



## FunPack Guide - (Version 1.0, August 2009)

WELCOME to the LetterJAM! Community.

The LetterJAM! FunPack includes:

- ✚ Two colored sets of LetterJAM! cards (blue/red or green/yellow), each containing two full alphabet sets (*a - z*, *a' - z'*, and two wild (\*) cards).
- ✚ A USA-made yellow sand timer (2 minutes) of nearly unbreakable plastic with sealed end caps.
- ✚ A quad-folded AlphaBoard™ to lay out LetterJAM! cards for all kinds of letter and word games, exercises and activities.
- ✚ LetterJAM! FunPack Guide - The most current version of the Guide may be viewed, downloaded and printed at [www.letterjam.com](http://www.letterjam.com). Be sure to check here for the latest in ideas for fun and learning.
- ✚ WordMatch - A free online tool that allows instant searches of an English dictionary database for words that contain any chosen letter sequence. Each owner of the FunPack should register free at [www.letterjam.com](http://www.letterjam.com).

### Key to Abbreviations and Terms

**AlphaBoard:** Board that is foldable in quadrants, which contains a four-row by eight-column grid of 32 spaces to lay down *LJ Cards*. Spaces are marked A1-A-8 down to D1-D8 and 1 to 32, respectively.

**Guider:** Parent, tutor, teacher, aide, instructor or therapist.

**Learner:** A person of any age who is building up motor, spelling, reading, literacy or brain skills.

**LJ Card:** A single LetterJAM! card that shows a particular lower-case letter, in upright and upside-down positions.

**LJ Array:** A complete alphabet set, whether *a* through *z* ("Plain"), or *a'* through *z'* ("Prime").

**LJ Set:** One of the four colored sets - Blue, Green, Red, and Yellow, two of which are included in each FunPack. Each set has 54 cards comprised of two *LJ Arrays* and two wild cards marked with an asterisk (\*). Wild cards are used as the highest card in a game and as a question mark to allow Learners or players to guess a missing letter in a game, exercise or activity.

**S-Timer:** Sand Timer that runs either 2 (yellow) or 3 (blue) minutes.

### Introduction

This Guide is an assortment of methods, tools, and games to enhance word building and discovery and other skills with letters, whether individually or in a group. LetterJAM! card sets are uniquely designed to invite play, exploration and discovery of words. By reading this Guide and understanding the color, function, and design of LetterJAM! cards, Guiders and Learners alike may maximize the learning and fun together. The LetterJAM! Community welcomes innovative ways to increase the variety of games and activities, regardless of age, skill and education. Visit [www.letterjam.com](http://www.letterjam.com). Each idea is described as a *Game, Exercise or Activity*, followed by a suggested age group or grade for Learners. Adult, disabled, and second language Learners can also benefit in participating in these games and activities. The items appearing on the next three pages are listed in generally increasing difficulty. Within each description are steps that are numbered and variations that are lettered in capitals. Cards and the S-Timer are CHOKING HAZARDS, so parents MUST supervise children under age 3.

### Motor Skills (Exercise) (Pre-K)

(A) Guider lays down *LJ Cards* with the back side (LetterJAM! side) facing up. Have Learner flip each card over to the face side to show the letter, without bringing the card to the edge of the table.

(B) Guider places a set of *LJ Cards* in Learner's hands, and asks Learner to distribute them into several stacks of cards evenly on the table. Have Learner pick up single cards from different piles with either hand.

(C) Guider lays out the AlphaBoard. Have Learner place 32 cards so that the entire matrix of four rows of eight spaces is filled up with cards. Make sure that Learner places the cards down in a direction to have the arrow (*Lj*) pointing to the right.

### Numerical and Counting Skills (Exercise) (Pre-K and K)

(A) Guider stacks *LJ Cards* in a pile and counts out the cards as they are drawn. Learner has cards in hand and counts out the number of cards in her hand.

(B) With the AlphaBoard, have Learner count out the numbers 1-32 on the board. Have Learner place cards within one of the 32 numbered spaces as called out by Guider.

### Alphabet Skills (Exercise) (Pre-K to 1st)

(A) Guider teaches Learner the alphabet by placing all 26 letters of an *LJ Array* within spaces 1 to 26 on the AlphaBoard. Increase awareness and memorization by removing one or more *LJ cards* from the 26 numbered spaces. Have Learner guess the missing letters within the 26 spaces until Learner has memorized the entire alphabet.

(B) Guider shuffles the 26 cards of a single *LJ Array Plain*. Have Guider place all cards into alphabetical order. Use the S-Timer to encourage speed and accuracy.

(C) Group: With up to four Learners, give to each Learner a shuffled *LJ Array* (four arrays from the two colored *LJ Sets* in the FunPack). Have the Learners race to see the first who can lay them in alphabetical order. With four Learners, set up two pairs in a race to alphabetize the *LJ Cards* as fast as possible.

### Alpha Hunting (Activity) (Pre-K to 2nd)

(A) With a Book. 1. Guider and Learner read a book together. Choose a single *LJ Card* from an array, either alphabetically or randomly. As Learner reads the sentences, have Learner announce a word that either begins or contains the chosen letter. Use the AlphaBoard to allow Learner to choose letters from an *LJ Array* to spell out the word containing the chosen letter.

2. Guider may make a list of words read in the book. Show the list to Learner and allow her to create the same words with *LJ cards* by placing them on various rows of the AlphaBoard.

3. Have Learner review a page or text out of a book. With a chosen letter, ask Learner to count the number of times that the chosen letter appears anywhere within that section.

(B) At the Store. Choose a single *LJ Card* from an array, either alphabetically or randomly. Have Learner find goods or words on packages that start with the chosen letter.

(C) In a Car. Have one or more Learner identify signs or objects that start with the chosen letter.

### Vowels and Consonants (Exercise) (Pre-K to 1st)

Guider places in alphabetical order an *LJ Array* out of the two colored sets in the FunPack, Set One (Blue or Green) and Set Two (Green or Red). Guider separates all vowels from Set One, and all consonants from Set Two.

(A) Guider shuffles the 26 *LJ Cards* to test Learner to identify consonants and vowels. Note of the dual usage of 'y' for Learner. Search WordMatch on [www.letterjam.com](http://www.letterjam.com) for words that use y as a consonant, both at the beginning of a word (e.g., yarn), and in the middle of a word (e.g., yoyo).

(B) Using the AlphaBoard, form words together using Set One consonants and Set Two vowels and place chains of consonants and vowels on Rows A, B, C and D. Guider allows Learner to begin forming their own words by choosing consonants and vowels. For basic two or three-letter words, start with single card and then add a consonant or vowel card to either side of the first *LJ Card*.

(C) For more advanced Learners, Guider may demonstrate how to create plurals of nouns and various parts of speech with the addition or change in letters.

### **Word Formation, Phonemes and Minimal Pairs (Exercise) (K to 4th)**

*Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify various sound segments or "phonemes" in words. One or more letters of a word yields a specific sound. Minimal pairs are pairs of letters that form rhymes, such as bat, cat, fat, hat, etc. This builds up word recognition and reading development.*

1. Guider selects a range of phonemes using one of the vowels and adding on various consonants (e.g., "a-b").
2. Place two *LJ Cards*, *a* and *b*, showing the chosen letters in positions A3 and A4 on the AlphaBoard.
3. To build minimal pairs with Learner, ask Learner to select various consonants to place in space A2 (e.g., "c-a-b").
4. For greater vocabulary build-up, insert two consonants in spaces A1 and A2, such as "c-r-a-b" or "d-r-a-b."
5. Search for all possible minimal pairs with the WordMatch tool by registering free as a FunPack owner at [www.letterjam.com](http://www.letterjam.com). In the search bar of WordMatch, to search for all "a-b" minimal pairs, enter "\_ab" for three-letter words and "\_\_[double underscore]ab" for four-letter words. The underscore "\_" may be inserted on or more times in the front or back of any letter chain to retrieve words with a single letter added into that additional underscore.
6. To look up definitions of words, use the sources listed in "AlphaBee with Dictionary" below.

### **AlphaBingo - Group Play (Game) (All grades and ages)**

(A) *Preparation:* Guider has Learners take out one complete *LJ Set* (*a* to *z* and *a'* to *z'*). Lay out an AlphaBoard on the left-half side (A1 - A4, down to D1 - D4), and fold the right half of the AlphaBoard (A5-A8 down to D5-D8) underneath the left half. Place 16 randomly chosen *LJ Cards* on the 16 exposed space. For older students who can spell four-letter words, have them place four words in four successive rows, A1-A4, B1-B4, C1-C4, and D1-D4.

(B) *Play:* One player draws a single letter from a full *LJ Array* and announces a letter. As letters are matched on their grid, they turn the matching *LJ Card* face down. The first to have four *LJ Cards* turned face down in any row, column or diagonal yells "ALPHA!" and is declared the winner. The winner gets to be the next announcer.

### **AlphaZoo (Activity) (K - 1st)**

Guider gives Learner a full colored set with two *LJ Arrays*. Begin with the *LJ Card 'a'* in the other colored set and present the card to Learner. Have Learner name an animal with the name that starts with the chosen letter. Learner may spell out, or place *LJ Cards* on the AlphaBoard, the full spelling for that animal name. Each pair says one thing they like or do not like about that animal. Move all the way down the alphabet to the letter 'z'. Other categories of words may be used for this activity.

### **AlphaBee (Activity) (1st to 3rd)**

(A) For one or two Learners, announce different words of various lengths (2-, 3- and 4-letter words) and have Learner(s) lay down on a blank surface or on the AlphaBoard the correct spelling of the word. If spelled incorrectly, assist Learner in choosing different cards or rearrange cards on spaces within a row on the AlphaBoard to achieve correct spelling. Begin with shorter words, and move to longer words of up to eight letters on a row on the AlphaBoard.

(B) Reverse roles and have Learner(s) ask Guider to spell longer or more difficult words on the AlphaBoard. Ask Learner for assistance to increase engagement.

(C) With multiple Learners, give one Learner use *LJ Cards* on the AlphaBoard, while the other Learner(s) write down the spelling on tablet paper. After Guider dictates a number of words to be spelled, have Learners switch roles.

### **AlphaBee with Dictionary (Activity) (1st to 4th)**

1. Have Learners create or spell out words in multiple rows of the AlphaBoard.
2. Guide Learners in using both a printed dictionary (suggestion - *Merriam-Webster's Visual Dictionary*) and an online dictionary (suggestion - [www.wordcentral.com](http://www.wordcentral.com)).
3. For each word found, read to Learner the definition or encourage Learner to read out loud the definition.

### **AlphaMatch (Game - two, three or four players) (pre-K to 2nd)**

*Preparation:* Each *LJ Set* has two *LJ Arrays*, *a* to *z* and *a'* to *z'*. From each array, extract 16 matching *LJ Card* pairs and shuffle them together. Cover all four rows (eight in each) A1-A8, B1-B8, C1-C8, and D1-D8 on the AlphaBoard by placing them face of the letter card down (*LetterJAM!* side showing) onto the open squares of the AlphaBoard.

*Play:* Each player takes turns to match a pair of letters, two at a time. If there is a successful match, the player must (i) announce the letter, and (ii) (for more advanced Learners) name a word that begins with that letter. Upon completion of these two steps, that pair of cards is removed from the AlphaBoard. A successful match leads to another attempt. When an attempt fails, the next player can make an attempt. Continue turns and matching until all pairs are removed from the AlphaBoard. The player with the most pairs matched wins.

*Variation:* For easier identification and matching by players, use the *LJ Plain Array* from each colored *LJ set* to fill the AlphaBoard with 32 cards.

### **AlphaWar (Game) (K and higher)**

*Play:* Two players pair up and each has an *LJ Array Plain* and the other *LJ Array Prime*. They shuffle their own Arrays and then begin to play 'war' with the letter highest to 'a' as the greater card. *LJ Wild Cards (\*)* trump every other card. Play enough hands until one player runs out of cards to play with.

*Variation:* To increase the challenge and complexity, (i) create four separate suits by making the Prime Array higher in order and colored Set One higher in order than colored Set Two, and (ii) allow multiple card wars by creating a face-off with (1) letters within one position of each other within the alphabet and (2) letters that match each other, regardless of color or Prime/Plain.

### **Hang Lj - a LetterJAM! version of Hangman (Game) (K and higher)**

Guider lays down a hidden word spelled out of letters in the *LJ Array Plain* on the A1-A8 row of the AlphaBoard, with the cards face down. Have Learners guessing vowels or consonants, but by simply opening up their hand of *LJ Cards* in their *LJ Array Prime*, and remove letter cards that are guessed, regardless of correct or incorrect guesses. For easier play, first have Learner separate their vowels from their consonants. Removal of cards that are already used make it easy to determine which letters can still be guessed by Learner.

*When Lj Gets Hung.* In the tradition of a stick figure, he has eight body parts - two locks of hair, a spine down to his tail, his tail, a left eye and a right eye, a bow tie, and his cape. When he is fully hung on a piece of paper, eight wrong guesses will have been made. Use the S-Timer to limit time use.

*Variation.* The AlphaBoard can be used for an entire phrase and even an entire sentence. Learners may use multiple *LJ Arrays* to create sentences with *LJ Cards* face down on the AlphaBoard in various rows.

### **AlphaBounce (Game for 2 or more players) (all ages once words are mastered)**

*Preparation:* (1) Each player has paper and pencil. (2) Choose one of the colored *LJ Sets*, and extract the 10 vowels (*a* to *e*) from each of *LJ Array Plain* and *LJ Array Prime* and the two *Wild Cards (\*)*. Randomly select 20 additional cards out of the remaining 42 cards in the *LJ Set*. (3) Randomly place the 32 cards, face up, onto the 32 spaces on the AlphaBoard.

*Play:* (1) The object is to write down as many words that are linked by letters on the AlphaBoard by bouncing in between letters that are adjacent to each other, whether horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Letter cards in various spaces may be used multiple times but a single letter card cannot be used twice in a row (e.g., "a-p-a-r-t" is valid when going from an 'a' card to a 'p' card and back to the 'a' card; however, a player may not double up on a single card to create "a-p-p-l-e" by bouncing twice on a single card in succession). (2) Start the S-Timer and see who can write down the most words and generate the most points before time runs out. Count one point for each letter within each word.

### **Letter JAM! Freestyle (Game) (ages 12 and up)**

Visit [www.alphabound.com](http://www.alphabound.com) to see and purchase the game that promises a most challenging, social and fun experience for two or more players.

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