

Make an Alphabet Book

Let your child play with scissors! Put her to work, creating a book that will keep her busy, and help her practice her letters, too. Long after all those preschool finger paintings have left the front of your refrigerator, you can look back at this book, for a glimpse at what your preschooler thought was special.

What You Need:

- Construction paper
- Glue stick
- Markers
- Magazines, newspapers, stickers, and other materials with pictures
- Binding material (a hole punch and yarn, staples, or whatever else you choose)

What You Do:

1. Ask your child to pick 26 pages of construction paper. Take a marker and write one letter of the alphabet at the top of each page.
2. It's time to work that alphabet! Give your child a stack of newspapers, photos, magazines, and anything else with pictures that you don't mind cutting up. Start with the letter A and ask your child to go through the gathered materials in search of words that begin with that letter-- apples from the grocery store ad, Aunt Thelma's picture from last Easter, an alligator from a magazine, an ant sticker... If your child needs help, you can make the sound the letter makes, to help her in her quest. When she makes a mistake, gently correct her, but without criticizing. For example, "That word starts with "eh" and the letter A sounds like "ah".
3. After your child has collected all the images, ask him to help you label each one. Your child can tell you what the picture and you can write the name below. Or older preschoolers might want to take a crack at it themselves, writing the words with a little help from mom or dad.
4. Repeat this process with each letter of the alphabet. For tougher letters, like x, you may need to go to the computer and print out some pictures to have on hand.
5. Once you've finished with all the letters, stack the pages in order, from A to Z. Let your child decide on a title, for example, Michael's Alphabet Book, and then write the name on a cover page, with a byline beneath. Let your child decorate to his heart's content.
6. You've reached the final stretch! Now it's time to bind your book. The fastest and easiest way is to punch holes in all of the pages and use yarn to tie the book together. If you don't have yarn or a hole punch, you can use staples. Or, for a spill proof version, take your creation to the copy store and have them laminate and bind it for you.



Don't forget to read your book! As you look over the letters, both now and in the future, you'll remember how much fun it was to create (and how hard it was to find a picture of a xylophone!)