

Magnet Sorts

What should be included:

- 24 Magnets (8 food, 8 animals, 8 transportation)
- 3 Magnetic boards
- Container for magnets
- Animal pictures (poses)
- Crayons
- Paper
- Book – *The Giant Jam Sandwich*

Play Plan:

To begin just allow your child to explore the magnets and look and **talk about** all the different kinds, the different colors, what each is named, how they are alike, how they are different, etc. and let him/her stick them to the boards. When you feel your child is ready for directed play, try the following activities:

- **Sorts** – Sorts help your child **LOOK** at items with a purpose.
 - * This is a very important skill to understand and to be able to put into practice when he/she enters Kindergarten. To be able to see how things are alike and different helps your child be able to put what he/she is being introduced to into categories and so make better sense of his/her world.
 - **3 Big Category Sort** – A good way to start is to put all the magnets into the container provided and give your child one magnetic board. Have your child take out one magnet at a time and see if it fits in the category you name. If it does then have your child place it on his/her magnetic board and if it doesn't fit just lay it to the side. Then put all the magnets that didn't fit back into the container and hand your child another magnetic board, name a different category and continue the same process as before, until all the magnets are on the 3 magnetic boards. It would be **BEST** for the introductory sort to sort the magnets in this order:
 - **Food**
 - **Transportation** (something to move around on/in)
 - **Animals**
 - *This order takes away the confusion of “animals” in the vehicles for the introductory sort. We want there to be overlapping details in our sorts but **not for the introduction.** 😊

- **Other Sorts** – After your child understands what it means to “sort” something by how they are alike and go together, you can be creative in your sorts. For sorts that aren’t as defined as our initial introductory sort, it is a good idea to use only a select group of the magnets (not ALL of them at once) and it is a good idea to lay out the magnets where the child can see all of the ones you have chosen to work with at this time (not pull them out of the container). Some sorts you may find fun to try are listed below:

- Color
- Air, ground, water
- Fruit, vegetable
- Number of feet
- Eyes/no eyes
- Feet/no feet

*Let your child have a chance to do some sorts of his/her own and then tell you why he/she grouped those things together.

- **“I Am Thinking Of....”** – Listening to a description of an item to be identified, (combines **LISTENING** and **LOOKING** for a purpose).

**This too is a very important skill to understand and to be able to put into practice when he/she enters Kindergarten.*

- For this activity, you will choose just a few magnets at a time to be used – start with just 2 magnets to compare and then try to work up to 3-4 to compare at one time.
- To begin, choose two magnets that are very different and place the magnets on a board together where your child can easily see them (makes comparing them to each other easier). Then you start the game by saying “The magnet I am thinking of has _____” (then name something only one magnet has – can say a color, the category, a trait, etc.) and that is the magnet your child will say you are thinking of.
- As your child begins to understand the game you can add 2 magnets that have a lot of the same characteristics. Then you may name several things that the 2 magnets both have before you name the detail that separates the two and makes only one magnet the correct choice. Example: Maybe both magnets are animals (dog & cat), both have 4 feet, both have the same color on them but only one of the animals says “meow”. So the first 3 clues you would say are: “The magnet I am thinking of is an animal” and your child would say both are animals, then “The magnet I am thinking of has 4 feet” and your child would say both magnets have 4 feet, then you would say “the magnet I am thinking of has the color brown on it” and your child would say both magnets have the

color brown , then you would say “the magnet I am thinking of meows” and your child would say it is the cat.

- Challenges, to make this game more challenging, you can use several magnets at a time that are all in the same category, several magnets that are all of different categories, magnets that have very few details that are different, etc. The more you play the better you will get at finding details that make it challenging for your child.

Book Activity:

Read the book *The Giant Jam Sandwich* and talk about what you are thinking as you read (this helps your child to develop the ability to “Think” while he/she is hearing a story or reading a story and so will better comprehend what he/she is reading.

- Before reading this book again, help your child understand what we mean when we say two words **RHyme**. Tell them that rhyming words are words with the same **ENDING SOUND** and then give them some examples (cat/bat – they both end with the sound “at”, top/hop – they both end with the sound “op”, boy/toy – they both end with the sound “oy”, etc.).
 - As you read this book again, stop at the different parts of the book where you hear rhyming words and after you have read each part stop and say what were the words that you just heard that rhymed. Example: On the first page of this story the words **Down** and **town** rhyme. After you read this page ask your child “did you hear the two words that I just read that rhymed?” If your child can say the two words that rhymed, continue reading and stopping when you hear two words that rhyme. If your child could not tell you the rhyming words, try reading the first page again and really emphasizing the word *Down* and *town*. And then repeat just the words *Down* and *town* and say these words rhyme because they have the same ending sound. Continue this process until your child begins to understand what it means to rhyme.
 - When you and your child have enjoyed this story several times, ask your child what he/she would have done to get rid of the wasps. He/she might have a different idea or he/she may say she would do just what happened in the story and either way is great. Then have your child draw a picture to show what he/she would do to get rid of the wasps. When your child is finished ask him/her to describe the picture to you and then write a few words on the picture to say what he/she told you. (It can be a sentence, just labeling parts of the picture or anything in between.)

***The point of this activity is to introduce your child to the understanding that what we say when we read is represented by words, which are skills he/she will be working on in Kindergarten.**

Big Body Movement:

- **Strike a Pose** - For this activity take the animal picture cards and lay them out in a large circle in your play area. Then have your child march around the outside of the circle while you clap your hand and say “March, March, March, etc.” and then say “STOP” and this is when your child stops next to the animal card closest to him/her. Have your child look at the picture on the card and then do the same pose the animal is doing. Continue this until your child has a chance to do several of the poses. *Variations of this game could be:
 - Playing music on your phone and stopping it for your child to “Strike a pose.”
 - Having your child do movements around the circle other than marching (hopping, skipping, crawling, etc.)

These are just a few suggestions. A child learns best through play and hands on experiences, feel free to be CREATIVE and have FUN 😊!