

Name Games



Our names represent who we are; they are a vital part of our identity. A child's name is most likely the first word he learns to read and write. Consequently, these abilities help reinforce the importance of reading and writing while forming a sound platform for future success. Because names are abstract (they can't be touched or held), it is important to provide children with opportunities to make connections to their names—the way they look, the way they sound, and the way they are written. The following activities support children in constructing their names in creative ways.

What you will need: (grouped by activity)

- water bottle caps, permanent marker
- paper, tissue paper, marker, crayon, scissors
- paper/index card, chalkboard/dry-erase board (optional), tray filled with salt/sand/cornmeal (optional)
- Play-Doh or pipe cleaners

Tips

- Once to a few times per week provide your child opportunities to practice writing his name.
- Encourage your child to first focus on his first name, then when he is ready, invite him to practice with his last name too!



- 1. Bottle Cap Spelling**
Using clean, disposable water bottle lids, write one letter from your child's name on each lid. Then, mix them up and invite your child to put the letters into the correct order (to spell out his name!). To further challenge your child, encourage him to write the letters onto water bottle caps before he spells his name. You may need to attach paper circles or use a metallic marker on caps with darker colors to make them easy to read.
- 2. Tissue Tracing**
Write your child's name on a piece of paper with a marker. Place a sheet of tissue over the name so your child can trace the letters using a crayon or other writing utensil.
- 3. Use a Guide**
Write your child's name on a piece of paper or an index card. Encourage her to use it as a guide as she writes it on her own (using another sheet of paper, a chalkboard, a dry-erase board, or into a tray filled with salt/sand/cornmeal).
- 4. Connect the Dots**
Dot out the letters in your child's name on a sheet of paper and invite him to trace the dots with a crayon or other writing utensil.
- 5. Match & Copy**
Write your child's name in big letters on a piece of paper. Cut the letters apart and mix them up. Encourage your child to put the letters in the correct order and then copy them onto another sheet of paper.
- 6. Name Sculpting**
Provide your child with Play-Doh (or some form of play clay) and encourage her to sculpt the letters of her name. You can also use pipe-cleaners.
- 7. Fill in the Space**
Write LARGE, individual letters on a sheet of paper and invite your child to use bottle caps (or a stamper) to fill in the lines of the letters.

