
school games / activities

helene au pair in usa



FUN WITH LETTERS



Letter Writing Tray

Ages: 3 and up

Here's a great way to help your tot get a feel for writing — no paper or pencil required! First, sprinkle a thick layer of **cornmeal** over the bottom of a **rimmed baking sheet**, then show her how to write letters with one or two fingers. When she's ready to start over, gently shake the sheet to erase the letters. Store the cornmeal in a **ziplock bag** when not in use.

Sound Search

Ages: 2-1/2 and up

Clue your child into phonetics with this educational twist on hide-and-seek. To play, gather up a handful of **objects that start with the same letter**, such as a banana, boat, boot, and ball. Talk with your little one about the sound that the objects start with (in this case, "buh"), then have her close her eyes while you "hide" them around the room. Now make the sound of the letter ("buh buh buh") and challenge your child to find everything in the room that starts with that sound.

Letter Portraits

Ages: 4 and up

Draw a large letter on a piece of **paper**, then give your child **colored pencils or crayons** and have her turn the letter into a portrait of something else. A lower-case "m" might become a camel, for example, or an upper-case "B" could change into a butterfly. For extra credit, tell older kids they can draw only objects that start with the letter on the paper.

COIN CRITTERS



What You Need

- Coins
- Paper
- Marker or crayons

Total Time Needed: 30 Minutes or less

Instructions

1. Take some coins from your pocket or purse, lay them out on a piece of paper, and have your child draw arms, legs, and other body parts to create a creature.
2. Then help her total up the value of the coins and write it beside the creature. Add or take away coins to form new shapes, and figure out the new sums..

BODY ENGLISH



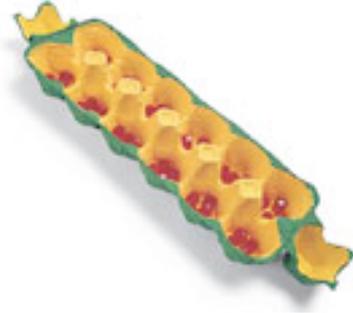
To play, spell with your body (alone or team) a word for the others players

WRITER'S BLOCK



with the vocabulary list from school or your own create some stickers .
attache with some tape the paper to a «lego» or others blocks. the kids needs
to create a sequence, a story

MANKALA COUNTING GAME KINGDOM



Winning the most buttons makes this African counting game a quick hit with youngsters. Older kids get a kick out of figuring out a strategy.

The game board is made from an egg carton. Remove the lid and tape an extra cup (cut from another carton) to each end--to be used as banks in which the players can store their winnings.

Put four buttons into each cup, but leave the banks empty.

The first player starts the game by taking the buttons from any cup.

Beginning with the next cup and moving counterclockwise, he drops a button into each cup.

Next, he takes the buttons from the cup into which his last button fell. He continues emptying and depositing until his last button falls into an empty cup. (This differs from following turns.)

Then, the second player, moving in the same direction, empties the cup of her choice and redistributes the buttons.

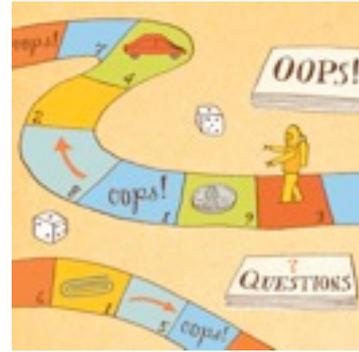
If her last button falls into a cup with three buttons, she wins all the buttons in that cup.

But if any button other than the last one falls into a cup of three, the first player wins the buttons from that cup.

Players alternate turns until four or fewer buttons are left in the carton.

The child with the most buttons in his bank wins..

THE HOMEWORK GAME



create a board like The Game of Life and Candy Land

The key element: 3- by 5-inch index cards with quiz questions and answers on them. Any time the kids had a test to prepare for, they would scour their course materials, then write likely exam questions on the front of the cards and answers on the back, as you would with flash cards. In itself this exercise would be a great way for them to learn facts, of course, but disguised as game prep, it also might seem much more fun than plain old studying.

Next, you have some cards "oops!" written on one side and silly slipups and the penalties on the other: "move back 2 spaces", leave your jacket on a floor loose 3 points ...

Finally, the game's rules, which I kept very simple. Each player would roll the dice and move his token that number of spaces along the path, then pull a card from the "Questions" pile.

A correct answer would earn the player the number of points written on that square.

If a player landed on an "oops!" spot, he'd pick up a penalty card and follow its instructions. The player who accumulated the most points would be the winner.

Homework Game How-tos

The author shares these easy steps for making your own test-prep tool.

- 1.** Start with a 22- by 14-inch piece of poster board. From sheets of construction paper, cut a long, snakelike path that will fit tidily onto the playing surface, then glue the path down (you could also draw this directly on the board with markers).
- 2.** With a bold-colored marker, divide the path into rectangular sections, then write oops! on every fifth space. Label all the other spaces randomly with a number between one and nine. At one end of the path, write "Start Here," and at the other end, "Finish Line."
- 3.** On 3- by 5-inch index cards, create your "oops!" cards, and set aside blanks for the "Question" cards. Glue an extra "oops!" card and a "Questions" card on the board to show where the stacks should go. Have the kids decorate the board with stickers, handprints, or drawings, then cover it with clear Con-Tact paper. For tokens, you can use coins, pebbles, trinkets, paper clips, Lego figures, or just about any tiny treasures from around the house.

Studying's more fun with our homework station.

BEACH BALL MATH

Get kids moving -- and practicing basic math processes -- with this versatile ball-toss game.

The skills it builds: addition, soustraction and multiplication

What You Need

- Beach ball
- Marker
- Small adhesive labels

Total Time Needed: 30 Minutes or less

Instructions

1. First, decide on a function to practice — addition soustraction or multiplication — and a set of numerals to work with — numbers 1 through 9 for young kids, larger numerals for older children. Write the numbers on small adhesive labels and stick them onto a beach ball, one per section, as shown.
2. Two or more players stand facing each other. The first player catches the ball and calls out the number where his right thumb lands. He then tosses the ball to another player, who does the same, then tosses it. The next player catches the ball, then must add, soustred or multiply the two numbers, calling out the solution. She then tosses the ball to another player, and the game starts over.