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Introduction

A to Z Language Games reinforces basic language skills and concepts. The games in this resource will help children build a strong language foundation on which to base future learning experiences.

The *A to Z Language Games* program assists children in achieving success by providing them with tools for hands-on exploration and manipulation. The games are intended for individual use. They are high-interest and self-motivating.

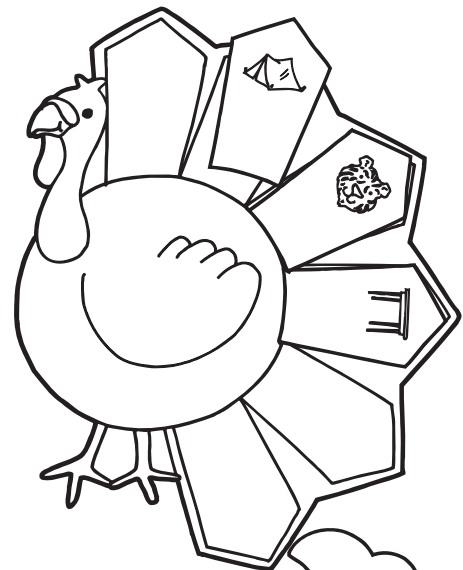
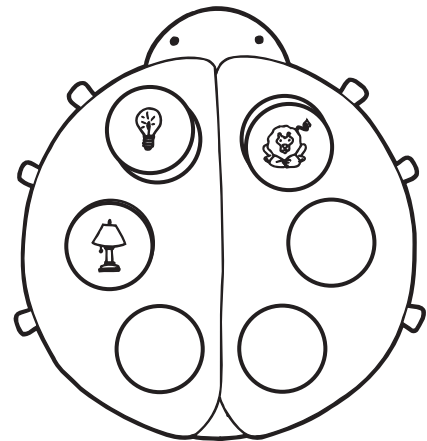
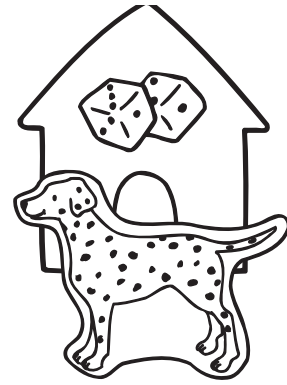
All of the games in this resource have been 'kid-tested' and approved! The children loved to learn this way and began looking forward to learning language skills. The children also progressed, regardless of their varying abilities. Each child was able to work at his or her own pace because the games were designed for individual use.

After you have made the games, you will have them for years. Since only one child plays with each game at a time, you avoid the problem of losing parts.

I hope that you and your students enjoy these games as much as my students and I have enjoyed creating them!

IN THE CLASSROOM

A good technique for incorporating *A to Z Language Games* in the classroom is to set up a Language Centre containing three to five of the games per week. There are many ways to organise the use of these games. Here is one possibility for using five games per week:



Making the Games:

- Each game contains directions for making and using motivating hands-on games in a classroom setting.
- For each game, all picture patterns are included. Some games may require additional readily available materials.
- Colour the patterns as desired unless suggestions are given. Sometimes, it is suggested that you outline a word with glue, then coat with glitter.
- To keep your games in the best possible shape, laminate the pieces. If you do not have access to a laminating machine, you can also use clear contact paper to cover the pieces.
- You might also label patterns on the back for children to self-check their work.

Setting Up a Language Centre Area:

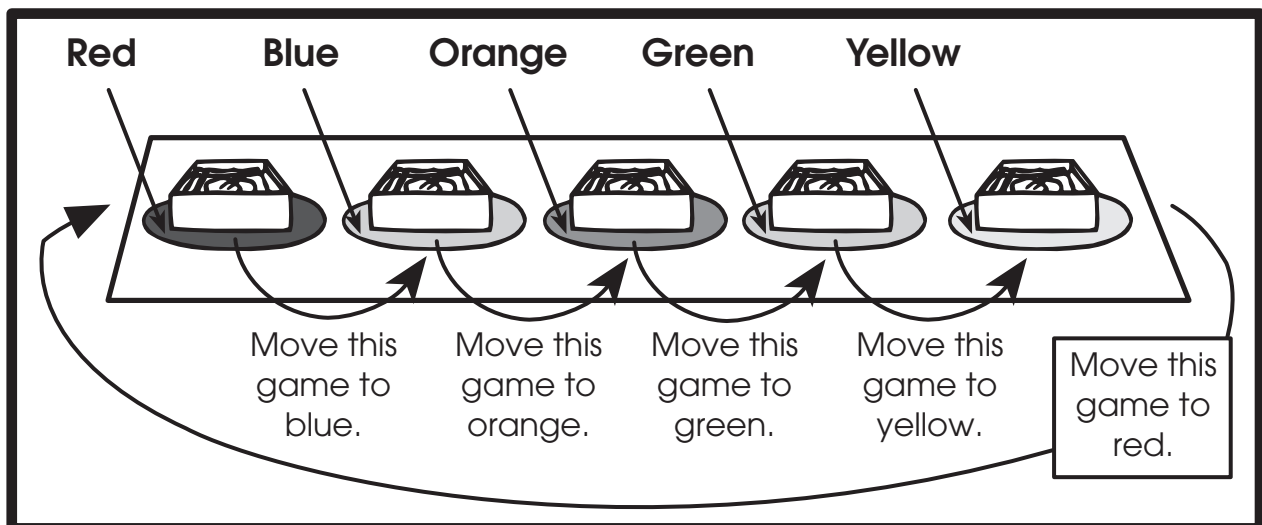
- Find five different coloured plastic baskets (or use five of the same coloured baskets, labelled with different coloured paper).
- Label the table you've chosen for your centre area with five paper circles. These circles should be the same colour as the baskets or the basket labels.
- Permanently attach these circles to the table using tape and then cover them with clear contact paper. The baskets will always be stored on top of the corresponding coloured circle.
- Select five games that you would like your students to work with. Put one game in each basket.

Preparing Language Centre Groups:

- Divide your children into five groups and give each group a colour name.
- Regroup your children so that there is one 'red', 'yellow', 'blue', 'orange', 'green' child in each group. (Your colours may vary, depending on what colour baskets you use.) Now you should have several groups with five children in each.
- Set up your groups before the children come in to school and write the children's names on the coloured circles that are permanently attached to the Language Centre table. (Write the names with a permanent texta.)
- Allow the children to sit with their groups and decide on a group name. These children will stay together all year.
- Tell the children what their colours are.

How to Use the Games:

- On Monday, introduce these games to the children. Directions are included for you to read to the children.
- First, go over the pictures with the children to introduce new vocabulary words.
- Second, model each game step-by-step, from setting up to playing to cleaning up.
- After you have modelled each game, choose one or two children to demonstrate how to set up, play with and clean up the game.
- At Centre Time, have the groups rotate through all of the centres in your room, including the Language Centre. When a group gets to the Language Centre, each child will take and use the game that is in his or her colour basket.
- At Clean Up Time, children will replace their game in the basket and place it on the corresponding colour, making sure the games are ready for the next group.
- At the end of the day, rotate the games from left to right. The game in the red basket will move to the blue basket, the blue to the orange and so on, with the last game in the row becoming the first. By rotating the games, the children will find a different game in their basket each day and you will be able to keep track of who is playing which game. By the end of the week, all of your children will have had time to play with each game.



APPLES ON A TREE

Objective:

- Children will recognise pictures of items that begin with the short 'a' sound.

Materials:

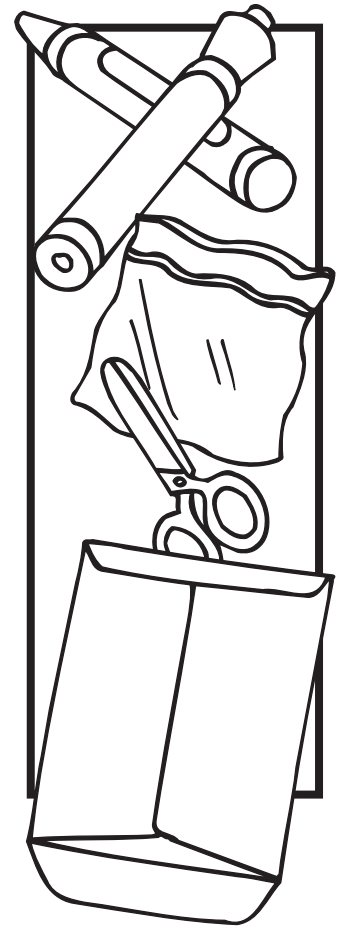
Apples (p. 8), Tree (p. 9), crayons or textas, resealable bag, scissors, large envelope

How to Make the Game:

1. Photocopy the Apples, colour, laminate and cut out.
2. Photocopy the Tree, colour and laminate.
3. Store the game pieces in a resealable bag and place this bag and the tree pattern in a large envelope.

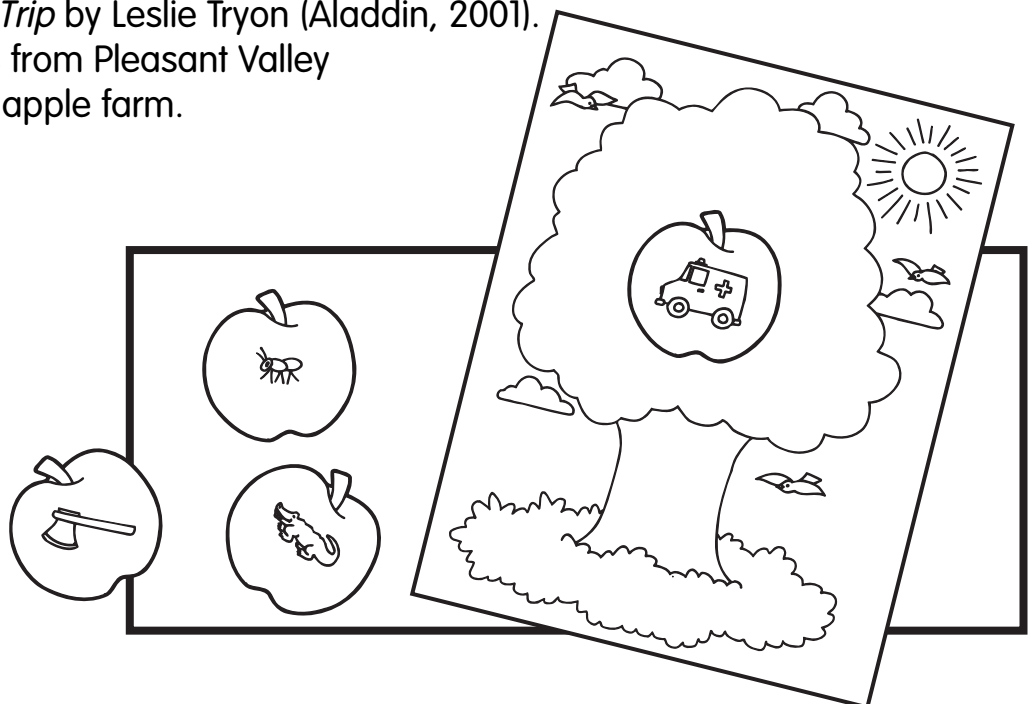
How to Play the Game:

1. Place the Tree and the Apples face up on a table.
2. Look at the pictures on the Apples. Some pictures are of items that begin with the short 'a' sound and some are not.
3. If a picture begins with a short 'a', put the Apple on the Tree.
4. If a picture does not begin with a short 'a', put it in the bag.
5. When you are finished, have your teacher check your work. Then place all game pieces in the bag and place the bag and the Tree in the envelope.



Book Link:

- *Albert's Field Trip* by Leslie Tryon (Aladdin, 2001).
Albert leads a class from Pleasant Valley on a field trip to an apple farm.



Apples

