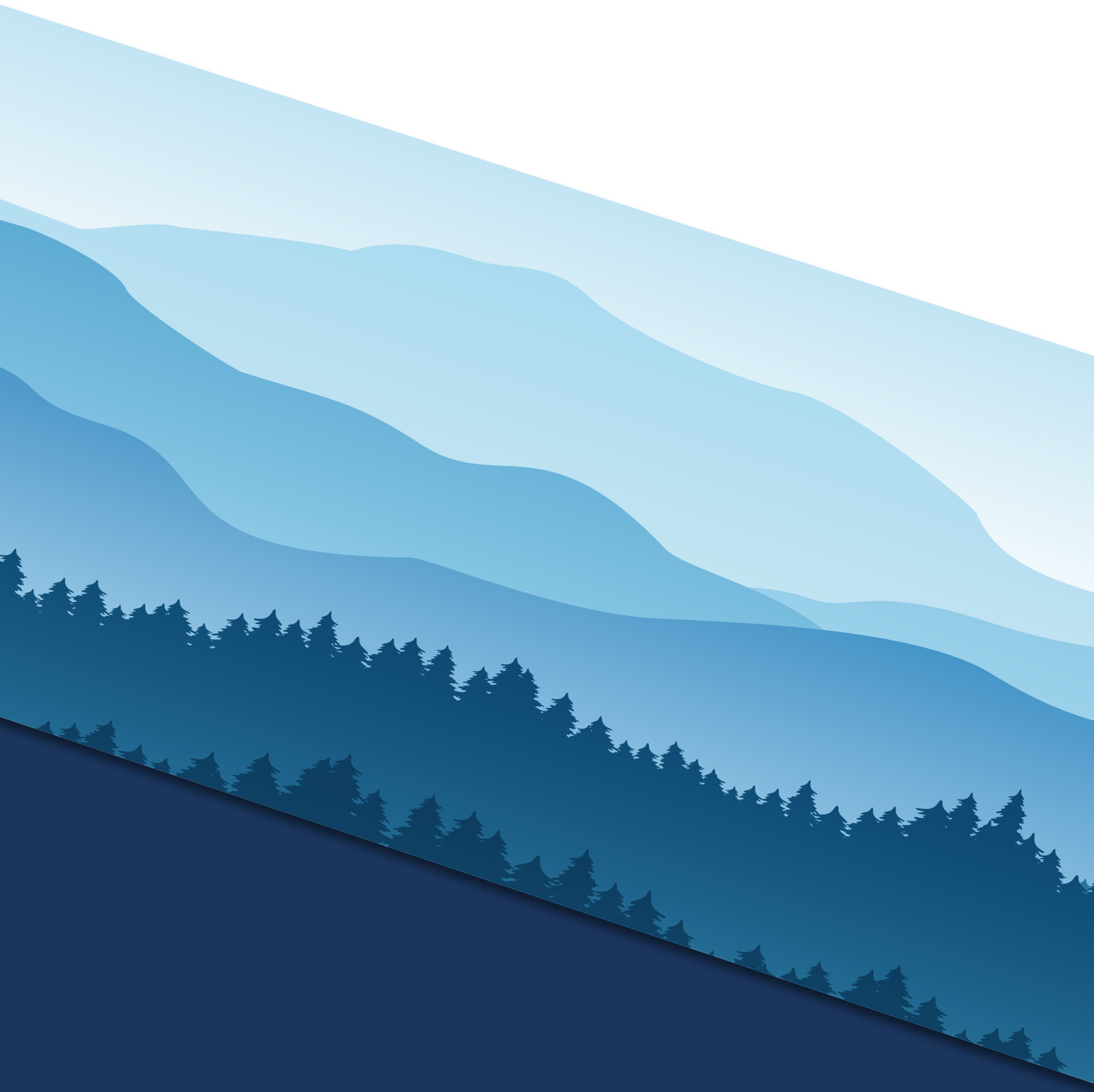
BLUE RIDGE ADVENTURES



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Language and Literacy

Alphabet Bingo: Themed Alphabet

EZ.039.LA.1001-1002

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify uppercase and lowercase letters.
Students will develop letter and object associations.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Students reinforce alphabet recognition by participating in alphabet Bingo. Learning the alphabet supports early literacy skills, including vocabulary building, playing with the sounds of language, and understanding letter-sound connections. It's important for young children to engage in a variety of letter recognition activities every day.

WHAT TO DO

1. Align themed magnetic letters from A-Z on the magnetic board. Pass out the Bingo cards and chips. Explain that each box will be covered with a Bingo chip as a letter is called out. A box may be covered once and some boxes may be left over.
2. As you call out letters, be sure students are using the Bingo chips to cover a letter. Remind students that Bingo looks like a filled row. You can remove a themed letter from the magnetic board as it is called.

PLAY TIP

Incorporate Bingo variations as students master letter recognition. You can try letter-sound Bingo (call out a sound and encourage students to find the associated letter) and picture Bingo (hold up a picture and encourage students to find the beginning letter sound).

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Mathematics

Number Toss: Number Cards

EZ.039.LA.1003-1004

Activity Type:
Free Choice or Small Group

Objectives:
Students will recognize numbers 1-10.
Students will develop one-to-one correspondence.

Each themed classroom includes themed number cards. A featured activity will be included with each set of themed number cards. Students begin to develop one-to-one correspondence by participating in frequent number recognition activities. Using number cards attached to bins and bean bags, students identify the matching number card when the number is called. Students add the appropriate number of manipulatives to the bucket to reinforce one-to-one correspondence.

WHAT TO DO

Tape the number flashcards onto the bins. Have students stand a predetermined distance from the bins. As you call out numbers from the caller cards, have students toss a bean bag into the correlating number bin. Have students count out the number of matching manipulatives and place the manipulatives next to the bin.

PLAY TIPS

- Encourage students to use the links to make patterns, either by shape or by color.
- Have students make a “number line” with the links, counting as they add each link (one-to-one correspondence).

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Mathematics

Counting and Measurement

EZ.039.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.

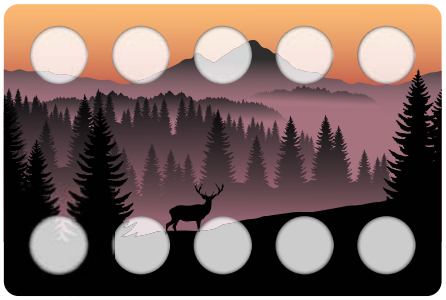
WHAT TO DO

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.

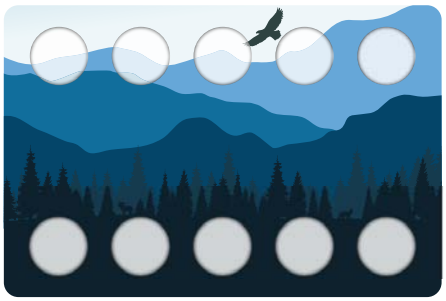
PLAY TIPS

- 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.039.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.

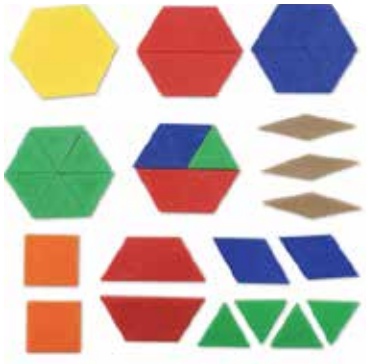
PLAY TIPS

- 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.039.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.039.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.039.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 cards as a small group or free choice activity. Say the words on the cards together and help students to identify the rhyming pairs. Students can connect the rhyming pairs by placing the cards side by side on the table.

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.039.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.

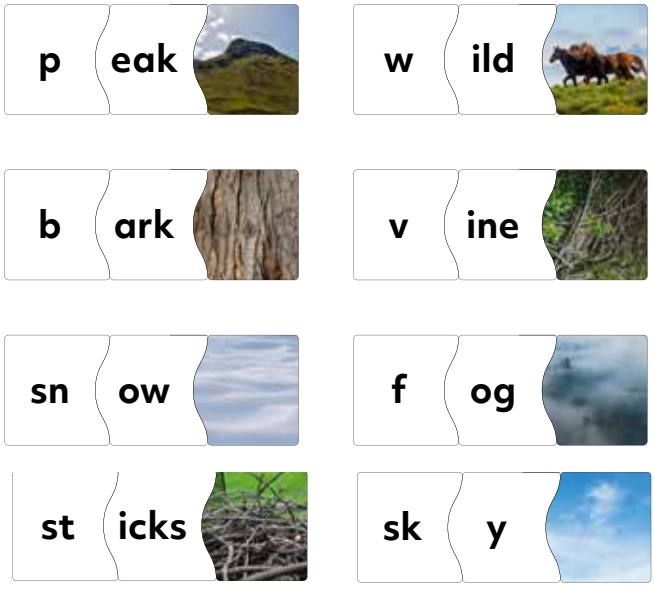
WHAT TO DO

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

Making Words with Alphabet Beads: Word Bank Words

EZ.039.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will reinforce vocabulary words by recreating words in various ways.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. Students reinforce letter recognition and recreate word wall words with large-scale alphabet beads. Students can have discussions about uppercase and lowercase letters as they review word bank words. Alphabet beads can help reinforce the sequence of letters and encourage students to experiment with letter sounds.

WHAT TO DO

Place the word bank words, alphabet beads, and threading material in the writing center and encourage students to recreate word bank words using the beads. Students can also create other words, string the letters in order from A-Z, and practice letter recognition. Have students match the beads along the alphabet arc.

PLAY TIPS

- Place the beads in alphabetical order to make finding the beads easier for students who need the support. As a challenge, place the beads in a container and ask students to search for specific letters.
- Include other types of threading material in the writing center like pipe cleaners, string, and yarn with varying widths.

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Fine Arts

Mountain Weather Storytelling: Weather Station Dramatic Play

EZ.039.LA.1013

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will collaborate and explore with peers.
Students will tell stories about the weather.
Students will observe and describe how weather and seasons change in the mountains.

Students practice speaking skills and assume new roles and personas by pretending to be weather reporters, hikers, or mountain explorers. Using dramatic play props such as umbrellas, hats, scarves, sunglasses, and thermometers, children act out different types of mountain weather and seasonal changes. They can share live "weather reports" with their peers, describing what they see, feel, and predict. Role-playing encourages turn-taking, questioning, and conversation while building confidence in storytelling and expression.

WHAT TO DO

Set up a "Mountain Weather Station" in the classroom with props and scenery. Students can create different seasons using paper. Invite students to step into roles as weather reporters, mountain hikers, or park rangers. Encourage students to begin with the current day's weather, then imagine how the mountain might look in another season.

PLAY TIPS

- Encourage students to make pretend play scene materials. For example, ball up pieces of white paper to make a snowstorm or use cotton balls to have a snowball fight. Students can cut out "raindrops" from blue construction paper and toss them in the air to create rain.
- Rotate props to encourage storytelling from a variety of topics. Use background photos (create on butcher paper or find in resources like magazines) that lend to storytelling like scenery and themed items.

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Science

Wind Exploration

EZ.039.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will make observations and predictions about wind.
Students will design, test and re-test their designs.

Fans are an engaging way for students to experiment with and learn about the movement of air as force. Children explore how the air from the fan moves different materials, making observations about speed, direction and distance. They may experiment with foam balls, scarves, paper airplanes, tissue paper, or other classroom items to see how each reacts. Since young children are still developing their understanding of abstract concepts like force, this type of hands-on exploration provides a concrete and play-based way to build scientific understanding.

WHAT TO DO

1. Ask students to wave their hands in front of their face and describe what they feel (wind, air). Explain that wind is a force and ask students where they see/feel wind. Provide opportunities for students to explore the fan freely by adjusting the speed and direction of the airflow and observe drag and force using various materials in front of the fan.
2. Make observations and talk about the ways objects behave in the path of the wind. Discuss the variables in objects, including weight, shape, and surface area. These observations and discussion help students reflect, redesign, and test again.

PLAY TIPS

- Help students design, build, and test specific objects that spin, fly, or float in unusual ways, including paper airplanes and parachutes.
- Measure wind speed outside and in the classroom using a class-made wind gauge.

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Science

A Rainbow of My Own

EZ.039.LA.1015

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will predict, observe, and test predictions.

Prisms are a fun way to observe and hypothesize about light! After students listen to the story *A Rainbow of My Own* by Don Freeman, they participate in discussions about the relationship between prisms, rainbows, and light, and discover how different items look when observed through a prism. This exploration strengthens observation skills and helps students make early connection between science concepts and the natural world.

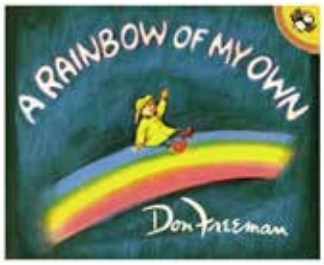
WHAT TO DO

1. Read the story *A Rainbow of My Own* by Don Freeman. After reading the story, begin a conversation about the science of rainbows by asking the following questions: "What causes rainbows?" and "Where do they go?" Students are not expected to know the answers to these questions but asking critical thinking questions helps them think about possibilities.
2. Allow students to experiment with the prisms and flashlights. Can they create a rainbow? What do they notice about the rainbow they created? Encourage students to place a white piece of paper on the table and use a flashlight to display a rainbow on the paper. They 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 Arts

Falling Rain Dance

EZ.007.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will listen for beats in music.
Students will move their body creatively to beats and rhythm.

On a rainy day, students can use their senses to describe what they notice about the rain (the rain is falling fast/slow, it feels cold, smells like dirt, etc.). Students move like raindrops using their body and use instruments to recreate the sounds of rain. Sensory integration creates a holistic understanding of the outside world by combining information from multiple senses into a cohesive perception of our environment.

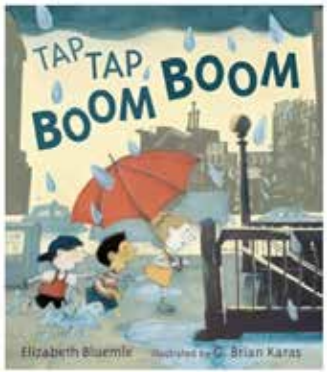
WHAT TO DO

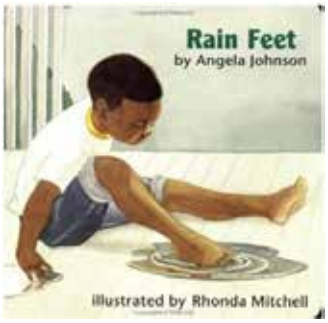
1. On a rainy day, ask students to notice the rain and the wind. Ask students the following questions: "How does the rain look as it falls?," "How does the rain feel?," and "What makes the leaves move on the trees?" Talk about the rainy-day experience and ask students to move like raindrops. Can they drip slowly? Can they drip fast? Can they move like a leaf blowing in the wind?
2. Ask several students to play instruments while other students move, encouraging them to change the tempo often, fast to slow and back again. Give several more students scarves and ask them to move the scarves with the music. Switch up roles to give each student an opportunity to play an instrument, move with the music, and move scarves with the music.

PLAY TIP

Read books about rain sounds like *Tap Tap Boom Boom* by Elizabeth Bluemle and *Rain Feet* by Angela Johnson. You can have discussions about the cultural significance of rain dances (some cultures dance for rain during periods of drought) and the celebrations when it rains (some cultures celebrate rain as rain makes it possible for plants and crops to grow).

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Geography

Map Drawing

EZ.039.LA.1016

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will read maps and recognize symbols as representations.
Students will draw symbols and representations.

Students learn that maps help us get from one place to another, help us locate places around the world, and maps use symbols to represent real objects. Students will become familiar with drawing simple symbols in the sand with their finger to reinforce the idea.

WHAT TO DO

1. Read *Henry's Map* by David Elliot, pointing out the symbols Henry draws to represent each farm animal.
2. Fill the sand trays with colored sand. Demonstrate "drawing" in the sand with your finger. Introduce the map examples, pointing out the symbols and discussing representations. Students can use the maps to practice "drawing" the symbols in the sand. Students can also use the maps to draw paths from one representation to another.

PLAY TIPS

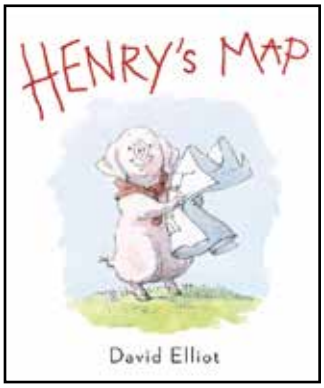
- Encourage students to draw their own maps. They can draw a map of their bedroom, classroom, or other place of their choosing using symbols from the classroom maps or newly created symbols. Ask students to say what the symbols represent.
- Go on a treasure hunt. Make a map of the classroom, hide an item in the classroom, and indicate the location with an "X" on the map. Students can use the map to find the hidden item.

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Social and Emotional

Life in the Mountains: Building a Community

EZ.039.LA.1017

Activity Type:
Small Group and Routines

Objectives:
Students will build relationships with educators and peers through communication and role-play.
Students will explore how people live, work, play, and care for animals in mountain areas.

Children learn about community life by imagining how people and animals share space in the mountains. Using puppets, students can role-play mountain jobs, home life, and recreational activities, while also considering how animals are part of mountain communities. Role-playing mountain life encourages students to see the world from different perspectives, building compassion and social awareness. Students also begin to recognize how people adapt to their surroundings and build traditions that reflect the places where they live.

WHAT TO DO

1. Demonstrate role-playing with various puppets. Use your imagination and model scenarios connected to mountain life, such as:
   - Park ranger and hiker puppets: Talk about ways rangers keep hikers safe and care for the land.
   - Farmer and family puppets: Share what foods might be grown or animals cared for on a mountain farm.
   - Animal and people puppets: Imagine how families keep food safe from bears, how dogs help on farms, or with herding animals.
   - Family puppets: Share how families enjoy mountain traditions like hiking, storytelling by a fire, or sledding in winter.
2. Invite children to choose puppets and act out their own versions of mountain home life, jobs, or play. This can take place during morning meetings, story time, or small-group discussions.

PLAY TIPS

- With students, brainstorm a list of mountain jobs (farmer, mail career, ranger, builder).
- Use the puppets to model how people take care of animals (feeding, sheltering, protecting from the weather) and how people stay safe around wild animals.
- Use the puppets to teach social skills in other ways. You can use the puppets to role-play big emotion situations, model kindness with one another, acknowledge and identify empathy, and practice taking turns.

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Science

Plant Scavenger Hunt

EZ.039.LA.1018

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will use observation skills to identify plants and flowers in their environment and describe their features.
Students will build plant vocabulary through hands-on exploration and discussion.

Students become nature investigators as they search for plants and natural materials in their outdoor environment. During large-group discussions about plant and tree species found in the Appalachian Mountains, students build key vocabulary and grow in confidence as young scientists. As they make close observations, describe features, and compare their findings, they strengthen both math and critical thinking skills. This hands-on experience fosters curiosity, encourages collaboration, and deepens their connection to the natural world.

WHAT TO DO

1. Begin by showing students the Appalachian Mountain plant and animal cards. Identify and name each species together. Take the scavenger hunt outdoors. Review the categories and encourage students to notice details such as leaf shape, color, size, bark texture, and flowers. Have students collect items, discussing safety and respect for nature (only collect fallen items when possible and avoid pulling up live plants).
2. Return to the classroom and sort the collected items by category. Invite students to describe their findings using plant vocabulary (leaf, stem, root, bark, petal, seed). Students can then create a plant collage using their collected materials and glue them onto construction paper.

PLAY TIPS

- Provide magnifying glasses for closer observation. Extend learning by charting findings or creating a classroom plant word wall.
- Create a simple class book titled *Plants We Found Near Our School*.
- Compare your findings to other regions of the United States and discuss how plants differ by climate and location.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED







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Mathematics

Moonlight Mix-Up

EZ.039.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will practice listening and responding to directions.
Students will identify numbers quantities, and images.

In this cooking center, students take on the role of chefs preparing a variety of simple dishes. Using recipe cards with pictures and numbers, they gather themed ingredients and add the correct amounts to their pot or bowl. As they scoop, count, and mix, children practice number recognition, matching quantities, and following step-by-step directions. This activity blends dramatic play, sensory exploration, and early math skills into a flexible, collaborative cooking experience that can be adapted to any classroom theme.

WHAT TO DO

1. Ask students to dress up as chefs using aprons and chef hats, then choose a stew recipe card that shows the ingredients and how many to add. Using scoops or their hands, have students count out the ingredients and place them into the pot or bowl.
2. Once the stew is finished, students can pretend to cook, stir, and serve it. After making their stew, they invite a friend to sing a stew song or pretend to serve their creation.

PLAY TIPS

- **Create a New Recipe:** Students design their own stew recipe card by choosing ingredients and deciding how many to add.
- **Chef Teamwork:** One student reads or shows the recipe while another chef gathers and counts the ingredients.
- **Taste Test Station:** Students present their stew to classmates who count the ingredients together before “tasting.”

WHAT YOU’LL NEED



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Fine Arts

Body Coverings

EZ.003.LA.1020

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will apply background information to creative expression.

Students learn that animals have body coverings to serve functions. Some animals have fur, some animals have skin, some have scales. Students can recreate a visual representation of body coverings using art materials like faux fur, scales (paper), and faux feathers. Using different materials like faux fur, paper scales, and feathers allows children to explore various textures. This sensory experience strengthens their cognitive development and provides a deeper understanding of the different coverings animals have.

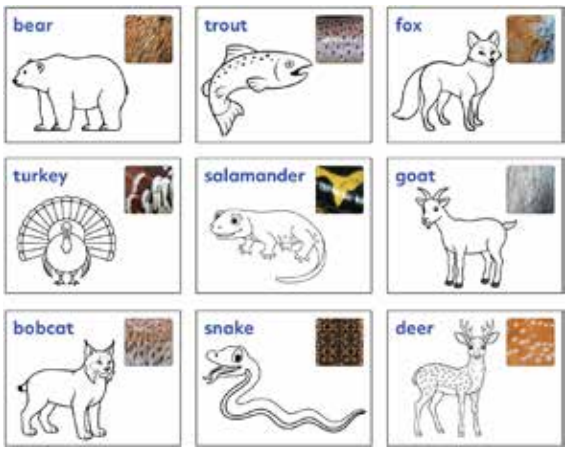
WHAT TO DO

1. After sharing several non-fiction books from the classroom library about animal body coverings, review the different body coverings (fur, scales, skin, feathers) and the function of each. Relate to human body coverings.
2. Introduce the open-ended art activity. Students can choose an animal template and art materials (textured paper, faux feathers, faux fur) to glue onto their template or create textured rubbings using the textured rubbing plates. Encourage students to share their new animal creation.

PLAY TIPS

- Create a tactile fur, feathers, and scale activity. Using three tissue boxes, place faux fur, feathers, and scale in each, asking students to use their sense of touch to determine the body covering type.
- Start an animal coverings collection in the classroom. Label different sections of a wall “Fur,” “Scales,” “Feathers,” and “Other Coverings.” Ask students to add animal pictures, either cut out or drawn to the collection as part of a comparison to animals we know.

WHAT YOU’LL NEED













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