Make Name Pattern Art!

One of the first words every kindergartener learns to read or spell is his own name. And because it's personal, children enjoy seeing, playing with, and creating artwork with their names. So what better way to practice reading and basic math than with a word your child is familiar with? In this activity, your child will write and color in his name to improve his letter recognition and patterning skills.

What You Need:

- Blank, 1" graph paper (make your own with our worksheet generator)
- Dark, fine-point permanent marker
- Crayons
- Optional: Clear contact paper or laminating paper

What You Do:

1. Use the fine-point marker to write or have your child write his name on the graph paper, putting one letter in each square across the page.
2. Repeat writing the name over and over, one letter per square, for as many lines as you or your youngster care to do. With younger children, it's best to cut the graph paper down to a more manageable size. Older children can fill an entire 8.5" x 11" sheet.
3. Have your child choose one color for each letter, using it to gently color over each letter. For instance, he may choose to color all "r"s blue, all "t"s yellow, all "o"s red, and so on. This activity looks different with each name you use, so encourage your little one to use Mom's, Dad's, and even siblings' names too.
4. Fill the entire page. Laminate or cover your finished creation with contact paper, and turn it into a placemat, a painting, or even just great refrigerator décor!

What a fun way to practice name writing! You can toss in more math practice by encouraging your child to count or graph letters on the grid. Or let him color name grids for other family names to find common letters and to compare and contrast patterns and name lengths.