

Letter Sorts

What are Letter Sorts?

In a letter sort activity, students look at letters and sort them into groups based on various features of the letters. Students explore letter formation and learn the consistent features of letters. At first, letters may be sorted by features such as *tall letters* or *letters with circles*. Later, students may sort letters with the same names that are written in different styles of type.

Using the Letter Sort Cards

Give students plenty of time to play with individual letter cards or magnetic letters. Show students a letter and have them find the same letter from among their letter cards.

Have students work in groups of three or four with sets of letter cards. Let them determine how to sort their letters. Ask them to explain their rationale to give you insight into how they are thinking about letters.

Ways to Sort Letters

- find letters with circles
- find letters in your name
- put the letters in alphabetical order
- sort tall letters
- sort short letters
- find letters with tails
- find upper-case letters
- find lower-case letters
- match upper-and lower-case letters

Letter Walk

Have students be on the lookout for letters in their environment. Take a walk around the classroom or the building and have students write down letters they see. When they return to their seats, have students report on what letters they found and where they saw them.

Alphabet Mats

Glue a copy of an upper- and lower-case letter (Aa, for example) onto a piece of colored construction paper to form an alphabet mat. Show the students how to search through old magazines, junk mail, and newspapers for other examples of that same letter to cut out and glue to the mats. When the mat is full, laminate it and put it in the word study center. Have students match their letter sort cards to the correct mat. Mats can be photocopied to form alphabet books for each student.