

# Sensory Bin Literacy Activities

## 1. Alphabet Hide & Seek

Skill: Letter identification, phonemic awareness

What you need:

- A sensory base (kinetic sand, dry rice, pom-poms, or beans)
- Plastic or foam letters
- Small scoop or tongs

How to play:

Hide the letters in the sensory bin. As your child digs them out, name the letter together and say its sound. For extra fun, match the letter to a picture card (e.g., A for apple).

Extension: Ask your child to find the first letter of their name or build simple CVC words.

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## 2. Name Treasure Hunt

Skill: Name recognition and spelling

What you need:

- Letter tiles, wooden letters, or magnetic letters
- A sensory filler
- A name card for reference

How to play:

Hide the letters of your child's name in the sensory bin. Let them find and place them in order on a name mat.

Extension: Write the letters on smooth stones or clothespins for a tactile twist.

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### **3. Sound Sorting Bin**

Skill: Beginning sound recognition

What you need:

- Objects or picture cards representing different beginning sounds (e.g., cat, dog, sun, fish)
- Small containers or labeled mats for sorting
- Sensory filler

How to play:

As your child pulls out items, say the name together and sort them by beginning sound. This promotes phonological awareness and vocabulary.

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### **4. Storytelling Bin**

Skill: Oral language, sequencing, comprehension

What you need:

- Mini figurines (animals, people, vehicles)
- Sensory base (e.g., sand, cotton balls for snow, etc.)
- A prompt or simple storybook

How to play:

Invite your child to create a story using the items they find. Ask guiding questions like “What happened first?” or “Who is the main character?”

Extension: Pair with a book (e.g., Brown Bear, Brown Bear) and have them retell it with the bin items.

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## **5. Rhyming Match Bin**

Skill: Rhyming, phonological awareness

What you need:

- Rhyming picture cards (e.g., cat/hat, log/frog)
- Sensory filler
- Small baskets or trays

How to play:

Hide the cards in the sensory bin. Have your child find and match rhyming pairs. Say each word out loud to emphasize the sounds.

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## **6. Sight Word Scoop & Match**

Skill: Sight word recognition

What you need:

- Laminated sight word cards
- Sensory filler
- Matching mat or board

How to play:

Hide the sight word cards in the bin. As your child finds each word, have them say it, spell it, and match it to a mat.

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## **7. Syllable Smash**

Skill: Syllable counting

What you need:

- Picture cards
- Kinetic sand or play dough
- Mini mallet or fingers

How to play:

Child pulls out a card, says the word, then smashes the kinetic sand for each syllable (e.g., “ap-ple” = 2 smashes).

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## **8. Letter Tracing Sensory Bin**

Skill: Fine motor, letter formation

What you need:

- Salt or sand in a tray
- Letter cards as models
- Finger or paintbrush

How to play:

Have your child trace letters in the sand with their finger or a brush while saying the sound.

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## **9. Mystery Word Builders**

Skill: Spelling, vocabulary

What you need:

- Sensory bin
- Letter tiles
- Word cards or picture cues

How to play:

Children dig for letters to spell simple words (like CVC words or themed vocabulary—e.g., bat, web, moon). Provide word cards to match.

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## **10. Book-Based Sensory Bins**

Skill: Comprehension, vocabulary, story connection

What you need:

- A familiar book (e.g., The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Chicka Chicka Boom Boom)
- Items related to the story
- Sensory filler

How to play:

Recreate the story in the sensory bin. Retell or act out parts as your child engages with the bin. Ask questions like “What happened next?” or “How do you think he felt?”