

Simply Charlotte Mason presents

Delightful Reading

Level

1

Playing with Letters and Sounds



Games and Activities Book
By Lanaya Gore

More than 100 multi-sensory games and activities to teach the letters and their sounds!

Easy to do • Quick to play • Fun to repeat

The Playing with Letters and Sounds kit helps you teach your child the first step to reading—learning the letters and their sounds—through play!

This Games and Activities book

- Gives simple instructions, so you can spend more time playing.*
- Uses common household items to keep activities informal and part of everyday life.*
- Keeps activities short to hold attention and encourage repeating favorites often.*
- Provides helpful tips so you know when to pause and when to move on at your child's pace.*

*Jump, draw, move, sculpt, eat, sing, match,
talk, march, stretch, play, . . . learn!*

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Charlotte Mason
.com*

Delightful Reading, Level 1

Playing with
Letters and Sounds
Games and Activities Book

by Lanaya Gore

Thank you to Sonya, Cheley, Alisa, my husband and children
for sharing their ideas for *Playing with Letters and Sounds*.

Delightful Reading, Level 1: Playing with Letters and Sounds, Games and Activities Book
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Introduction

I began exploring Charlotte Mason education when my oldest child was in Kindergarten. Having limited knowledge about all the homeschool curricula and options available, I felt Charlotte's writings were a breath of fresh air from the textbook curriculum I had previously chosen. I've been using her methods since then for our homeschooling journey and have been more than satisfied and joyful with the process.

Before I found Charlotte Mason, I used a little of this and a little of that for my daughter's education. She learned enough via this route, but I'm not sure how. I still can't quite figure out how she learned to read. I decided I wanted to do something a little better-planned for my next child. After reading through *Home Education* by Charlotte Mason, I liked the sound of her reading lesson ideas. But no prepared lesson plans could I find that would be easy to implement. The plans in *Delightful Reading* are a result of my need for a Charlotte Mason reading curriculum.

You will find on page 49 the writings of Charlotte herself on the subject of Playing with Letters and Sounds. Her comments are straight from *Home Education*, Volume 1 of The Original Home Schooling Series.

May you and your child enjoy this first step in Charlotte Mason's delightful road to reading.

Delightful Reading

Level 1: Playing with Letters and Sounds

Level 2: Words I Can Build

Level 3: From Words to Books

Household Items Used in These Activities

These simple items will be needed for some of the playful activities designed to help your child learn letters and their sounds. You will probably have most of the items around the house already or can easily find them.

- Child's favorite story books
- ABC book(s)
- Magnetic, plastic, or wooden letters
- Alphabet floor puzzle
- Jump rope (optional)
- Music (for Musical ABCs)
- Spoon
- Cereal box (or other packaged food item)
- Clear tape or reusable adhesive
- Dough (such as play dough, fondant, or sugar cookie dough)
- Computer keyboard (on a desktop, smart phone, or tablet; could use one at a local library)
- Small markers for Bingo (such as raisins, buttons, or coins)
- Sidewalk chalk
- Goop, sand, shaving cream, or rice
- Mail envelopes or advertisements
- Stone or bean bag (for tossing in Hopscotch)
- Old toothbrush or squirt bottle of water (optional)
- Yarn, masking tape, or shoe laces
- Hat or large bowl
- Snack foods (such as sandwiches, pretzel sticks, or raisins)
- Empty egg carton
- Permanent felt-tip marker
- Empty squeeze bottle (such as a ketchup or mustard bottle)
- Pancake batter
- Recipe cards, magazine, or catalog
- Construction paper or regular printer paper
- Glue
- Coloring book, picture book, or children's dictionary
- Toilet paper, adding machine paper, or paper towels
- Crayons or felt-tip markers

Items used in each activity are **highlighted** so you can tell at glance what will be needed for each one.

How to Use Playing with Letters and Sounds

Playing with Letters and Sounds is designed to help you guide your child into the delightful world of pre-reading through enjoyable hands-on activities. You will gently introduce beginning phonics from identifying the letters to learning the sounds they represent.

- If your child has not yet learned the alphabet, begin with the Activities for Learning Letters on page 9. If your child knows the alphabet but has not yet learned the sounds the letters stand for, begin with Activities for Learning Sounds on page 23.
- Learning letters should be like play for a young one. Leave alphabet letters and other manipulatives out and about for him to play with on his own if he so chooses. Keep activity time light and fun, short and sweet.
- Take your cue from your child. Your child is different from every other child you will meet. He did not learn to walk or talk at exactly the same moment that every other child learned to walk and talk. He will not learn his letters and sounds—or put them together to read words—at exactly the same moment as every other child. If he is interested in words or letters and the sounds they make, do one of the activities and gauge his response. If he wants more, do the next activity in a day or two. If he, however, drags his heels and doesn't enjoy the activity or doesn't understand it, set the activities aside for a week or two then try one again.
- Match your child's pace instead of carrying him to the finish line; you could do one activity every day or just a couple of activities a week depending on your child's level.
- Feel free to repeat favorite activities as often as desired or tweak an activity to better suit your child. Remember, the goal is not to go as fast as you can; the goal is to lay a sure foundation that will help your child enjoy reading for his entire life.
- When you have completed *Delightful Reading, Level 1: Playing with Letters and Sounds* the next step will be *Delightful Reading, Level 2: Words I Can Build*, which guides your child into putting letters and sounds together in order to build and read beginning words.

Activities for Learning Letters

Notes

The letters can be learned in any sequence; you don't have to go in ABC order. Some children will recognize certain letters initially; others will be attracted to different letters first.

One possible sequence for learning letters would be to learn straight-lined uppercase letters first, then curved uppercase, then lowercase letters that look like their uppercase counterparts, and then odd lowercase letters. You could also learn letters from your child's name first or go ahead and learn the letters in ABC order. Choose a sequence that you feel comfortable with.

The activities in the Learning Letters stage can be used in any order. Each activity can be repeated with various letters. Introduce a few letters at a time (two is a good number) instead of all 52 at once; there will be cues in the following activities telling you when to concentrate on vowels, uppercase, and lowercase.

Use the Letters and Sounds bookmark (provided in the kit) to help you keep track of which letters your child knows well and which need more work. Simply underline each letter on the card when you introduce it and circle the letter when your child knows it well. That way you can tell at a glance which letters he knows, which ones he needs more work on, and which ones he doesn't know yet.

Notes

You may use one, some, or all of the suggestions in this activity. You may want to casually mention only one point at a time to your child as you're reading together over several days, or your child may be ready to think about all of the points in one sitting. Either way, continue the discussion only as long as your child shows interest.



"In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you."—Mortimer Adler

Feel free to repeat favorite activities as often as desired.

Introduce the Alphabet

L1. Story Book

Let your child choose a **favorite story book**, then sit down together to read it. Have a short discussion about sentences, words, letters, and sounds.

- » Ask him, "What is in a book?" (He might say stories, pictures, words, or letters.)
- » Draw attention to letters and words that tell the author's story.

Ask him to tell you a short story. Listen, and then talk about how when a story gets written down, other people can read it even if you aren't there to tell them the story yourself. In order to read a story, you first have to learn letters. Letters make sounds and those sounds are put together to make words; words are put together to make sentences and sentences make up a story.

- » Point out letters and name some.

Ask your child to point to the letters on the page of his favorite book. You could name some of the letters by saying such things as, "Your name starts with this one." He might like to know that there are 26 letters in our English alphabet.

- » Point out words and spaces.

Show him the spaces between some of the letters. Tell him the space is how we know when a word begins and ends.

- » Encourage him on the journey.

Tell your child that he is on the journey to learning his letters and sounds so that he can read many wonderful stories that others have written, and maybe one day, he will write down a story of his own.

L2. ABC Book

Read ***A is for Art: A Fine Art Alphabet Book*** (in kit) or another **ABC book** together, taking your time to explore the pictures and pages.

L3. ABC Song

Sing the traditional **ABC Song** or find a new version for your child to learn. Help him say all the letter names distinctly. ("LMNOP" can get run together if you're not careful.)

L4. Letter Play

Provide **magnetic, plastic, or wooden letters** for your child to play with. There is no need to go over every letter at this time; this is an introduction. You might concentrate on two letters of your choice. Choose from these structured suggestions if you wish:

- Name two letters as your child picks them up.
- Have him name some that he might know.
- Make a train by lining them up on the floor or refrigerator.
- Spell your child's name or your pet's name.
- Encourage him to feel the shapes of the letters and notice if they are curved or straight, how many lines make them, etc.
- Have him trace the letters with a finger.

L5. ABC Floor Puzzle

Help your child put together an **alphabet floor puzzle**. Name the letters as you and your child put the pieces together. Have him point out three letters and name them.

L6. Letters and Movement

Have your child **jump rope**, skip, or march while singing or chanting the alphabet together with you.

Concentrate on Vowels

Continue including some consonants, but be sure your child concentrates on *A, E, I, O, U* over the next nine activities.

L7. Musical ABCs

Place about 5–7 **uppercase ABC cards (in kit)** on the floor in a circle. Include at least three vowels. Play **music** and have your child walk around the circle, stepping from letter to letter. (You may need to tape the cards to the floor if they slide around.) Stop the music at random and see if he can name the letter on which he is standing. Name it for him if he can't and quickly move on. Leave unknown letters in the circle and periodically replace known letters with new ones as long as your child is interested in playing.

Use the sidebar section to jot down letters your child is fluent in and letters that need more attention. You can keep track of his progress on the Letters and Sounds bookmark included in the kit.

The cards should be fine after removing the tape. If you are concerned about possible defacement of the cards, use removable poster tape.

Notes

Be a student of your child; know how many letters will challenge without frustrating him when deciding how many to choose for each activity.

Be sure to keep this activity fun and informal; not a demanding drill.

The cards should be fine after removing the tape. If you are concerned about possible defacement of the cards, use removable poster tape.

L8. Go Fish

Choose 6–8 pairs of **uppercase ABC cards (in kit)**, two of each selected letter. Be sure to include the five vowels. Add known and/or unknown consonants for the rest. Mix them together and let each person take three cards in his hands. One person asks another for a letter that matches one he already has. (“Do you have an *A*?”) If he gets a matching card from the inquiry, he can continue by inquiring for another card. If he does not get a match, he must “go fish” by picking up a card from the mixed pile and adding it to his hand. When all pairs have been matched, you can count them up to see who got the most. Give your child time to think about what letters he needs to ask for, but name the letters if he is stumped.

L9. ABC Placemat

Laminate and use the **ABC placemat (L9 in kit)** or purchase a different one. Use the placemat with the following activities at meal times and snack times throughout the day:

- Point to letters together as you sing the ABC song
- Have your child use a **spoon** to point out a couple of letters as you call them.
- Have your child put a raisin on each letter as you call it, then eat all of the **raisins**.
- If your child is having trouble remembering some letters, you might casually point to one anytime you and he are near the table and see if he can name it.

L10. Cereal Box Search

Have your child find 4–6 consonants he knows on a **cereal box** or other packaged food item. See if he can pick out all five vowels.

L11. I Spy Game

Place 8–10 **uppercase ABC cards (in kit)** around the room, **taped** to the walls and laid on the floor. Include all five vowels. Take turns spying out a letter for the other person to find. (“I spy an *E*. That’s right, it’s on the floor by the shoes.”) Ask for the vowels several times if the practice is needed in vowel recognition.

Tell your child that the letters *A, E, I, O, U* are called *vowels*. Vowels are important because they are used in just about every word we read in English.

L12. Which One Doesn’t Belong

Using two sets of **uppercase ABC cards**, lay out three letter cards—two