



Activity 1

PRINT AWARENESS

Building Your Name

In this episode, Mary and Mike showed us that when we layer elements/parts together, we create or “build” a finished product. If we do not include all the elements, we don’t really have a complete project. This is true when writing our names. We must include all the letters in the correct order for the word to carry meaning. It is important for children to manipulate the letters in their names before they are expected to write them. Playing with letters helps your child to recognize and name letters, develop sequencing skills, and develop an awareness that print is meaningful.

VA Unified Early Learning and Development Standards

- ✓ APL1.1 Being curious learners
- ✓ APL1.2 Being active explorers
- ✓ APL3.2 Building working memory
- ✓ APL3.3 Thinking flexibly
- ✓ APL3.5 Persisting and problem-solving
- ✓ HPD3.1 Using eyes and hands together
- ✓ HPD3.2 Developing small muscle control
- ✓ SED1.2 Developing self-esteem and confidence
- ✓ CLLD2.1 Paying attention to print as meaningful
- ✓ CD4.2 Learning about and through music
- ✓ CD4.4 Using visual arts media to develop skills and express thoughts and feelings

Materials Needed

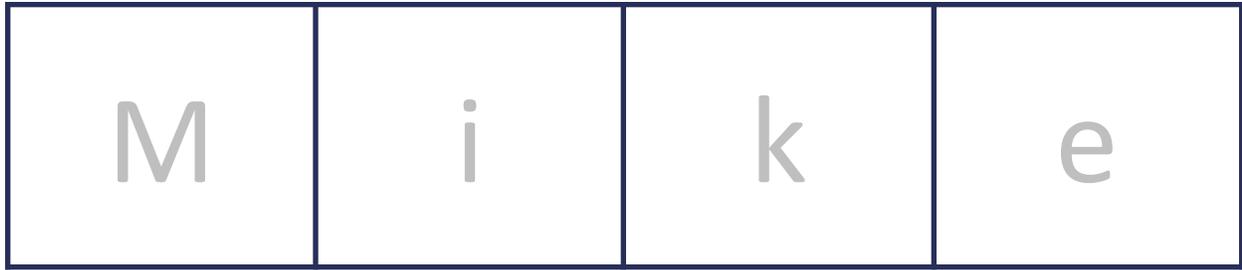
- Paper
- Post-it Notes
- Magnetic letters or alphabet blocks/cards

Directions

Before you begin, create a frame/template that has a space for each letter in your child’s name. For example, “Mike” has four letters, so your frame would have four equal spaces.

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Depending on your child’s developmental needs, you may scaffold this activity by writing the letters inside each space so that your child begins by matching letters.



You might also write out your child's name for them to use as a reference.



Gather the letters in your child's name, using materials you have available to you.

Suggestions include magnetic letters, alphabet blocks, rocks with letters written on them, or letter cards that you have created—Post-it Notes are great for this!

Have your child build their names. Be sure to encourage them to say the letters as they build it.

Once your child can build their name independently, see if they can “spot the error” when you mix up the letters.

For an Extra Challenge

Use these activities to learn the names of other family members and pets. A super challenge would be putting the whole alphabet in order -- *can you do it?*

Some children learn best when moving their whole body.

Check out this “Name Hop” gross motor idea for using paper plates to learn your name.

<https://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/name-hop-gross-motor-name-activity.html>

Book Connections

- ***Andy That's My Name*** by Tomie DePaola
 - Andy has a wagon full of letters for spelling words. What happens when the big kids want to play with the letters, but not with Andy.
- ***Alma And how She Got Her Name*** by Juana Martinez-Neal
 - Alma's name is very long. This book helps her to realize just how special her name is.
- ***Hello, My Name Is Ruby*** by Phillip C. Stead
 - Ruby is a friendly little bird looking for friends and her place in the world.
- ***Chrysanthemum*** by Kevin Henkes
 - Chrysanthemum thinks her name is "absolutely perfect" until her first day of school. This story is perfect for addressing teasing and self-esteem.
- ***The Letters Are Lost*** by Lisa Ernst
 - The alphabet blocks are usually all put together and in order. Oh, no! The letters are all lost. Read this book to see if they can be brought back together again.