

ABC Blocks

What should be included:

- 26 blocks
- Musical instrument
- 6 color spots
- Bag for blocks
- Ball
- Book- Picture Puzzle

Play Plan:

To begin just let your child play with blocks. When you feel like your child is ready for directed play, try the following:

- **Build a Tower**
First, hide the blocks around your play area, then have your child find the blocks. Each time he/she finds a block, have him/her bring it back to you where he/she will tell you the letter on the block and then stack the blocks to make a tower. Try to get the tower as tall as you can, however, when it does fall help your child count how many blocks he/she got on the tower that time – try to get more each time.
- **Color Sort**
 - Before you begin this activity lay out the 6 color spots in front of your child and place all 26 alphabet blocks into the bag provided. Then have your child take one block at a time out of the bag and have him/her tell you what letter is on the block. Then according to what color the letter is on the block, place it on the matching color spot. Continue this until all blocks have been named and placed on the color spots.
 - Next, you are going to help your child take the alphabet blocks (one at a time from the color spots and place them in a line in alphabetical order. So, you would have your child look at all the blocks until he/she finds the letter “A” and then start the line of letters, then the “B” and continue to find the letters in order until all the letters are in order. *For the color pattern to come out correctly you **MUST** line up **ALL UPPER CASE** or **ALL LOWER CASE** (if they are mixed together the pattern does not match 😊)
 - After, your child has several letters in the line, ask him/her if he/she has noticed anything about the color of the blocks. If your child doesn't notice, that he/she has one block from each color and then it starts over, let him/her put more of the blocks in order and ask again.

- If your child gets all the blocks in alphabetical order and doesn't see that the letters are placed in such a way that they make a color pattern. Then help your child see the color pattern by pointing at the letter "A" and saying the color of each block as you point to each letter. *If your child is still not seeing the repeating color pattern, you can take the first 6 blocks (which will be 1 block of each color) and lay them close together in a line. Then take the next 6 blocks and lay them in a line directly under the first line and continue this until you 4 lines of 6 colors (with 2 extra of the first two colors). This will help your child see the repeating color pattern.

Book Activity:

This book – **Picture Puzzles** is an interactive book for you and your child.

- It begins with pictures to compare and find what is different from one picture to the other. If your child has never done an activity like this, it would be very helpful if you "talk about" (explain) what you are thinking and how you are looking at the pictures to find the differences. You can also point your child's eyes in the correct direction to find a difference, for example: On the first 2 pictures you may say to your child "look at the little chicks on both pages" (which may be enough for them to notice one page has 3 and the other page only has 2). If that doesn't help your child see the difference in the number of chicks, then you can say something about counting the chicks on each page. If this is a new skill for your child, you may need to show him/her that since there is not the same number of chicks on both pages, then we call that "a difference" in the pictures and move to the next difference.
- The book also has some jokes and riddles in it. To understand "Jokes" and "Riddles" is also a skill that takes practice. Here again, it is very helpful for a child to gain a better understanding of something, if you will "talk about" (explain) what you are seeing/thinking that makes what is there a "Joke".
- After you and your child have had time to find all the differences in the pictures and tell the jokes (which may take several times), then go to each page and read the heading for the pictures. This time when you read the words, clap your hands (one time) for each word you say. Example: When you read "Old MacDonald's Farm" you would say "Old" (clap), "MacDonald's" (clap), "Farm" (clap). Then invite your child to say and clap each word with you. When you feel like your child is understanding what he/she is doing, then you stop clapping and point to the words in the book as you child continues to clap (one time) for each word.
- This is also a good time to help your child begin to understand the difference between a "word" and a "letter". You can use the same headings you just clapped the words, to help your child point to a word and then just one letter in a word.

***Knowing the difference between a “word” and a “letter” and that letters make words, as well as, the “words” are what you are looking at to get the message you are reading; are all skills your child will be developing in Kindergarten.**

Big Body Movement:

- **March Around The Alphabet:**

- Lay the alphabet blocks in a big circle (spacing them far apart) and have your child march around the outside of the circle of blocks. You then play the musical instrument provided (or music on your phone) and your child continues to march until the music stops (you may have to say “stop” too until your child understands the game). Whatever alphabet block your child is closest to when the music stops, is the block he/she picks up and tells you the name of the letter on it. Then place the block back in its spot and continue to play the music and march around the circle of blocks.
- You can have your child do movements other than “marching” around the circle to keep it more interesting.
- You can also play the music and when the music and your child “stop” call out a **color** and then your child has to pick up the block of that particular color that is closest to him/her.

- **Roll and Count:**

- To begin, you and your child can sit face to face but far enough apart that you can roll the ball back and forth between the two of you. The one who has the ball first will start the counting by saying “1” and rolling it to the other person who then says “2” and rolls it back. Continue taking turns rolling the ball and saying the next number and see how far you and your child can count before someone says the wrong number. *Children often have a hard time knowing what number starts the next set of “10” (20, 30, 40, etc.) but can follow the counting pattern of the numbers in between these numbers. If you find this is true for your child, let your child “start” the counting game each time and the change to the next set of “10” should fall on you each time – the repetition of hearing the correct counting sequence will be more helpful for your child than to have him/her miss that number each time and have to start the game over 😊
- You can also try kicking or bouncing the ball back and forth while counting and see how many times this can be done without one of you missing the ball.

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