

# Sandpaper Letters

Purpose: To help a child associate the sounds of letters with their graphic symbols in preparation for writing and reading.

Directions: To begin this exercise, invite a child to the language arts shelf to introduce the Sandpaper Letters.

- Select three Sandpaper Letters that are distinct from each other in shape and sound, starting with “m”, “a”, and “s” and place them on the tray.
- Place the three cards in a stack on the table. Place the Sandpaper Letter for “m” in front of the child. Begin with the naming, “this is” phase of the three-period lesson.
- With the two primary fingers of your right hand, slowly trace the letter “m”. Clearly pronounce the phonetic sound of the letter “m”. Continue by tracing the letter three times, saying the sound of the letter after each time tracing.
- Provide context and meaning for the phonetic sound by naming a few familiar words that begin with that sound. For example, “m” is for monkey, mom, mat and emphasize the initial sound as you say each word.
- At this point, invite the child to trace and say the phonetic sound of the letter three times. When the child completes this, move the card to the left.
- Continue this process for the other letters.
- Continue with the recognition, “show me” phase of the three-period lesson. For example, “can you show me which letter says “m”?”
- Finally, complete the lesson with the recall, “what is” phase. For example, point to the letter “a” and say, “Please trace this letter and tell me what it is.” Once the child completes this, ask the child if he/she can think of a word that begins with the sound “a”. If necessary, provide some examples. Repeat this portion of the lesson with the other letters.
- On the next lesson, introduce the next three Sandpaper Letters in the same manner. Each time, reviewing the letters previously introduced.
- 



Extensions:

1. Introducing Double Sandpaper Letters: invite the child to repeat the activity with the Double Sandpaper Letters.
2. The “Knock, Knock Game”: invite a small group of children who have been introduced to some Sandpaper Letters to a mat. Arrange the letters facedown and explain the game. First, knock on one letter and select a child to say “Who is there?” Next, turn the letter over and allow the child to trace the letter and say the corresponding sound. Continue these steps for all letters on the mat.
3. Tracing, forming, and sounding out letters: invite the child to trace the letters in a layer of cornmeal or in sand. Encourage the child to say the sound of the letter after he/she forms it.

Miss Tanya  
BA, B.Ed, IMTD (3-6)