

Magic Jar Alphabet Game

Got a few empty jars or coffee cans? Got a kid who needs some alphabet practice, or is just learning to read? The whole family can play this fun homemade game, and your little one will get some great practice learning his letters, sounding things out, and thinking on his feet!

In this very simple, but very fun game, the letters of the alphabet go into a decorated jar. Each player pulls out a letter and tries to name three things that start with that letter. If they do it in time, they get the letter! But if it takes too long, someone else can steal the turn...

This is a fantastic opportunity for your child to participate in group play, exercise turn taking, counting, alphabet recognition and word play.



What You Need:

- A large jar or coffee can
- Paints and brushes
- Paper
- Tape or glue
- Markers (optional)
- Stickers (optional)
- Index cards

What You Do:

1. Have your child decorate a jar, coffee can, or other container of choice. The container should have a lid that stays put when it's shaken.
2. If the container is transparent, make sure your child covers it completely with paint, paper, or stickers! The container needs to shield what's inside from view.
3. While the glue and paint on the container are drying, make the alphabet cards that go inside!: Have your child write one letter of the alphabet on each index card. Depending on the size of your container, you may want to cut the index cards in half first. If your child is still learning to write his letters, write them lightly in pencil first and have him trace over them with marker.
4. Put the alphabet cards in the container, put the lid on, and let your child shake them up!
5. Now, you are ready to play!

Basic Rules:

1. When it's his turn, a player selects a letter out of the container.
2. The player attempts to name three things that start with that letter. (Meanwhile, another player counts to 10 quietly to themselves or on their fingers.)
3. If the player can name three things in 10 seconds, they get to keep the letter. If they can't, they have to hand the letter to the player on their right and that player must name three different things starting with that letter in 10 seconds.
4. If the next player successfully names three things, they keep the letter and get to choose the next letter. If not, play continues to the right until three new things can be named in 10 seconds.
5. The winner of the game is the person who can collect the most letters by the time they run out!

Stash this game on a shelf or even in the car for a quick and easy go-to activity when you and your child have some extra time to practice those letters and numbers.

