

BABY FLASH CARDS Montessori

**“Children reveal their true nature when they are free to express themselves.”
(Maria Montessori)**

This game develops children’s linguistic abilities and offers a first experience playing with abstract ideas. It’s based on the teachings of Maria Montessori, harnessing the different senses to heighten the cognitive experience and using the three-period method to promote natural, spontaneous learning.

SENSORY STIMULATION

The Baby Flashcards are made of shaped card with insets to stimulate the sense of touch. They also stimulate visual perception as the children recognize and remember the pictures. At the same time, the Baby Flashcards are a useful way of teaching additional concepts like the sounds of words.

THREE-PERIOD LESSON

This method is ideal for younger children as a way to introduce new concepts, like names, sounds, numbers, shapes, colours and so on. There are three stages to the learning process: the educator selects the materials and presents them to the child to become familiar with them; the educator then guides the child towards fully recognizing the subjects; in the third and final stage, the educator checks and consolidates learning. In this game, the three-period lesson helps the children to recognize the pictures, to remember and pronounce the names of the figures depicted, and to expand their vocabulary.

WORDS AND PICTURES GAME

In this first stage, present all the cards to the child and help them to insert the shapes into the cards, working at their pace. Now present a group of cards at a time, encouraging the child to focus on just one group-category. For example, start playing with the four animal cards: show the child a card and say the animal's name out loud: “This is a dog!”

Use this procedure to present the rest of the cards, one at a time. Repeat the procedure twice. In the second stage, lay the cards and animal shapes out on the table and ask, "Where's the dog?"; "Where's the cat?" "Can you find it and fit it into the matching card?" and so on. Remember to ask the child to say out loud the name of each animal. In the third stage, you can make it more difficult by laying the cards out on the table with the shapes inserted and ask, "What is this animal called?"; ""What's this?" Don't worry if the child can't remember the animal names right away. Help them with a few prompts so that they remember spontaneously by themselves. Present each group of cards in this way: by the time you finish, the child will have learned a lot of new things and expanded their lexicon.

SORTING GAME

The Baby Flashcards can also be used for sorting games, grouping the subjects into categories using one or more strings. Once the child has inserted all the shapes correctly, lay the cards of three groups out on the table. Start to form groups of animals, fruit and vehicles, asking the children to observe the cards as you do it. Remember to say the names of each subject and which category it belongs to: "A dog is an animal", "a cat is also an animal" and so on.

As a final step, you can reinforce learning by playing an "odd one out" game: collect together the animal cards and insert one from another group, then ask the child, "Which one's the odd one out?" As the game progresses, you can gradually add in more than one "intruder".

MY FIRST DISCOVERIES

Enrich the learning experience by helping the child to understand the function or characteristics of each of the subjects pictured, using simple questions like, "What noise does a dog make?", "What does a pear taste like?" "What colour is the apple?" etc. Have them observe the cards and shapes first while you describe the details of each subject pictured, always saying the name of each out loud. You can also make up simple rhymes, songs or stories to inject an extra element of fun into the learning experience.