02 Crazy Letters

Let's learn the alphabet letters differently! Use photography to practise the alphabet and learn letters in a creative and playful way.

Even before children learn to read and write, they have their first experiences with language and writing. Practising letters is a first step as preparation. In the "Crazy Letters" project, children practise assigning initial letters.

Are you currently working on different letters with your preschool group? Perfect! Use the current letters for the photo project or choose one with which the children still have difficulties.

The children work in small groups. They choose their own motifs and photograph objects or people whose name starts with the corresponding letter. The interest in language and writing is aroused by the search for objects/people matching the letter. The project addresses the children's powers of observation and discovery. The literacy experiences of the children are specifically promoted. Language promotion and technical understanding are practised - in a playful way.

Preparation

Prepare the children for the photo project and discuss with them what they have in mind. The morning circle is a good way to introduce the topic. For example, ask the children where you can find letters, with which letter the alphabet or their name begins or which letters the children already know.

To help the children understand their task, show them an example: a collage with the letter to be tested in the middle and photos with objects, animals, and people whose name starts with this letter next to it. Or you can collect objects matching a letter in the room and arrange them around a printed letter.

Try out the devices you will use for the project before they are used by the children and check that everything works. Familiarise yourself with the activity so that you can explain it to the children. The children should also be allowed to test the devices in peace beforehand.

Age: 5-7 years

Group: small groups (3-5 children)

Level of difficulty: ● ● ● ○ ○

Time and effort: ● ● ● ○ ○

Material:

For implementation:

- Tablet, smartphone or digital camera

For follow-up:

- Tablet, PC or laptop
- Printer and laminator

Area of Education:

- Literacy and Communication
- Aesthetic-cultural education
- Emotional and social learning
- Media literacy

Media pedagogical goals:

- Create photos and use media creatively
- Try out shot types and perspectives
- Experiencing changes or "manipulations" of reality through one's own actions with photos
- Playful media-creative appropriateness of social space and nature
- Dealing with media technology

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Project Implementation

It is best to divide the children into small groups. Each group will receive a device for taking pictures, e.g. a tablet, and will use it to discover the surroundings in search of objects and/or people whose name starts with the desired letter. Make sure that each child in the group has the opportunity to take pictures and practise using the camera. Set the time available for the group to take pictures beforehand. We recommend 20-30 minutes, depending on the size of the group.

This will create a collection of images for each letter. View the pictures together with the children. Use the tablet or laptop so that all children have a good view and the pictures are displayed in a sufficiently large format. See which pictures are successful and help the children to see why other pictures are less suitable (sharpness, detail, etc.). The result should be 5-8 images per letter.

To present the pictures in an appealing way, create a collage with the children. This can be done by sticking pictures on paper or digitally. With simple programmes, such as the app "Pic Collage", children can design a digital picture collage. This can be done directly on the tablet or on the laptop. However, handling the app on the tablet is easier for children.
Print out your "letter collage" and laminate it if necessary. Now you can present the collage in the classroom. If you repeat the project regularly with one letter, you will soon have a creative, self-created alphabet in your classroom.

Postprocessing

If you have installed the collage in the classroom, encourage the children to repeatedly deal with letters and literacy. Talk to the children not only about the letters, but also about photographing or creating the collage. This also strengthens their technical knowledge. The children can, for example, explain how they took the photos, what they paid particular attention to and what they enjoyed a lot. The use of the app and the tablet in general is also practised through repetition.

Learn more:

- *Module 6 – Photo*

Tip: Work with the children on only one letter per project so that they are better able to assimilate what they have learnt and do not overtax the children.

Tip: Be open-minded and try new programs such as Pic Collage to teach children not only how to take photographs, but also how to work with a PC or tablet. They will love to use and work with these devices.

Photo credits: Pixabay / Pic Collage