

# Alphabet Beanbags

EI-3045  
Grades Pre-K+  
Ages 3+

## Teacher's Guide

**Alphabet Beanbags are a fun, active way to encourage young learners' beginning reading skills, from alphabet identification to sound/symbol recognition. Here are several game ideas to get you started:**

### **Toss and Say**

Divide children into pairs or small groups. Give each team a pile of beanbags. Depending on the age and ability of your students, have children stand from three to six (or more) feet from one another. Have the children take turns tossing the beanbags to one another, identifying them on each toss. **Variation:** As a large group activity, have children toss and say the beanbags in alphabetical order.

### **Alphabetical Beanbags**

Place the beanbags on the ground in alphabetical order, leaving spaces for some "missing" letters. For example, set out *A, B, C, F, G, I*, and so on. Have children choose the missing letters and toss them into the correct position in the alphabet.

### **Alphabet Relay Race**

Divide the beanbags into two equal piles, one for the letters *A-M* and one for the letters *N-Z*. Place the beanbags in two large shoeboxes or other containers at the start of the race. Place two empty containers at the end of the race. Divide your class into two teams. Have the first child in each team find the beanbag with the team's assigned first letter on it (*A* or *N*). As soon as the child finds the letter, have him or her balance it on the head, hand, shoulder, or other chosen body part, walk quickly to the empty container, deposit the beanbag in the correct order, and run back to the starting point. The next child finds the next letter in the alphabet, balances it, races to the container, and so on. The winning team is the one that finishes first, with the letters in the correct order.

### **"A" Is for Animal Antics**

Without looking, a child chooses a beanbag from a container. The child then thinks of an animal whose name begins with that letter sound, places the beanbag on a part of his or her body, and moves like that animal, while balancing the beanbag. For example, a child might sway like an elephant for the letter *e*, or swim like a fish for the letter *f*.

## Alpha Picture Toss

Make a giant alphabet game board from a plastic shower curtain or tablecloth. Draw lines with a permanent marker, dividing the game board into 26 sections. Cut out pictures from magazines or have children draw pictures of objects or animals for each letter of the alphabet on large index cards. Tape the pictures to the game board. Have children take turns tossing the beanbags onto the pictures that begin with the matching letter sound. **Note:** Begin by taping the pictures in alphabetical order. Older or more experienced children will enjoy the challenge of the pictures being placed on the game board in random order.

## Toss and Spell

Give children large index cards with simple three- and four-letter words (such as *cat*, *dog*, *cake*, *frog*) printed on one side. Have children illustrate the words on the other side. Mix up the deck of cards. Children take turns choosing a card and then throwing the beanbags that spell the word for the picture into a large laundry basket, calling out the letters as they go into the basket. Children who need extra help can use the back of the cards, with the words printed on them, for assistance.

## Beanbag Phonics Fun

Mark a “word circle” for children to toss the beanbags inside. Begin by tossing a word family, such as *an*, in the circle. Have children take turns tossing an additional letter into the circle to create a new word, calling out the letter and the word as they toss the additional letter; for example, “P, pan.” **Variation:** Place a beginning consonant and an ending consonant into the circle, such as *p* and *t*. Have children take turns identifying and tossing in vowels to create simple c-v-c words; for example, *u* or *a* to make *put* and *pat*.

**For more active toss-and-learn fun, look for these additional beanbag sets:**

EI-3044 Phonics Beanbags

EI-3046 Colors Beanbags

EI-3047 Number Beanbags

EI-3048 Shapes Beanbags

EI-3049 Teachable Touchables™ Texture Squares

