The Child Unplugged

THE LETTER PLAY BOOK

Simple play ideas to connect.
Explore & Support yours babies developmenr

15
Simple Play Ideas



0-12 Months

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Introduction

The Numbers & Letters Adventure Activity Book transforms early learning into an exciting journey of discovery. Designed to support preschool and early years development, each activity encourages children to explore letters, numbers, shapes, sounds, and patterns through hands-on play and creative learning experiences.
By combining education with fun, the activity book helps children develop strong foundations for reading, writing, and mathematics while fostering a lifelong love of learning. Every page offers opportunities to build confidence, celebrate achievements, and turn everyday learning into an adventure.







Why Numbers & Letters Is So Valuable

- Strengthens brain development by creating connections through active participation and repetition.
- Builds fine motor skills through tracing letters, writing numbers, colouring, and completing activities.
- Supports early literacy development by helping children recognise letters, sounds, words, and their own name.
- Develops numeracy skills through counting, number recognition, sequencing, and simple mathematical concepts.

How to Support Play at Home

Create a calm and positive learning environment where children can explore numbers and letters at their own pace. Encourage participation, celebrate effort, and make learning fun through everyday interactions.

Basic setup:

- Work through activities together or allow children to complete them independently when appropriate.

Simple steps:

- Encourage children to trace, write, count, match, and solve challenges.
- Ask questions to extend learning, such as "What letter does your name start with?" or "Can you count how many there are?"

Helpful tips:

- Revisit favourite activities to build confidence and reinforce skills.
- Use real-life opportunities to practise numbers and letters throughout the day.







Ideas

- Count toys, snacks, steps, or household items.
- Look for letters on signs, packaging, and books

PASTA LETTER STICKING

WHATS NEEDED:

- Dry pasta (any shape — macaroni, penne, bow tie)
- Cardstock or thick paper
- Glue stick or white glue
- Marker (to write letters)
- Optional: Tweezers, food coloring (to dye pasta), tray for setup

HOW TO MAKE:

- Write large letters on cardstock or paper.
- Apply glue along the letter lines.
- Stick pasta pieces on the glue to trace each letter.
- Let it dry completely before displaying or touching.

BENEFITS:

- Strengthens fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination
- Encourages letter recognition and early literacy
- Boosts creativity and concentration
- Great for sensory exploration



HOW TO ADAPT:

- Toddlers (1–3):
- Focus on sticking pasta freely or on basic shapes
- Use big pasta and pre-glued lines
- Preschoolers (3–5):
- Stick pasta on letters of their name
- Try color-matching dyed pasta to outlined letters
- Older Kids (5+):

ALPHABET WATER PLAY

WHATS NEEDED:

- Floating foam or plastic letters
- Water tray, tub, or sensory bin
- Scoops, cups, or nets
- Towel for spills
- Letter cards (optional)

WHAT TO DO:

- Fill a tray or tub with water.
- Add floating letters.
- Encourage children to scoop out letters and name them.
- Match letters to letter cards or sort them into groups.
- Continue exploring and identifying different letters.

BENEFITS:

- Encourages letter recognition
- Supports early literacy skills
- Promotes sensory exploration
- Develops fine motor skills
- Strengthens hand-eye coordination
- Encourages language development
- Builds concentration and focus
- Makes learning fun and engaging



HOW TO ADAPT:

- Use only a few letters for younger learners.
- Focus on the letters in the child's name.
- Match uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Sort letters by colour.
- Introduce letter sounds for older children.
- Use tongs or nets to add a fine motor challenge.

WORD BUILDER BLOCKS

WHATS NEEDED:

- Word Builder Blocks tray
- Picture word cards
- Alphabet letter blocks
- Flat work surface

WHAT TO DO:

- Choose a picture word card.
- Look at the picture and say the word aloud.
- Find the letter blocks needed to spell the word.
- Place the blocks in the correct order.
- Read the completed word together.
- Repeat with additional picture cards.
- Challenge yourself to build words independently.

BENEFITS:

- Develops letter recognition.
- Supports early reading and spelling skills.
- Encourages phonics and sound awareness.
- Expands vocabulary and language development.
- Strengthens memory and sequencing skills.
- Improves concentration and focus.
- Develops fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.
- Builds confidence in literacy learning.



HOW TO ADAPT:

- Younger Children: Match letters directly to the word card.
- Older Children: Spell words without using the printed word as a guide.
- Phonics: Say each letter sound while building the word.
- Memory Challenge: View the card, then build the word from memory.
- Sensory Play: Hide letter blocks in a sensory tray before spelling.
- Group Play: Take turns selecting cards and building words.

SHAPE & NUMBER QUEST BOARD

WHATS NEEDED:

- Wooden puzzle board with number and shape cutouts
- Colorful wooden number pieces
- Shape puzzle pieces (circle, square, triangle, heart, etc.)
- Child-safe paint and smooth wooden finish
- Easy-grip knobs for little hands

WHAT TO DO:

- Spread out all puzzle pieces.
- Encourage the child to identify numbers and shapes.
- Match each piece to the correct slot on the board.
- Practice saying numbers aloud while placing them.
- Talk about colors and shapes during play.
- Challenge children to place pieces faster as they improve.

BENEFITS:

- Builds number recognition skills
- Improves shape identification
- Develops hand-eye coordination
- Strengthens fine motor control and finger grip
- Encourages memory and problem-solving skills
- Supports early math readiness
- Boosts confidence through independent learning



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Beginners:** Start with numbers only, introduce shapes one at a time, and give verbal guidance
- **Advanced Learners:** Count matching objects, sort by color or shape, and try simple addition activities
- **Sensory Learning:** Use textured stickers, raised outlines for tracing, and combine verbal + visual prompts
- **Group Activities:** Timed puzzle races, partner matching games, and cooperative problem-solving tasks

SUMMER WORD SEARCH

WHATS NEEDED:

- Summer Word Search worksheet
- Pencil, crayon, or highlighter

WHAT TO DO:

- Look at the list of summer words: SUN, BEACH, SHELL, ICE, SWIM, PICNIC, SAND, SUMMER
- Search the puzzle to find each word.
- Circle or highlight the words as you find them.
- Tick off each word from the list.
- Colour the page when finished if desired.

BENEFITS:

- Develops letter recognition skills.
- Strengthens spelling and vocabulary.
- Improves concentration and attention to detail.
- Encourages visual scanning and word recognition.
- Builds confidence with literacy activities.



HOW TO ADAPT:

- Younger Children: Search for fewer words.
- Older Children: Add longer or more challenging words.
- Literacy: Use each word in a sentence.
- Group Play: Work together to find all the words.
- Sensory: Form the words using letter tiles or magnetic letters.
- Extension: Create your own summer word search.

LETTER PATH WALK

WHATS NEEDED:

- Letter cards or foam letters
- Floor space
- Tape (optional, to secure letters)
- Basket of letters (optional)

WHAT TO DO:

- Place letters on the floor to create a path.
- Encourage the child to step, hop, or crawl from one letter to the next.
- Name each letter as they reach it.
- Continue until all letters have been explored.

BENEFITS:

- Encourages letter recognition
- Supports gross motor development
- Improves balance and coordination
- Builds listening and language skills
- Encourages active learning through play
- Develops concentration and memory
- Promotes confidence and independent exploration



HOW TO ADAPT:

- Use only a few letters for younger learners.
- Focus on the letters in the child's name.
- Ask children to find a specific letter.
- Add jumping, hopping, or animal movements.
- Match uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Introduce letter sounds for older children.

LITTLE LEARNER BLOCKS

WHATS NEEDED:

- Little Learner Blocks
- Play mat, tray, or open floor space

Optional Extras

- Flashcards
- Small baskets or containers for sorting
- Play dough
- Sensory trays (rice, sand, water beads, etc.)
- Chalkboards, whiteboards, or markers for extension activities

WHAT TO DO:

- Identify letters, numbers, words, and pictures
- Stack, sort, and build with the blocks
- Match letters, colours, or numbers
- Practice counting and simple word building
- Use blocks during imaginative and storytelling play

BENEFITS:

- Supports early literacy and language skills
- Develops counting and number recognition
- Strengthens fine motor skills and coordination
- Encourages problem-solving and critical thinking
- Builds creativity, confidence, and social interaction



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Younger toddlers:** Focus on stacking, colours, and simple naming activities
- **Preschoolers:** Practice counting, matching, and CVC word building
- **Advanced learners:** Create longer words, patterns, and maths challenges
- **Sensory play:** Add blocks to sand, rice, or play dough activities
- **Group play:** Use for team games, sorting stations, or collaborative building tasks

ALPHABET RECOGNITION BOARD

WHATS NEEDED:

- Wooden uppercase alphabet boards
- Loose uppercase wooden letter pieces
- Tweezers
- Tray, basket, or mesh storage bag

Sensory Play Ideas:

- Hide letters in sensory bins for discovery play
- Trace letters in sand, salt, or shaving foam
- Build letters using play dough or loose parts

WHAT TO DO:

- Introduce a few letters at a time
- Identify and name each letter
- Match loose letters to the correct spaces on the board
- Say letter names and sounds aloud together
- Repeat through hands-on play and repetition

Extend the learning:

- Find matching letters around the room
- Match letters to objects with the same beginning sound
- Trace letters in sand or salt after matching

BENEFITS:

- Builds uppercase letter recognition
- Strengthens early literacy and phonics awareness
- Develops fine motor control and hand-eye coordination
- Encourages concentration and problem-solving
- Supports tactile, visual, and sensory learning
- Builds confidence in reading readiness
- Encourages independent exploration and learning



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Toddlers:** Focus on a few familiar letters and simple matching
- **Preschoolers:** Explore the full alphabet and practice letter sounds
- **Older children:** Build simple words and practice beginning sounds and spelling

ALPHABET FORMATION - NATURE

WHATS NEEDED:

- Alphabet formation cards
- Natural materials such as:(Stones,Twigs or sticks,Leaves,Shells,Pebbles or seeds)
- Workspace

Sensory Play Ideas:

- Build letters in sand, soil, or grass
- Collect materials during a nature walk for added engagement
- Combine with sensory trays using natural elements

WHAT TO DO:

- Choose a letter card
- Observe the letter shape together
- Collect natural materials
- Arrange items to form the letter
- Trace the letter shape with a finger before building
- Say the letter name and sound aloud
- Repeat with different letters

Extend the learning:

- Build the child's name letters
- Match letters to objects in nature

BENEFITS:

- Builds letter recognition and formation skills
- Strengthens early phonics awareness
- Develops fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination
- Encourages sensory and tactile learning
- Supports visual discrimination and spatial awareness
- Promotes concentration and problem-solving
- Encourages creativity and nature connection
- Builds early literacy confidence



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Toddlers:** Focus on a few familiar letters and simple tracing or matching
- **Preschoolers:** Build full alphabet letters and practice letter sounds
- **Older children:** Form names, simple words, and explore uppercase vs lowercase differences

WHAT'S YOUR NAME

WHATS NEEDED:

- Letters to copy (depending on age)
- Nature, loose parts

WHAT TO DO:

- Look at each letter of your name.
- Collect natural materials like leaves, twigs, petals, or small stones.
- Use the materials to recreate each letter on a piece of paper.
- Optionally, use playdough to shape the letters and decorate with nature items.

BENEFITS:

- Encourages creativity and self-expression.
- Builds letter recognition and early literacy skills.
- Develops fine motor skills through handling small natural materials or playdough.
- Connects children to nature and sensory exploration.



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Age:** Toddlers – focus on first letter; Older kids – spell full names or decorate letters with patterns.
- **Abilities:** Use larger or easier-to-handle materials, provide templates, or guide hand placement.
- **Materials:** Natural items, playdough, or cardboard letters for tracing.
- **Setting:** Indoors – on paper or trays; Outdoors – use sticks, leaves, or stones on the ground.

CVC WORD BUILDING

WHATS NEEDED:

- CVC picture word cards
- Letter stamps
- Dry erase marker and eraser
- Flat workspace or tray
- Sand or salt tray for word tracing(optional)

Sensory Play Ideas:

- Trace words in sand or salt trays
- Hide letters in sensory bins for discovery play
- Build words using play dough or textured letters

WHAT TO DO:

- Choose a CVC picture word card
- Say the word aloud together
- Identify beginning, middle, and ending sounds
- Match or stamp the correct letters into place
- Blend the sounds slowly to read the word
- Trace the completed word in sand or salt using fingers or a tracing tool

Extend the learning:

- Repeat words for extra sound practice
- Mix and rebuild words

BENEFITS:

- Builds phonemic awareness and sound recognition
- Strengthens early reading and spelling skills
- Supports blending and decoding practice
- Develops fine motor control and writing readiness
- Encourages sensory and hands-on learning
- Improves focus, memory, and sequencing skills
- Builds confidence in early literacy development



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Toddlers:** Focus on letter recognition and beginning sounds
- **Preschoolers:** Practice common CVC words and sound blending
- **Older children:** Explore word families, rhyming, sight words, and simple sentences

LADYBUG BEGINNING SOUNDS SPINNER

WHATS NEEDED:

- Ladybug beginning sounds spinner board with attached rotating picture sections

Sensory Play Ideas:

- Pair with sensory bins using objects that match the sounds
- Use tactile alphabet letters alongside the spinner

WHAT TO DO:

- Choose a ladybug spinner
- Rotate the spinner to reveal a picture
- Name the picture together
- Identify the beginning sound
- Say the matching letter aloud
- Match the sound to other objects or words with the same beginning letter

Extend the learning:

- Sort pictures by beginning sounds
- Find objects around the room with matching sounds

BENEFITS:

- Builds beginning sound and phonics awareness
- Strengthens letter recognition and sound association
- Expands vocabulary and language skills
- Develops listening and sound discrimination
- Encourages problem-solving and critical thinking
- Supports fine motor development through spinning and pointing
- Promotes independent, hands-on learning



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Toddlers:** Focus on naming pictures and hearing simple sounds
- **Preschoolers:** Match beginning sounds to letters and words
- **Older children:** Explore rhyming, ending sounds, and simple spelling activities

ALPHABET HUNT

WHATS NEEDED:

- A tray filled with rice (or any sensory base)
- Alphabet letters
- Scoops
- Tweezers

WHAT TO DO:

- Fill a sensory tray with rice
- Hide plastic or foam letters inside the tray.
- Encourage children to dig, scoop, or sift through the material to find the hidden letters.
- As each letter is found, ask children to name it and say its sound.
- Match letters to a printed alphabet sheet or spell simple words together.

BENEFITS:

- Turns letter recognition into an exciting and motivating game
- Encourages playful, hands-on learning
- Develops fine motor skills through digging and picking up letters
- Strengthens hand-eye coordination
- Supports sensory development, especially the sense of touch



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **For younger children:** Use fewer letters at a time and focus on recognising their name initial or a small group of familiar sounds.
- **For older children:** Challenge them to find letters in order, spell simple CVC words, or match uppercase and lowercase pairs.
- **Add maths:** Write numbers instead of letters and practise counting or number recognition.
- **Add tools:** Provide scoops, tweezers, paintbrushes, or sieves to increase fine motor challenge.
- **Make it active:** Hide larger letters around the garden or room for a movement-based alphabet hunt.

ABC FISHING ADVENTURE

WHATS NEEDED:

- Wooden fishing board or pond
- Magnetic fishing rod
- Magnetic fish pieces with letters or numbers
- Flat play surface
- Optional: alphabet cards, number cards, sorting trays, or timers.

WHAT TO DO:

- Catch fish using the magnetic rod
- Name letters, numbers, or colors
- Sort and match fish into groups
- Practice spelling, counting, or sequencing games
- Play challenges like “Catch the letter A” or “Find all blue fish.”

BENEFITS:

- Develops fine motor skills and coordination
- Supports early literacy and math learning
- Encourages focus, patience, and problem-solving
- Promotes interactive and imaginative play
- Builds confidence through hands-on learning



HOW TO ADAPT:

- **Younger kids:** simple fishing and color matching
- **Older kids:** spelling, math, and timed challenges
- **Extra support:** larger fish, guided assistance, one skill at a time
- **Group play:** turn-taking games, team challenges, and sorting races

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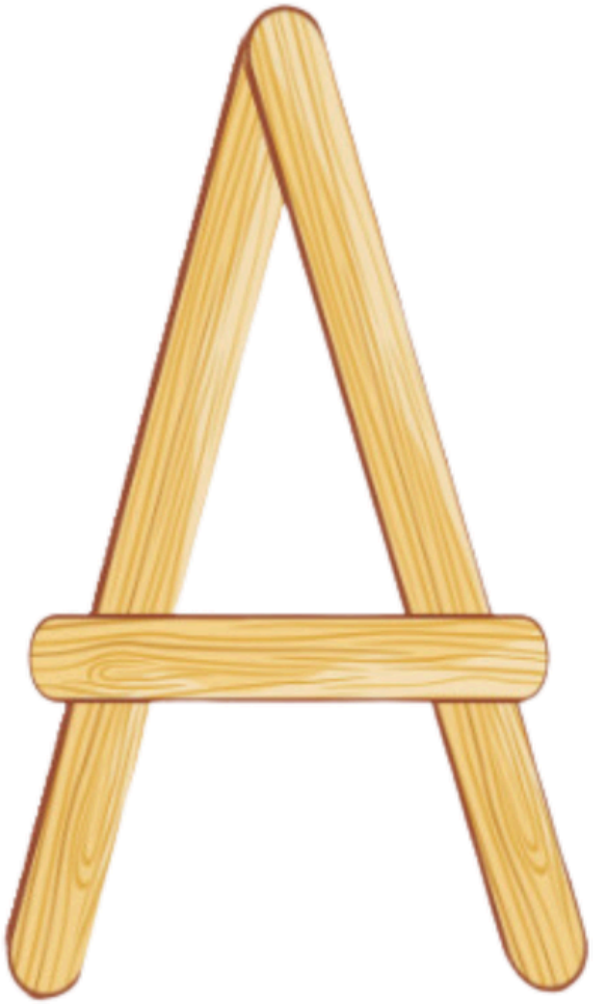

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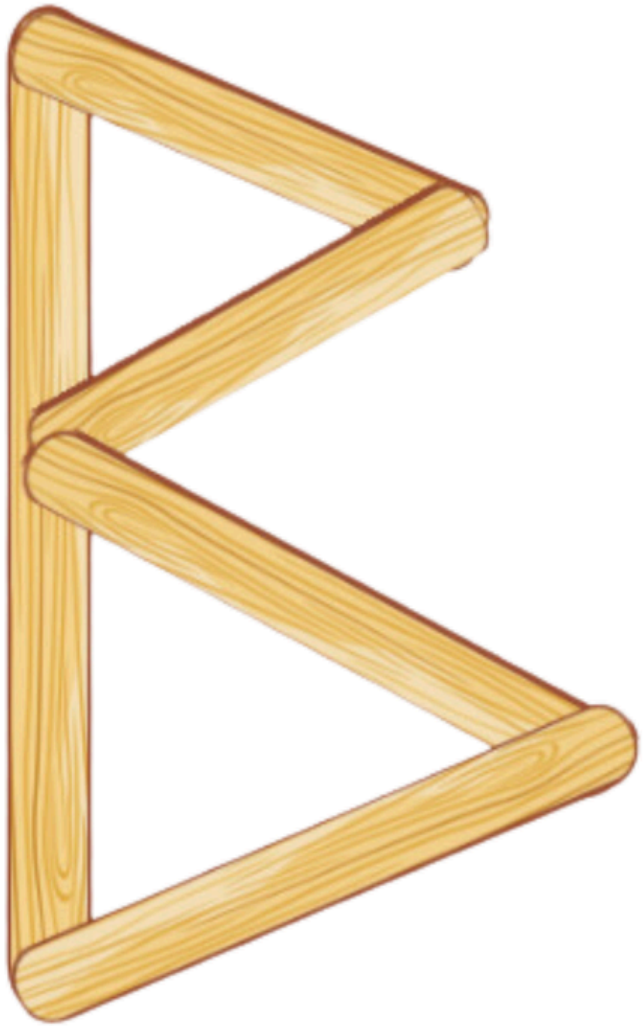

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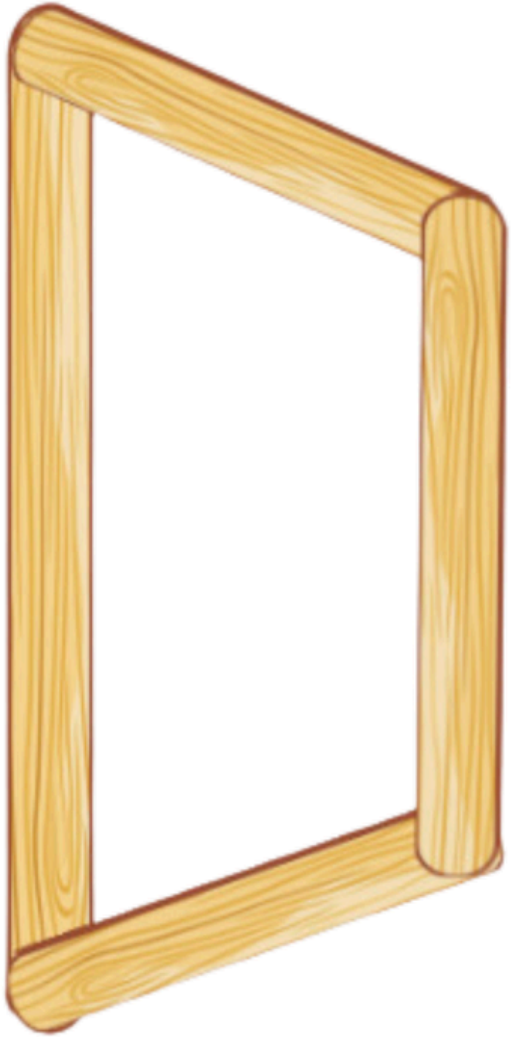

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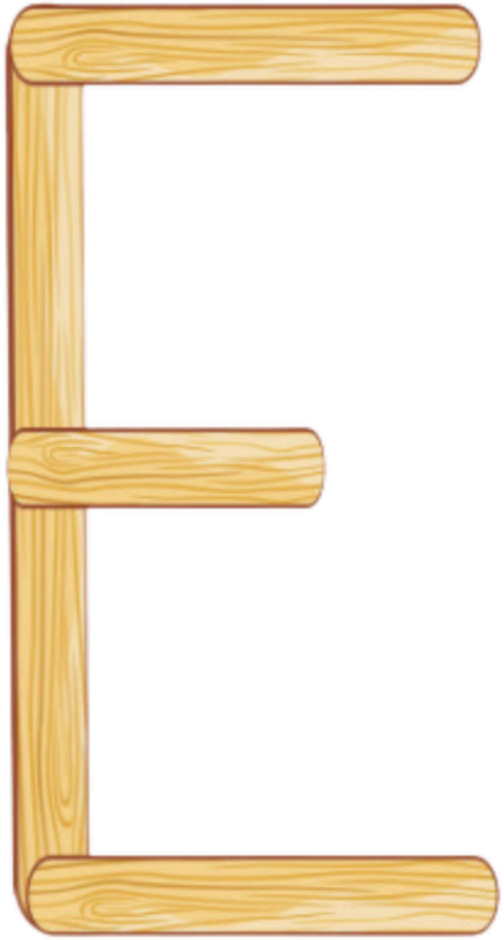

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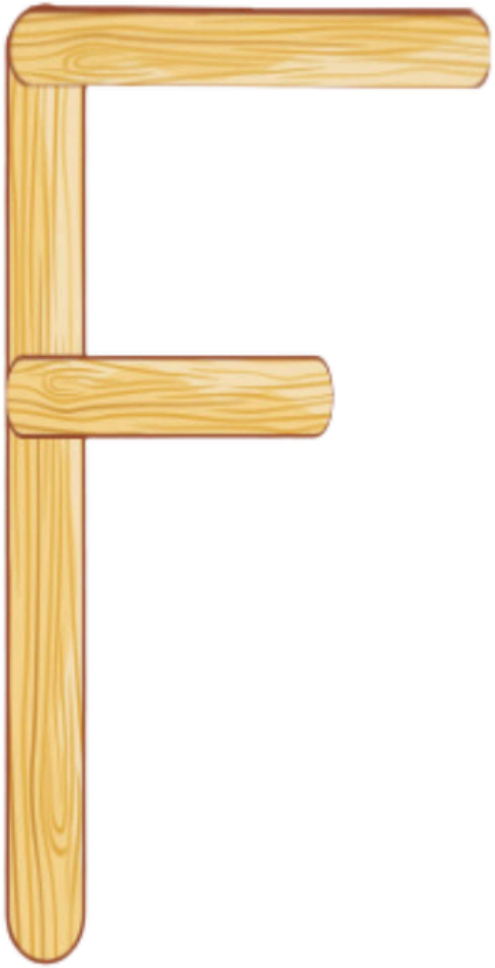

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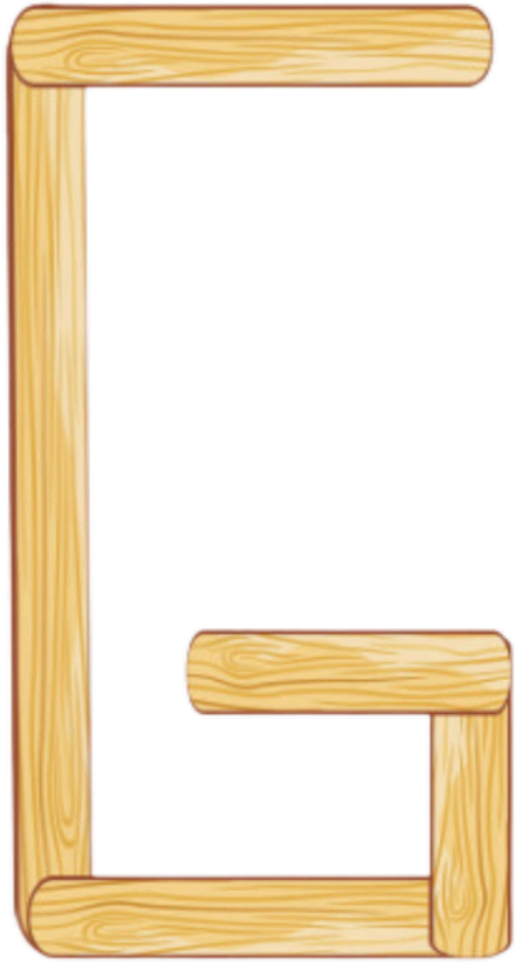

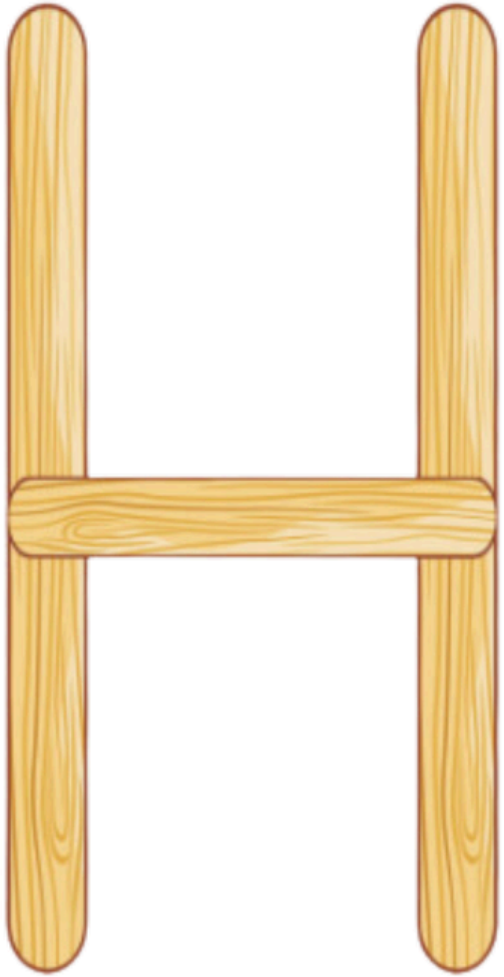

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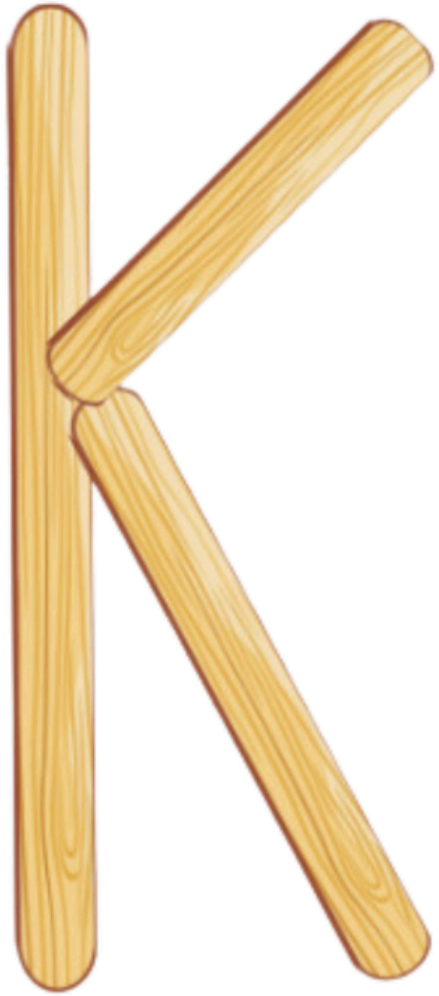

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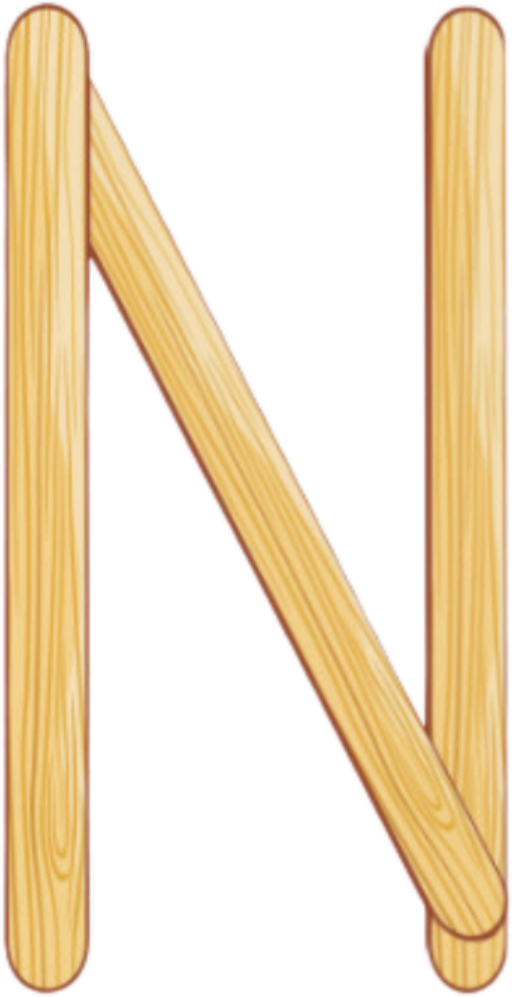

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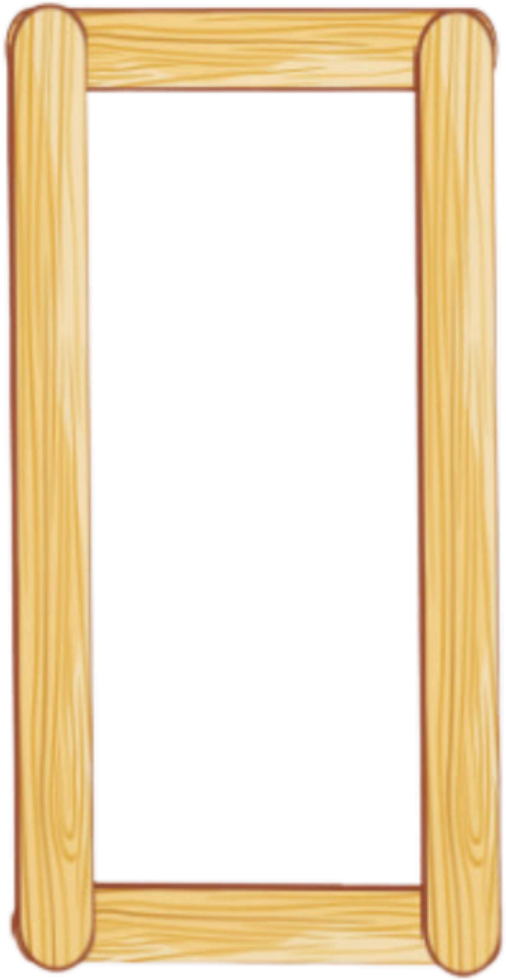

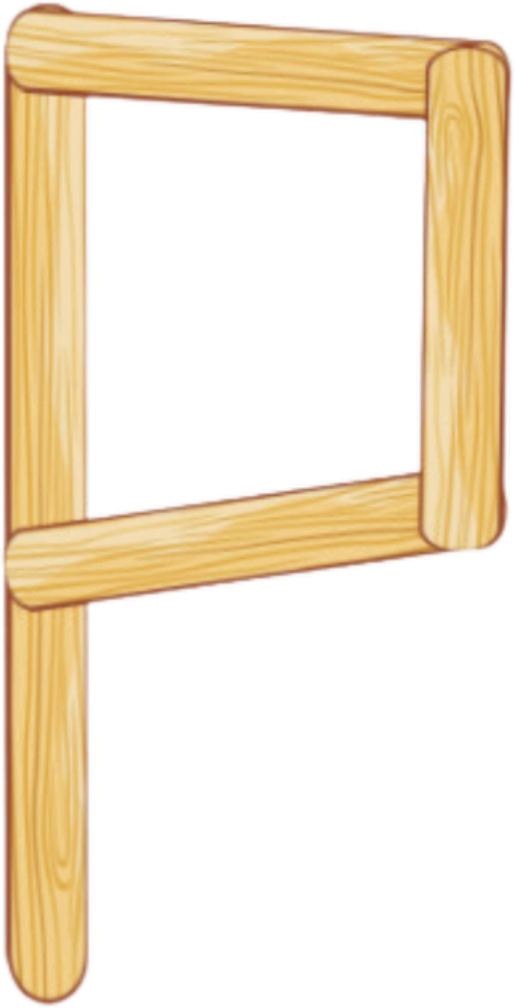

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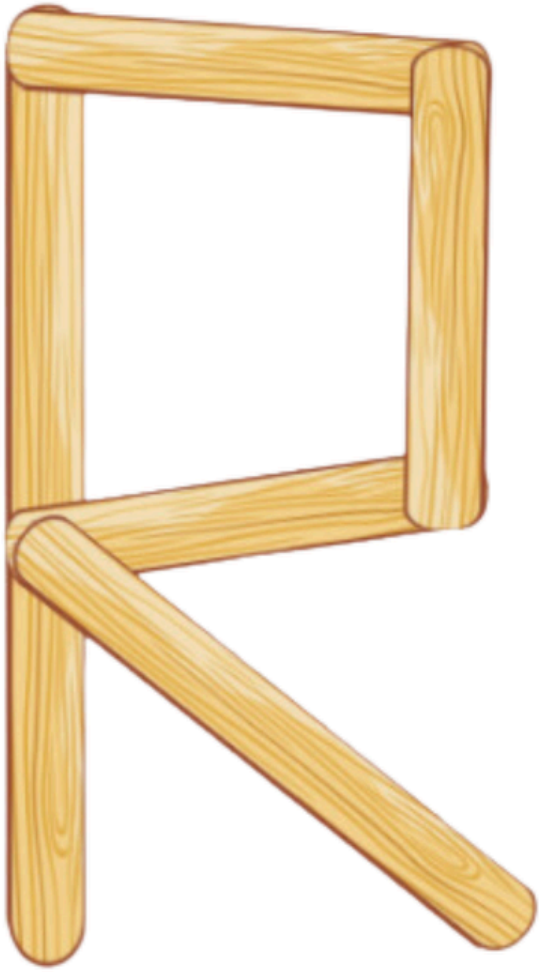

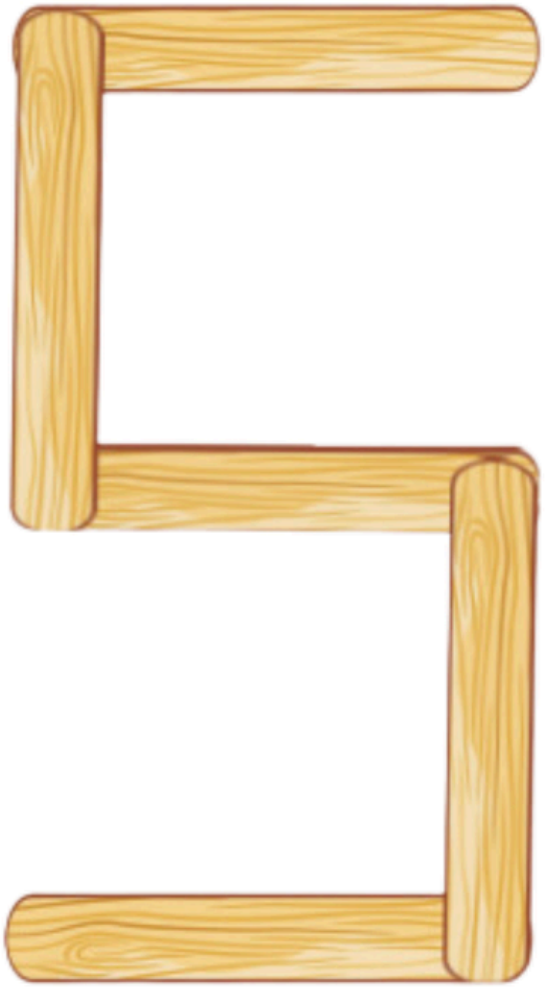







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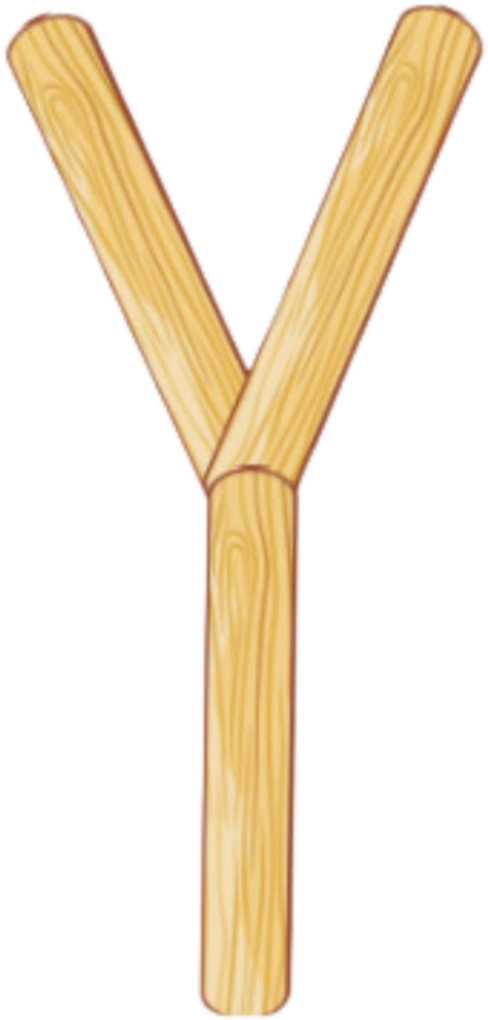

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LETTERS ADVENTURE

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Slow, calm sensory experiences for babies and young children

Using familiar, accessible materials