

# One of These Things Is Not Like the Others

## Targeted skill

Young children are expected to recognize the difference between letters as well as to name and identify each letter of the alphabet.

## Materials

- ◆ index cards
- ◆ pencil

## What to do

This activity helps your child learn to look closely at letters to see what is different (and the same) about them. Cut an index card into three parts. Write the same letter on two of the pieces and a different letter on the third. Ask your child to turn away from the playing area while you arrange the pieces in a row. Ask him or her to look at the pieces and identify the letter that is different. Say, "Find one of these things that is not like the others." When your child identifies the different letter, call his or her attention to the similarities and differences between the letters. Continue with other letters.

## Extending the activity

- ✦ This activity works well for comparing rhyming words. Write two rhyming words on two cards and on the third card write a word that does not rhyme. Ask your child to find the card that is different and to explain why.
- ✦ This activity can also be played with picture cards that relate to other language concepts. For example, play this game to find words that have the same middle or ending sound, words that have the same beginning blend, or words that have the same number of letters.

## Phonological Awareness

### One of These Things Is Not Like the Others *(continued)*

- ✦ Common objects found in the kitchen or garage are often good for this activity. Make it into a “magic trick” by covering the objects with a small scarf or piece of fabric and saying, “Abracadabra!” when you remove it.
- ✦ The activity can be used for all sorts of comparisons. For example, displaying two red objects and one yellow object helps your child’s color recognition. Displaying two pictures of pizza and one of a carrot helps your child learn to categorize food groups. Displaying a picture of a train, a car, and a banana requires him or her to categorize objects according to their function.

### More questions to ask

Ask your child how he or she would change the objects to make them all match. Challenge him or her to find other small toys that could replace the object that does not match.

#### **What your child is practicing**

**W**hen your child can recognize small differences between letters or pictures, he or she is learning to look closely at similar objects. Your child is also learning to notice similarities and differences and to explain them.