

Appendix A7

Letter Name Games

1. Find magnetic letters that match the letters in your child's name. Have a mixture of uppercase and lowercase letters. On an easel or table, mix up the letters and line them up in a row at the top of the surface. Going from LEFT to RIGHT (again, to reinforce directionality), have your child point to each magnetic letter and say the name of the letter out loud.
2. Draw two large circles on the easel (or put two sheets of paper on the table). Tell your child that in one circle, he/she will place the uppercase letters. In the other circle, he/she will place the lowercase letters. Explain that going from LEFT to RIGHT, he or she will take a letter, say the name aloud, and place it in the correct circle (or onto the correct paper). Show your child what to do. Also, encourage your child to use each hand to take turns instead of using just one hand to do all the work. Observe whether your child can do the activity with ease and knowing the names of the letters. If your child has trouble, use a smaller number of letters. Sometimes at the beginning, sorting a total of 6-8 letters is enough. Sorting 15 or more letters is unnecessary. This should be a quick and smooth activity. Adjust accordingly.
3. If your child does well with this task using letters in his/her name, have your child try different letters the next day. For example, use letters that he/she already knows but have your child sort letters by color. You may have a string of random letters (again, letters that are already *known*), but have your child sort the letters by the colors blue and yellow.
4. As your child becomes comfortable with this game, begin adding letters that he or she has yet to master. Start bringing your child's attention to attributes of letters – such as tall letters (l, t, h, f) versus short letters (a, c, s, e) versus dangling letters (g, y, p, q) or letters with sticks (l, t, v, x, i) versus letters with curves (s, c, g, o). These are just a few examples; the possibilities are endless. Just BE AWARE of confusing your child. For example, some letters have stick and curves (a, r, m, n, p), so be mindful of which attributes you are having your child sort for.
5. As your child builds confidence, he or she may need to practice and reinforce letters that are easily confused. For example, some children struggle with knowing "b"s and "d"s. You can have your child name and sort just these two letters at a time. Just be sure he/she is confident in knowing how to play these letter games and has good practice with these letters on other days. The same practice can be done with "p"s and "q"s. Just remember to keep it simple and not overwhelming with too many confusing letters.