early interest in letters is related to more advanced reading skills, so include letter learning only if your child is interested. Give her playful opportunities to recognize the shapes and sounds of letters, talk about the letters in all of the favorite things in her world, and “write” with scribbles, lines, circles and shapes. As she grows, she will eventually identify letters by sight and sound, and trace and copy letters. There is plenty about letters to love at every age when you keep the learning engaging.

Here are some practical tips for teaching your child to identify letters by sight and sound.

Letter Tag. Children love to run! Make racing into letter fun by playing an alphabet tag game. Print one letter on a single sheet of paper. Repeat this task for a total of three to five letters, and place them on the floor or tape them to the wall. Instruct your “player” to line up at the starting line. Tell them to run to the letters, touch the letter ‘T,’ then run back to finish the game. Repeat for a different letter. Make sure to join in the game.



Letter Touch Time. Most young children crave time spent in your lap cuddling, reading and sharing moments with you. Include a game of letter learning by drawing a letter with your pointer on your child’s palm. Take turns so that your child draws letters on your palm as well. What letter did you draw? This lovely and simple activity connects your child’s sense of touch with his thinking skills. You can also draw letters with your pointer on your child’s back as he transitions to nap or bedtime, or craves quiet and connection with you. Continue the game until your child decides to stop – or falls sound asleep.



Together we will help your child learn and grow. **SingPlayLove.com**