

OBJECT OF THE GAME: Find the correct matches to each pair. Three versions of play are suggested for children at different levels of skill and experience.

GETTING READY TO PLAY: Before playing for the first time, talk about the pictures. Select both halves of one pair, for example the "Thomas - T" pair. Say, "This is Thomas. Do you see his name? Here is another piece with his name, Thomas, on it. It starts with the letter T. Let's find each letter T on these two pieces." Let the players fit the two pieces together. Talk about the objects in the picture and their colors.

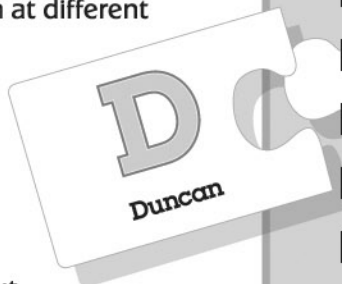
FUN WITH THE ALPHABET: Encourage the child to identify other objects in the room that begin with T, like table, tooth, toy. Have the child trace the letter T with his or her finger. If you were a T what would you look like? Stand with your arms outstretched. Find out if any player in the group has a T in his or her name (or a friend, a favorite character on TV, and so on). Look for the printed letter T on things in the room, in the kitchen. Make up sentences with lots of T's: "Thomas took a toy to Trenton in time for tea."

Now do the same with other alphabet pairs. During the first few sessions, introduce no more than five letters at a time in this way. Gradually increase the number of pairs until the child can work with all the letters of the alphabet. Each pair is uniquely cut so that only the correct match will fit.

GAME PLAY FOR BEGINNERS: If you are the game leader (an adult or older child), distribute the picture pieces equally among the players, keeping the letter pieces in a stack. If there are any picture halves left over, keep them face up in front of you. (The other players can help you find the matches to these.) Hold up one letter half at a time and ask, for example, "Who has Thomas?" and so on. The player with the matching half takes the letter half and fits the pair together. Play continues until all the pairs are matched.

Everyone wins!

Children at age three and four are just developing socially. A game provides them the opportunity to show respect for their playmates by taking turns and playing fairly. Game play also teaches them to accept temporary setbacks cheerfully.



Duncan

halves, put the two together and keep the matched pair; if not, return the letter you chose to the pile. The turn passes to the next player. Play continues until all players have completed their matching pairs.

Everyone wins!

OR

Distribute pieces on which the interlocking 'button' faces outward (or inward!) to each player and play as above.

The activity of picking out a single desired image among a jumble of others is an important visual and cognitive skill known as figure-ground recognition. This skill is essential in learning to read.

MEMORY MATCHING GAME: Place all pieces face down in the middle of the table. Mix them well and arrange them in rows.

On your turn, choose two pieces and turn them face up so that all players can see them. If they match, you may keep them and take another turn. If they do not, place them face down on the table in the same position. Watch carefully as other players turn over pieces so that you will remember where the matching pieces are when it's your turn again. The player with the most matching pairs wins.

Children from age three to six are good at memory activities. Games such as this help them to reinforce memory skills, and offer them the opportunity to learn tactical and strategic thinking.

The Thomas the Tank Engine And Friends™ ABC Game helps players to develop reading, matching and memory skills as well as important social skills: taking turns, following rules, sharing and respecting others.



Lighthouse



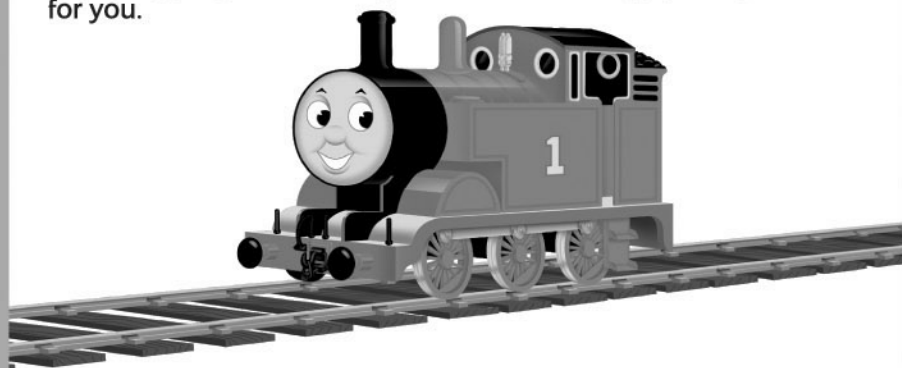
Umbrella

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Visit the Thomas & Friends website at
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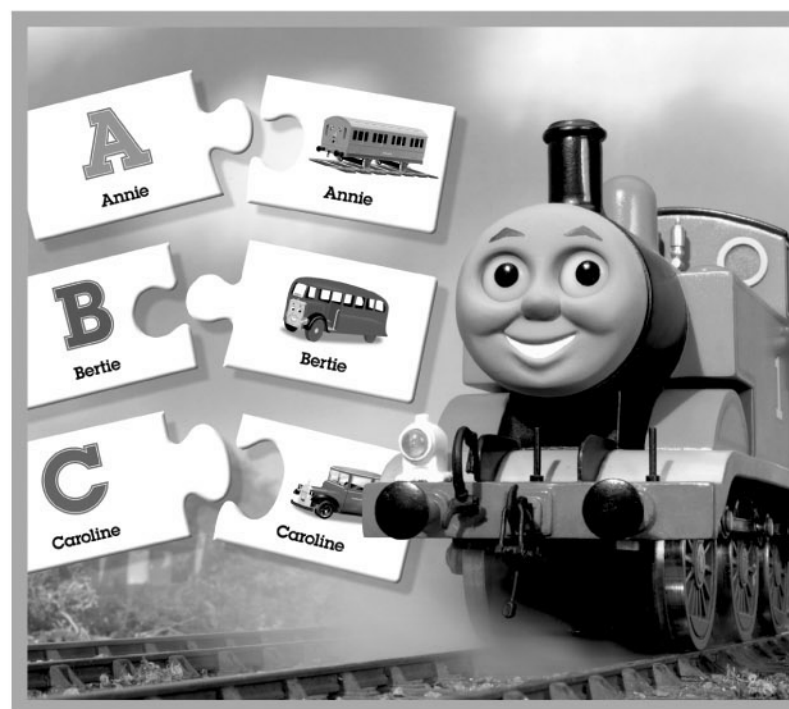
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Thomas ABC Game

Matching Fun from A to Z

Self-correcting matching game
for 1-4 players ages 3-6



Contents: 26 interlocking matching pairs, game rules