Alphabet Clue Game

Level: Preschool
Cost: None
Mess factor: None
Suggested room in the house: While running errands and waiting in line somewhere (grocery check-out, doctors office, paying a bill...)

Next time you find yourself waiting in a line with an impatient and bored child, try this quick little activity. All you need is something to write with and a small piece of paper, so start digging in that purse for an old receipt and get ready to teach your child about the alphabet.

Your child will experience:
- Alphabet knowledge

Materials:
- Something to write with
- A piece of paper

Beginning:
This is a fast and easy activity that can be done with children just about anywhere. Tell children in an excited voice that you are going to give them a clue and they are going to have to guess what it is you’re drawing.

Middle:
Draw one line of a letter at a time, asking children to guess which letter it will be. Answer children with comments as in the following steps for guessing R:
1. Draw a straight vertical line. “Well this could be an L because L has a tall straight line, too...but I’m thinking of a different letter.”
2. Next, draw the curved part at the top. “This sure looks like a P, doesn’t it?...but I’m not done making the letter I’m thinking of.”
3. I’ll draw one more short line, right here (draw bottom diagonal line) “Can you tell what it is now?”

End:
Just play a few times so that the games stay fun and interesting for the next time you need them!

Cleanup:
No cleaning up is necessary.
Younger children:
- Children are old enough to play this game if they know what letter their first name starts with. Use the letters in their first or last name to keep the letters familiar without causing too much frustration.
- If children are too young to recognize letters, change the activity to just be a game in which they guess what you are drawing. Draw simple things like a bird or face.

Older children:
- Instead of just guessing one letter and then moving on to another, do the guessing game for a whole word, so children are guessing one letter at a time.
- Let them turn the tables and draw out a letter for you to guess!
- For even older children, try the game using cursive letters.

Hints:
- You can extend this activity in another way without over using the guessing game. Point out letters in the environment and ask, “How do you think you would write that letter?”

More!
- You can use the same idea for guessing numbers, too!

Special Needs Accommodations:
- For children with visual or physical special needs, you can still help them learn their letters in ways that are engaging and stimulating to various senses. Try making letters out of the following materials:
  - Legos
  - Pipe cleaners
  - Cooked and uncooked spaghetti noodles
  - Paper strips
  - Play dough