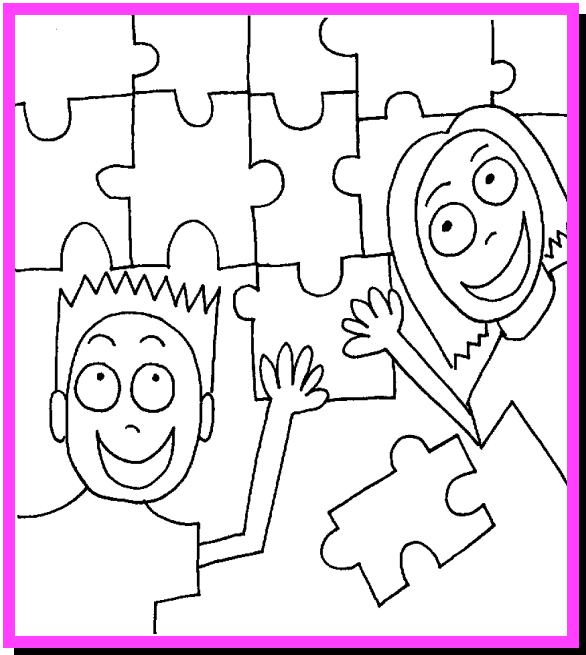


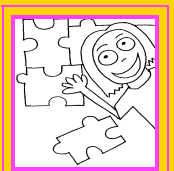
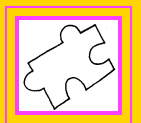
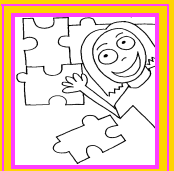
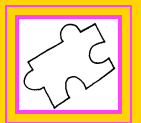
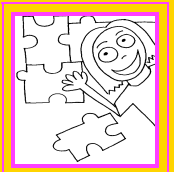
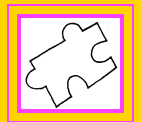
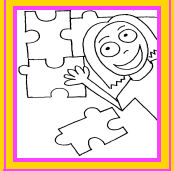
Puzzles and Games

PLAY
IDEAS 18

ABOUT
PUZZLES
& GAMES



Jigsaw puzzles and board games are a great way to develop attention, concentration and thinking skills (recognising, remembering, matching, sorting and problem solving). Puzzles and games also develop language skills (as we listen and follow instructions, and talk about what we are doing), hand skills (as we roll die, move counters and place puzzle pieces) and social skills (as we learn to take turns, play games with rules, win and lose). Most puzzles and games are easily adapted to suit all levels of ability.



PUZZLES, GAMES AND DEVELOPMENT



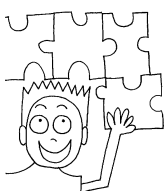
Babies

Your baby can start developing skills for puzzles and placement games by handling many objects and playing at putting objects inside other objects. "Does the piece of apple go into the drink cup?" "Does the block go into the container?" Stacking rings/cups, simple posting boxes and peg boards and early formboard puzzles can be introduced around 12 months.



Toddlers

By the time they are 3 years old most toddlers can match and sort objects, pictures, shapes and colours. Toddlers love posting boxes, and will also manage simple formboards and 3-4 piece puzzles with your help. Your toddler can be encouraged to look for familiar shapes and pictures (where's the ball? Find one the same). Introduce "my turn, your turn" for simple puzzles, block stacking, posting and matching games, but remember that self-control is only just developing and having to wait even a few seconds is often difficult.



Young Children

3-5 year olds will enjoy all kinds of formboards (up to 10 pieces), puzzles (4-12 pieces), simple card games and looking/matching games such as snap, fish, memory, and picture bingo. Early board games can also be introduced, especially if they involve counting to 5 or 10, colour/picture matching and only last about 15-30 minutes. Be patient with children as they learn about winning and losing.



P.A.L. PLAY AND LEARNING PROGRAM
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WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Use puzzles and games as an opportunity to spend quality time together, talk with your child and build a positive relationship. Have fun playing together.
- Make sure that puzzles and matching games are at just the right level of difficulty - too easy and they will be boring, too hard and they will be overwhelming. Give as much help as necessary to achieve success and avoid frustration.
- For younger children, look for puzzles with large pieces in a frame, formboard pieces with knobs, and use a non-slip surface (eg rubber placemat on the table) or a card holder for little hands.
- Encourage your child to play with a puzzle alone occasionally (perhaps alongside you as you do something else) to develop pleasure and ability in playing alone at times.
- Loan puzzles and games from your local library or toy library. New and different puzzles and games spark interest and create new challenges. Or swap games and puzzles with friends.
- Help children learn about winning and losing. Make sure they have the opportunity to win games, but also let them lose sometimes too. Show your child how you can play fairly and lose gracefully!

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Be aware of choking hazards (small game pieces, dice, etc).
- Supervise children closely while making toys, especially if using knives/scissors/glue/paint/staplers etc.

SOME ACTIVITIES TO TRY

- **Matching cards** Make your own cards, using pictures from magazines or photos of family, cut out and glued onto card. Let your child help you find and match the pictures.
- **Early shape puzzles** Draw around fun biscuit cutters (animals, Christmas shapes) then show your child how to match the biscuit cutters to the shapes.
- **Picture Bingo** Draw or paste 6-9 familiar objects onto a page. Name or show each object and help your child place a counter on the matching picture on their page.
- **Early board games** Make your own games by drawing squares on paper. Ask questions and the child moves ahead two spaces if correct, and stays the same if incorrect. The winner is the first to get to the end of the track.
- **Commercial games** such as Picture Lotto or Snap. Supervise play and be ready to settle disputes if young children are playing together.
- **Jigsaw puzzles** For an easy puzzle, cut greeting cards in two and try and match the halves. Another idea is to glue calendar pictures onto cardboard, then cut into 3-6 pieces. With bigger puzzles, remove only 1 or 2 pieces first, then put them back in. Gradually build up the number of pieces that are out of the puzzle. Show your child what the finished puzzle looks like before you start.
- **Provide simple clues** With a puzzle, place your finger in the appropriate place, and say: "I wonder where the next piece goes?" Or say: "try turning it this way"; "we need something red"; " can you find the bird?" Be positive and praise your child's efforts: "well done, good matching".

PLAY IDEAS 18

ABOUT PUZZLES & GAMES

