

# Improving language skills

## The sorting letters game

It can often be challenging to maintain the focus of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The key to maintain interest is to encourage their participation in activities they find especially enjoyable.

This is a fun activity to teach letters and their sounds to a youngster with ASD. It incorporates sorting and visual cues, a favourite activity for many children with autism. You'll need red, yellow and blue letters printed onto card and three shoe boxes painted in the same three colours.

1. Print out the letters and cut them out. For durability consider printing them onto heavy paper or laminating them.
2. Place all the cards face down in a pile and place the painted boxes in front of the child.
3. Have the child pick up one card at a time and say the letter or make the sound it makes, then let the child sort it into the appropriate box.
4. Repeat with all the cards.



# Hints & Tips

**As you promote a child's language skills, keep the following tips in mind:**

- Remember that some children with autism have trouble understanding verbal instructions. If possible, give the activity instructions in a variety of formats.
- Introduce these activities gradually to avoid overwhelming the child. It is best to work on one language-related game at a time.
- Make language activities fun and full of praise, no matter how small the progress. This is hard work for the child, even if you are making it fun.
- Read often and for long periods of time. This exposure to language is important for all children and essential for youngsters with autism.