

Alzheimer's Focus

Activity ideas especially for persons with Alzheimer's.

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Alzheimer's from Around August

MANY of the ideas on Activity Connection are appropriate for people suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Below are just a **FEW EXAMPLES** from around the site this month. Be sure to check out all of the pages.

1. [Bingo Press](#) - Select one of the "easier" versions of bingo cards where the numbers are in order down the columns. They can make playing bingo less confusing for people with dementia.
2. [Brush to Canvas](#) always includes simple (but adult) pictures to paint or color.
3. [Exercise & Healthy Living](#) - Turn on the "Hukilau Song" and do arm movements to the music. They can be any movements you want.
4. [Flora & Fauna](#) - Bring in a pineapple and share some pineapple trivia. If you want, try growing a pineapple plant.
5. [It's Puzzling](#) - Print copies of the easier versions of some of the puzzles and pass them out for people to solve. (See [Puzzles & Pondering](#) below for more puzzles.)
6. [Parties & Socials](#) - Plan a Hawaiian party with Hawaiian music, leis, and pineapple snacks.
7. [Just Picture It!](#) - See if people can identify the object. Then discuss what it is and how it is used.



In addition, see this month's [Making Sense](#) page for "A Jewel of a Sensory Kit" that most people will enjoy, no matter their ability level.

THERE'S MUCH MORE! CHECK OUT [ALL OF THE PAGES](#) FOR **ALL** OF THE IDEAS!

Puzzles & Pondering

NEW: Puzzles & Pondering will be a regular monthly feature on the Alzheimer's page. The puzzles are compliments of [Lindy McClean](#), author of *Senior Smart Puzzles*. Pondering questions are by our contributing writer Julie Allen.

How to Use the Puzzles

1. Print copies of the [3 PUZZLES](#) below and pass them out one at a time.
2. Pass out pencils or markers.
3. After everyone has had a chance to solve the puzzle, reveal the [SOLUTIONS](#).
4. Then, use the "Ponderings" below (including short info and questions) to prompt a discussion. The puzzles are illustrated with vintage pictures, which make them perfect for conversation and reminiscing.

Tips:

- Some of the puzzles specify finding a specific number of things. (For example, the instructions for Puzzle #1 say "Find **5** differences ...") This might be frustrating to those people who can only find a couple. As an alternative, simply cut the instructions off the top of the page and ask the person to "Find **some** differences" or "How many differences can you find?"
- If you want, enlarge the puzzle and try solving as a group.
- Use for one-to-one and independent activities.
- Pass out colored pencils so people can color in the pictures.

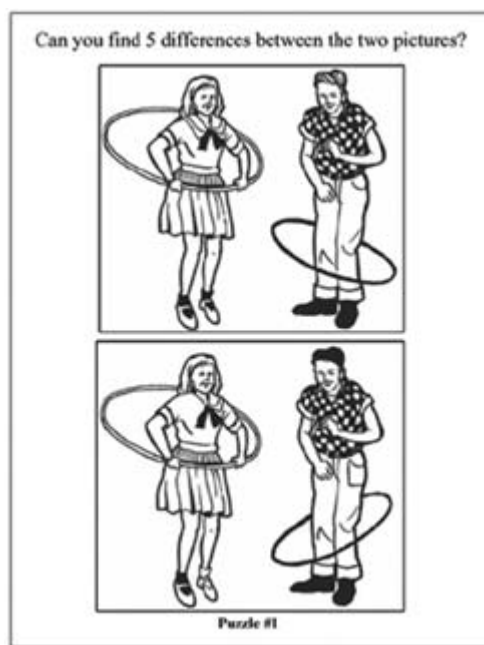
Ponderings

Puzzle #1 - Hula Hoops

Hula Hoops made their debut in the 1950s and their popularity continues today. You can see these brightly colored hoops for sale at most toy stores. With ball bearings or bells inside, they were marketed as having that "shoop, shoop" sound.

Q: Do you remember playing with a hula hoop? Did your children or grandchildren play with one? Would you like to learn more about the history of the hula hoop?

Two American toy makers, Arthur "Spud" Melin and Richard Knerr, based the hula hoop on a similar game that Australian children played using a bamboo hoop. In 1958, they produced a plastic version and promoted it around the Los Angeles, California area. They demonstrated the toy by showing it to kids who were playing on the playground, and



they gave many away. This approach launched the biggest toy fad the United States has ever witnessed. In just four months, over 25 million hula hoops were sold in the United States alone. Worldwide, over 100 million were sold in 1958. They sold for \$1.98 each.

Q: Was \$1.98 a lot of money to spend on a toy in 1958? What were some of your favorite toys as a kid? Do you know what it cost, if anything?

Q: Do you think keeping a hula hoop going is easy? Did you and your friends ever compete against each other to see who could keep it going the longest? Did you ever try keeping more than one hula hoop going at a time?

The record for the most time continuously keeping a hula hoop going (with 5-minute rest breaks each hour) is 72 hours! The most hula hoops twirled at once is 105. Wow!

Q: Do you think the boy and girl in the puzzle are having a hula hoop contest? Who do you think is winning?

Q: Would you see children today dressed like the ones in the puzzle? What's different? Do you see many girls wearing dresses or skirts today? Why about the boy's shirt and hairstyle?

Puzzle #2 - USO Card Game

The USO was formed in 1941 (as a request from President Franklin D. Roosevelt) to provide respite for servicemen. The USO became the GI's "Home Away from Home." At its high point in 1944, the USO had more than 3,000 clubs. The USO could be many things to many people - a place to dance, meet people, see a movie, play a game of pool or ping pong, get free coffee and doughnuts, or play cards, like the men in the puzzle.

Q: If you were in the military, did you ever go to a USO? What kind of things did you do there? Guys, did you ever go to a dance or meet a pretty woman at a USO?

Q: Do you know what USO stands for?

It stands for United Service Organizations.

Q: Do you think the woman serving coffee is a volunteer? Do you see the band she is wearing on her arm? What does it say?

During WW II, women made up the core of USO volunteers, serving as hostesses.



During the war era, the government and the public at large believed that women, more than men, could lift servicemen's morale.

Q: If the USO wasn't available, how do you think it would affect the morale of the servicemen and women?

Q: What kind of card is hidden in the puzzle? Can you name the suits in a deck of cards?

It's an ace of spades. The other suits are clubs, diamonds, and hearts.

Q: What kind of card game do you think the men are playing? What are some other card games?

They are probably playing poker since the men are holding 5 cards and it looks like there are poker chips on the table. Other card games include blackjack, rummy, cribbage, pinochle, bridge, hearts, etc.

Q: What branch of the military do you think the men in the puzzle belong to? What clues did you get from the puzzle?

Three of the men look like Army guys. The other is probably a Navy man because of the sailor collar on his uniform.

Puzzle #3 - Photographer

The world's first photograph was produced in 1826 by French scientist Joseph Nicéphore Niépce. He took the photograph of his family's country home from an upstairs window. He used a simple pinhole camera and coated plates. He titled the picture "View from the Window at Le Gras."

Q: What kind of camera do you think is in the puzzle? Have you ever seen or used a camera like the one shown? What other kinds of cameras or camera brands can you name?

The camera in the puzzle is a folding camera. Other types of cameras include box, Instamatic, Kodak, Polaroid, 35mm, disposable, digital, etc.

Q: What does it look like the man in the puzzle is doing?

It looks like he is trying to take a picture without his camera.

Q: What do you think he is trying to take a picture of? What are some things people



like to take pictures of?

Family members, weddings, graduations, babies, animals, flowers, wildlife, scenery, important events, celebrities, etc.

Q: Do you remember your first camera? Did it have a flash with large flashbulbs that got very hot? How did you take out the hot bulb?

Q: Do you remember waiting to get the film developed? How long did it take? Were you anxious to see the results?

Q: Do you remember Polaroid cameras? How did they work?

You had to pull out the film, wait for the picture to appear, and then coat it with a chemical to keep it from fading. The quality was usually not very good.

Q: Do you like to get your picture taken?

Q: What do you say to make people smile?

When you say the word CHEESE, the vowels EE make you open your mouth and smile. Let's all try it!

Q: Have you ever seen or used a digital camera?

Activity Note: It might be fun to bring in a digital camera and take everyone's picture. Then, show them the instant results. If you can, connect your camera to the TV and show the pictures.

“I’m Your Biggest Fan” Door Decorations

A cool door decoration for summer.



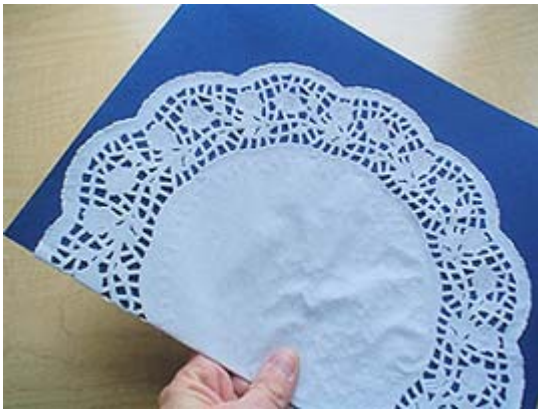
You will need:

- Paper doily - 10 1/2 inches in diameter. (You can find these in the bridal or cake decorating section of most craft stores.)
- 8 1/2" X 11" piece of colored or patterned cardstock
- Jumbo craft stick
- Silk flowers in coordinating colors
- Ribbon in coordinating colors
- Scissors, glue
- Permanent marker or paint pen (optional)

Print a [picture of the finished project](#) to show the group. Also, post a copy of the picture on your bulletin board to create interest in your craft activity.

How to make it:

1. Fold the bottom 1/3 of the doily up and cut along the folded line.
2. Using the larger half, center and glue the doily to the sheet of cardstock.
3. When the glue has dried, cut around the edge of the doily, leaving approximately 1/2-inch edge of cardstock showing.



4. Glue the craft stick to the center back of the fan for a handle.
5. Glue silk flowers to the front of the fan near the handle.
6. Glue a loop of ribbon to the back of the fan for a hanger.
7. When all the glue has dried, finish the fan by tying a pretty ribbon around the handle.
8. If you like, you can write your name on the fan with a permanent marker or paint pen.

Sorting Earrings & Cuff Links

Ask staff and families to donate old clip-on earrings and cuff links. Place them in a jewelry box and ask people to help you sort them - finding matching pairs.

For Conversation

Talk about the different designs and ask how to wear earrings and cuff links.



For more, see this month's [Making Sense](#) page and put together "A Jewel of a Sensory Kit."

Learning Resource

If you would like to learn more about behaviors in people with dementia, check out our sister site - [Activity Teacher](#). Here you will find a course titled:

[Ain't Misbehavin' or Behavior as Communication](#).

Take the class for CE hours **OR** just to learn more about the topic.

Course description: Although this course is aimed primarily at understanding behaviors in people with dementia, you will find that the guidelines work for people without cognitive handicaps as well. We all want to be understood, but we cannot always explain ourselves verbally. Behavior is a form of communication. This course will give you many tips on understanding why a person is acting as s/he is and possibly even addressing the root cause of the behavior.

