

pre-school **Colors** puzzle pairs

For 2 to 4 players, age 3 and up

- This is a pre-reading activity. While “Colors Puzzle Pairs” is not designed to teach reading, it can familiarize a child with the concepts that will facilitate learning to read. This is achieved while enjoying an activity that introduces or reinforces recognition and identification of colors with a variety of familiar animals and objects.
- The ability to read is not required to find pairs because the pieces can be matched by color. A familiarity with the alphabet will be helpful in developing pre-reading skills with the puzzle pairs.
- Start with the puzzle pairs linked together. Children should be encouraged to talk about what they know about the pictured objects, including their color.
- Once the child is familiar with the color names, an adult can explain that the word on the puzzle piece names the color of the piece.
- Draw attention to the starting sound of each color word. Point out that this sound corresponds to the first letter of the word on the puzzle piece. The child needs to understand that the spoken word is composed of sounds, and that the written word represents these sounds with combinations of letters. When this concept is mastered and practiced, the final sound of each word can then be brought to the child’s attention, and those letters learned. These letters can be used as clues in finding an image’s matching puzzle piece.
- Simplify things by initially giving the child only the simplest words to begin, adding longer words as familiarity increases. If no interest is shown in breaking down the words to component sounds, the child should simply be encouraged to learn to visually recognize which word goes with each image. Simply associating image and the look of the graphic written word in the course of puzzle play will be a useful foundation when the child is ready for that step.
- As the child becomes familiar with the word pieces, pairs can be found by looking for words, not just by color. As pairs are found, the child can say the color and point to the letters that signify these sounds.
- When simple consonants are familiar, and the child is comfortable with the concept of “sounding out” a letter, an adult can explain that saying the word for the image will help them find what sounds are represented by the vowels and vowel combinations.
- “Colors Puzzle Pairs” should be part of an ongoing investigative environment that encourages pre-readers to think about sounds and letters, rhymes and wordplay.