

Eight Ways of Working With Letters

Students spend about two minutes doing one of the following activities using the known letters in their individual letter bags and a personal alphabet chart. Circulate among the students and prompt children to name the letters as they sort them. The purpose of this activity is to build automaticity with *known* letters. Children will learn new letters as they trace the alphabet book with a tutor outside of the small-group lesson. It is important that you regularly communicate with the tutor so you know which new letters students have learned. You should add these letters to the student's letter bag.

1. **Match the letters in the bag.** This activity is only for children who have fewer than ten letters. You will put multiple sets of the letters they know in their bags. Ask the children to find the letters that are the same. For example, find all of the *c*'s and put them in a line. Find all the *o*'s and put them in a line. Students should say the name of each letter as they line them up left to right.
2. **Match letters to an alphabet chart.** Give each student an alphabet chart that has been placed inside a plastic sheet protector. Instruct them to match the letters in their bag to the letters on the chart and to name the letter and the picture as they place it on the chart. Ask students to give the letter sound if they know it.
3. **Match upper- and lowercase letters.** Put matching upper- and lowercase letters in their bags. Ask students to find the capital letter that matches the lowercase letter. They should name the letters as they line them up. Teach students how to use the alphabet chart for help.
4. **Sort by color.** You will need multicolored magnetic letters for this activity. Tell children to find the red letters and name them as they put them in a line. Then have them find all of the blue letters and name them as they line them up. Continue with other colors of the magnetic letters.
5. **Name letters left to right.** Tell children to put all their letters in a line and name them as they line them up. Encourage speedy recall. "Let's see how fast you can do it." There is no specified sequence for this activity. They just grab a letter from the bag, name it, and put it at the end of the line.
6. **Name a word that begins with that letter.** Ask the students to pick a letter from their bag, say the name of the letter, and say a word that begins with that letter. For

example, the child might pick a *b* and say, “*b*—book.” If children have difficulty thinking of a word, prompt them to use their alphabet chart.

7. **Name the letter that begins that word.** The teacher says a word and asks the children to find the letter on the alphabet chart that makes the sound at the beginning of the word. For example, the teacher says, “Find the letter that you hear at the beginning of *book*.” The children find a *b*.
8. **Find the letter that makes that sound.** Ask students to find a letter on the alphabet chart that makes a particular sound. For example, “Find the letter that says /t/.”