

# Fun with letter sounds

Group activities with letters, words and sentences



## Games for Jolly Phonics.

Children practice blending and reading by playing these games. They like to play games and while playing, they learn and have fun. Learning with fun is learning better! You can play the activities with the whole group, in small groups or in pairs. Make sure that all the children can see what's happening. Make rules e.g. about raising up hands.

Make sure you prepared well and collect the things you need. The (small) words that are written bold are the things you need, beside a blackboard and chalk.

### Index

1. Flashcards	2	31. Write a sentence	8
2. Frieze	2	32. What's wrong?	8
3. Letter wall or letter book	2	33. Missing word in a sentence	8
4. Rhyming	2	34. Sentence substitution	8
5. Sound sets	2	35. Yes or no?	9
6. Matching	3	36. Choose three correct answers	9
7. I spy with my little eye	3	37. Reach the top	9
8. Spot letter sounds / words	3	38. Board Race	10
9. Letter dice:	3	39. Mind mapping	10
10. A sack with letters	4	40. Hangman	10
11. Fans	4		
12. Quick write letters / words	4	<i>For outside:</i>	
13. Clay letters	4	41. Spot sounds	11
14. Letter ball	4	42. Step by step	11
15. What do I say?	4	43. Decorated stones	11
16. Build vocabulary	5	44. Hop words	11
17. Letter trains	5	45. Run to the right letter	11
18. 'Georgie's gym	5	46. Hide and seek	11
19. Counting sounds	5	47. Treasure hunt	12
20. Sound buttons	5	48. Write what you see	12
21. Phoneme frame	5	49. Phonics Basketball!	12
22. What's in the box?	6	50. Search letters and sounds	12
23. Buried treasure	6		
24. Make jumbled words / sentences	6	Books and stories.	13
25. Make new words	6		
26. How many words can you make?	7		
27. Full circle	7		
28. Find the same	7		
29. Find the other part	7		
30. Complete the sentence	8		

## 1. Flashcards

Make flashcards with letters or words

Hold up the **flashcards** with words or letters, one at the time.

Letters: Ask the children to name the letter sound.

Words: Ask the children to blend the word / read the word

*Variation:*

- Say the word with letter sounds before you show the card. Ask the children what you said and then show the card.
- Use action / mnemonic
- Increase the speed of presentation so that the children learn to respond quickly

**Quick read:** How many letters, words or sentences can you read in 1 minute?

## 2. Jolly Phonic's Wall Frieze

Point to the letters on **the Wall Frieze** and ask the children to tell the sounds.

As the children become familiar with the letters, increase the speed of presentation.

Sometimes ask a child to be the teacher so the child can get more confidence and it gives you the opportunity to watch and assess they children respond.

Name a letter sound and ask the children to point the right picture with grapheme.

## 3. Letter wall or letter book

Cut out pictures of **papers and / or magazines**.

Make sets of words that start with the same sound and paste them on a big paper, on the wall or a page in a book. (A book per child or make one big book together). Or let the children make drawing.

## 4. Rhyming

Name a word or write it on the blackboard.

What rhymes to it?

E.g.: rat – mat – cat

house – mouse

pen – when – then

It doesn't matter when the children say nonsense words.

If you write the words ask the children which letters are the same / different.

## 5. Sound sets

Put **objects or pictures** on the table. There must be two or more **with the same sound** at the beginning.

The children search for the object or pictures with the same sound at the beginning.

*Variation:*

Sets with the same sound at the end or in the middle.

## 6. Match

Give each child a card with a letter, picture or word. The children walk around and try to find the child with the matching card. E.g.

- the same letters
- the same word
- word – picture
- letter – picture or word that start with this letter

There can be two cards that match but also more, like words with the same vowel or the same letter at the beginning of the words.

See also: playing memory

## 7. I spy with my little eye

The teacher or a child says: I spy with my little eyes something that starts with sound .....

The other children guess what it is. They name things in the class that start with the sound till it is the one that the teacher (or child) has in mind.

*Variation:*

Sound at the end of the word

Sound in the middle

With double letters like br, sn, etc.

Spy in different surroundings like farm, shop, kitchen, play ground. Say: I spy with my little eyes in the ..... something.....

## 8. Spot letter sounds

Show a **picture**.

What do you see at the picture with letter sound .....

You can use **the big book of Jolly Phonics**. For individuals or small groups use **the hard carton book, Finger Phonics, of Jolly Phonics**.

Check the library for other books to use for this activity.

## 9. Throw a letter dice:

Throw a **letter dice**. Use a dice with the letters you teach that week and repeat the ones you used before.

Can you make a word with this letter?

Can you blend this word?

Can you write it?

Make sure that all of the children can see the dice.

How many words can you make?

## 10. A sack with letters

Put cards with the **letters** the children have learned **in a sack**.

One child takes a letter, without looking, and shows it to the other children.

Can you make a word with this letter?

Can you blend it?

Can you write it?

## 11. Fans

Use **fans** with letters from one or more sets of letters.

Say a letter sound and ask the children to find the letter on the fan and leave it at the top, sliding the other letters out of sight.

When every child has found the letter they hold it up for you to see.

When there is not a fan for each child let them work together or work in small groups.

Work in pairs or in small groups and give each child a different fan. Who has the letter you say?

*Variation:*

Make words with the letters of the fan.

## 12. Quick write letters / words

Give each child **a piece of paper or their book**.

Say a letter sound and ask the children to write it down.

Then write the letter on the blackboard so the children can check if they wrote the right one. Pay attention on the letterformation.

## 13. Clay letters

Let the children make letters (words) using **clay or play doh**.

## 14. Letter ball

The children stand in a circle. Throw a beach ball with letters on it to a child.

(Write the letters on it with a permanent marker.)

The child who catches the ball looks which letter is under his or her right thumb and names a word with that letter.

For small groups you can also use a balloon.

## 15. What do I say?

Put a set of any six (or more) **objects or pictures**: e.g. pen, book, box, mug, block, chart, chalk, soap, doll, etc.

Say the name of one of the objects or pictures using sound-talk (saying the word with the letter sounds, one by one). Ask a child to point to the object or picture.

Make **a list of the words** / items you want to use.

## 16. Build vocabulary

Search 2 words that match with alliteration like:

I went shopping and I got a **blue ball**; a **beautifull bike**; **colourful crayons**, a small **shirt**; etc.

*variation:*

Annie got an **apple**, **Ben** got a **bike**, .....

## 17. Letter trains

Make chains of words, using the last letter of a word with the first letter of the next word. Like:

car – rabbit – train – n...

## 18. 'Georgie's gym

Use a **soft toy** (Georgie, or give it another name) give instructions:

1. Stand u-p
2. Put your hands on your kn-ee-s
3. Put your hands on your f-ee-t
4. Put your finger on your n-o-se
5. Bend your arm round your b-a-ck
6. Wiggle your.....

## 19. Counting sounds

Sound-talk (say the word with the letter sounds, one by one) a word.  
Hold up a finger for each sound you hear.

## 20. Sound buttons

Display a word. Start with VC words (e.g. it, at), than CVC words (e.g. sun, mat) etc. It depends on the reading of the children.

Say the word with the letter sounds, one by one together with the children.

Write it on the blackboard and put a button (dot) under each sound.

Use the **flashcards** with sound buttons.

## 21. Phoneme frame

Give the children a **phoneme frame** like

--	--	--	--	--

Or write a frame on the blackboard.

Say a word like *cat* the children say the word with the letter sounds, one by one.

They write the right letters on the right place in de frame. So, cat = c a t

Start with VC words, than CVC words, etc.

Instead of writing you can use lettercards.

## 22. What's in the box?

**Set of word cards and set of objects or pictures corresponding to the word cards.**

Put the objects or pictures in a **box**.

Display a card – blend the word.

Ask one child to find the object or picture in the box.

*Variation 1:*

- Put objects or pictures behind a **scream or table** or something else.  
One child takes an object or picture and puts it in the box.  
The child sound-talks (says the word with the letter sounds, one by one) what's in the box.  
The other children say what it is and look for the right word card.

*Variation 2:*

- Half of the class gets a word card and the other half an object or picture.
- The children with a word card stand up and walk around to find the child with the corresponding object or picture

*Variation 3:*

*One child puts an object in a box. The other children, try, asking questions, to find out what is in the box. The child with the box is only allowed to answer with yes or no.*

## 23. Buried treasure

About **10 cards, shaped and colored like coins**, with words and nonsense words on them made up from the letters the children have been learning.

**Containers representing a treasure chest and a waste bin.**

Blend / read the words with the children and ask if it is a proper word or a nonsense word.

Put the proper words in the treasure chest and the nonsense words in the waste bin.

*Variation:*

Show a word (or write it on the blackboard): When it's a proper word put your thumb up, when it's nonsense put your thumb down.

## 24. Make jumbled words

Cut out of paper or cardboard **the letters of a word** like *cat* and ask the children to fix the word.

Make the words longer and longer.

*Variation:*

Mix the words of a sentence and write them on the blackboard. Fix the sentence.

## 25. Make new words

Write a long word on the blackboard.

Make new words with the letters of the word on the board. E.g. television, you can make: ten – vision – son – sin – on – in – etc.

## 26. How many words can you make?

Draw this frame on the blackboard.  
How many words can you make with these letters?

You can make frames with other letters.

c	f	t
p	a	m
r	s	n

## 27. Full circle

Give the children a **set of letters**.

Let them make the first word you say, or write on the blackboard.

Let them make the second word, etc. Every time one letter is changing.

Go on till you are back by the first word.

### **Circles:**

1. Sat – sit – sip – tip – tap – sap – sat.
2. Pin – pit – sit – sat – pat – pan – pin.
3. Pot – pod – pad – sad – mad – mat – pat – pot.
4. Cat – can – man – map – mop- cop – cap – cat.
5. Leg – peg – pet – pat – rat – ran – rag – lag – leg.
6. Run – bun – but – bit – hit – him – dim – din – sin – sun – run.
7. Ship – chip – chin – thin – than – can – cash – rash – rang – ring – rip – ship.
8. Song – long- lock – shock – shop – chop – chip – chick – thick – thing – sing – song.
9. Car – card – lard – laid – maid – mood – moon – moan – moat – mart – cart – car.

## 28. Find the same

Give each child a piece of paper with a sound or a word.

The children walk around and try to find the children with the same letter sound or word.

You can make two, three or four the same.

### *Variation:*

Make groups with different words but with the same vowel.

## 29. Find the other part

Give each child a piece of paper with a part of a word.

The children walk around and try to find the child with the other part that makes one word with his or her part. E.g. win – dow; ta – ble

Or practice the words with 2 consonants like br – ead; fa – rm

### *Variation:*

Make groups with words that belong together. E.g. animals of the farm, things for cooking, plants.

Give children a part of a sentence. Find the other part.



### 30. Complete the sentence

Write on the blackboard e.g. The dog is .....

Finish it together and write it on the blackboard.

For each sentence there are more possibilities. How many do you know?

You can also give the first letter of the word, like: The dog is w ..... (wet) or s ..... (sick).

Encourage the children to make the sentences longer and longer.

*Variation:*

Each child writes its own sentence.

Compare the sentences.

### 31. Write a sentence

Show **an object or picture**.

Who can make a sentence about it.

Blend and write the sentence together on the blackboard.

*Variation:*

Each child writes its own sentence.

Compare the sentences.

Give two (or more) words: can you make a sentence with both (all) words?

### 32. What's wrong?

Write sentences on the blackboard like:

I go to deb (bed)

The cat is on the tam (mat)

A tac (cat) has legs

The nus (sun) is hot.

What's wrong

Write the right spelling on the blackboard.

When the children don't see what's wrong, tell them which word is wrong and let them blend it correct.

### 33. Missing word in a sentence

Write **a sentence** but leave out one word.

Ask the children which word, from **a set of words**, can be filled in.

Write the word.

Are there more possibilities?

### 34. Sentence substitution

Write **a sentence** on the blackboard.

Let the children read the sentence. First for themselves and then together.

Choose one word and ask the children to replace it for another word.

Eg. The cat is on the mat → The dog is on the mat → The dog is on the grass

*Variation:*

- Write the sentence and some words they can use for replacing, on the blackboard. Try the words, one by one, and ask the children, after reading it, if it makes sense or is ridiculous.  
E.g. The ..... is on the mat. sky – house – cat. What is correct: The sky is on the mat; The house is on the mat; The cat is on the mat.
- Put words in **a box**. Choose a word in the sentence. Take a word out of the box. Can you put the word out of the box on the word in the sentence you choose?  
E.g. I sit in the car → we choose to change car and pick the card moon → I sit in the moon: sense or ridiculous?

### 35. Yes or no?

**Cards with questions.**

Show the card. Or write question on a paper and ask them only orally.

Is the answer yes: put your thumb up: Is the answer no: put your thumb down.

You can ask: facts (grass is blue; cool is a vegetable; etc.)

opinion (I like colour green; I like football; I'm 5 years old; etc.)

question about the subject or theme you teach.

*Variation:*

Put a **big card with yes** on one side of the class and at the other side a **big card with no**. Go to the right answer.

Or sit down – stand up.

### 36. Choose three correct answers

A number of **prepared questions or statements**, three correct answers and one incorrect.

Which answers are correct?

Which of these are days of the week?	sunday	thursday	tuesday	september
What do you see on the farm	cow	pig	lion	hen

*Variation:*

Choose 1 right answer.

The color of the grass is	red	green	black	pink
---------------------------	-----	-------	-------	------

### 37. Reach the top

Draw a staircase on the black board.

Write a letter on the board. When the children know the sound, put a tick on the first step of the staircase.

Step with each right answer.

After how many answer do they reach the top?

You can also let them blend or read words or sentences.

*Variation:*

- Divide the group in two or more groups and make a race of it.

### 38. Board Race

Divide the class in 3 or 4 groups.

Draw lines down the board to divide it into 3 or 4 areas. Write on the board in each column a different. For example in column 1, write "ai", column 2 write "oa" and in column 3 write "ir".

Children stand in line and go one by one to the board and write a word (spelling it correctly of course!) that fits that column's sound. Then he goes to the last place in line. Group 1 students write words like rain, train braid, trail, etc. Group 2 students might write boat, goat, float foam, soap, etc. Group 3 students might write bird, first, birthday sir, etc.

Give them 2 minutes. Students must stop when you say "STOP!"

Score the correctly written words and write the total score on the blackboard. If you want to play more times change the sounds for each group each round. Add the scores together. Double words and words that are spelled wrong do not count.

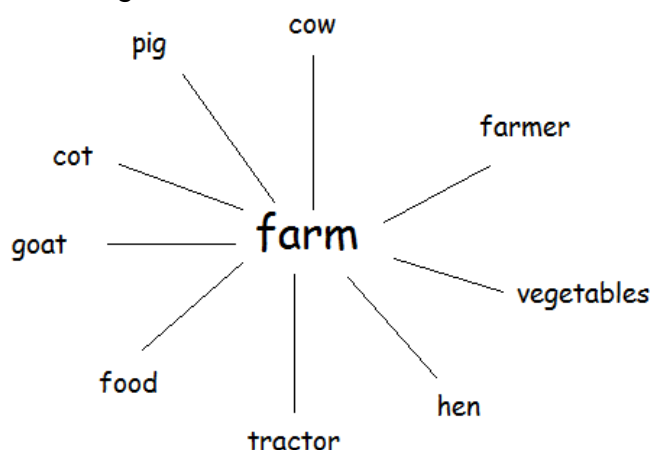
You can also choose for the same sound for each group.

### 39. Mind mapping

Write a word in the middle of the blackboard or paper.

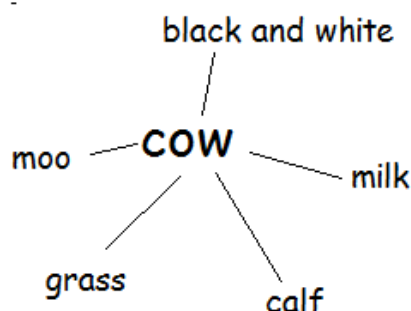
Ask the children what words belong to this word and write them around the word in the middle.

E.g.:



You can choose one of the words and start again, making a new mind map.

E.g



### 40. Hangman

Take a word in your mind.

Write for each letter a dot on the blackboard.

The children name a letter.

When the letter is in the word you write it on the correct place.

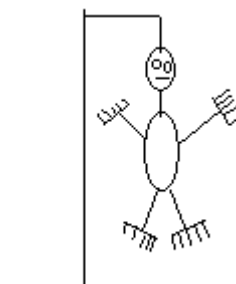
For each letter that is not in the word you draw one line of the 'hangman'.

How fast can the children guess the word?

When they guess the wrong word three times, they hang.

They also loose when the hangman is finished.

hangman



# To play outside

## 41. Spot sounds

Go out and sit down somewhere on the compound. Make groups with about 4 children. Mention a letter sound. Which group can find, as the first, something with this sound? (like l-leaf, g-grass, .....)

## 42. Step by step

Divide the group in smaller groups.

The children stand behind a line. There is another line at a distance of about 4 meter.

Each group has a leader. The leaders are children that know all letter sounds.

Give the leader of the group cards with words.

The leader sound-talks a word for the first member of his group. The child has to blend the sounds and say the word. When it's correct that child can take 1 step forward. The next member of the group gets a turn, etc.

Who is the first that reach the other line?

## 43. Decorated stones

Decorate the stones outside with letters and drawings.

Use (big) chalks.

Mark the area in which they are allowed to draw.

## 44. Hop words

Write letters on the stones.

Children hop from stone to stone making words.

Let them make words on their own or give words they can hop.

## 45. Run to the right letter

Hang letters in trees or write them on the stones.

Say a letter and the children have to run to the right letter.

You can also say a word and children has to run to the letters in the right order.

## 46. Hide and seek

Hide letters and let the children seek them

Can they make words with it?

*Variation:*

- Hide halves of words. Such as bl and ack. Can they find the matching cards

- Hide words with different vowels. Each child as to bring 3 (or another number) cards with different vowels. Who is the first?
- The children can also work in teams or small groups.

#### **47. Treasure hunt**

Let the children follow a route over the compound by reading sentences.  
E.g.: Run to the hut; Go to the hen; Sit in the grass

#### **48. Write what you see**

Go out and sit down somewhere on the compound. (by de clinic, on the farm,....)  
Make groups of about 4 children. Write what you see.  
Which group writes the most words?  
Or let them write sentences. Give for each correct word a point.

#### **49. Phonics Basketball!**

Divide the class in groups, lining them up.  
Place a can or basket several feet from the beginning line.  
Give the first player from the first group a word to spell.  
If he spells the word correct, he gets the basketball and tries to throw it in the can. When it's a goal the group gets a point.  
The one who played goes to the last place of the line.  
Then it's the other team's turn.  
Which team gets most points?

*Variation:*

Use colored tape to put down two different lines. The children choose from behind which line they try to score. The line close to the basket is worth 2 points, from a further distance is worth 2 points.

#### **50. Search letters and sounds**

Look for letters and words on the compound. Can you read it?  
What does it mean?  
Can you design your own signpost? For the school or something else.

# Books and stories

## Before you read the book

- Talk about a book before you read it to the children or before they read it by themselves.
- Talk about the title and the pictures on the cover. Look through the pictures and discuss what you think the story might be about.
- Talk about the pictures in the book and discuss what's going to happen next.

## After

- Let the children retell the story.
- Let them tell about their favorite story.
- Ask questions about the story.
- Talk about what might happen after the story ending.
- Play word-and-letter spotting game like:
  - Can you find ..... (any word that is on the page)?
  - Can you find something at the picture that begins with sound .....
- Let them make a summary and / or picture of the story.

## While reading

- If the children do not know what they are reading, ask them to stop and think about what the word or sentence might mean, using a variety of strategies:
  - Reading to the end of the sentence and then deciding on a sensible word to fill the gap;
  - using the picture;
  - using the letter sounds.
- If it is a long word, break it, if possible, into smaller parts. E.g. foot-ball
- If they still can't read the word, read it for them.

## Story telling

- Tell a story together: The first child starts with one sentence of a story. The next one tells the next sentence, and so on. Let them use their fantasy.