

# Aleph-Bet Puzzle Stix™

*Activity ideas in order of increasing difficulty*

## **Aleph-Bet Puzzle Stix™ Contains:**

- 1 *Puzzle Stix™* board
- 1 storage bag
- 1 wooden *Puzzle Stix™* die
- 9 wooden “sticks” (3 blue, 1 each of orange, purple, green, yellow, pink, and silver)
- 1 instruction sheet

## **ACTIVITY # 1 - Practice forming the letters (1 or more players)**

Spread out the sticks on a table top (the die is not used for this activity). Using the *Puzzle Stix™* board as a guide, arrange the correct sticks to form each letter. Practice saying the name of the letter as you make it. If more than one child is playing, they can take turns making each letter on the board in sequence.

*Skills: Color matching; pattern matching; fine motor skills; letter recognition; letter naming and pronunciation.*

**Idea:** Use this game along with JET’s Aleph Bet Flash Cards – show one of the flash cards and teach the name and sound of the letter. The child then has to find that letter on the *Puzzle Stix™* board and use the sticks to make the letter.

## **ACTIVITY # 2 – Feel the Aleph-Bet! (1 or more players)**

Place all of the sticks in the bag. (The die is not used for this activity.) Choose a letter on the *Puzzle Stix™* board and look at it to see which sticks you need to make that letter. Then reach into the bag and try to pull out the sticks you need just by feeling them. No peeking! If you choose the correct sticks, make the letter. You did it! If not, try to make a different letter using the sticks you have, or put all the sticks back in the bag and start over.

*Skills: Color matching; pattern matching; fine motor skills; size/shape identification by touch.*

## **ACTIVITY # 3 – Letter Challenge (2 or more players)**

Spread out all the sticks on the table. This is the “pot.” The youngest player goes first. On your turn roll the die and select a stick whose color matches one of the colors shown on the top face of the die. If there is no stick matching either color, roll again. Now try to make a letter with the sticks you have. If you make a letter, then you score one point for each stick used, and all of the sticks used to make that letter are returned to the pot. If you believe that you cannot make any letter with the parts you have collected so far, then play passes to the player on your left. If you could create a letter with the

parts you have, but don't realize it, the other players don't have to tell you! If there are no more sticks in the pot, then anyone who can make a letter must do so and then return the used sticks to the pot.

The first player to score 15 points or more wins the game.

*Skills: Color matching; abstract pattern matching; fine motor skills; counting/scoring.*

#### **ACTIVITY # 4 – Advanced Letter Challenge (2 or more players)**

This game is played as the “Letter Challenge” above, but points are awarded based on preset values for each letter (the small number in each letter square on the *Puzzle Stix*<sup>™</sup> board). On your turn, you have the option to form a letter with the sticks you have already selected or waiting another turn to try to form a more valuable letter using more sticks. However, the risk of waiting is that another player might complete a letter and achieve enough points to win the round! Play continues as described above. Whoever reaches 30 points or more first wins!

*Skills: Color matching; abstract pattern matching; fine motor skills; numerical value comparison; strategic thinking; addition.*

Here are some ideas you can use for even more challenging play:

- *Rather than playing until someone gets 30 points, play a timed game (for example, when 15 minutes are up the game ends, and the player with the most points wins.*
- *Keep track of which letters have been made and earn a 5-point bonus when you make a letter that has not yet been made.*
- *At the end of the game subtract 2 points for every stick you have left in your possession.*