

Reading for Success

Have fun with the alphabet!

It's important to expose your child to letters and words—even before he can read them. He will begin to recognize the shapes of the letters and to understand how letters combine to make different words. You can give your child a jump start on reading by having some fun with letters right at home.

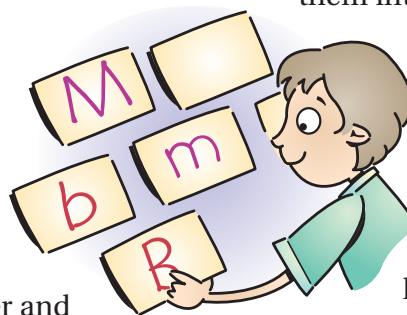
Look for letters everywhere

When it comes to exposing your child to letters, don't overlook the obvious. Language is everywhere, including:

- **On the road.** Ask your child to name letters on street signs, buildings and license plates.
- **On food packaging.** Stuck in line at the grocery store? Ask your child to name the letters on that box of cereal.

Play with letters

- **Talk about the sounds** that letters make. "B sounds like *buh*. Book starts with B. Can you think of other words that start with the same sound?"
- **Make sandpaper letters.** Cut letters out of sandpaper and glue them to index cards. Have your child run a finger over them to see how they feel. Then, with eyes closed, have your child touch a letter and guess which one it is.
- **Post a magnetic letter** on the refrigerator each day. Add a picture that begins with that letter. Once a week, mix up the letters and pictures and challenge your child to match the correct letter with the correct picture.



- **Make a letter scrapbook.** Write a letter on each page of a scrapbook. Then have your child add pictures of things that start with each letter.
- **Fish for letters.** Write letters on index cards and attach a paper clip to each card. Make a fishing pole by attaching string to a stick. Tie a magnet to the end of the string and have your child "fish" for letters. What letter did he catch?
- **Play with pipe cleaners.** Give your child several pipe cleaners and bend them into letters.
- **Make a matching game.** Write the upper and lower case versions of letters on separate index cards. (Make sure each upper case letter has a matching lower case letter!) Then have your child mix up the cards and match the upper case letters to their lower case versions.
- **Make silly words.** Write letters on pieces of paper. Put the vowels in a container and the other letters in containers placed on both sides of the vowels. Take turns making silly words by drawing one letter from each container. Say the letter sound as you draw the letter, then say the silly word you made.

