

Unscramble

Materials

Note cards • marker

What to do

1. Write a variety of easy reading words on note cards (one per card), such as sight words or consonant-vowel-consonant words. Prior to the activity, think of a few sentences using the words on the note cards and keep them together.
2. Gather the children (8-12 is ideal) around you on a rug on the floor.
3. Explain that they are going to become editors. You may wish to explain that editors correct sentences to make them easier to understand.
4. Pass out three to five of the cards (that make a potential sentence) to some children (one card per child).
5. Read aloud a possible sentence (scrambled) using the words on the cards.
6. Ask the children to arrange themselves in a line in the order that the words were read.
7. Now say, "Unscramble," and the children must figure out by themselves how to create a grammatically correct sentence. There may be several possibilities. Help them to understand this concept. (Perhaps they can be guided to make a question out of their sentence when done?)
8. Read aloud the correct sentence or let the children read their own words aloud.
9. Choose another small group of children to create the next sentence.
10. Be sure all the children have been given the opportunity to participate before repeating the exercise or moving on to another activity.

★ Kate Ross, Middlesex, VT

The Magic Letter Game

Materials

Large note cards • markers

What to do

1. Make a set of cards by writing the uppercase letters of the alphabet on each card (one letter per card), large enough for the children to read in a group setting.
2. Invite the children to sit in a circle with you. Explain that they will be playing

the Magic Letter Game. Emphasize that it is important for them to pay attention and listen so they will know what to say when it is their turn.

3. Show the children the set of cards, one at a time in alphabetical order, and encourage them to name each letter.
4. Shuffle the cards and draw one at random for the “magic letter.”
5. Show the card and invite the class to name the letter. Lay the card face up in front of you.
6. Beginning with the letter “A,” go around the circle and have each child say a letter of the alphabet, in order, until someone gets to the “magic letter.” For example, if the letter “R” was drawn, the game will go from “A” to “R,” and the child who gets to say the letter “R” will be “Mr. R” or “Miss R.” You might want to serve as the initial starting person and say “A,” and then have the sequence move around the circle to your left (the child next to you says “B,” and so on).
7. The person who gets to say the magic letter (in this case, “Miss R”) stands up as everyone claps.
8. Choose a new “magic letter” by drawing another card and begin the alphabet sequence again, with the winner of the previous round starting the game by saying the letter “A.”
9. Repeat the game as many times as you like, each time drawing a new letter.

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10. Sometimes a child may be unsure of what letter to say when it is his turn. Emphasize beforehand that it is always okay to ask for help if they don’t know the answer—this is a learning game! Encourage the children to help their friends by raising their hands if they know the correct letter. The child can then call on a friend who may say the letter.
11. The game can continue until all the letters have been used, or can conclude after a pre-determined number of “magic letters” are chosen.

★ Susan Jones Jensen, Norman, OK

Letter Carrier Game

Materials

Business-size envelopes • markers • scissors • oak tag • “mail” bag • paper for hats