

spar^{ler}



Child Development



Let's
GROW
CONNECTICUT

Four colorful cartoon characters (red, purple, green, and orange) are holding up the letters G, R, O, and W respectively.

An activity book for
spar^{ler}
kids and families!

About Us

Sparkler is an app for parents and caregivers, available for FREE to all Connecticut families with young children (prenatal – age 5) thanks to the CT Office of Early Childhood (available in English, Spanish, Chinese, French, and Arabic).

Your family can use Sparkler to:

Know: Understand your child's development with the mobile Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ)

Play: Spark early learning with fun, off-screen play activities

Grow: Follow your child's progress reaching milestones

Connect: Get answers or support from 211 Child Development, Help Me Grow Connecticut, or your school, family resource center, home visitor, doctor, or other provider

To download the mobile app, scan this QR code and create your account.

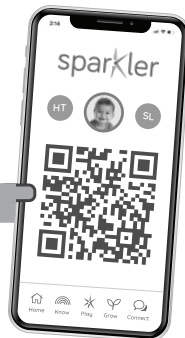
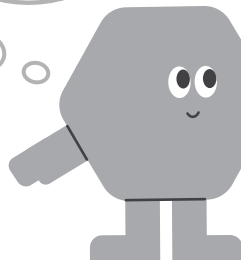
Sign up with code CT or your program's code:

211

Child Development

Help Me Grow
Connecticut

CONNECTICUT
Early Childhood



This activity book is designed to help children grow stronger hearts, words, minds, and bodies. These are the four Sparkler friends! Each one represents an area of learning.



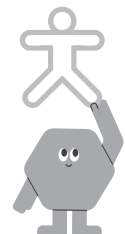
Heart



Words



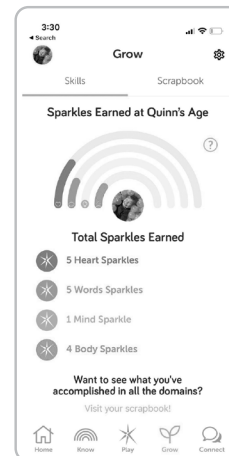
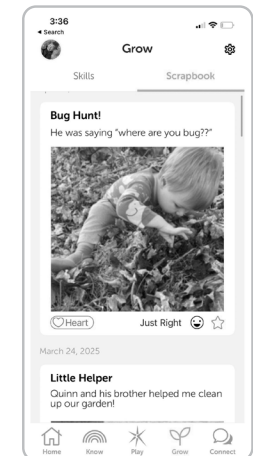
Mind



Body

Families can explore here and then scan the QR code on the page to find related activities in the Sparkler mobile app.

Play along in the app by pressing “We Did It” and adding a photo to grow your memories and track all that you learn together in your Sparkler scrapbook!



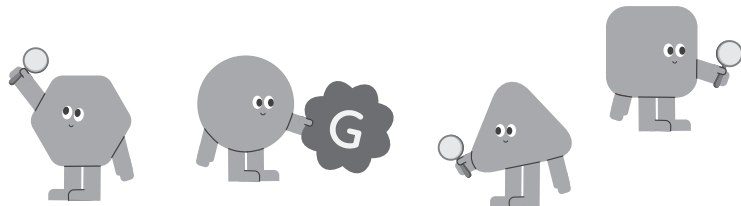
Watch your child's rainbow grow as you make progress together!

Let's grow smarter, kinder, and braver...together!

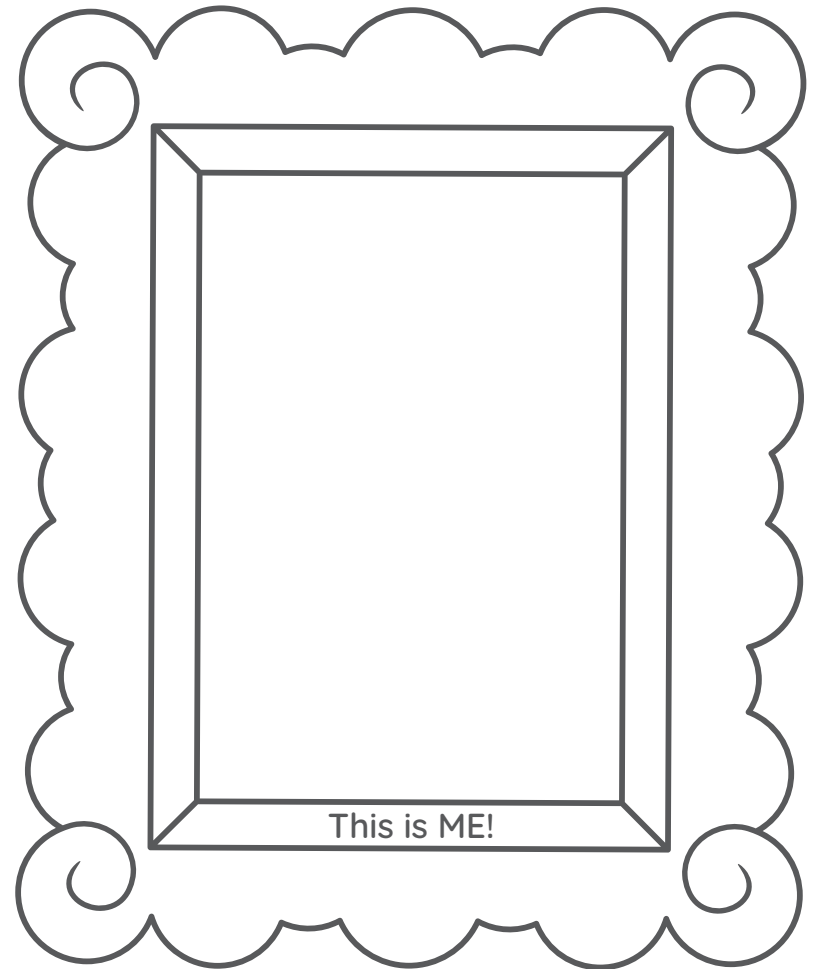
This book belongs to:

For each activity:

- 1 Try the activity with your grown-ups!
- 2 Count and record how many Sparkler friends you see! Hint: below, there are four!
- 3 Find the Mystery Message letters on each page. Use the clues to unlock the Mystery Message on p. 29!



Before getting started, can you draw a self portrait?



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

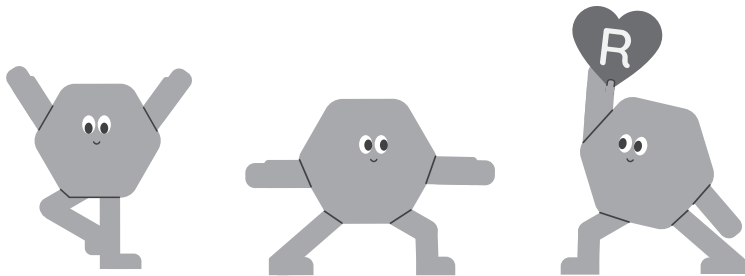
Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Heart Yoga

Open your heart and breathe.

- 1 Let's lie on our bellies on the floor facing each other.
- 2 Let's rest our heads on our hands and then lift our heads, shoulders, and bellies off of the floor by pressing on our hands.
- 3 Let's rest on our elbows and aim our hearts toward one another.



Heart Yoga grows your body and heart.

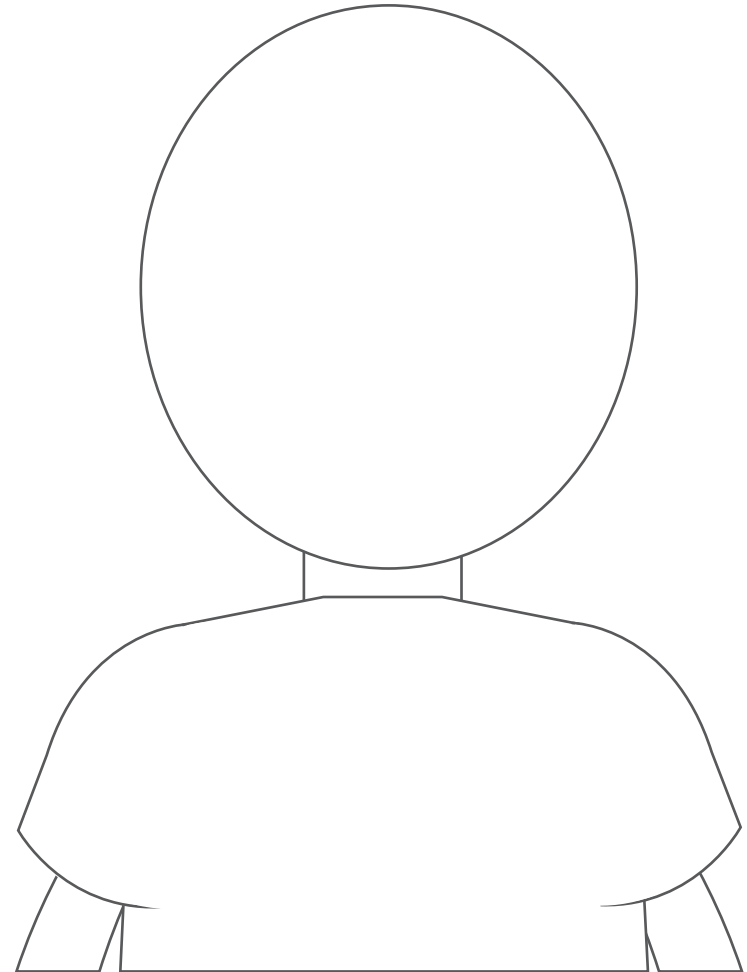


We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

What feelings do you have when YOU do yoga?

How does your face look when you do yoga?
Calm? Happy? Draw your feeling.



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



One Line, Two Hands

Draw a collaborative picture!

- 1 You start by drawing one line, dot, or shape.
- 2 Now it's my turn to add something to the drawing. Then it's your turn again!
- 3 Extend the lines, change the shapes, and add to the picture! Keep taking turns until the drawing is finished. What did we make together?



♥ Heart

Drawing together and appreciating what your child adds will help you build a trusting relationship.

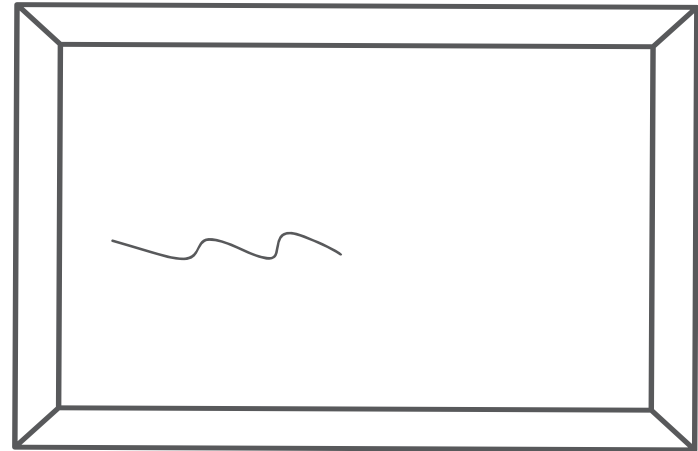
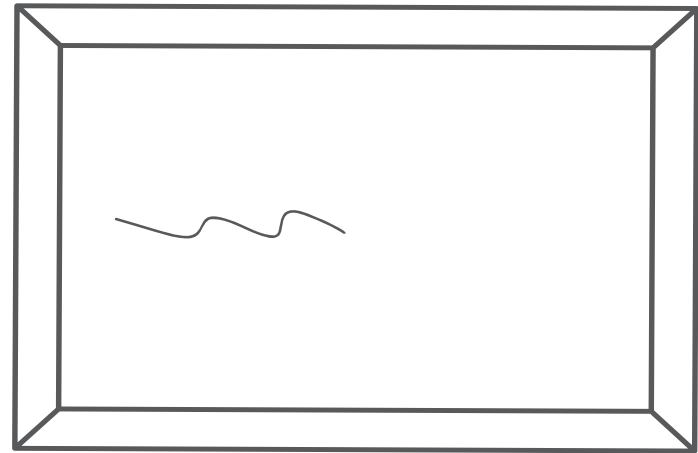


We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Where will the line take you?

Create two different pictures with one line!
Extend it one way and then another...will you create a car...a house...a bear?



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Laundry Sort

Let's sort the clean clothes.

- 1 Let's sort this laundry into piles!
- 2 Let's put all of the shirts into one pile.
Now let's put the pants into a pile...and
the socks into a pile...
- 3 Look at all of the piles we made!
Let's count them.



 Mind

Sorting encourages your child's developing math skills. It helps your child begin to recognize patterns.

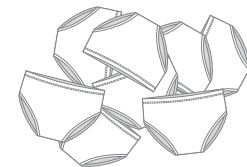
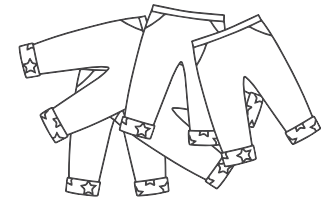
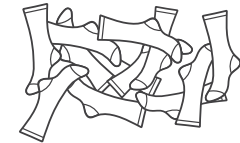
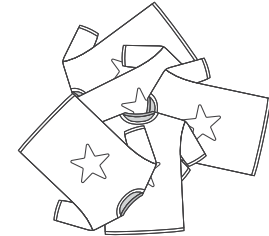
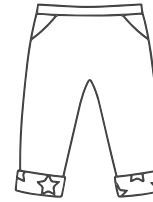


We did it! 

Don't forget to add this activity
to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you spot the patterns?

Draw a line connecting the piece of clean
laundry with the right pile, and then color
in the clothes.



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

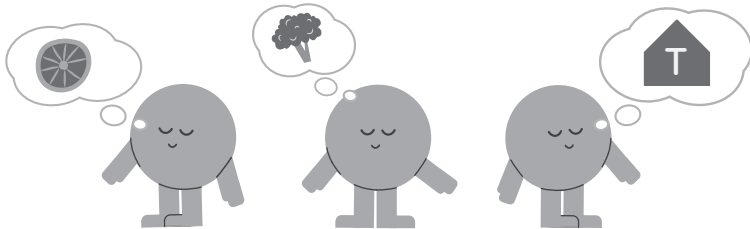
Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Smell Detective

Use your nose to identify different smells.

- 1 Pretend you're a smell detective!
- 2 Close your eyes and sniff. I will put different foods and spices near your nose.
- 3 Describe what you smell! Let's try again.



Words

Smelling and describing the smells will help your child practice making observations and using descriptive language.



We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

What's your favorite smell?

Draw the thing that smells the best to you!



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Plant Shapes

Make shapes with plant parts.

- 1 Let's find some natural objects outside: sticks, grass, flowers, acorns, or leaves.
- 2 Let's use our plant pieces to make shapes on the ground.
- 3 What shapes can we create?



Making and naming shapes helps your child learn that symbols mean something; this helps your child get ready to read and write!

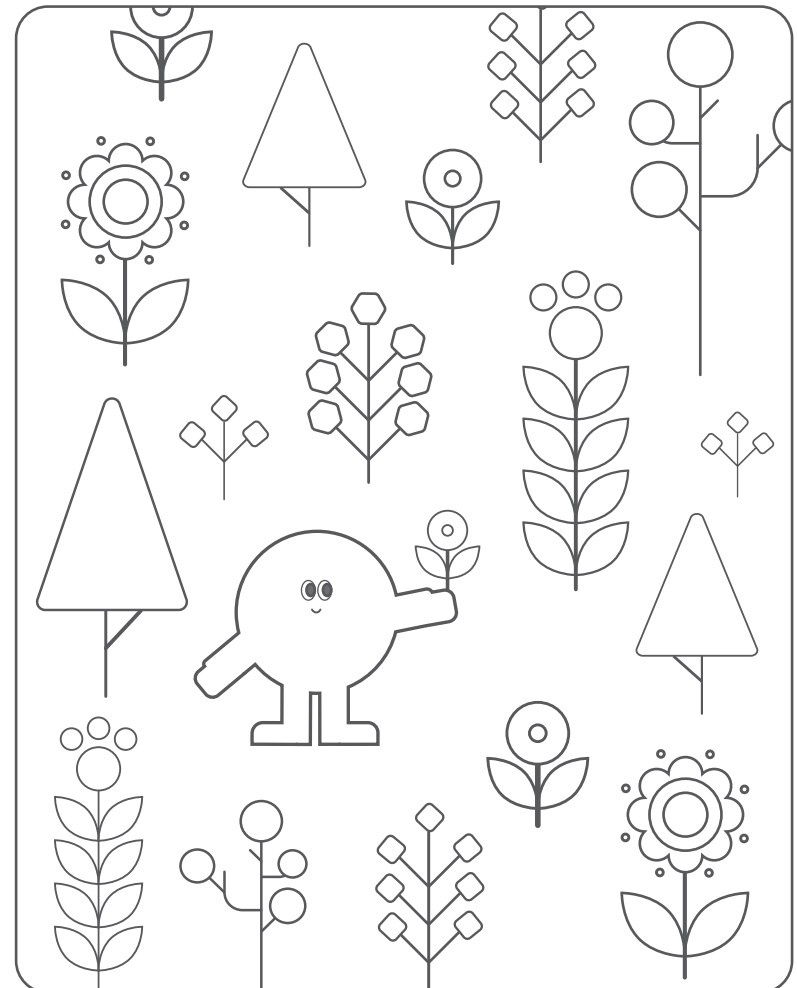


We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you find all the shapes?

Color in all the shapes that you see in this shape search!



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

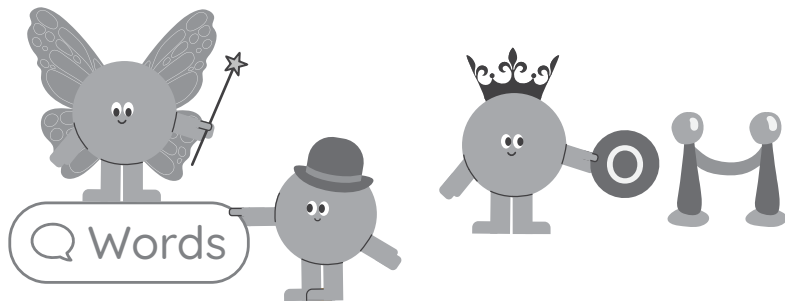
Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Tiny Theater

Use toys to tell a story!

- 1 Let's use our toys as if they were puppets and act out a familiar story like "The Three Little Pigs."
- 2 Let's choose toys to represent the main characters. We can use stuffed animals, plastic animals, or draw pictures! Which characters will you be? Which should I be?
- 3 Let's act out the beginning, the middle, and the end!



Making up shows and stories helps your child think about the various parts of a story like the characters, setting, and plot.

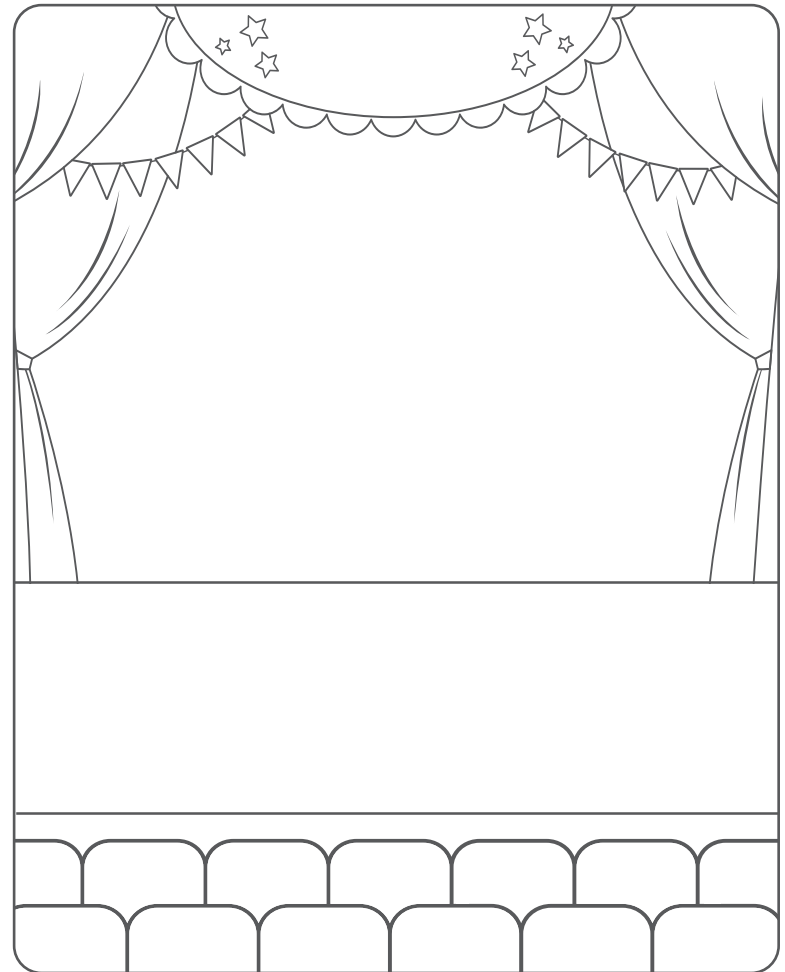


We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

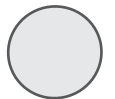
Can you go from the page to the stage?

Who are your main characters? Draw them!
What props will each one get?



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

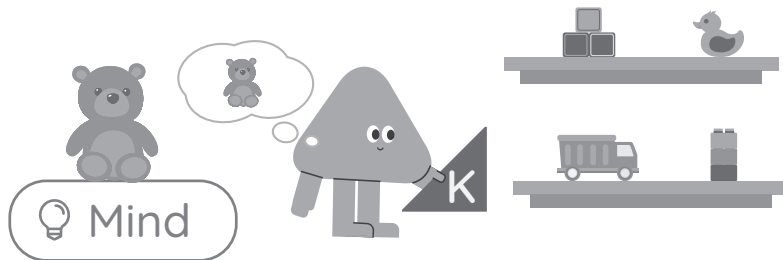
Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Search and Rescue

Find and rescue hidden animals!

- 1 Close your eyes while I hide a few toy animals. Then you can save the day and find them.
- 2 I will give you clues. As you move, I'll say "hotter" if you're getting closer to an animal or "colder" if you're getting farther away.
- 3 How many of the animals can you rescue? Now it's my turn to save the day!



Staying focused and continuing to work on an activity for a while helps your child practice persistence.



We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you find our Sparkler friend?

Let's find the missing Sparkler friend in the park and color in the scene.



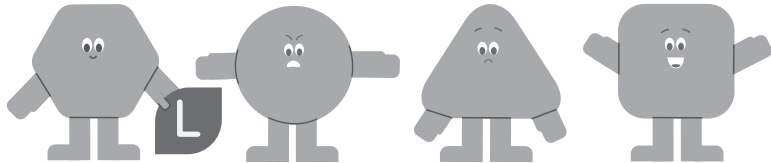
How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

Which Mystery Message letter do you see? 

Rainbow Feelings

Connect colors and feelings.

- 1 Let's draw with all the colors of the rainbow on a piece of white paper.
- 2 When I feel mad, I think about the color red.
- 3 Pick another color from our picture. How does it make you feel? Let's talk about a time when you felt that way.



Talking about feelings helps children understand and manage their own emotions.

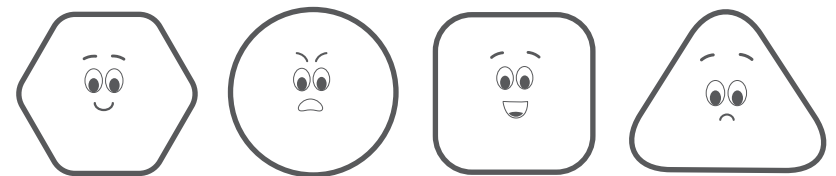
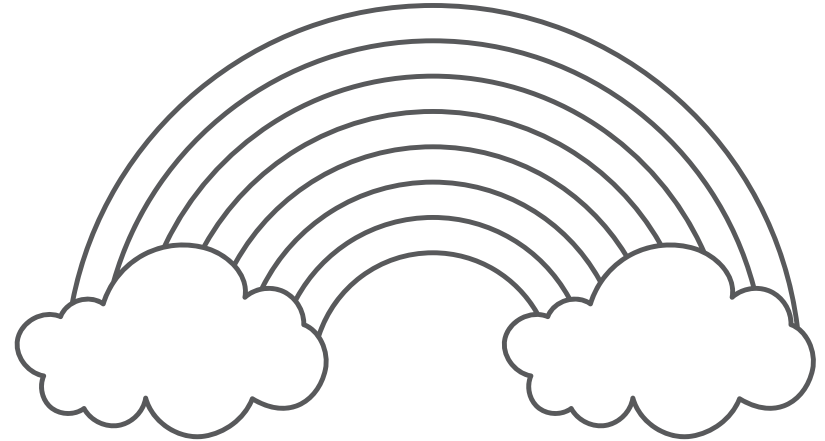


We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you draw the colors of your feelings?

Color in the rainbow. What color from the rainbow goes with each face?



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

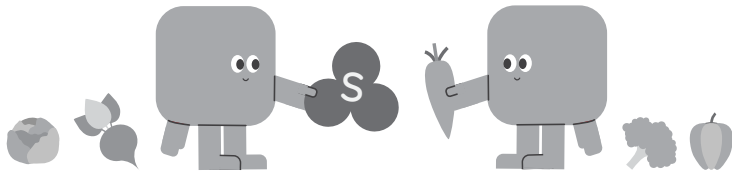
Which Mystery Message letter do you see? _____



Loudest Crunch

Compare vegetable sounds!

- 1 Let's pick five different fruits or vegetables. Which one will make the loudest crunch when we eat it?
- 2 Let's each take a bite of the first one and listen. Is it a really loud crunch? Not too loud? Now let's bite into the others!
- 3 Which vegetable is the winner of the Loudest Crunch prize?



♥ Heart

Predicting the sounds of vegetables and then biting into them to test the predictions will help build your child's curiosity.



We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Who wins the prize?

Write and draw a certificate for the Loudest Crunch!

The winner of the
LOUDEST CRUNCH
goes to:



Name: _____

Date: _____

How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

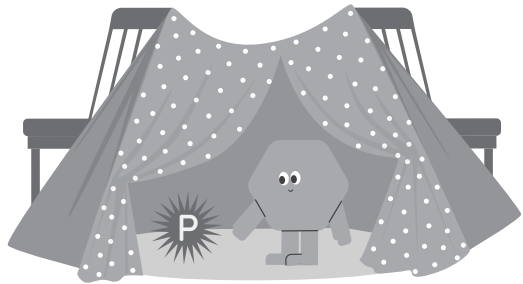
Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Tunnel Crawl

Make a tunnel to move through.

- 1 Let's make a tunnel by tying a sheet to two chairs or other furniture.
- 2 Now let's try moving our bodies through the tunnel without touching the sheet.
- 3 Let's make the game more challenging by moving the sheet closer to the ground.



 Body

Children build big muscles when they move their bodies over, under, around, and through!

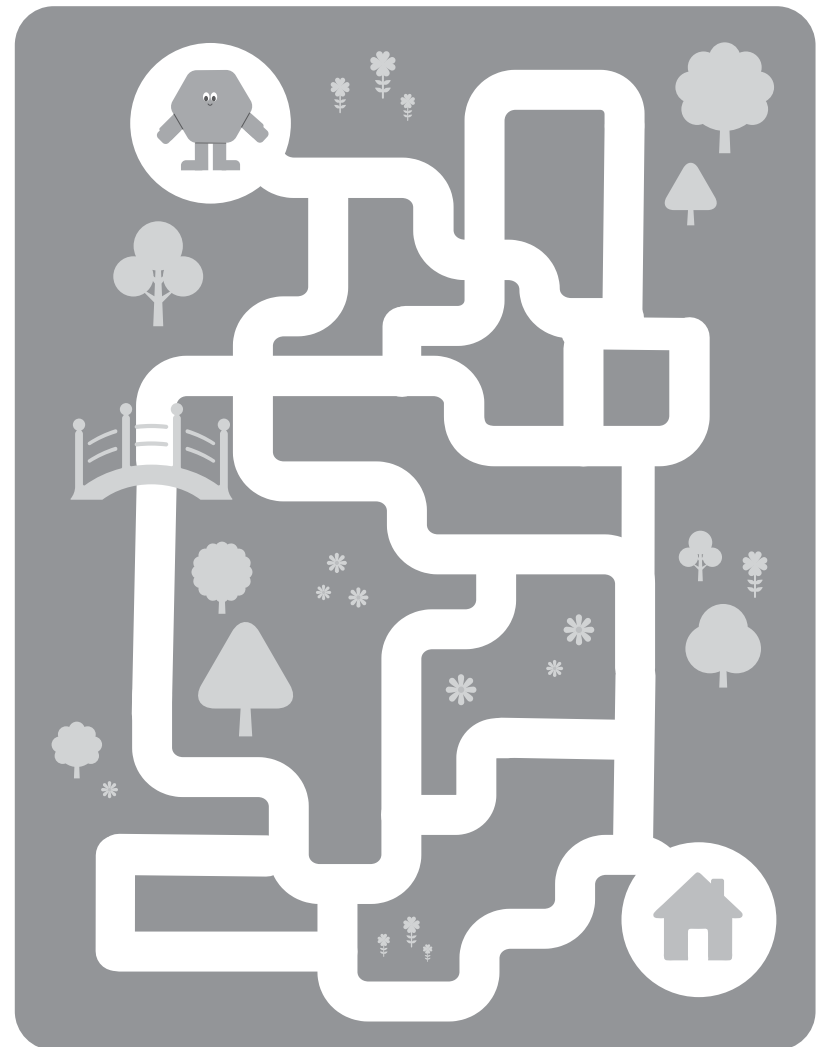


We did it! 

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you help our friend find the way?

Complete the maze!



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

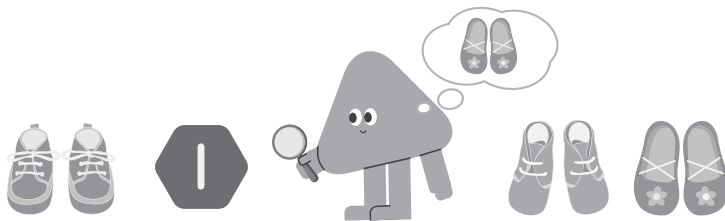
Which Mystery Message letter do you see? _____



Family Shoes

Match your family's shoes!

- 1 Let's play a shoe game! Help me collect a few pairs of shoes that belong to different members of our family.
- 2 Let's mix up the shoes and put them in a straight line. Can you find one of my shoes? Where's the other half of the pair?
- 3 You found it! Let's keep going until we match all the shoes.



 Mind

When children practice matching and sorting, they build math and problem solving skills.



We did it! 

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you design your own shoe?

Draw the most beautiful shoe you can imagine!



How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

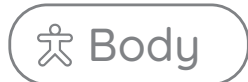
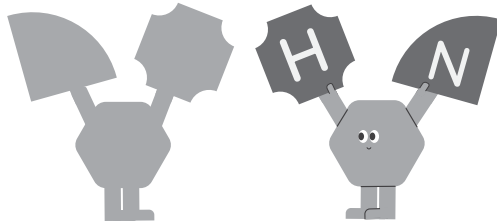
Which Mystery Message letter do you see?



Shadow Theater

Make a shadow theater show!

- 1 Let's create a shadow theater! Let's use tape to hang a white sheet in a doorway.
- 2 Let's use a lamp to shine light on the sheet. Let's stand between the light and the sheet to create shadows. The audience on the other side of the sheet can watch our performance.
- 3 Let's use our bodies to create shadow shapes. How can we make the shadow shapes move and dance?



Playing with shadows is a fun way for your child to move in new ways.

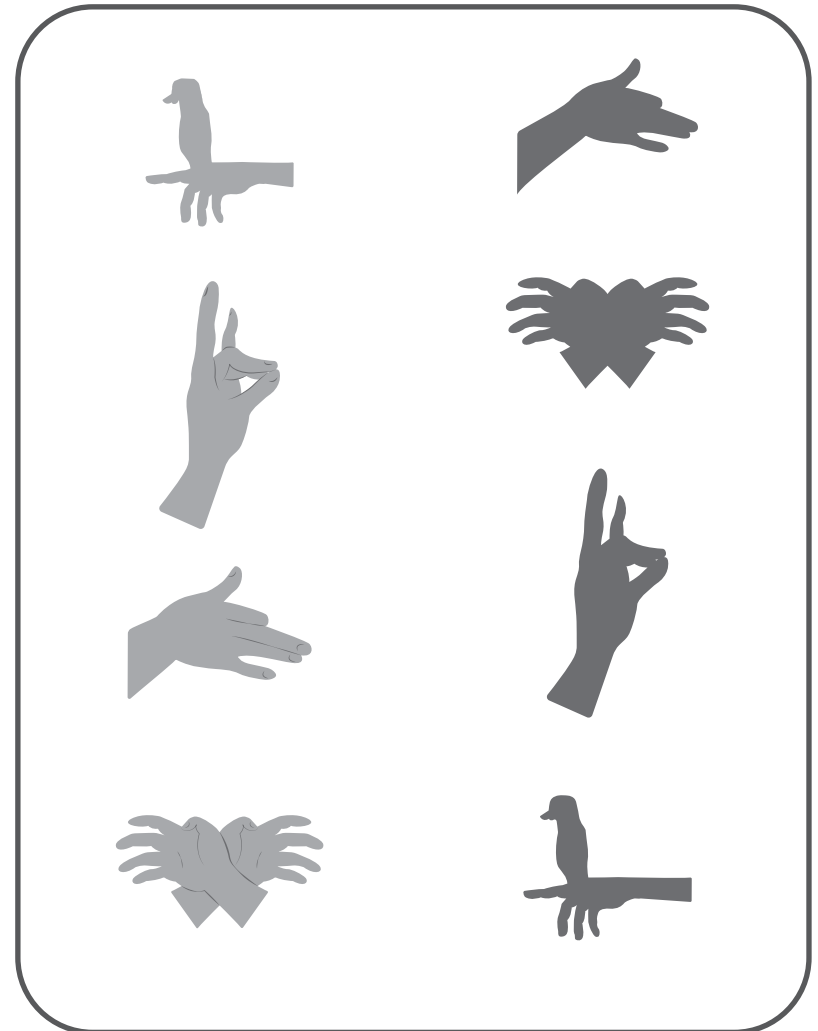


We did it! *

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Can you match the animal and its shadow?

Draw a line to connect the pairs.

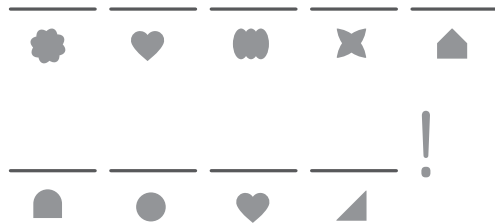
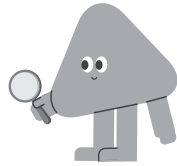


How many Sparkler friends do you see? _____

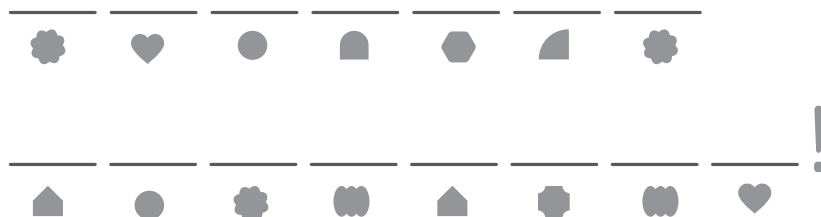
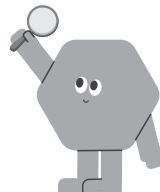
Which Mystery Message letters do you see?



Unlock the Mystery Clue!



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Keep learning and growing together every day with Sparkler!

Learn about all the milestones your child is achieving, play to learn every day, and connect to someone who can help you if you have questions or need support.

Questions?

Questions about Sparkler?
Learn more at playsparkler.org/LetsGrowCT or email support@playsparkler.org.

Questions about your child's development?
Connect with 211 Child Development via Sparkler in the app under "Connect" or call 1-800-505-7000.

