

Letter Day Activity

Instructions for Level 1: Imitation

Why: Helps your child hear the first sounds in words.
Helps your child hear whether or not two words have the same or different starting sounds.
Introduces your child to letters, letter sounds and letter names.

When: During play time, 10 minutes at a time.
Adjust this time depending on your child's attention span. Stop before she or he becomes frustrated or bored.
You can play this game while looking at picture books, playing or doing everyday activities such as eating, bathing, dressing or driving.

STEPS

1. Point to the picture of the bed and say, "This is a bed. I can say it slow like this "buh – ed."
(Say "bed" with an emphasis on the first sound—the "buh" sound—and a pause between saying the first sound and the last part of the word, "buh" – "ed.")
2. Ask your child to imitate saying the word this way: bed – "buh," – "ed."
3. Now, let's think of letter sounds.
What is the first sound in bat? It's /b/ "buh."
(It is not "bee." Bee is the name of the letter, not the sound.)
4. Explain that the first sound is the "buh" sound. Have your child imitate this sound.
Tell your child that "buh" is the first sound in the word "bed." It is the sound that the letter B makes.
5. Ask your child to think of other words that begin with the "buh" sound. You can pick objects around the house or look for words that start with the "buh" sound in picture books.
6. Now say a word that begins with a different sound and do the same thing.

Helpful Hints/Keep It Fun

- Children will enjoy the game most if it is not too easy or too difficult.
- Pay close attention to what your child can and cannot do.
- Follow your child's lead. Use toys, books and words that interest your child.
- Have fun! Always stop before you or your child become frustrated.
- Praise your child for all efforts even if the answers are not always correct.
Teach the correct answer but do not expect perfection.
- Do not correct speech errors at this time. The goal is to learn that words can come apart, not perfect speech.
- ***Encourage the whole family to play!***

Letter Day Activity

Instructions for Level 2: Production

Why: Helps your child hear the first sounds in words.
Helps your child hear whether or not two words have the same or different starting sounds.
Introduces your child to letters, letter sounds and letter names.

When: During playtime – 10 minutes at a time.
Adjust this time depending on your child's attention span. Stop before she or he become frustrated or bored.
You can play this game while looking at picture books, playing or doing everyday activities such as eating, bathing, dressing or driving.

STEPS

1. After your child can do the imitation part of the game easily, you can move on to the production part of the game.
2. Tell your child that today is the letter ____ day. For example, the "mmm" sound.
(See the handout for sequence of letter-sounds to pick and the best letter-sounds to start with.)
3. Tell your child that you both are going to look for things that begin with "mmm."

This activity is similar to the imitation part of the game, but this time your child has to think of or find words that have the same sound on his or her own. Again, use picture books, things around the house, or things you and your child can see anywhere.

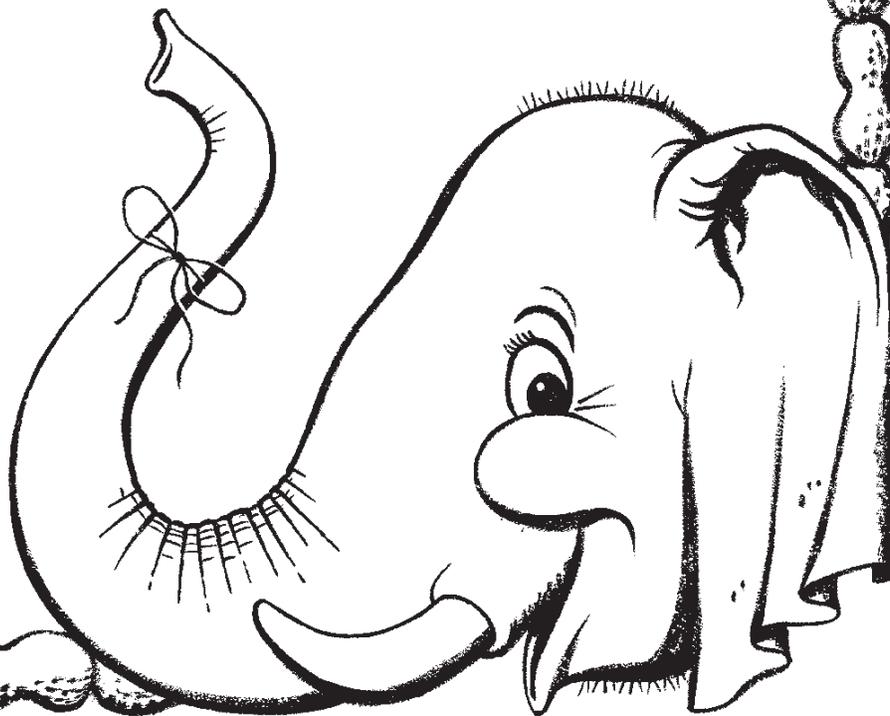
4. Praise your child's success. Give him or her a little help if needed. For example, if your child is having a hard time, you might say "Well, here's a bird. Bird starts with the 'buh' sound."
5. "What else can you think of that starts with the 'buh' sound?"
6. You can extend this activity to make it more interesting for you and your child in lots of ways that are fun. For example:
 - Help your child make collages of pictures cut from magazines that focus on one sound, for example all words that begin with a c-sound like car, cat, cow, cup, can.
 - Name all of his or her stuffed animals or dolls with names that begin with that day's letter-sound.
 - Make up silly words by changing words to begin with that day's letter sound. For example, if it is letter "P" day, you might say to your child, "What word would 'milk' be if we took off the 'mmmm' sound and made it a 'p' sound? 'Pilk!'"

Willowby, Wallowby

Willowby, Wallowby Woo
An elephant sat on you.
Willowby, Wallowby Wee
An elephant sat on me.

Make up your own rhymes like this:

Willowby, Wallowby Wary, an elephant sat on Mary.
Willowby, Wallowby Wuzzle, an elephant played with a puzzle.
Willowby, Wallowby Woo, an elephant went to the zoo.
Willowby, Wallowby Weetah, an elephant ran with a cheetah, etc.



Letter Sounds for *Letter Day* Game Activities

The following is the rough order of sounds as they develop in children’s speech. You do not need to teach these sounds in this exact order. However, it is important to do these activities with sounds that the child can articulate easily. Avoid words with the initial letters q, sh, ch and th, because the written letters do not correspond to the speech sounds (e.g., the first sound in “church” is not a “c” sound as in “cat”).

Start with these letter sounds: w, p, b, d, t, m, n, h, y

Do these letter sounds next: f, v, s, z, g, *k/c
(*k and c have the same sound but are different letters. Teach them separately.)

Do these letter-sounds last: j, l, r

Remember that this activity is teaching your child to listen for the **sounds** in words. Often alphabet books choose pictures to depict a letter by the way it is **spelled** not the way it sounds (e.g. “cheese” as a /C/ word; “giraffe” as a /G/ word). If you see this, do not include that word in your game. To reduce confusion, it is important to be consistent. Choose simple words and choose words that sound the way they are spelled. The following is a chart of letters and sounds as they should be taught in this activity.

Letter Sound	Sample Words	Letter Sound	Sample Words
W	water, worm, wet, window	F	food, fork, fox, fan
P	pot, paint, pear, pool	V	violin, van, vase, vacuum
B	boy, bed, bike, ball	S	sock, soap, sun, spoon
D	door, dime, doll, dog	Z	zoo, zebra, zipper
T	toe, toy, truck, tree	G	goat, gate, game, grass
M	mop, mail, milk, man	K	kite, kangaroo, king, kiss
N	net, nap, neck, nose	C	cat, cake, cookie, car
H	house, hill, horse, head	J	juice, jar, jacks, jelly
Y	yogurt, yo-yo, yard, yellow	L	light, lion, lip, leg
		R	rake, rain, raisin, rock