Dots and Dots of Fun! – A Learn the Braille Alphabet Game for the Whole Family

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Let’s get started!

Braille is so much fun and the whole family can learn the braille code!

Here are a few things to get you started.

In your family braille kit, you will find some jumbo braille cells, just the right size for making braille letters with Smarties, Skittles, grapes or any other small round food or objects (like buttons, cotton balls, pompoms…). Feel free to be creative and please share any ideas that you come up with with your child’s vision teacher! J

For parents:

To get you started, read the page “The Braille Trail” and have a look at the braille code on “The Braille Alphabet” page. (<https://braillebug.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2023/09/BrailleBugBrailleTrail.pdf>)

Now that you understand how the braille cell is laid out and how to make braille letters, let’s play! This game is designed to allow you to have some quick connection time together while you learn the braille code. The game is divided into individual letters or groups of letters so you can play one short game per day.

Get your A game on-The Smartie game

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some Smarties for each person.

How to play:

1. Put a Smartie in the top left section of the plastic braille cell tray. This is dot 1 — Letter “a”.

2. Take turns saying words that start with the letter “a”.

3. When each player has had a turn, eat your Smartie!

Bring out the “b”est in you – The Skittles game

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some Skittles for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one Skittle in the top left section and one in the section below it. This is dots 1-2 and makes the letter “b”. Say this letter together.

2. Take turns doing an action that starts with the letter “b” (for example: bouncing, beating a drum, biting a banana, banging bath bombs…)

3. When each person has had a turn, eat your Skittles!

Crafty “c” – The creative game

What you need:

Pipe cleaners, Wikki Stix, other craft materials and 2 cotton balls for each person (or candies if you prefer)

How to play:

1. Make the letter “c” by putting a cotton ball in the top left section of the plastic jumbo braille cell and one in the top right section. This is dots 1 and 4. You have made the letter “c”.

2. Each person thinks of something that they can make with pipe cleaners, Wikki Stix… that begins with the letter “c” (for example: a caterpillar, circle, cat…).

3. Repeat making as many things as you can think of that begin with the letter “c”. (Or, if using candies instead of cotton balls, you can now eat the 2 candies that you used to make the letter “c”)

Dancing D – The dice game

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and 3 tactile dice for each person.

A small box empty box

How to play:

1. Put one die in the top left section and one in top right section and one just below it. This is dots 1-4-5 and makes the letter “d”. Say this letter together.

2. Take turns tossing all 3 dice into the empty box. Add up the number on the dice.

3. You now have to find the same number of things in your house that start with the letter “d”. Take a walk and call out the names of the items as you find them. (For example: if you roll a total of 9 on all 3 dice, find 9 things in your home that start with the letter “d” such as your dog, a doll, dominos, dishes…)

4. Each time you call out an item, the other family members say the letter “d” and tap fingers 1-4-5 on the surface in front of them.

E – Egg on your partner

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some jellybeans or small candy eggs for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one candy in the top section on the left and one in the 2nd section of the right in the tray. This is dots 1-5 and makes the letter “e”. Say this letter together.

2. Starting with the youngest player, say a word that begins with the letter “e”. The person to the right then says “Excellent” and repeats their word and says a new word that also starts with the letter “e”.

(Example:

* Player 1: elephant
* Player 2: “Excellent”, elephant, eagle
* Player 3: “Excellent”, elephant, eagle, eyes … )

Continue in this way until someone can no longer repeat all of the words. When this happens, all together say “Eat your eggs” and eat the candies.

F – G – H – The Feel Good and Happy Game

Now that you are becoming a wiz at learning the braille code, let’s see if we can learn a few letters at a time!

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some marbles (or any small round object) for each person.

How to play:

1.

* **Fabulous F** – Put one marble in the top section on the left and one in the section just below it. Put a 3rd marble in the 1st section on the right side of the tray. This is dots 1-2-4 and makes the letter “f”. Say this letter together.
* **Gorgeous G** – Put one marble in the top section on the left and one in the section just below it. Put a 3rd marble in the 1st section on the right side of the tray and a 4th one below it. This is dots 1-2-4-5 and makes the letter “g”. Say this letter together.
* **Happy H** – Put one marble in the top section on the left and one in the section just below it. Put a 3rd marble in the 2nd section on the right side of the tray. This is dots 1-2-5 and makes the letter “h”. Say this letter together.

2. Now let’s play! Choose a song that starts with the letter F and play it or sing it while you dance to the tune. Repeat for the letters G, and H.

I – Instrument Inspiration

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and 2 small jingle bells for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one jingle bell in the second section on the left and one in the 1st section on the right of the tray. This is dots 2-4 and makes the letter “i”. Say this letter together.

2. Using your jingle bells and any materials you find around your home, each person makes a simple instrument (for example, attach your bells to a pencil with a twist tie).

3. Make up a song about the letter “i” and take turns singing your song and playing your instrument!

J – The “J”-umping Jacks game

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and 3 jellybeans for each person.

How to play:

1. Put 1 jellybean in the second section on the left and one in the top section and the section below it on the right side of the tray. This is dots 2-4-5 and makes the letter “j”. Say this letter together.

2. Take turns saying a word that starts with the letter “j”. After you say the word, spell it together and count the number of letters in the word.

3. Now everyone jumps up and does the same number of jumping jacks as there are letters in the word. (For example: The word “jam” has 3 letters so everyone would do 3 jumping jacks). \*If jumping jacks are a challenge, clap your hands or tap the table.

4. When everyone has had a turn to say a word, eat your jellybeans.

K – Kind Kids

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and 2 small round objects such as marbles for each person.

How to play:

1. You are adding the bottom dots in the braille cell to your letters now. Put one small round object in the top section on the left and one below it in the bottom section on the left of the tray. This is dots 1-3 and makes the letter “k”. Say this letter together.

2. Quietly take a moment to think of something kind to say about each person playing the game. One by one take turns sharing your kind words with each other. If you feel comfortable with the group you are playing with, end the game with a group hug.

L-M-N – Sour LeMoNs

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some lemon drops or other small candies for each person.

How to play:

1.

* **Lovely L** – Put one candy in the top section on the left and one in each of the sections just below it. This is dots 1-2-3 and makes the letter “L”. Say this letter together.
* **Magnificent M** – Put one candy in the top section on the left and one in the 3rd section below it. Put a 3rd candy in the 1st section on the right side of the tray. This is dots 1-3-4 and makes the letter “m”. Say this letter together.
* **Nifty N** – Put one candy in the top section on the left and one in the 3rd section below it. Put a 3rd candy in the 1st section on the right side of the tray and another candy just below it. This is dots 1-3-4-5 and makes the letter “n”. Say this letter together.

2. Think about foods that are sour. (\*Challenge\*: try to think of only foods that start with the letters L, M and N). Say 3 foods each.

3. When everyone has had a turn. Eat your sour lemon drops!

The Organized O game!

 What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects such as marbles for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one object in the top section on the left and one in the 3rd section below it. Put a 3rd object in the 2nd section on the right side of the tray. This is dots 1-3-5 and makes the letter “o”. Say this letter together.

2. Organizing is important! Ask the adult in the game for one thing that they need help organizing (for example: toys in your toy box).

3. Set a timer and see how quickly you can finish the task!

4. When everyone is done say all together “Organized and in order!” (Now make sure you help to put this game away in an organized way!)

P- Playdough Party!

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some playdough for each person.

How to play:

1. Roll a small amount of playdough to make 4 small balls. Put one small ball of playdough in each of the sections on the left of your braille cell tray. Put one small ball in the top right section. This is dots 1-2-3-4 and makes the letter “p”. Say this letter together.

2. Start the party rolling! Create as many things as you can that begin with the letter “p” using your playdough!

3. Take turns telling everyone what you’ve made. Make sure you describe it too!

Q – Quiet Questions

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects such as cotton balls for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one cotton ball in the top section on the left, one in the 2nd section below it and one in the 3rd section below it. Put a 3rd cotton ball in the 1st section on the right side of the tray and one below it in the 2nd section on the right. This is dots 1-2-3-4-5 and makes the letter “q”. Say this letter together.

2. Quiet questions is a game of learning and listening. After a busy day, take some time to connect with your family members by asking them questions such as “What was the best thing about your day today?” or “What is your favourite thing to do?” … We are so busy that this game gives you a few minutes to really listen to what your family has to say. Follow up their answer with more questions for them if you have time!

Another way to play Quiet Questions: If you have access to an AI Assistant such as Alexa, Siri, Cortana…, take turns finding out about things that you are curious about, such as, “How fast does a cheetah run?”…

3. Finish the game by taking a deep breath, closing your eyes and thinking about how you appreciate the people you are playing the game with.

R - Review Race!

Here we go! The competition you’ve been waiting for! Who will be the fastest to remember and create letters using their plastic braille cell tray?

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects such as marbles for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one object in the top section on the left, one in the 2nd section and one in the 3rd section below it. Put a 4th small round object in the 2nd section on the right side of the tray. This is dots 1-2-3-5 and makes the letter “r”. Say this letter together.

2. Game on! As quickly as you can, try to remember as many letters as possible form A-R and make them using your marbles (or other small round object) and your plastic braille cell tray.

3. Call out each letter after you make it and share the dot numbers with the other players so that they remember how to make these letters too.

4. How many of the 18 letters that you’ve learned so far do you remember? Review the ones that you’ve forgotten.

S - Silly Statues!

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects (such as a marble) for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one small round object in the 2nd section on the left of your braille cell tray and one small round object in the bottom section on the same side. Put one small round object in the top right section. This is dots 2-3-4 and makes the letter “s”. Say this letter together.

2. Say as many words that begin with the letter “s” as you can. Call these words out all together. Now stand up if you are able to or stay seated if that’s what works for you and freeze in a silly way. You are a statue! Hold your position for 3 seconds!

3. With the group all sitting back together. Make the letter “s” in your braille cell tray one more time. While you are doing this, think up a name for your silly statue that starts with the letter “s”. Take turns telling everyone your made-up name.

T- Take Turns Teaching!

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects such as marbles for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one small round object in the 2nd and bottom sections on the left side of your braille cell tray. Put one small round object in the top right section and one below it. This is dots 2-3-4-5 and makes the letter “t”. Say this letter together.

2. One at a time, think of a word that begins with the letter “t”. Tell everyone your word and try to spell it.

3. Guide each person to make the letters in your word one at a time in their jumbo braille cells. (\*If you haven’t learned one of the letters in your word yet, just skip over it\*) Make sure to tell the other players the dot numbers for each letter in your word. For example: If your word is “tap”

1. Say the word “tap”
2. Tell everyone to make the letter “t” using dots 2-3-4-5
3. Take the small round objects out of your jumbo braille cell and get everyone to make the letter “a” telling them that is dot 1.
4. Repeat this step to make the letter “p” dots 1-2-3-4

4. When your turn is finished, the next person thinks of a word and follows the same steps.

U – Up your Understanding!

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects such as marbles for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one small round object in the top and bottom sections on the left side of your braille cell tray. Put one small round object in the bottom right section. This is dots 1-3-6 and makes the letter “u”. Say this letter together.

2. Each person thinks of a word that begins with the letter “u” (don’t say it out loud!).

3. Come up with a few clues to have your teammates guess your word. (For example, if your word is “umbrella”, your clues might be “You use it in the rain”; “It keeps you dry”.

4. If you know the answer, and are able to, jump up and shout it out. If jumping is a challenge for you, just shout out your answer!

V- Various Vocations – the Vamping your Vocabulary Game

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one small round object in each of the sections on the left of your braille cell tray. Put one small round object in the bottom right section. This is dots 1-2-3-6 and makes the letter “v”. Say this letter together.

2. Did you know that vocation is another word for job? If you can think of a job that starts with the letter “v” (hint like “veterinarian”) say it out loud.

3. After every vocation is mentioned, each person repeats the word and replaces their small round objects to make the letter “v” each time.

\*Variation – If you want to play this game again, try thinking of other things besides vocations that start with the letter “v” such as animals, things you find around the house…

What??? The W Game!

I bet you guessed it! This game is about asking the 5-W questions: Who? What? Where? When? and Why?

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one small round object in the 2nd section on the left of your jumbo braille cell and one small round object in each of the sections on the right side of your braille cell tray. This is dots 2-4-5-6 and makes the letter “w”. Say this letter together.

2. Now let’s play a guessing game. Think of a word that you can answer who, what, where, when and why questions for. (For example: Doctor)

3. Each person then asks you one question beginning with Who, the next person asks, What, the next one asks Where… (For example, with doctor – Question: Who Answer: a person; Question: What – Answer: helps people; Question: Where: -- Answer: hospital or office; Question: When – Answer: When they are sick; Question: Why – Answer: To make them better).

4. After all 5 questions have been answered, each person takes a guess at the word you were thinking of and makes the letter “w” again in their jumbo braille cell.

X-press Yourself – The X-Y Game

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some small round objects for each person.

How to play:

1.

* **eXceptional X**– Put one small round object in the top section on the left and one in each of the 3rd sections below it. Put one small round object in the top section on the right and one in the 3rd section below it. This is dots 1-3-4-6 and makes the letter “x”. Say this letter together.
* **Young Y** – Put one small round object in the top section on the left and one in the 3rd section below it. Put another small round object in the 1st section on the right side of the tray and one in each of the sections below it. This is dots 1-3-4-5-6 and makes the letter “y”. Say this letter together.

2. Try to make your teammates laugh using silly phrases with words that only start with the letters “x” or “y”. (For example, “yucky young yams yearn (for) xylophones.” See who gets the most laughs!

Zip, Zap, Zoom – Z – The race to the finish line game

You are almost done learning all of the letters of the alphabet in braille!

What you need:

1 plastic braille cell tray and some marbles for each person.

How to play:

1. Put one small marble in the 1st section on the left of your jumbo braille cell and one marble below it in the 3rd section. Place one marble in the 2nd section on the right side of your braille cell tray and one below it in the 3rd section. This is dots 1-3-5-6 and makes the letter “z”. Say this letter together.

2. Sitting at a table or on the floor, use a Wikki Stix or pipe cleaner to mark a start line and directly across from it, a finish line.

3. Sit in a line at the start line and take turns saying a word that starts or ends with “z”.

4. Once everyone has had a turn to say a word, all together say, “zip, zap, zoom!” and roll your marbles from the starting line to the finish line.

\*Note: For more auditory feedback, use your little bells instead of marbles for this game.

Well done braille wiz! You have learned all of the letters of the alphabet! Give yourself a big pat on the back! Now play the game again in any order you like! Before you know it, you will be a braille alphabet champion!