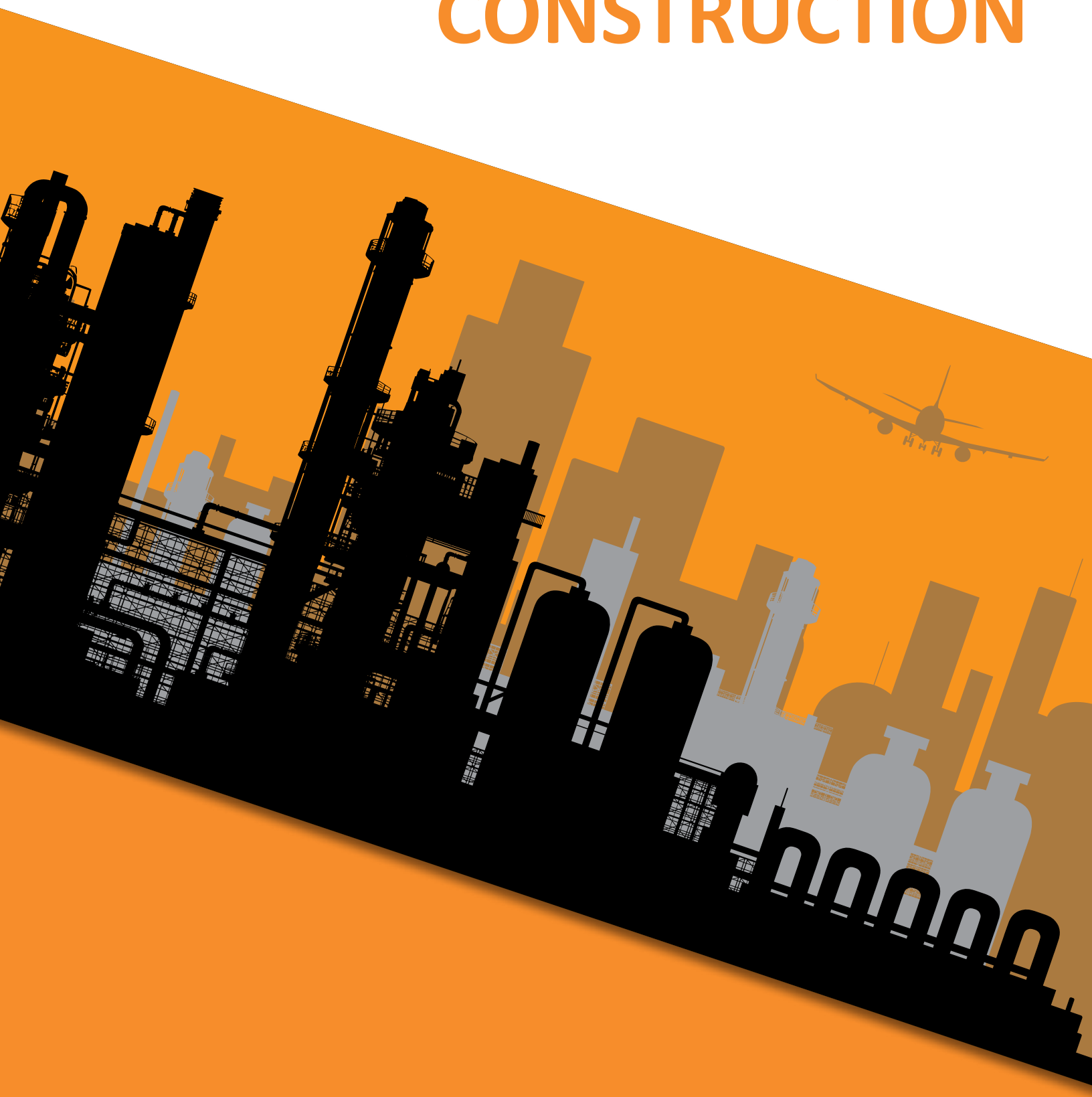
CONSTRUCTION



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Language and Literacy

Alphabet Memory: Themed Alphabet

EZ.004.LA.1001-1002

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify uppercase and lowercase letters.
Students will identify and reproduce letter sounds.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Students reinforce alphabet recognition, letter sounds, and the visual difference between uppercase and lowercase letters by participating in alphabet memory. By engaging in literacy-based games and activities, students start to develop essential reading skills and build their self-confidence.

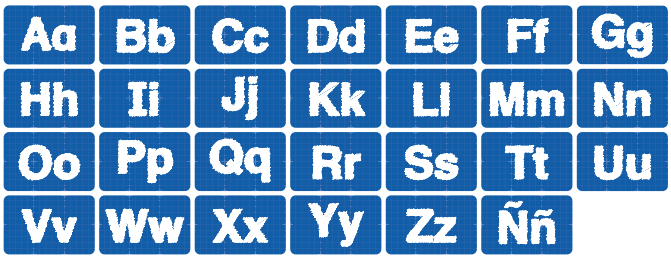
WHAT TO DO

1. Review the letters of the alphabet using the themed magnetic letters. As you are reviewing, be sure to point out both the capital and lowercase letters.
2. The first time you introduce the memory game, model appropriate play with the students. Place the cards face down and spread them out (you may want to start with fewer matches and increase the number of matches as students become more comfortable with the game). Take turns trying to find a match by turning up two cards. If the cards match, keep the match and take another turn. If the cards do not match, return the cards to the same location, face down. Continue the game until all of the matches have been found.

PLAY TIP

Playing memory games can help preschool students improve brain functions such as attention, concentration, and focus. Play Memory Tray to encourage critical thinking. Place several items on a tray for students to see (start with a small number), then remove from students' vision. Return the try, without the items, and ask students to recall items that were on the tray. Continue to add more items to the tray as memory capabilities increase.

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Mathematics

More or Less: Number Cards

EZ.004.LA.1003-1004

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will develop one-to-one correspondence.
Students will compare sets of objects using relative language.

Each themed classroom includes themed number cards. A featured activity will be included with each set of themed number cards. Math manipulatives and tools help students make direct correlations between visual numbers and objects. Using manipulatives, students make comparisons between numbers using comparative language like “more than” and “less than.”

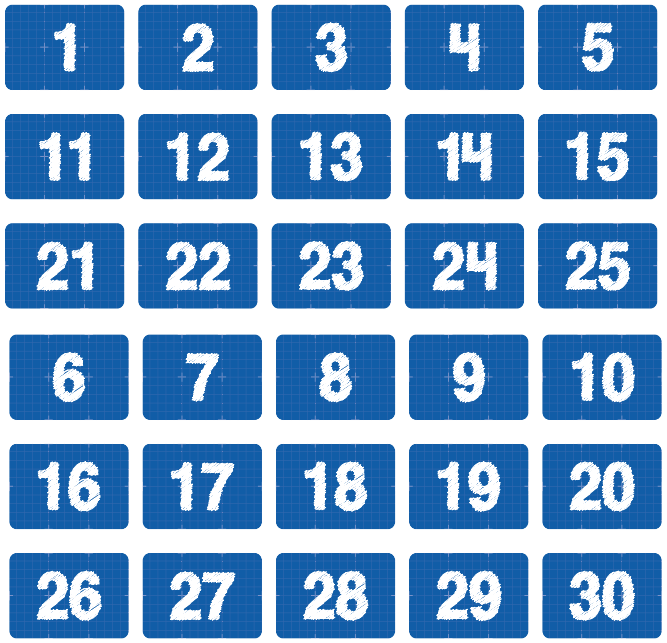
WHAT TO DO

1. Make a set of number cards (1-10 or 1-20) for each student in the small group using simple copy paper. Provide students with a handful of manipulatives.
2. Choose a themed number card and ask students to choose a number card from their set that is either more or less than the card you have chosen. Assess for number recognition by asking students to count the objects on your card and counting out objects to match their own card. Continue through the set of numbers (1-10 or 1-20).

PLAY TIPS

- Practice counting forwards and backwards using the number cards as a visual guide.
- Have students create patterns using multiple sets of number cards. For example, students can create a 1-2-1-2-1-2 or 1122-1122 pattern to start.

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Mathematics

Counting and Measurement

EZ.004.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.

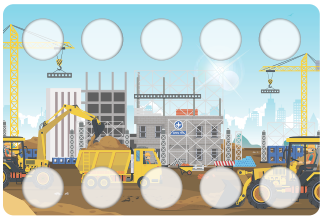
WHAT TO DO

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.

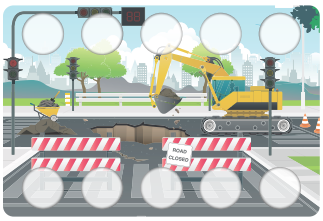
PLAY TIPS

- 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.004.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.

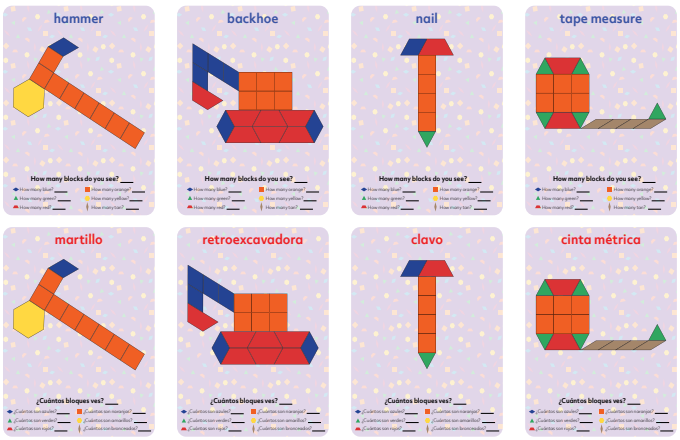
WHAT TO DO

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.

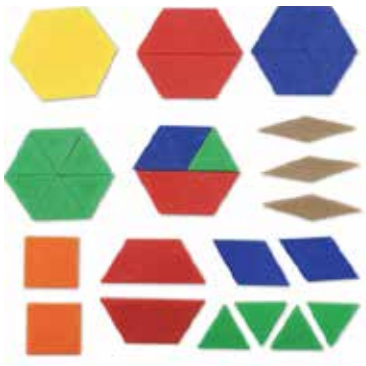
PLAY TIPS

- 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.004.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.

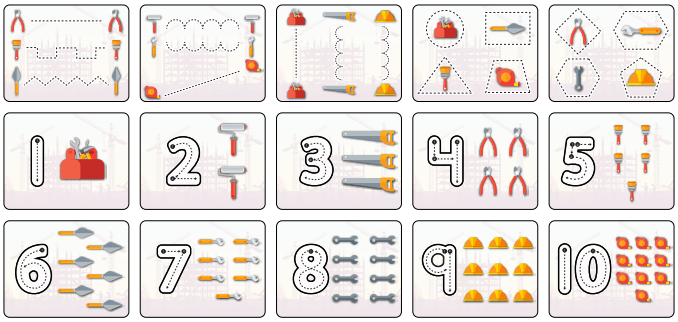
WHAT TO DO

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.004.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.004.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.

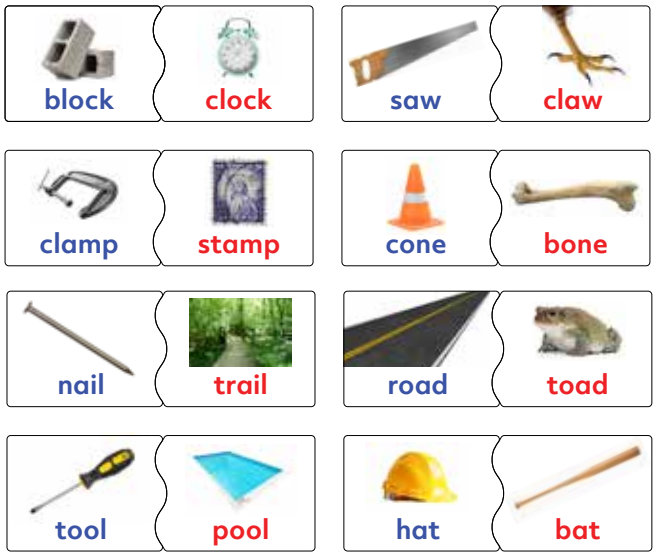
WHAT TO DO

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.004.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.

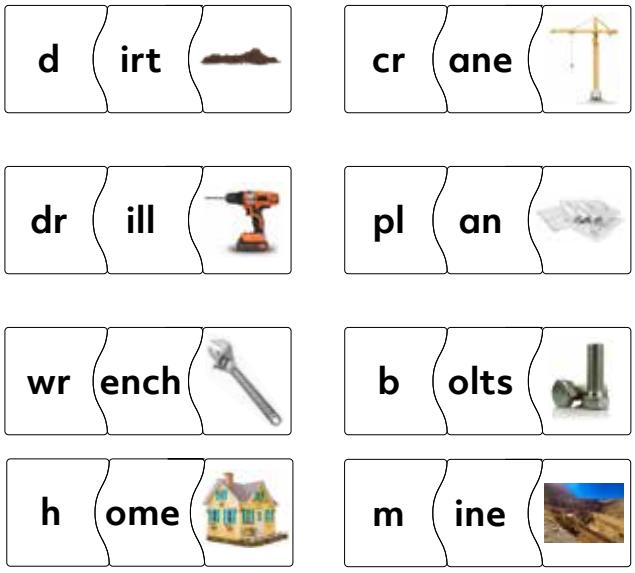
WHAT TO DO

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

Cotton Swab Painting: Word Bank Words

EZ.004.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

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

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. Students work on developing prewriting skills by exploring a variety of writing materials. Using paper, paint, and cotton swabs, students can practice writing word bank words, their name, letter sequencing, and other drawing activities of their choosing. Free writing is a powerful tool in preschool because it supports young children in developing their language skills, thinking creatively, and building confidence in their abilities.

WHAT TO DO

Place the word bank words, printing paper, cotton swabs, and small bowls of paint in the writing center. Students can practice writing word bank words, their name, and/or the alphabet with the unconventional writing materials. Students can also use the materials to draw or paint in open-ended ways.

PLAY TIPS

- Write out letters or word bank words on paper or sentence strips (tracing) for students who need additional support.
- Provide opportunities for students to paint freely with the cotton swabs.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Lincoln Logs Building

EZ.004.LA.1013

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will increase visual and spatial awareness through design and construction.
Students will design and redesign structures using common materials.

Lincoln Logs naturally encourage students to engage in associative play, problem solve, and consider their own actions. The large-scale Lincoln Logs further encourage skill development as their size necessitates peer interactions. Students can use tabletop Lincoln Logs to make comparisons between structures and draw new conclusions.

WHAT TO DO

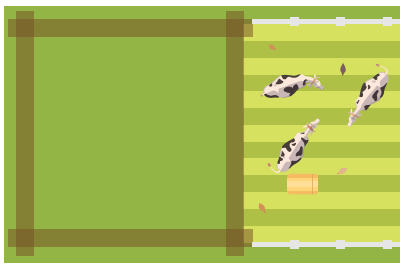
Introduce the tabletop Lincoln Logs and large-scale Lincoln Logs. Students can use the Lincoln Log mats as a foundation to create structures or explore the pieces freely. As an educator-directed activity, ask students to create a tabletop structure and recreate the same structure using the large-scale Lincoln Logs. In addition, challenge students to build the tallest structure possible. After the structure falls, students can redesign and consider ways to make the structure taller.

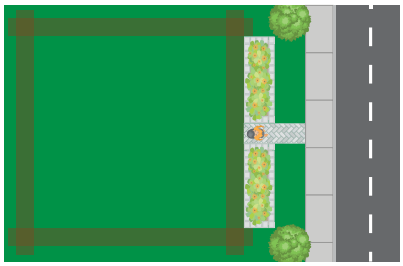
PLAY TIPS

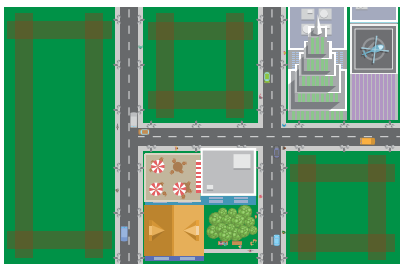
- Make log cabins out of other materials and make comparisons between the building process. Students can use craft tubes or paper towel rolls (cut in half) to build a log cabin. Ask students to glue four craft rolls onto construction paper and add a construction paper roof. How is the paper log cabin building process similar and/or different to building a log cabin out of Lincoln Logs?
- Create a builder's box. Add several types of building materials like Legos, wooden blocks, Lincoln Logs, and Magna Tiles to the box and encourage students to build the same structures. Ask students how the building process is different as they use each type of material.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Following Directions

EZ.004.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will follow a series of steps to make an end product.
Students will develop fine motor skills.

Young children learn language by listening to the world around them. With increased exposure, they begin to comprehend and build understanding. Using concept cards, building materials, and adult guidance, students participate in following direction exercises to make an end product.

WHAT TO DO

Introduce the construction building set and concept cards in a free exploration area. Students can use the concept cards to create a pre-determined product or students can build items/ structures of their choosing.

PLAY TIPS

- Students can practice following directions through other listening exercises. Provide students with a series of directives to create a specific end product using tabletop blocks. For example, ask students to stack two cylinders and a triangle to create a rocket, modeling as you provide the directives.
- Games like *Simon Says* and *Red Light, Green Light* help students practice following directions. Even though students are not creating a visible product, they are listening to directions in order to complete a task.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Building Letters

EZ.004.LA.1015

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

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

Students use rocks to trace the lines of uppercase and lowercase letter cards. Letter cards include a picture that matches the beginning sound to help students make meaningful associations between letters and sounds.

WHAT TO DO

Provide students with the letter-tracing cards and a handful of rocks. Include the themed magnetic letters as a visual reference. Demonstrate aligning the rocks along the letter cards to form letters. Ask students to use the rocks to outline the letter cards.

PLAY TIP

Students can also use a dry erase marker to trace the letters.

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Mathematics

Building Shapes

EZ.004.LA.1016

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students identify and recognize common 2-D shapes.
Students will recreate shapes with manipulatives.

Understanding shapes is at the foundation of building and constructing. Students practice creating shapes using craft sticks and identification cards. Educator can help students identify the shapes and facilitate conversations about characteristics of each shape such as how many sides and corners (vertices) each shape has.

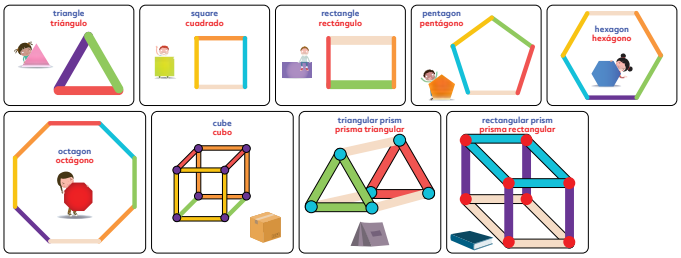
WHAT TO DO

Spread out the shape mats in a free-choice center or as part of a small group experience. Place the craft sticks on the table. Ask students to recreate the shapes using the craft sticks. Students can lay the craft sticks directly on the mat (match) or recreate by sight. As students are recreating, ask questions such as, “How many craft sticks will you need to recreate this shape?” and “Can you think of additional shapes to make?” (outside of the shape mats)

PLAY TIPS

- After students have created shapes using the craft sticks, they can glue them together as shape references for future activities.
- Add Velcro to each end of the craft sticks (identical surface of Velcro on each side) and encourage students to build shapes. Velcro enables the craft sticks to be used multiple times (reusable activity).
- Create 3-D shapes using Play-Doh as an adhesive. Using the 3-D shape mats, encourage students to build 3-D shapes with educator support. Include a variety of materials to build 3-D shapes such as craft sticks, toothpicks, and straws.

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Mathematics

I Can Be an Architect

EZ.004.LA.1017

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify and recognize common 2-D shapes.
Students will analyze shapes to make a whole.

After reading *Young Frank, Architect* by Frank Viva, students learn that an architect designs objects and often gives advice during the build process. Students can practice assuming the role of an architect by interacting with "blueprint" cards and creating buildings and structures using pattern blocks. Pattern blocks help children develop spatial reasoning, early math skills, and promote creativity and imagination.

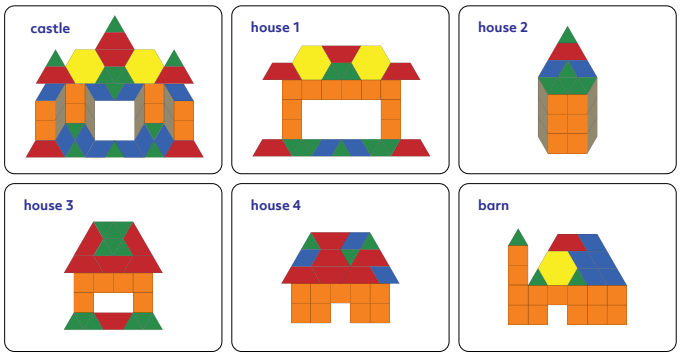
WHAT TO DO

1. Read *Young Frank, Architect* by Frank Viva, reiterating the word architect throughout and explaining that an architect is someone who designs the construction of a building. Ask students to share what they know about architects and people who construct buildings. Show students pictures of a variety of buildings and ask them to share different types of buildings found in their community.
2. Show students the architecture block boards and ask how they look similar or dissimilar to pictures of buildings (an outline, similar shape, etc.). In small groups or in a free-choice center, encourage students to use tangrams or pattern blocks to fill in the architecture block boards.

PLAY TIPS

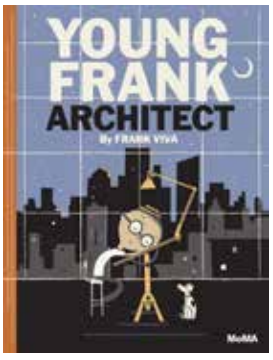
- Take students on a walk outside to identify different types of geometric shapes found in neighborhood buildings.
- Have students search through magazines, catalogs, and books for photos of buildings and talk about the shapes they see.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED









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Fine and Gross Motor

Lego Wall

EZ.004.LA.1018

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will recognize and recreate shapes.
Students will follow simple two and three-step directions.

Learning through Legos individually and in a small group can benefit children in many ways. Students build small-muscle strength, increase confidence, interact with peers, create and problem solve. Students can use the Lego wall to create letters, practice letter-sound correspondence, and build replica structures.

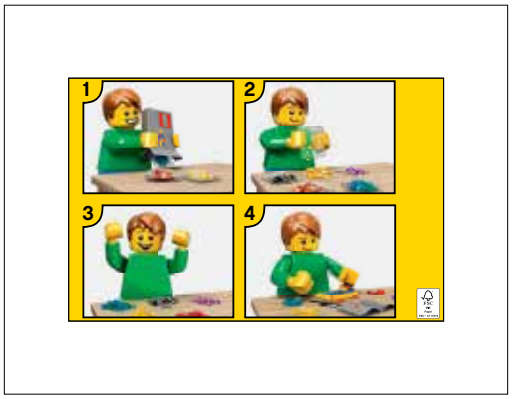
WHAT TO DO

1. Introduce the Legos, baseplates, and Lego Building Instruction Guide as a free-choice or educator-directed activity. As a free-choice activity, students can use the baseplates or Lego building wall to create structures and murals. The Lego Building Instruction Guide can help guide students in creating Lego scenes and murals with adult support or peer collaboration.
2. Challenge your students to build classification, sorting, spatial sense, and addition and subtraction skills using Legos in educator-directed ways. Ask students to find the Legos that match, either by color, shape, or size, or combination of sorting categories. Ask students to make a tower, starting with the largest bricks on the bottom and graduating up to the smallest. Ask students to recreate something that you build, either after you have designed the structure or through a step-by-step process.

PLAY TIP

Use Legos as counting manipulatives in addition and subtraction activities. Number cards can help students make the one-to-one correlation.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Simon Says

EZ.004.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will follow simple two and three-step directions.
Students will demonstrate understanding through actions.

Simon Says encourages children to listen to instructions, make interpretations, and follow through with decisions. This gross motor game is also an early introduction into leadership roles. Using photo identification cards as support, one child assumes the role of "leader" and encourages their peers to follow body movements.

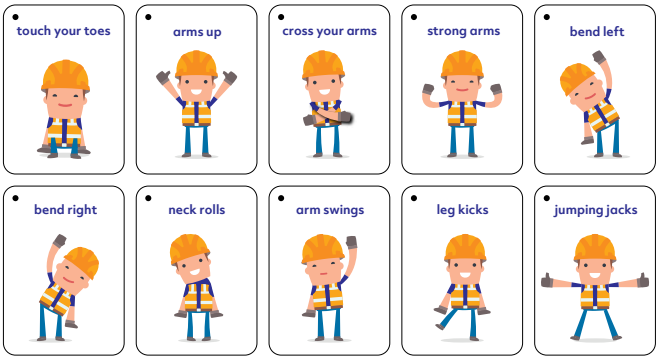
WHAT TO DO

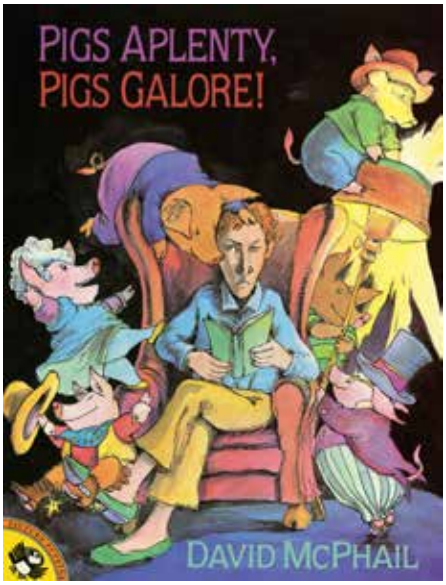
1. Read *Pigs Aplenty, Pigs Galore!* by David McPhail, asking students to think about the pigs' actions as they are listening to the story. After reading the story, have the students pretend they are the "pigs aplenty" and participate in the following actions: "Lift up your arms," "Touch your waist," Put your hands on your knees," and "Touch your toes."
2. Tell students they will be playing a game called *Simon Says*. Similar to the pigs aplenty, *Simon Says* is a game in which you will follow actions. If the leader says "Simon says" first, that is an action the rest of the students must follow. If the leader does not say "Simon says" first, the rest of the students do not follow the action.
3. Begin the game with simple actions, such as "Simon says put your hand on your head." As students become comfortable with simple one-step actions, add two-step and three-step actions, such as "Simon says stand on one foot and jump up and down."

PLAY TIP

Play *Simon Says* with an emphasis on positional words. Have students use a block to show understanding of positions. For example, "Simon says put your block in front of your toes" and "Simon says pick up your block with your right hand."

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Science

Gravity

EZ.004.LA.1020

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will experiment with slope, cause and effect, momentum, and gravity.

Gravity is a concept young children regularly see occurring in their play. They build towers, topple them, and drop toys, observing them as they fall to the ground. Students reinforce their understanding of gravity concepts by exploring magnetic pipes on the peg board. Students can create ramps and experiment with manipulatives as they connect one piece to another.

WHAT TO DO

1. Invite a small group of students to the magnetic wall to look at the materials (ramps, rings, and balls), and talk about their observations and ideas. Ask the following questions: “What are some things you notice?,” “What are some ways you might play here?,” and “What if it doesn’t work?” Provide several I wonder statements like, “I wonder how I can get this ball to move quickly down the ramp?” and “I wonder how I can slow the ball down?”
2. Encourage students to free play in this area while you make observations and ask guiding questions. Use terminology like plan, build, test, and retest throughout.

PLAY TIP

Explore how different materials roll down the ramps. Test the materials one by one and ask questions like, “What material seems to be the slowest?,” “What materials seems to be the fastest?,” and “Why do you think that is?”

WHAT YOU’LL NEED















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Fine Arts

Construction Dramatic Play

EZ.004.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will participate in dramatic expression and make applications to real life.

Preparing to build takes a lot of planning! You can sketch out your design, test your design, revise your design, and rebuild. Students can try out the design process in the dramatic play area using a variety of play-based construction themed materials. Practicing a design process helps to develop problem-solving skills and critical thinking as well as fostering perseverance and resilience.

WHAT TO DO

Introduce the dramatic play materials and encourage students to design, build, and redesign. Ask students to draw out their plans, first using paper and pencil, and then mirroring those designs using the Big Bricks. Students can use the other construction dramatic play items to create a full construction scene and imagine themselves in construction-oriented roles.

PLAY TIP

Continue adding new materials to the construction dramatic play center to entice creative and new thinking. Students can create construction signs using paper and coloring materials.

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