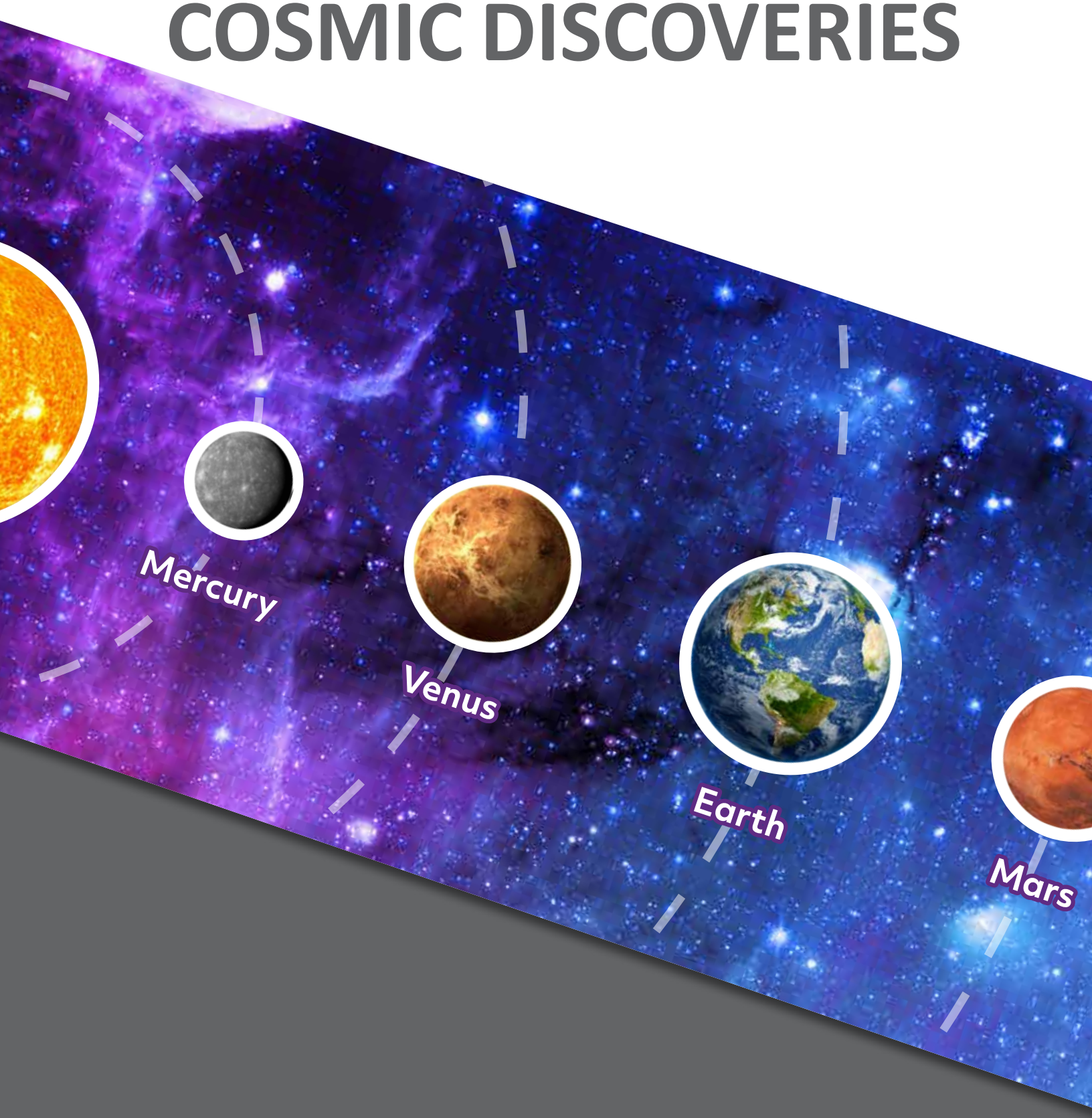
COSMIC DISCOVERIES



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Language and Literacy

Letter Constellations: Themed Alphabet

EZ.005.LA.1001-1002

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify letters of the alphabet.
Students will create letters in unconventional ways.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Using laminated capital and lowercase letters, students use star stickers to create a letter constellation on the template, building awareness around writing as a process. Students also work on developing fine motor skills.

WHAT TO DO

1. After reviewing the term constellation (a group of stars forming an imaginary picture in the sky), students can make their own letter constellations using the reusable letter cards and foam star stickers. Encourage students to outline the letters to create constellations (be sure to use the foam stickers with the reusable letter cards).
2. Students can use the star stickers and black construction paper to make constellations (star patterns) in pictures and patterns of their choosing. Encourage the students to connect the stars using chalk and create a story about their constellation.

PLAY TIPS

- Make constellations out of pipe cleaners! Bend pipe cleaners into shapes and add beads in various locations. Encourage students to create a story about their constellation.
- Use a hole punch to make “stars” on black construction paper in a pattern or picture. Then, shine a flashlight through the paper while holding the paper five inches from a wall. Students can see their constellation shine on the wall!

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Mathematics

Number Scavenger Hunt: Number Cards

EZ.005.LA.1003-1004

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will develop one-to-one correspondence.
Students will compare quantities of objects by using number recognition and one-to-one correspondence.

Each themed classroom includes themed number cards. A featured activity will be included with each set of themed number cards. Math manipulatives and tools, such as dominoes, help students make direct correlations between visual numbers and objects. Using dominoes, students make comparisons between numbers and participate in simple addition and subtraction tasks.

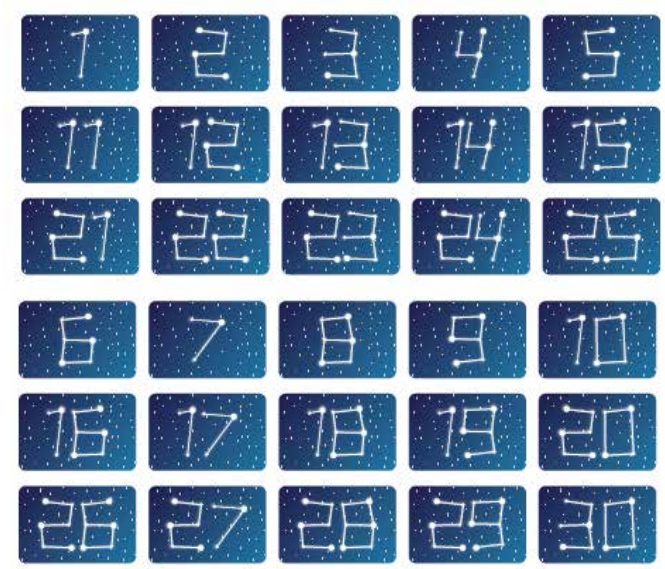
WHAT TO DO

1. Introduce the dominoes in a small group. Use a domino to model counting the dots and draw attention to the divide line on a domino.
2. Place the dominoes on the table and have students match the domino dots to the number card (one-to-one correspondence).

PLAY TIPS

- Work on simple addition and subtraction using the dominoes. Have students make comparison between the two sides of a domino, add the total amount of both sides (one-to-one correspondence), and ask students to subtract one side (count the remaining on the other side).
- Create simple domino matching cards and have students match the dominoes to the cards.

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Mathematics

Counting and Measurement

EZ.005.LA.1005

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will count items up to 10 with one-to-one correspondence.
Students will begin to add to and take away items.
Students will begin to use nonstandard measurement tools.

Students use counting manipulatives, non-standard forms of measurement like Unifix Cubes, and themed counters, to practice one-to-one correspondence and early practices of measurement using themed math cards. Measurement can be an abstract concept for young children. Manipulatives like blocks, cubes, or cups provide a tangible way to understand concepts like length, and height. By physically comparing and ordering objects, they can build a foundation for understanding measurement units later.

WHAT TO DO

After modeling how to use the mats, place the counting and measurement mats in a learning center as a teacher-directed or student-directed experience. As a teacher-directed experience, guide students to use manipulatives to show one-to-one correspondence and length. As a student-directed experience, allow students to freely explore the manipulatives and mats.

PLAY TIPS

- Use the math manipulatives to reinforce sorting by color and type. Encourage students to count how many are in each category. Encourage students to think of other ways to sort the manipulatives.
- Ask students to use the manipulatives to create patterns. Create simple pattern mats (ABAB, AABB, ABB) for additional support and guidance.

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Mathematics

Making Patterns

EZ.005.LA.1006

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will recognize common 2-D shapes.
Students will sort by features and attributes.
Students will recognize patterns.

Students explore patterns and properties of shapes as they create whole images using pattern blocks and themed pattern block mats. Pattern blocks boost students' ability to think critically, make predictions, and test their predictions.

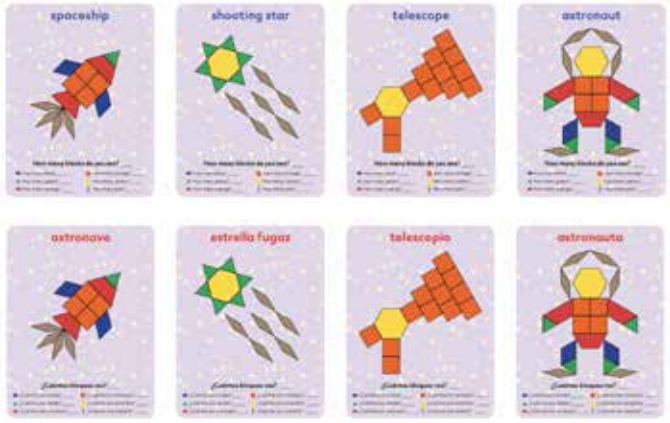
WHAT TO DO

Pattern block mats and pattern blocks work well as a self-directed activity. The intuitive nature requires little direction. Place the mats and pattern blocks out for students to explore freely, encouraging students to match the pattern block shape and color to the correlating space on the whole image.

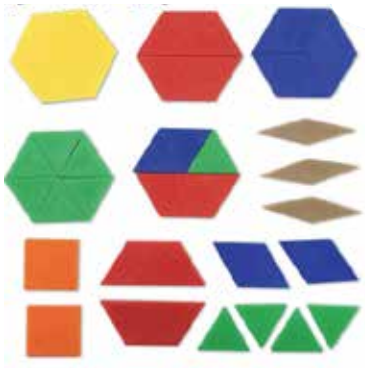
PLAY TIPS

- You can make your own pattern block cards by simply tracing pattern blocks on paper. Create a design using the pattern blocks and place the design on paper. Trace around the outer edge of your design and allow students to fill in the design with pattern blocks.
- Have students take a two-handed scoop of pattern blocks and sort by shape or color. Use graphing paper or a graphing mat to visualize the sorting process.
- Students can use mirrors to create patterns and make observations in the reflections. Ask students to describe what they are seeing as they create patterns in the mirrors.

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Language and Literacy

Pre-Writing Line Tracing

EZ.005.LA.1007

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will build pre-writing skills by tracing curved, notched, and zigzag lines. Students will recognize directionality in print and writing.

Students work on emergent literacy and transition to letter formations by tracing lines, patterns, and shapes with a theme in a dry erase, reusable format. To connect to fine motor development, students are encouraged to add detail. Themed templates are included for tracing.

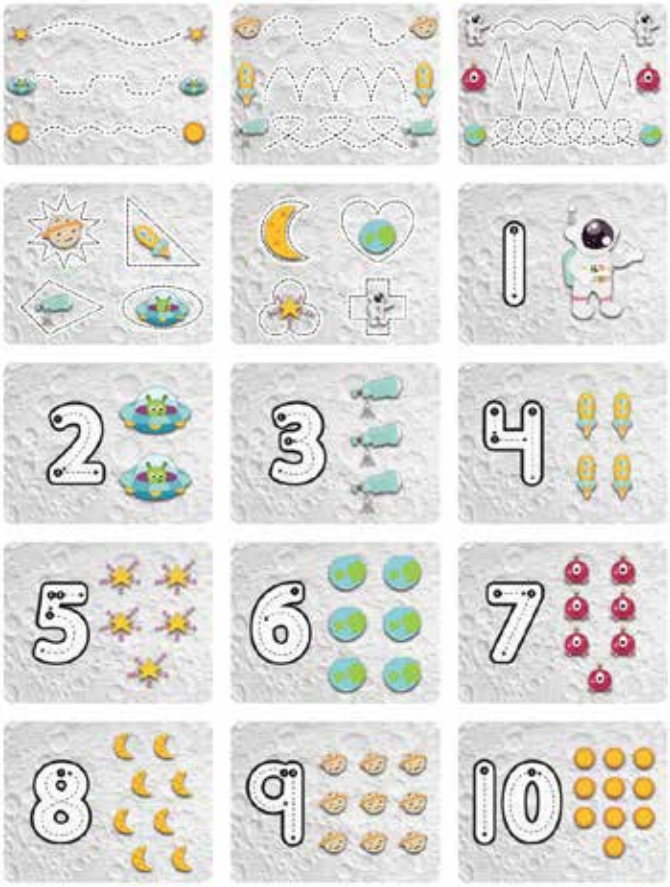
WHAT TO DO

1. Place the dry erase templates in the writing center. Students have the choice to use dry erase markers on the dry erase templates or place paper on the template and trace using a pencil/crayon. Remind students to start from left to right and top to bottom.
2. Encourage students to make their own tracing templates using the dry erase templates as a guide. Students can work on tracing shapes, lines, and numbers by repetitively tracing the same shape, line, or number using a different color crayon each time.

PLAY TIPS

- Include the themed tracing patterns in the writing center to align with other free-choice writing exercises. Using a clipboard will help students control the writing utensil.
- Tape the template vertically, on an easel or teacher board, to encourage the strengthening of fine motor development.

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Language and Literacy

Syllable Awareness

EZ.005.LA.1009

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will understand and use recognizable and new vocabulary.
Students will begin to blend and segment syllables in words.

Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. It is an essential skill in the process of learning to read and write. Young children participate in various sound activities to build sound awareness. Recognizing that words can be broken down into syllables or units of sound is a phonological skill.

WHAT TO DO

Introduce the vocabulary cards as a guided activity or free choice center activity. Have students clap the number of beats on the vocabulary card and indicate the number by moving the clip.

PLAY TIPS

- Provide simple instruments to reinforce the number of syllables. Rather than clap the number of syllables in a word, students can shake the number of syllables.
- Students can use their body to emphasize syllables in a word. Have students jump up and down, tap their toes, march in place, do jumping jacks, or tap their head to count syllables.

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Language and Literacy

Rhyming Awareness

EZ.005.LA.1010

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will understand and use recognizable and new vocabulary.
Students will begin to recognize rhyming words.

Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. It is an essential skill in the process of learning to read and write. Young children participate in various sound activities to build sound awareness. Rhyming activities help children listen for ending sounds in words, a precursor to phonics activities in late preschool.

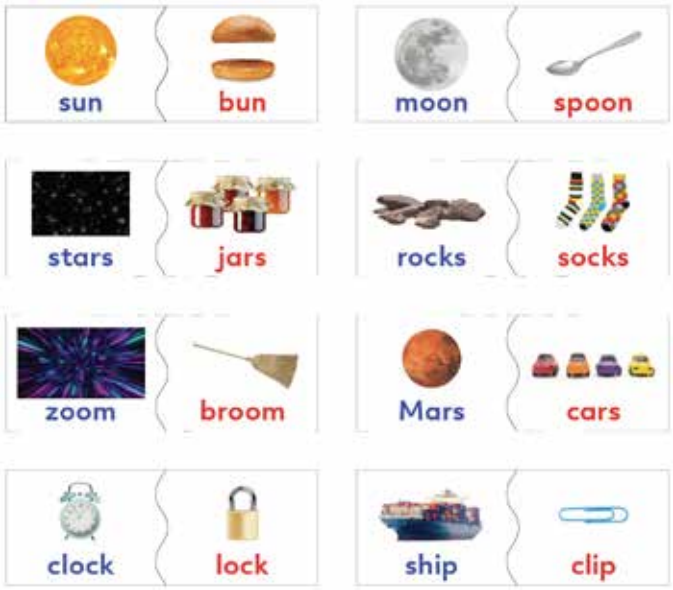
WHAT TO DO

Introduce the rhyming and matching cards as a small group, guided activity. Have students say the words on the rhyming cards and find the matching sound card. Students can place the matching sound card on the correlating picture.

PLAY TIPS

- Play rhyming words with body parts. Have students touch their head, nose, arm, etc. and think of a word that rhymes with the body part.
- Play, *I Spy with My Little Eye*, using target items in the classroom. For example, decide on something in the classroom, like *door* as the target word. Then state, "I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with *floor*." The students look around the classroom for something that rhymes with floor.

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Language and Literacy

Onset and Rime Awareness

EZ.005.LA.1011

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will understand and use recognizable and new vocabulary.
Students will begin to identify and segment one-syllable words.

Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. It is an essential skill in the process of learning to read and write. Young children participate in various sound activities to build sound awareness. Onset and rime activities help children identify patterns in words.

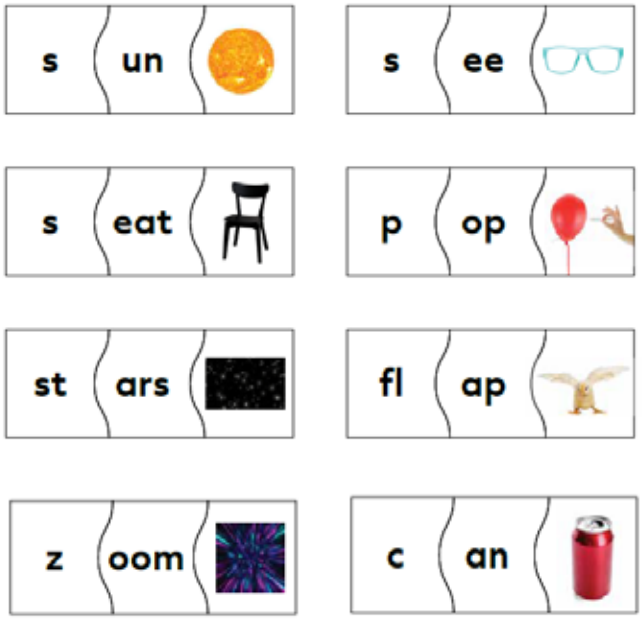
WHAT TO DO

Introduce the picture puzzles as a small group or free choice activity. As a small group exercise, model saying the onset together, the rime together, and the picture that identifies the word. As a free choice exercise, have the students put the pieces together to create a word.

PLAY TIP

Attach beginning and ending sounds to a set (2) of large dice. Have students roll the dice and say the word created, putting the onset and rime together.

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Language and Literacy

Space Syllables: Word Bank Words

EZ.005.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify letters of the alphabet.
Students will recognize syllables through clapping beats.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. Students clap the beats (syllables) to word bank words with support from the educator. Word bank words can be written on sentence strips to be used during morning meeting or other routine periods in the schedule.

WHAT TO DO

1. Write word bank words on sentence strip paper and cut according to word length. Place the word bank words in the pocket chart for use during morning meeting or other group meeting times. Model clapping the beat (syllables) to word bank words as students follow along.
2. You can continue to model clapping the beat to word bank words as part of daily routines and even during transition periods (lining up and walking outside, transitioning to nap, etc.).

PLAY TIPS

- Instead of clapping the beat to word bank words, jump up and down to recognize syllables. You can even create a number line on the floor using painter's tape and have students jump to the appropriate number of syllables as you say a word.
- Use manipulatives and picture cards to recognize syllables. Students can move counters as they say each syllable in the word. Ask them to count the manipulatives to reinforce the number of syllables in the word.

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Social and Emotional

How I'm Feeling

EZ.005.LA.1013

Activity Type:
Large Group, Small Group, and Routines

Objective:
Students will Identify their own feelings and feelings of others/story characters.

Through the read aloud *A Place for Pluto* by Stef Wade, students learn that Pluto was once classified as a planet but is no longer. How do you think this makes Pluto feel? During morning meetings, students have daily check-ins regarding their own feelings which helps build a classroom community. A plush Pluto is passed around as students post their own feelings using planet emote cards on the How is Pluto Today magnetic board.

WHAT TO DO

1. Read *A Place for Pluto* by Stef Wade, asking students how Pluto is feeling throughout the read aloud. Ask students how they would feel if they were Pluto in each situation.
2. Introduce the planet emote cards during morning meeting. Students can recognize and share their own feelings during daily check-ins using the plush Pluto and planet emote cards. As students pass around the plush Pluto, they share their current emotions by placing a planet emote card on the magnetic board.

PLAY TIPS

- Continue hosting discussions about belonging and having friendly behavior, which aids in building a healthy classroom community. Comment on behavior such as, "You two are doing a great job putting the blocks in the basket together." and "Thank you for sharing the blocks."
- Make coffee filter planets/dwarf planet (Pluto). Use an intact coffee filter as scale for Jupiter and cut the remaining planets/dwarf planet in descending order by size. Ask the students to color the planets/dwarf planet using markers, referencing the murals in the classroom. When finished coloring, spray the planets gently with a water-filled spray bottle and watch the colors blend!

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Language and Literacy

Peg Light Board Exploration

EZ.005.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will create art with light using design templates and imagination.
Students will develop fine motor skills.

In the classroom, a peg light board provides opportunities for free exploration or opportunities for educator-led experiences. Large-scale letter templates encourage students to practice letter formations in a non-conventional way.

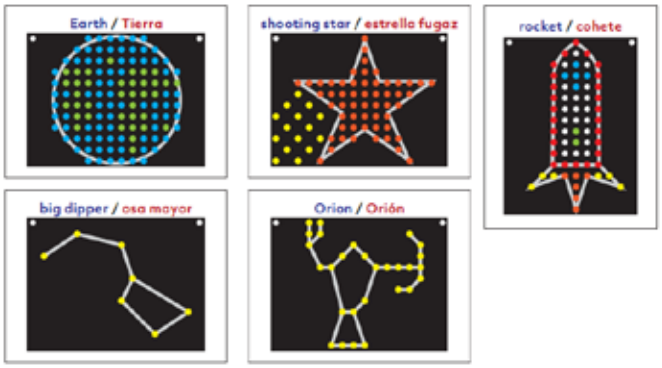
WHAT TO DO

1. A peg light board can be used as a center-based, free-choice activity. Introduce and demonstrate interacting with the peg light board and templates. Encourage students to explore the templates and/or create pictures and patterns of their own.
2. Use the peg light board for sorting and counting activities. Students can sort by color and use the pegs as math manipulatives in educator-directed activities.

PLAY TIP

Make connections to the tabletop Peg Creations Light Board (similar features and functions). The individual light boards can be used by students who would like to work independently and students who need additional support.

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Science

Rocket Launch

EZ.005.LA.1015

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will observe, discuss, and describe motion of rockets.
Students will design, test, redesign, and retest as part of the scientific process.

Rockets require fuel and speed to leave Earth's atmosphere. Students can simulate a real rocket launch in the classroom using stomp rockets and have discussions about fuel, cause and effect, and testing and trying again. Cause and effect is the foundation of scientific thinking. By experimenting and observing, preschoolers can start to form hypotheses, test them, and understand how one event leads to another.

WHAT TO DO

1. Plan to do this activity outdoors, in an auditorium, or a gym as the rockets can travel 200 feet into the air. Before launching the rockets, discuss rocket features using the diagram. Ask students what a rocket needs to launch into the air (fuel). While the students are launching rockets from the launch pad, discuss the fuel used for the classroom rockets (air).
2. Students can make their own rocket out of construction paper and tape. With adult assistance, have students cut the construction paper in half and roll it into a roll. Tape the roll. Cut a circle out of the other piece of construction paper and cut a small triangle out of the circle. Fold the circle into a cone shape, tape the cone, and then tape the cone on top of the body. Last, cut out three triangles to make fins and tape onto the body.

PLAY TIP

You can make your own rocket launcher using a half-inch PVC pipe and a two-liter bottle. Simply insert the PVC pipe into the bottle, place the rocket onto the end of the PVC pipe, and squeeze the two-liter bottle. Students can make comparisons between the two launchers (Which launcher sent the rocket farther? Why do you think so? Do they use the same fuel?).

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Fine Arts

International Space Station Dramatic Play

EZ.005.LA.1016

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will participate in dramatic expression scenarios and apply to real life situations.

Students prepare for a mission to the International Space Station by dressing for the flight, taking notes before takeoff, and recording observations while traveling through space. Once they arrive, they can consider all the things they will do in space: build a new home, eat, exercise, and research. Using materials like wooden blocks, students leave Earth to explore the possibility of life on other planets. Through role-playing, children ask questions, give instructions, and engage in conversations. Role-playing also strengthens turn-taking abilities and confidence in expressing themselves.

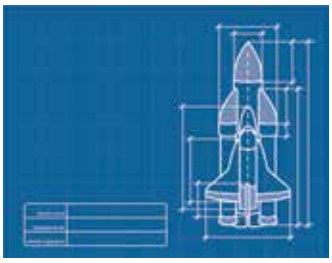
WHAT TO DO

Introduce the dramatic play materials and encourage students to blast off into space! Ask students to consider preparing for the trip and think about what they will pack. Next, students can make a flight plan using the flight plan dry erase boards. Once students arrive at the International Space Station, they can draw/sketch plans to build a home and create their new home using wooden blocks. The space-themed dramatic play possibilities are endless!

PLAY TIP

Continue adding new materials to the International Space Station dramatic play center to entice creative and new thinking. Create astronaut food by adding felt or paper pieces to a Ziploc bag and adding a label. Create a research lab by adding rocks, paper and pencils, and observation tools (magnifying glass and mini microscope).

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Mathematics

Build With K'NEX

EZ.005.LA.1017

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will design and redesign using open-ended materials.
Students follow simple steps.

Using direct-printed building cards and Kid K'NEX building sets, students work on fine-motor development and reinforce science concepts by building space-related items. Children can consider building other structures and objects that are interesting to them.

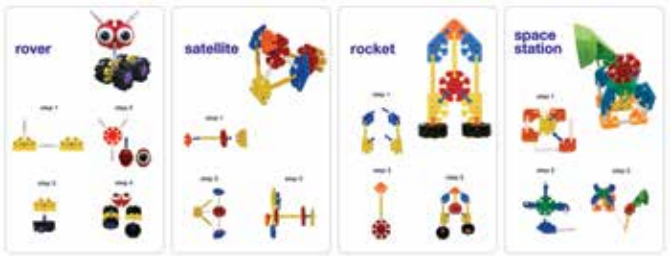
WHAT TO DO

1. Introduce the Kid K'NEX and building guide cards in a free-choice center. Ask students to sort the K'NEX by piece type first and use a building guide card to create a rover, rocket, satellite, and more.
2. Students can use the included building ideas to create other items and draw inspiration.

PLAY TIPS

- Encourage students to make their own structures, models, or characters. Students can sketch their design first before constructing. After a read aloud, ask the students to make characters from the story and retell the story in their own words.
- Use the K'NEX as counting manipulatives during math exercises.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Reach for the Stars

EZ.005.LA.1018

Activity Type:
Small Group, Large Group, Routine, and Transitions

Objectives:
Students will develop gross motor movements to control mind and body.
Students will follow simple two and three-step directions.

Students participate in gross motor movements by bending their body and stretching for the sky and stars. Movement cards are supplied to provide a visual and entice participation. How might movements change if you were on the Moon or International Space Station?

WHAT TO DO

1. As a large group activity, pass out individual star spots to work on the concept of personal space. As a small group activity, ask a student to lead the small group in the exercises.
2. Display the reach-for-the-stars movement cards, one at a time, starting with small intervals of 15-20 seconds. As students become accustomed to the routine and practice, slowly increase the amount of time engaged in each movement.

PLAY TIPS

- Ask students to create their own movements and share with the class.
- Use the star carpet spots during morning meeting, story time, or to encourage social distancing

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Science

Making Craters

EZ.005.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will make observations and predictions about object impacts.

Craters are impacts made by objects in the sky like meteors, meteorites, or space junk. In the classroom, students can simulate making craters on a surface by dropping objects of varying sizes from varying heights and talking about the crater's size and shape. Experimenting with the materials allows students to make predictions, observe, and ask questions. Through this play, they gain a deeper understanding of scientific concepts.

WHAT TO DO

1. Fill the container with sensory sand, kinetic sand, or flour. Have students drop the various balls onto the surface from the same height and make observations. Ask students the following questions: "How are the craters (dents) different?" and "Why do you think they are different?" Make connections to craters (dents) found on the Moon and the Earth.
2. Repeat using another surface material and make observations about the craters. Do the craters look the same or different than the craters on other surfaces?

PLAY TIPS

- Try dropping other items from the classroom like marbles or rocks onto the surfaces and ask students to make observations about shape and size. Ask students to choose the items to explore.
- Mix 4 cups of flour with ½ cup of cooking oil to make Moon dough (student-led or teacher-led). Students can make craters in the moon dough using rocks, marbles, or other hard objects.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED















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Science

Prism Exploration Center

EZ.005.LA.1020

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students make predictions and observations using scientific tools.

Acrylic prisms are a fun, hands-on tool that students can explore with light to make observations and predictions. Using flashlights, acrylic prisms, and different colored paper, students can observe the bending of light as it moves through a prism and make predictions as they explore with different shapes and sizes.

WHAT TO DO

1. Prisms are a great introduction to rainbows. Allow students to experiment with the prisms and flashlight. Can they create a rainbow? What do they notice about the rainbow that they created?
2. Place the white paper on the table and use a flashlight to display a rainbow on the paper. Students can trace the rainbow with crayons or colored pencils as a friend holds the flashlight.

PLAY TIPS

- Hang prisms around your classroom, close to a window. Students can go on a rainbow hunt as the prisms bend the sunlight.
- Create prism patterns with patterned colored paper. Draw a pattern on colored paper. Place a prism on the paper and explore how the prism interrupts the pattern.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Space Sensory Play

EZ.005.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objective:
Students will strengthen fine motor skills through manipulation of sensory materials.
Students will explore scientific and artistic representation by recreating features of the Moon's surface.
Students will collaborate and share ideas and they build and create.

Students use kinetic sand or play sand to create interpretations of the Moon's surface. They can browse non-fiction books and classroom visuals of space for inspiration. Astronauts, rovers, satellites, and other space-themed materials encourage dramatic play and imaginative storytelling. This hands-on experience integrates sensory exploration, early science inquiry, and creativity.

WHAT TO DO

1. Place the kinetic sand or black play sand, space figurines, space transportation, and planets in the *Moon Rocks Sensory Station*. This activity also works well as a free-choice, tabletop exploration using the flexible storage bin.
2. Encourage students to form craters, mountains, and other lunar features to simulate the Moon's landscape. Invite students to narrate their creations or act out space missions using the figurines and vehicles.

PLAY TIPS

- Have students make their own "moon sand" by mixing 4 ½ cups of fine play sand, 1 ½ cups of cornstarch, and 1 cup of water. Add powdered tempera paint to create different colors.
- Add clear water beads, black rocks, and white rocks to the *Moon Rocks Sensory Station* to create texture variations and extend the space theme.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Moon Rocks Sensory Station

EZ.005.LA.1022

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objective:
Students will use observation skills to explore, compare, and classify "moon rocks" and minerals.
Students will sort items into categories such as "same" and "different," using criteria either set by the teacher or chosen by themselves.
Students will use tools of exploration to investigate and describe physical properties of materials.

Students become young lunar scientists as they explore "moon rocks" and minerals at the *Moon Rocks Sensory Station*. Inside the sensory table, students discover an assortment of rocks, minerals, and geodes - representing "moon samples" collected by astronauts. Using magnifiers, balance scales, and spray bottles, students carefully observe, sort, and classify these specimens by characteristics such as size, texture, weight, and shine. Through this sensory-rich exploration, students practice using descriptive language as they make comparisons and deepen their understanding of Earth and space science.

WHAT TO DO

1. As a large group, invite students to gather around the Moon Rocks Sensory Station. Introduce the idea that they are lunar scientists studying samples collected from the Moon's surface.
2. Place the specimen in the sensory table and ask students to use descriptive words to share what they notice. Students can use spray bottles to gently clean off the rocks, observing how moisture changes appearance and color.
3. In small groups, encourage students to use magnifying glasses and the balance to compare size, weight, and texture. Ask questions such as:
   - "Which moon rock is the heaviest?"
   - "What do you notice when you look closely?"
   - "How do these rocks feel? Rough, smooth, or bumpy?"

PLAY TIP

Create a moon rock discovery chart. Write "Our Moon Rocks" in the center and add descriptive words and drawings from students' observations. Display the chart near the sensory table and add new vocabulary as exploration continues.

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