SPARK: Simple Play Adaptations to Reference for Kids

Braille Alphabet Tiles

(Early Literacy Braille Manipulatives – EC COE)

Description:	Image:
26 colorful (red, orange, green, dark blue, light blue) alphabet tiles that provide both braille and raised letters on each tile. The tiles can be used for both tactile and visual exploration to teach alphabet concepts and other early literacy skills. Each tile is 3.5"L X 1.5"W X 1"H and is made from a soft rubber foam to provide additional tactile input. These colorful tiles promote creativity and imagination while learning the ABCs and other literacy related skills.	 Purchasing Information

Who Might Benefit?

Those who…

- Have low vision or are blind.
- Learn best through tactile exploration or need additional sensory cues to learn early literacy skills, such as letter recognition.

Why Use?

Provides an opportunity to…

- Learn braille and print letters.
- Develop knowledge of the alphabet and increase early literacy skills.
- Explore letters through both tactile and visual means.

Instructions for Use:	Adaptation Ideas:
Environmental Considerations • Can be used during large group activities, small group activities, and one-on-one instruction. • Can be used at school, home or the community.	**Optional Additional Materials/Supplies** • Dycem • Velcro **Stabilize It** • Place Dycem under the tiles to create a non-slip surface, helping keep them in place for children who might accidentally push them away while exploring with their hands.

Positioning

- Braille Alphabet Tiles can be used in any position; seated, standing, on the floor, etc.
- Consider the surface where the child is reading the braille on the blocks. Ensure it allows the child to comfortably use their hands to explore and feel the letters clearly.

Alternate Positioning

- Alternate positioning of side-lying, lying on their belly (prone), supine (lying on the back), kneeling, etc. may also be possible.

Basic Play/Use

- Learn the letters of the alphabet in braille and print.
- Encourage tactile and visual exploration
- Identify, match or sort colors.

Extended Play/Use

- Ask the child to stack the blocks on top of each other. See how high the child can stack them.
- Sort the blocks in groups by color or size.
- Create simple patterns with the blocks.
- Put the tiles in alphabetic order.
- Say a color name and have the child find and pick up a block in that color.
- Ask the child to use their fingers to feel or count the dots on the tile.
- Ask the child to find the tile with the first letter of their name.
- Spread out all the letter tiles. Show a flashcard, say a letter name or say a letter sound. Then have the child find the matching tile.
- Show a model of a letter or CVC word. See if the child can find the matching letter or letters to recreate the word.
- Squeeze the fuzzy surface to promote fine-motor strengthening.
- Use a Pop-A-Cell or another pop-it toy to recreate the letter you feel in braille.
- Attach Velcro to the back of each tile and use a Velcro-friendly board to keep them in place, providing stability for children who need the tiles to stay stationary while exploring. This would also allow for the tiles to be presented on a raised surface such as an All-in-One Board from APH.

Contain it

- Use a tray with raised edges—such as a baking sheet—to help create a clearly defined workspace. This is especially beneficial for students who are blind, as it allows them to more easily locate and organize materials like tiles within a contained area.
- Store the tiles in a basket or tub with a lid.

Add Sensory Cues

- Add a tactile cue to the block so a student who is blind or has low vision knows the correct orientation of the blocks when learning and reading letters (e.g. dot of puffy paint on the top of the block).

Communication Support

- For students with some vision, provide a communication board with vocabulary appropriate (e.g. touch, on, off, up, down, more, red, blue, etc.) for the child to engage with the Braille Alphabet Tiles.

Alternative Uses

- Use the tiles to teach the names of basic colors.
- Use the tiles to practice counting, sorting and matching skills.
- Put the tiles in a sensory bin with rice, beans or other sensory materials. Have the child find the tiles in the bin.

DIY Alternatives

- To make DIY Braille alphabet blocks, use puffy paint to add raised dots that correspond to Braille letters on blocks that only have printed letters. Apply the puffy paint carefully to form the correct Braille

Play/Use with Others • Including both braille and print enables and encourages students with low vision or blindness to play with peers. • Have children play with the blocks together by working together to find matching color tiles, matching letter tiles or by finding the beginning letter of each child's name.	cell pattern for each letter, allowing enough space between dots to be distinguishable by touch. Let the paint dry completely before use to ensure the dots are firm and tactile. This simple adaptation makes the blocks more accessible for students who are blind or have low vision. • Use wooden tumbling tower blocks and pearl stickers to make DIY braille and print alphabet blocks.

Additional Considerations:

- Recommended for ages 2+
- Use with adult supervision. Not for mouthing or chewing.

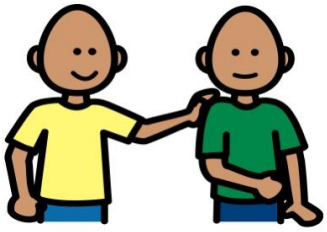
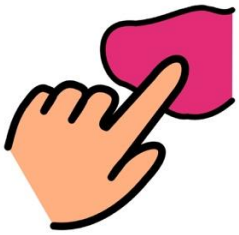
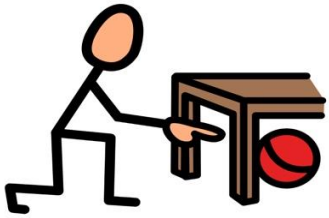
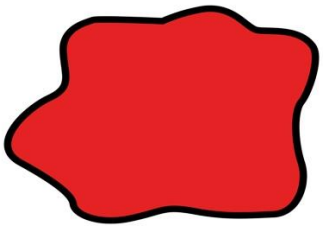
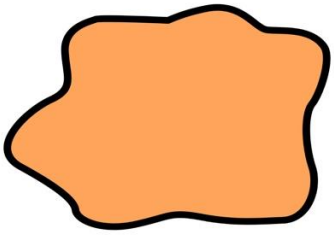
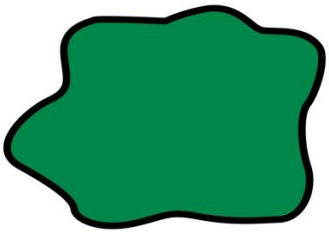
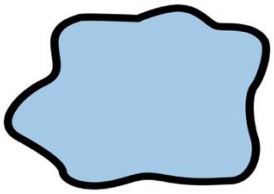
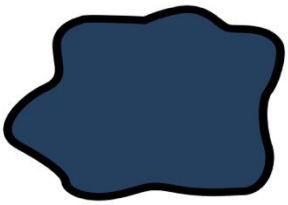
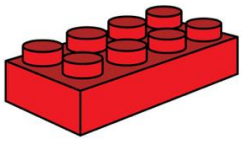
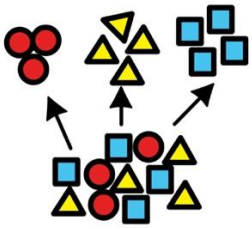
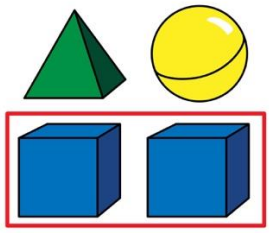
Additional Resources:

- Activity with Braille Letters
- Read more about Hand Guidance and Techniques

Ohio Early Learning Standards

- LL: Print Awareness: Develops knowledge of print organization. (3.a.).
- LL: Print Awareness: Develops knowledge of the alphabet. (3.b.).
- AL: Engagement and Persistence: Engages in new and unfamiliar experiences and activities. (1.a.).
- CO: Memory: Develops the ability to recall information about objects, people, and past experiences. (1.a.)

Words to Encourage Play/Use

Touch 	Feel 	Find 
Red 	Orange 	Green 
Light Blue 	Dark Blue 	Tile 
Rectangle 	Sort 	Match 

Adapted from: Haugen's Modes for Adapting Toys based on materials from the "Let's Play" Project at the University of Buffalo

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