



PLAY AND LEARN

POSITIVE PARENTING

IN THE HOME

FOOD

## Short Term Memory Games

On our 100th post, I asked readers if there were any questions they needed answered or tips they were looking for related to children, learning and teaching. One reader requested, *“One thing I would be interested in are games or activities for early primary school aged children that help improve short memory. Thanks PQ.”*

I have gathered together four game ideas (plus a few extra tips) for developing short term memory skills, all suitable for the early primary years.

### CONCENTRATION

A deck of children’s matching picture cards easily becomes the classic favourite game of Concentration.

#### To play

Firstly, ensure your set of cards contains all matching pairs.

Shuffle and spread all cards out on a flat surface, face down.

Players take it in turns to choose any two cards. Make a successful match and you get to take another turn. No match, the cards are turned back over.

Success in Concentration relies upon children remembering where they have seen each picture in previous turns.

The winner is the person who has matched the most pairs.

#### Variation

You can also play Concentration by mixing up and placing facedown the pieces to simple matching 2-piece puzzles, encouraging your child to find the two pieces that make up one puzzle. In the picture below, Immy is playing with a vehicle puzzle set. All eight pieces were placed facedown (4 complete vehicles) and she has found and is matching the two airplane pieces.

Welcome to Childhood 101, a place to celebrate the joys of family, home and childhood.



Christie Burnett, Editor



ABOUT SHOP CONTACT

#### — MORE TIPS AND IDEAS —



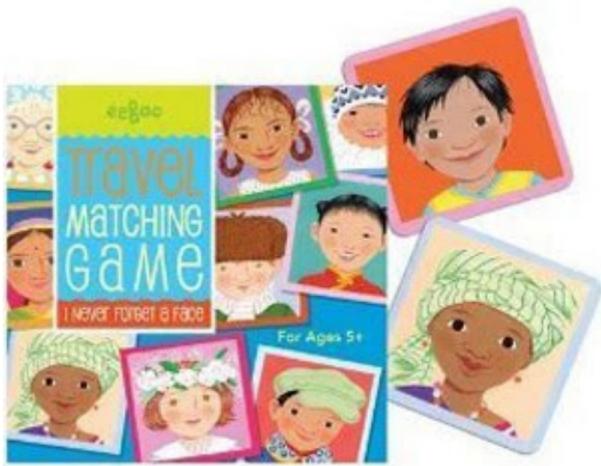
**FREE PLAY PLANNER**  
 Our fortnightly PLAY PLANNER includes fabulous activity ideas for kids of all ages & cool family adventure inspiration too.  
[SUBSCRIBE ME](#)

#### — SEARCH —

Search this website...

#### — RECENT POSTS —

Picture Books About Friendship



[Travel Matching Game – I Never Forget a Face](#)

## BINGO

Similar to Concentration but instead of matching pairs, players take turns to select a card to match to a baseboard.

### To play

Each player selects a base board. The matching cards are shuffled and spread out on a flat surface, face down.

Players take it in turns to select a card. If the card matches an image on the players board they have made a match and get to take another turn. No match, the card is placed back down.

The winner is the first person to match all of the images on their base board.

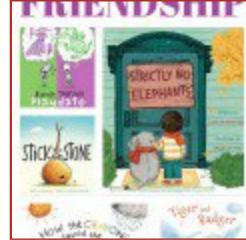


[Thomas & Friends Station Stop Matching Game](#)

## WHAT'S MISSING?

### To play

Place a number of household items onto a tray (the more items, the more



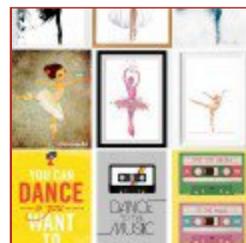
Childhood friends often become life-long friends. I still have dinner once a month with girls that I went to school ... [\[Read More...\]](#)



**Nutella Popcorn Recipe**  
If you're a Nutella fan, then this is the family movie night snack for you! A sticky, chocolately, nutty, treat in fact! ... [\[Read More...\]](#)



**32 Awesome Art & Craft Projects for Tweens**  
As Kate shared in our first Activities for Tweens post, "(It's a) well-known fact that kids who are engaged in ... [\[Read More...\]](#)



**15 Gorgeous Prints to Inspire Your Young Dancer**

When we decided to give Immy's room a mini makeover a few months ago, the first place I looked for artwork was Etsy. ... [\[Read More...\]](#)

challenging the game so for younger children start with just 3-4 items to begin with).

Tell your child to have a close look at the items on the tray. Name them together (the more you discuss the items, the more likely your child is to remember them, so you could ask them what colour or shape each item is or what it is used for).

Cover the items with a tea towel. Ask your child to close their eyes and as they do so remove one item from under the cloth.

Ask them to open their eyes, remove the cloth and tell you What's Missing!

### **Variations**

For older children, use more items and allow them to look at them for a full minute. Then cover them up and ask them to write a list or draw as many of the items that they can remember.

## **I WENT SHOPPING...**

The aim of the game is to remember as many items players purchased at the shops as possible!

### **To play**

The first player starts the game by saying, "I went shopping and bought a \_\_\_\_\_," identifying an item they would buy.

The second player continues, "I went shopping and bought a (names the first player's item) and a \_\_\_\_ (adding a new item to the list)."

Players continue taking turns to remember the items purchased in order as the list gets longer and longer.

### **Variations**

This game can be adapted to many different scenarios, for example, "I went on holidays and packed..." or "I went to school and took ..."

You can also adapt the game for children familiar with letters of the alphabet by requiring players in turn to name an item that begins with each letter of the alphabet. Player 1=A, player 2=B, player 3=C, etc.

## **AIDING MEMORY**

Children in kindergarten and the early years of primary school are often learning new, abstract concepts that require them to move and store information from their short term to long term memories. Learning to name and identify letters, numerals, phonic blends or sight words (when beginning reading) are four examples. For young children it can be extremely helpful to provide them with experiences that provide them with the opportunity to rehearse this information in fun, engaging ways (especially sensory or tactile experiences). These can include;

- Writing the letters or numbers in sand
- Forming the letters or numbers with playdough, pasta or wool
- Painting the letters, numbers or words
- Painting the letters, numbers or words outside with water
- Decorate the letters numbers or words by gluing on sequins and sparkles
- Making the words with letter tiles from Scrabble
- Jump, clap or stomp as you count or recite the words
- Print the letters, words or numbers onto index cards (two for each) and play

These types of experiences are particularly important for children who learn by doing rather than listening or observing as they are hands-on and physically involve them in the process of acquiring knowledge.

### Related Posts

- [Jigsaw Puzzle Fun](#)
- [Keeping Little Fingers Busy\\_\(and Learning Too!\)](#)
- [Pattern Making](#)

Check out our brand new resource for parents and teachers...



Don't miss out on any of our great content

RECEIVE EVERY POST  
STRAIGHT TO EMAIL

RECEIVE OUR FREE  
FORTNIGHTLY  
NEWSLETTER



Christie Burnett is an early childhood teacher, presenter, writer and the editor of Childhood 101. More importantly, she is a Mum who believes wholeheartedly in the value of children learning through play, the importance of quality early education, and the togetherness of family.

Read more of Christie's adventures at <http://childhood101.com>.



FILED UNDER: [BIGGER KIDS PLAY](#), [LITERACY](#), [PRESCHOOL PLAY](#), [THINKING & REASONING](#), [TOYS](#), [GAMES & SUPPLIES](#)

Previous post: [Homeward Bound!](#)

Next post: [Adventures of an Amateur Seamstress](#)

### Comments



~ ♥ J E S S I C A . T says:

October 27, 2009 at 6:10 PM

babe! i didnt know how else to contact u as there wasnt any email or chatbox. anyway, remember me? 😊 we spoke briefly during the nn awards, and congratulations again!

hehe ur acceptance speech video is up on my blog already! 😊 cheers hot momma!

[Reply](#)



**Elise says:**

October 27, 2009 at 10:18 PM

I like these fun ideas. My three year old often asks to play "emory" (memory) which is great for concnetration and improving short term memory.

[Reply](#)



**Kendra says:**

October 27, 2009 at 11:32 PM

Great ideas. I like the idea of the tray and tea towel; I never thought of that for some reason. And those are good ideas of making the letters and numbers in different ways. As the parent of a first-grader (knows letters and numbers, working on independent reading and sounding out words) and an almost-4-year-old (can identify most letters, working on phonics and counting), I like the ways of using the games in different ways.

[Reply](#)



**Busy Brissy Mum says:**

October 28, 2009 at 3:49 AM

It's all about games in our house at the moment with our 3yr old. Thanks for the reminder of some other fun games we could play.

[Reply](#)



**katepickle says:**

October 28, 2009 at 4:34 AM

Oh my girls love doing the 'what is missing game' and they also love their 'fairy snap cards' which are used in so many different ways. Great list!

[Reply](#)

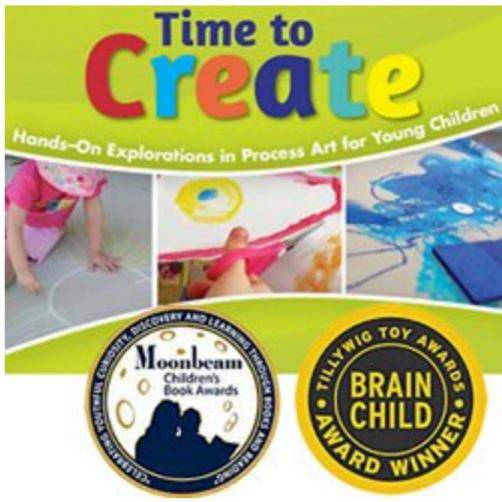
## Leave a Comment

Name \*

Email \*

Website

THE BOOK



E-MAGAZINE



ACTIVITIES BY AGE

BABY

TODDLER

PRESCHOOL

SCHOOL-AGE

FAMILY