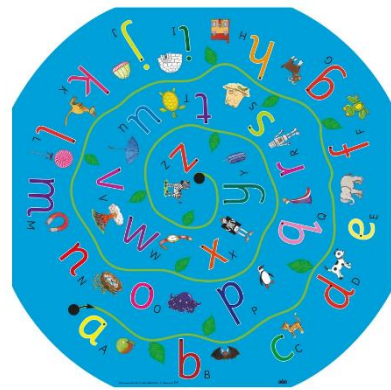


Activity Ideas: Alphabet Sorting Tuff Tray Mat (EY01241)



Matching letters

Place a selection of alphabet tiles/letters on the mat e.g. squidgy sparkly letters, letter pebbles or magnetic letters. Encourage children to look closely at the letters on both the mat and the tactile ones provided. Can they match them to the printed letters on the mat?

Can you find games

Play a range of 'Can you find...' games. These can be adapted to the interests of the children. Some examples of 'Can you find....' games include:

- Finding specific letters from the learning environment or in books
- Finding the letter at the start their own or friend's names
- Letters of different animals or food etc
- Find objects around the environment that link to the letters on the mat. How many can they find for each letter?

Alphabet song

Sing the alphabet whilst pointing to the corresponding lower case letter on the mat. This activity will promote discussions about letter names and letter sounds (upper and lower case letters). As children learn more about letter names, they can have a go at matching upper case letters (resource or written by the children) to the correct letter sound on the mat?

Getting messy

Place the Alphabet Sorting Mat in a tuff tray and cover with a thin layer of a messy material. Materials include wallpaper paste (fungicide free), cornflour, jelly, shaving foam or soap flakes etc (remember to risk assess before use). Encourage the children to swish and swirl around, revealing the letters as they go. Can they say the letter sounds as they find them?

Water play with letters

Place the Alphabet Mat in a tuff tray and cover with water (add glitter and food colouring for extra effect). Scatter magnetic letters into the water. Using a fishing rod with a magnet on the end, can the children fish for different letters. Older children may wish to put them in order as they find them (alphabet arch)?

Multi-sensory letters

Give the children a range of materials such as dough, pasta, lentils, shaving foam etc. Can the children use the mat as a base board to help them create the letters?

Picture prompts

Challenge the children to find the letters that the different pictures begin with. For example, can you find the letter that umbrella begins with? Fastest finger wins. Some children could even have a go at creating their own picture prompts to go with the letters on the mat.

Tracing letters

Encourage the children to trace over the letters, starting at the dot. Children can do this in a range of ways. Some children may want to trace over the letter using different techniques such as tracing with their finger, elbow or a paint brush.

Alphabet game

Choose a topic or theme such as fruit, vegetables, animals or toys etc. Go around the letters on the mat (in alphabetic order) and see if the children can name an item from the chosen topic for each letter. How far around the mat can they get? Alternatively, they may like to see how many items they can think of for each letter. Which letter has the most or least? This could be tuned into a game where the children take turns. If they can't think of an item for the letter they land on, they are out of the game. Who can stay in the longest?

Care instructions for the mat

The mat is easily wiped clean with a damp cloth. Roll for storage. Keep away from fire.