

How to Make Multiple Brain Builder Bottles

- Collect a supply of clean, empty water bottles with lids (store the lids separately). Ensure the bottles have been open to the air and are completely dry inside. Remove any labels.
- Obtain items that will easily fit in the opening of the bottle (approximately 25-30 items in each bottle) and of various colours. No food (other than the rice) and no candy. The Dollar Store is a good source to find supplies - look for packages with large amounts in each, for example, 30 feathers. All items must be clean and unlikely to flake or break during play.
- Required items:
 - 3 or more beads, buttons or pompoms of various colours, and sizes (not white/grey/beige)
 - 1 or 2 animals of any kind - foam, erasers, plastic or stickers of animals
 - 1 small birthday candle (for young children to practice blowing)
 - 1 coloured feather
 - 3 to 5 foam or plastic shapes (circles, diamonds, squares, etc.)
 - 3 to 5 alphabet letters (beads or foam letters)
 - 1 snake (for practicing the “sss” sound; if no snakes available add a piece of coloured string)
 - A large pinch of sparkly items; stars, sequins, table glitter
 - 3 to 5 googly eyes

Other items

- 3 to 5 bugs
 - 1 or 2 paper clips, mini clothespins, safety pins, bobby pins
 - 1 or 2 coloured marbles or the small dollar store lego-like pieces
 - 3 to 5 mini-puzzle pieces
 - 1 or 2 tiny seasonal items, for example, hearts at Valentine’s Day, bugs at Halloween (no scary skulls), bunny erasers at Easter, jingle bells at Christmas
 - Any other items that can teach colours, shapes, counting and sounds
 - Objects of different size and colour but from same category (beads, letters, shapes etc.)
 - For older children, add in more letters and numbers
- Use white rice – a 10 kg bag of rice makes about 55 bottles. Use a funnel to pour rice into the bottle
 - Duckling tape is used to seal the bottle lid, this is a narrow duck tape that is available online, in craft supply or stationery stores. Lids can also be glued in place but must be child safe glue.
 - **Instructions for filling the bottles:**
 - Set-up assembly line of empty bottles.
 - Add small items first, making sure each bottle has the “required items”. Aim for 25-30 items in each bottle – too many items will make it difficult for a child to find things
 - Add rice to 1/3 full. Avoid adding too much rice! Shake the bottle.
 - Cap the bottle tightly and wrap with Duckling tape to ensure the bottle lid is well secured.
 - Include a supply of the “How to Play” sheets to give out with bottles. Don’t wrap the “how to play” sheet around the bottle.
 - **Additional information:**
 - The “How to Play” handout mentions various items in the bottle, which is why the bottle has “required items”. Feel free to add seasonal items. Snakes and bugs are easiest to find in the spring, or at Halloween. If you can’t find them, don’t worry
 - For babies, use the 250 ml bottles instead of the 500 ml bottles and fill with very little rice, so that the bottle becomes more of a “shaker” rather than a “search and find”, while still remaining a brain builder.
 - **IMPORTANT** to advise all parents about the risk of spillage and choking if the lid becomes loose or comes off, and to check the bottle often - especially if being used by children who “mouth” toys.