

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Christmas Letter Detectives

Get children interested in letters and writing with this detective activity.

Learning aims

- Develop letter recognition
- Recognise print within the environment
- Link letter name and sounds.

Resources

- A set of letters
- Card
- Christmas wrapping paper
- A letter clue sheet showing all the letters you have hidden
- Paper
- Pencils
- Clipboards
- Detective area - you can include: binoculars, magnifying glasses, telescope, clipboards with pencils attached, clue sheets/letters, detective bags/cases for collecting the letters, detective coat/cap, ink pad and paper for 'finger printing' the letters (check they are the same) a range of letters (wooden/magnetic) and letter posters.



Activity Outline

This is a great way of getting children - especially boys - interested in finding letters and writing.

- Firstly, introduce the idea of being a detective. You could look in your local library for detective stories or lost and found stories
- Discuss what detectives do, what they use, what clues are etc.
- Create a 'detectives' area/table where your detective kits can be stored
- Put together your detective kits from the resources above
- Then take a set of letters and stick/back them onto squares of Christmas wrapping paper and place them around your environment (indoors and outdoors)
- Give the children a 'detective kit' - this must include a clipboard with a letter 'clue' sheet of all the letters you have hidden
- To meet all children's development stage, you should offer a range of options for recording the letters they find, e.g. paper and pencil so they can write each letters they find

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- Letter stamps so children can go back to the detective area/table and use a letter stamper to identify the letters they have found
- Provide a camera for children to photograph the letters they find.

Extending the activity

- Using newspapers or magazines, children can cut out letters that have a special meaning to them, i.e. their name or 'm for mummy'.

Working with babies

- Hide letters in rice trays for babies to find and explore
- Put letters into empty plastic bottles and fill with coloured rice
- Use cardboard and material to make your own lift-the-flap game with letters made out of a range of materials for babies to discover.