

PUZZLE BLENDING



Ewan found blending so tricky; he just couldn't hear how the sounds could fit together to make words. I played these kinds of games with him many times before he started getting it, so don't worry if, the first twenty times you play, you are the only one modelling how to blend the sounds together, with very loooooonnggg clues to help them. They will get it eventually, and this game is perfect to support them as they do.

GRAB:

- a bit of cardboard (ideally from a cardboard box)
- a whiteboard pen
- a marker pen
- scissors
- dice
- sellotape or sticky-back plastic

TO SET UP ...

1. Cut a strip off your piece of card and cut it into three connecting puzzle pieces.
2. Put sellotape or sticky-back plastic over each puzzle piece.
3. On the remainder of the card, or a bit of paper if there isn't enough card left, draw an outline of each puzzle piece across the top, then draw lines on either side of them so that each puzzle outline is at the top of a column.
4. Then write the numbers 1 to 6 down the left-hand side. Draw a long line under the numbers, crossing the lines of the puzzle columns, so you end up with a grid with three columns of boxes and six rows.
5. In each box of the grid, write a letter or letters (depending on which level of phonics your little one is up to).
6. The middle column must have vowels or vowel digraphs in it.

TO PLAY ...

1. Your child selects one puzzle piece, then rolls the dice.
2. Identify which column in the grid has the puzzle piece that they've picked. Then, in that column, go down to the row number that matches the number on the dice they've just thrown.
3. They need to sound out the letter or letters that they land on and write the letter/sound on to the puzzle piece with the whiteboard pen.

4. Then pick another puzzle piece, roll the dice and write the letter/sound on the puzzle piece. We sometimes play as a three and each takes a turn to do one piece, or they play this solo.
5. Roll and write until you have a letter/sound on each of the puzzle pieces.
6. Now connect the pieces together and make the word. Is it a real word or a nonsense word? Can you make some really silly and funny words?
7. Wipe the letters off the puzzle pieces with your fingers and start again.

