

Tee-rific Letters

MATERIALS

FOR STUDENT:
(to make [one game](#))

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam Block, 1 ¼" x 5" x 12"
- Golf tees, twenty-six 2" – 2 ¾" tall, white
- Ten – twelve ¾" diameter circle stickers in each of six asst. colors (light colored enough for marker to show)
- Paper plate
- Small plastic cups (to hold golf tees)



FOR TEACHER:

- Hot melt glue gun (for teacher only) or thick white tacky glue
- Paper punch, (that makes ¼" diameter circles)
- Fine and medium point black felt tip markers
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Ziploc bags – medium size to hold foam game board and smaller to hold tees

TEACHER PREPARATION

Note: Read through all instructions first and check out the TIPS! Decide how many games the class will make and how to divide up the activities: Wrapping the lowercase letter stickers onto the golf tees, checking for the correct alphabet order and color coordination, and inserting the golf tees. Have a glue gun plugged in and ready to use (ideally set on low temperature) but out of student reach. This can give you immediate adhesion when in a hurry to help students. Be sure glue has cooled before returning project to students (takes a minute or so.) It is also recommended that you make one game first, before preparing the materials for any others, since knowing how the parts fit, might affect how you prepare.

[1] Decide how you'd prefer to have the students read the alphabet. The photo model has the game running vertically, so that there are three letters per row and there are eight rows of three, plus the bottom row of two. Use a pencil to mark the foam block 1" from the top and 1" from the left side. (Just make a little indentation.) Repeat on the top right side. Then put one dot in between them, which makes them 1 ½" apart. This is the model for your first row. Space the rows going down, 1 ¼" apart, in order for them to fit on the 12" piece.

[2] Use a golf tee to insert into the foam at each mark. Be sure that the tee is perpendicular to the foam block each time and insert about 1" of the tee into the foam. Repeat with all the marks for a total of 26 foam holes.

[3] Leave the stickers on the release paper. Use a ¼" diameter hole paper punch in each sticker, 1/16" away from edge. (This gives you room to make the uppercase letter.) Plan the order of the colors. (Notice the photo model - The color that you put first and fourth, will be the two colors

that alternate on a vertical row. Likewise, second and fifth, and third and sixth. Knowing this might have you keep similar colors further apart to prevent color confusion.)

Use a medium point marker to print the uppercase letters in the proper color order as you have planned.

[4] Attach the stickers, aligned with the holes. If the sticker adhesive isn't strong enough, use hot glue while avoiding the foam hole area.

[5] Similarly, print the lowercase letters in the centers of the stickers, using a fine line marker on the same colors as you did for the corresponding uppercase letters. Keep the letters centered as much as possible and small enough that they are the right size when the edges are wrapped over the sides of the golf tee. Try a few to be sure they will work.

[6] Prepare the work area based on the number of projects that you're making. Then set up the paper plates with containers of golf tees on them, beside the foam blocks. (Wait to set out the lowercase stickers.)

LANGUAGE ARTS
GRADE LEVEL **EARLY**
CHILDHOOD – PRE K

COMPLETION TIME
• 20 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Students learn:

- How to recognize the connection between upper-case and lowercase letters
- Working cooperatively with others
- Use of fine motor skills and afterwards, play

STANDARDS

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
- Recognize and name uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter sounds (beginning letters)
- Classify by size and sort color and shape

LESSON INTRODUCTION

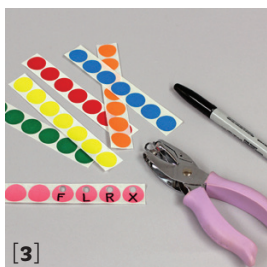
- Discuss that the students have been singing the alphabet song and learning about uppercase and lowercase letters. Include whatever it is you're currently teaching about the alphabet. Explain that they will be working together to make a game that they may play together or take turns using. To play, they can match the lowercase letters with the uppercase letters.



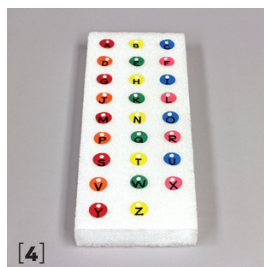
[1]



[2]



[3]



[4]



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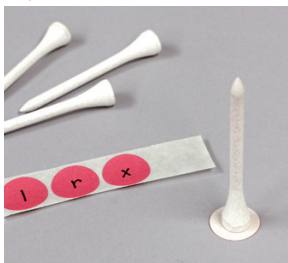
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INSTRUCTIONS

[1] Show students your foam block. Explain how the golf tees are marked with the lower case letters and they fit into the holes in the block with the uppercase letter stickers. Emphasize that the letters need to match correctly. Explain that you've already inserted the tees (so that you could determine how far to press them in). Add that they may take them in and out but that they shouldn't push them too far into the block, because the tees are supposed to stick up from the block and you don't want them to poke through.

[2] Discuss how you want them to work together in groups. Explain how you've already prepared the uppercase letters on their foam blocks and now they can add the lowercase letters to the golf tees.

Demonstrate how to remove from the release paper, one lowercase letter sticker. Turn it, sticky side up onto the table. Place the top of a golf tee down onto the center of the sticker, checking all around to be sure it's centered. Have students repeat as directed.

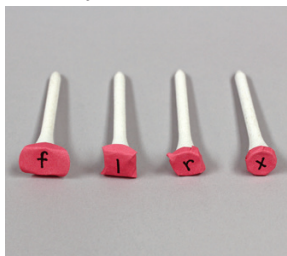


[3] Demonstrate and have students pick up the golf tee and hold so that they can see the top, with the letter in the correct position. Demonstrate how to use their thumb and forefinger to carefully press over the top and bottom edges of the sticker onto the top and bottom edge of the golf tee. Have students repeat.

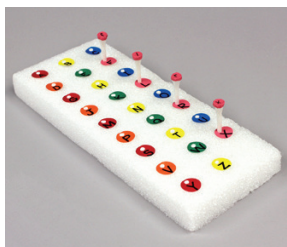
Next, demonstrate how to press over the right and left sides of the sticker onto the tee. Have students repeat.

Call the students' attention to the small points that are still showing. Demonstrate how to diagonally pinch in one direction and then diagonally pinch in the other direction to press in those points. Have students repeat.

[4] Go around to check their golf tees, identifying those students who understand the process the best and ask them to help the others in their group carefully attach the stickers.



[5] Have students insert the tees into the correct uppercase holes. Then they can check each other's foam game boards to be sure each group understands.



[6] You might allow the students to play with the boards. After they've finished, give each group a small ziploc bag, and ask them to put the twenty-six tees into them, counting to be sure that they have them all. Then, give each group a larger bag to hold the foam game board, as well as the small bag of golf tees.

MODIFICATIONS

To simplify project:

- Have adult or older student helpers work with each group.
- Use fewer letters – just those that you're currently teaching and reduce the foam block size.

To expand project:

- Have students print the uppercase and lowercase letters, themselves.
- Have students insert the tees using the marker guideline "TIP" to standardize the foam hole depths.
- Have students attach the uppercase letters to the foam, as well as the lowercase letters to the golf tees.

For multiple ages:

- Younger and older students can work side-by-side with older students measuring, marking and preparing the foam board and then helping younger students attach both the uppercase and lowercase letter stickers.
- While younger students finish covering the tees with letter stickers, have older students spell a range of words in a scrap of foam.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Instead of using stickers, use acrylic paint markers to paint tops of tees. Let dry. Then print lowercase letters in permanent fine line black marker.
- Create learning centers / stations for students to use independently.
- Have students help you come up with other games using golf tees.
- Have each student make a smaller, 6-tee board with part of the alphabet. Then have students arrange them together on a table to put into proper order. (You can use toothpicks to temporarily hold them together.)



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TIPS

- Before printing the letters on colored stickers, you might want to plan it by making a sketch of a large rectangle, representing the foam. Then, write the alphabet in the same position as the stickers will be. Use colored pencils, markers or crayons to circle the letters in the color of the stickers, in the order that you plan to use. This will make it easier to have a guide when writing on the stickers.
- When inserting the first golf tee to make a hole, use a fine line permanent marker to make a small horizontal line on the tee that is even with the foam surface. Then use that tee as a guide for making the other foam holes, pressing into the foam until the mark is even with the surface. This will keep the foam hole depths the same.
- To minimize student confusion on which way is right side up on the lowercase letters, make a small underline on those that could confuse: a, b, d, m, n, p, q, u, and w.
- If you have difficulty making the lowercase letters small enough, or centered enough, trace around a golf tee on copy paper. Then make a circle stencil by pushing a small hole in the center with a manicure scissors and cutting out the circle a little smaller than the tracing line. Then center the stencil on each sticker and print the letter inside the stencil area.
- If you decide to make a lot of foam game boards and need to paint a lot of golf tees, you can spray paint instead of hand paint. Lightly sand the tees to rough the surface and then insert the tops down into a scrap of foam, about 2" apart. Spray in a well-ventilated, newspaper-covered area (inside a large box or outside). Let dry. Then remove and re-insert them with points into the foam. Spray tops and let dry.

REFERENCES

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
Al Pha's Bet by Amy Krouse Rosenthal
"A" Was Once An Apple Pie by Edward Lear
If Rocks Could Sing, A Discovered Alphabet by Leslie McGuirk