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Language and Literacy

Play-Doh Letters: Themed Alphabet

EZ.006.LA.1001-1002

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will identify uppercase and lowercase letters.
Students will recreate uppercase and lowercase letters in unconventional ways.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Using the magnetic letters as a reference, students can make letters out of playdough with adult support. Students can roll playdough with their hands or use the rope-making playdough tool and outline the magnetic letters. Consistently exposing young children to the alphabet helps them build a solid foundation for recognizing letters.

WHAT TO DO

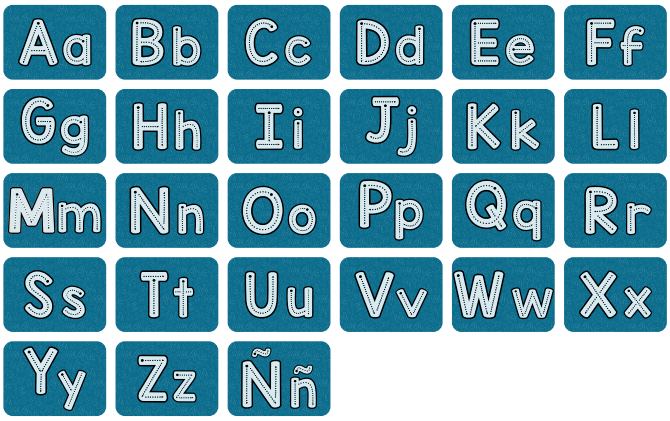
1. Provide students with the letter-tracing cards and a choice of Play-Doh colors. Include the themed magnetic letters as a visual alphabet reference. Demonstrate rolling the Play-Doh into "snakes," and bending, pinching, and pulling the Play-Doh to make longer strands and curves. Demonstrate "tracing" the letter-tracing cards with Play-Doh.
2. Students can use the Play-Doh tools to assist with letter tracing or in free exploration.

PLAY TIP

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

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Mathematics

More or Less: Number Cards

EZ.006.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.006.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.

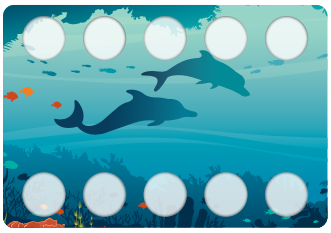
WHAT TO DO

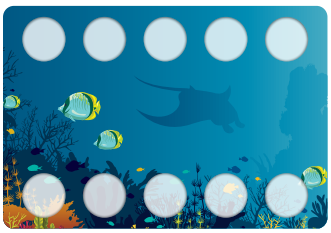
After modeling how to use the mats, place the counting and measurement mats in a learning center as a teacher-directed or student-directed experience. As a teacher-directed experience, guide students to use manipulatives to show one-to-one correspondence and length. As a student-directed experience, 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.006.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.

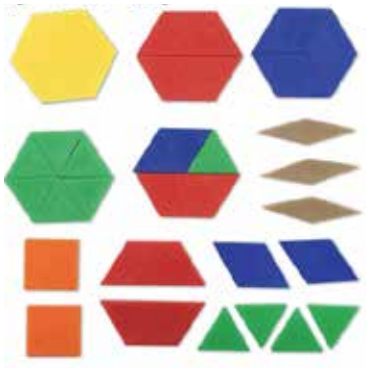
PLAY TIPS

- 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.006.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.

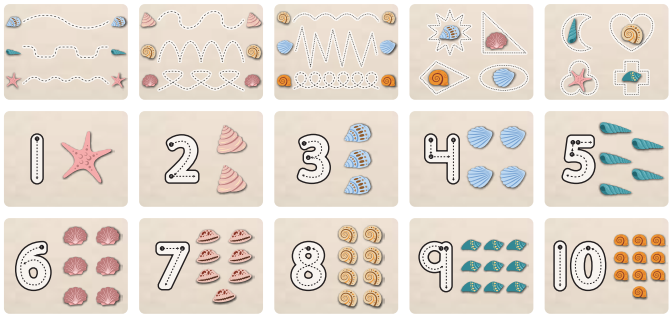
WHAT TO DO

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.006.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.

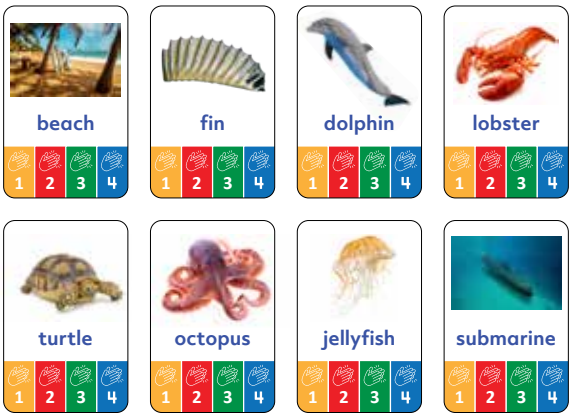
WHAT TO DO

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.006.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.

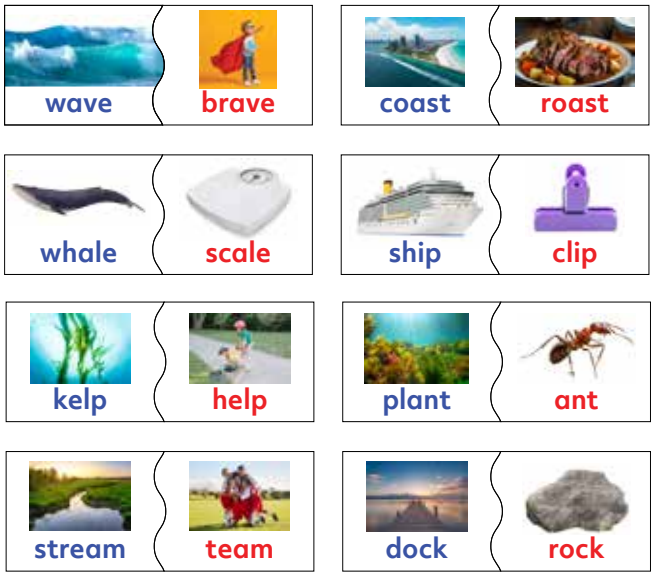
WHAT TO DO

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.006.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

Aquatic Animal Vocabulary: Word Bank Words

EZ.006.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objective:
Students will recognize beginning and ending sounds in words.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. Children build vocabulary as active participants in reading and reciting new vocabulary words. Students match tangible letters to letters in animal names using magnetic letters and animal identification cards. Frequent participation in this activity encourages letter-sound correspondence.

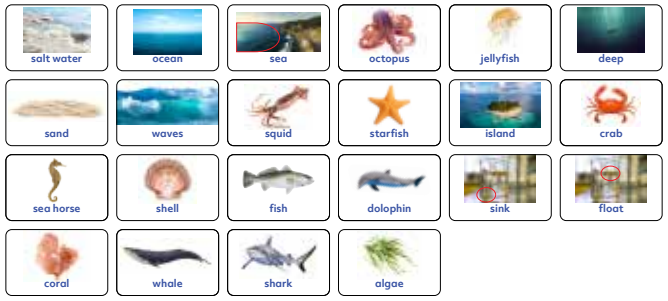
WHAT TO DO

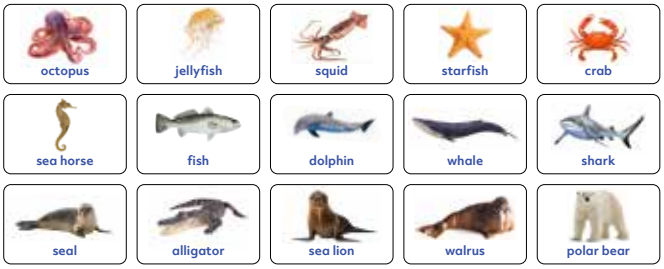
1. Place the magnetic letters on a magnetic board in order. Show students an animal identification card. Ask a student to find the corresponding beginning letter from the line of magnetic letters. This can also be placed in the writing center as a free-choice activity.
2. Reading and reciting new vocabulary regularly helps students learn about word families and teaches students the sound of the English language. Share the word bank words during group time often; provide a rhyming word with each and ask students to think of any additional rhyming words.

PLAY TIPS

- Have students separate the aquatic animal cards by land and ocean animals. Ask students to name the animal (point out the beginning letter/sound) and draw attention to features that make an animal better suited for land, for the ocean, or both.
- Use the aquatic animal cards to reinforce animal identification in books. Point out each letter in the animal's name as you make associations to text in books.

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Social and Emotional

Find the Aquatic Animals

EZ.006.LA.1013

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will use a map and peer-to-peer interactions to make discoveries.
Students will understand that everything in a classroom has a place and spot.

The aquatic animals have escaped their enclosure! Students must use a classroom picture map to find the missing animals and return them to their home. Working with classmates, students use classroom maps to discover features of their classroom and find the missing aquatic animals.

WHAT TO DO

1. Before the activity, hide the aquatic life around the classroom, circle a different aquatic animal on each map, and draw a path to find the aquatic animal. The idea is for students to stop at various locations in the classroom using the map to see if they can find the aquatic animal.
2. Gather students in a small group. Tell students that several aquatic animals have gone missing in the classroom and you need help finding them! Show students a map and explain that they must travel the path with their peers, stop at each location, and look for the aquatic animal. Once they find the aquatic animal, they can move on to the next map and aquatic animal.

PLAY TIPS

- Create an activity or action students must do as they stop at each location on the map. For example, at the first stop tell students they must do five jumping jacks after finding the aquatic animal.
- Encourage students to hide the aquatic animals and create a path on the map with their peers as you serve as a support.

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Language and Literacy

Follow the Fish Leader

EZ.006.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will listen and make applications.
Students will consider different ways to communicate.

Just like humans, fish and other aquatic animals communicate with one another. They use sound, color, bioluminescence, motion, and smell. Humans communicate in lots of ways too; they sign, point, use pictures, and move their body. Students learn to use their body to communicate by encouraging others to follow their movements.

WHAT TO DO

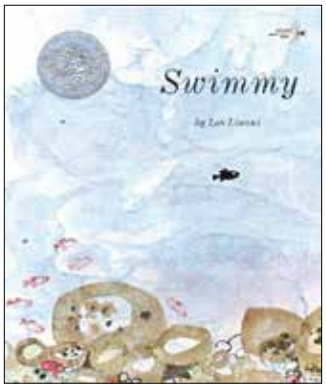
1. In the story *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni, Swimmy learns that collaboration and teamwork are important in a community, and a leader helps guide the community in the right direction. After reading the story, talk about the importance of working together and ask students what it means to be a leader.
2. Demonstrate the roles of the leader and followers using an action card. Give students the opportunity to discuss and decide who will be the leader first, emphasizing that everyone will take turns. Explain that the leader's role is to become an aquatic animal, choose an action card, and ask their peers to follow the action. The leader can perform one or more actions using the cards.

PLAY TIP

Empower students to create their own actions as a leader. Ask the leader how they would like the other students to follow.

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Language and Literacy

Guess Who?

EZ.006.LA.1015

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will practice asking and answering questions.
Students will make predictions based on clues and observations.

Students practice asking questions and using new vocabulary words as they participate in a game of “Guess Who?.” Educator provides clues about an animal as students make predictions about the animal’s identity. The last clue is a silhouette card of the animal with the animal reveal card at the end.

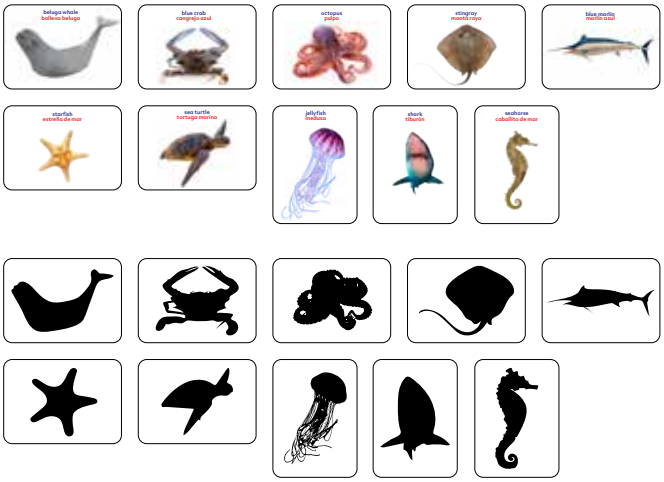
WHAT TO DO

1. Brainstorm a list of aquatic animals with the class, holding up each aquatic animal as it’s named. Include any remaining aquatic animals from the stack of cards that are not mentioned. After all of the aquatic animals are displayed, discuss the features of each.
2. Tell students that you are thinking about one of the animals displayed. Provide clues to help the students determine the animal’s identity. For example: This animal is brown or orange, has five points, and moves using tube feet. Can you guess what it is? Display the silhouette as a final clue.

PLAY TIPS

- As a free-choice activity, encourage students to match the animal to the silhouette card on a table.
- Play “Act It Out” with the students using the aquatic animal cards. Students can move like an aquatic animal while the other students guess the animal’s identity.

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Mathematics

Sea Life Bingo

EZ.006.LA.1016

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will listen for and recognize familiar and new words.
Students will identify word and picture matches.

Bingo games help students learn to associate visuals with words and help build a robust vocabulary. Using alphabet and number Bingo cards, students match the letter or number with the corresponding item as it is called from the Bingo caller.

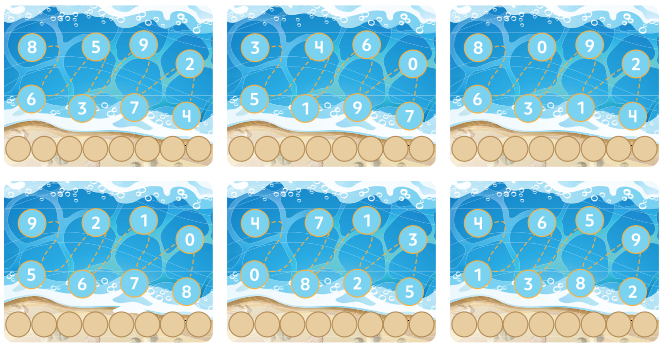
WHAT TO DO

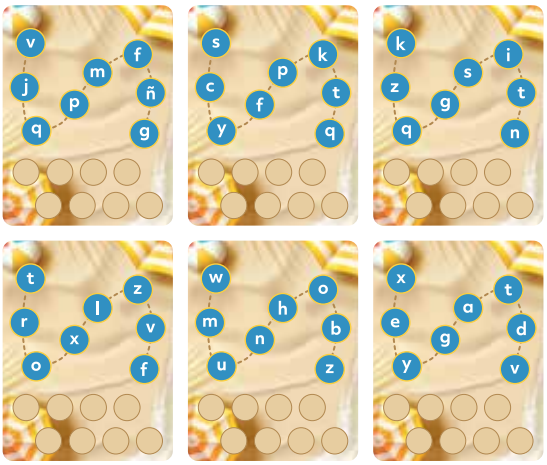
1. Pass out the Bingo cards and ocean counters and ask students to place the counters on the circles/starfish at the bottom. Reinforce the letters and numbers on the game board and explain that once a letter or number is called, students swim an ocean counter to the called letter or number.
2. As you roll a letter or number die, be sure students are using the ocean counters to cover the called letter or number. Remind students that Bingo looks like a filled row.

PLAY TIPS

- Use the ocean counters to reinforce math concepts like counting, sorting, patterning, and other early math skills.
- Add the ocean counters to the sensory bin filled with water beads.

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Science

Saltwater vs. Freshwater

EZ.006.LA.1017

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objective:
Students will make predictions, observations, and test their predictions.

Students engage in scientific explorations by experimenting with saltwater and freshwater. Students make predictions and observations about various objects and materials placed in saltwater and freshwater and record their observations on a simple recording sheet. The sink/float conversation can continue by finding other items around the classroom, making predictions about their ability to sink or float. When children form a prediction, they become more attentive to details. Predictions help to hone students' observation skills.

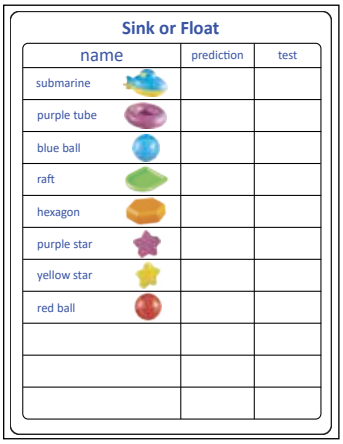
WHAT TO DO

1. Fill the Touch Tank Sensory Table with water. Ask students to make predictions about each object, with questions like, "Will this object sink or float?" and "Why do you think it will sink or float?"
2. Fill the dishpan halfway with warm water and add 8 tsp. of salt until salt dissolves. Walk through the prediction and observation process again, making comparisons between items that float/sink in freshwater vs. saltwater.

PLAY TIPS

- Add Jello powder or liquid watercolor to the water to encourage a multi-sensory experience.
- Investigate sink/float further with items found in the classroom such as Legos, balls, craft sticks, and crayons.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED



Sink or Float

name	prediction	test
submarine		
purple tube		
blue ball		
raft		
hexagon		
purple star		
yellow star		
red ball		











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Science

Sea Turtle Life Cycle

EZ.006.LA.1018

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objective:
Students will explore life cycles.
Students will use their body to create representations.

After reading *From Egg to Sea Turtle* by Lisa Owings, students act out the different stages of the sea turtle life cycle using their body. Students can create movements of their own or follow educator-directed movements. Life cycle replicas are provided to reinforce the stages. Physical activity not only strengthens neural pathways in the brain but also aids in developing motor skills and spatial awareness.

WHAT TO DO

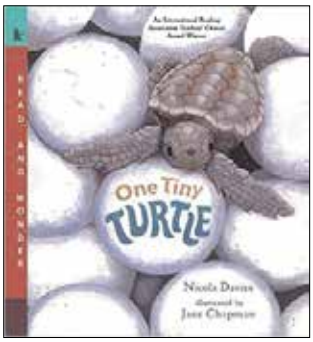
1. After reading *From Egg to Sea Turtle* by Lisa Owings and *One Tiny Turtle* by Nicola Davies, discuss the sea turtle's life cycle, based on information discovered through the read alouds. Show students the sea turtle life cycle replica as you are reading and make comparisons to images in the books.
2. Encourage students to remember the different stages of the sea turtle's life cycle by creating body movements for each stage. Suggestions include: **Egg**-sit on the floor. Pull your knees up to your chest and wrap your arms around your legs to simulate an egg shape. **Hatchling**-pretend to break out of your egg. Move your flippers (arms) while crawling on the ground out of the sand. **Juvenile**-move your flippers (arms) to swim in the ocean. **Adult**-continue moving your flippers (arms and legs) to swim in the ocean. Pretend to catch prey (jellyfish, mollusks, shrimp, and kelp).

PLAY TIPS

- With students, brainstorm some things that are living and non-living and write them down on a two-column chart for students to visualize. Talk about the ways living things grow and change and make comparisons to the sea turtle's life cycle.
- Have students bring in pictures of themselves as infants/toddlers and make predictions about who they represent as an older student. Talk about how they have changed as they've aged.

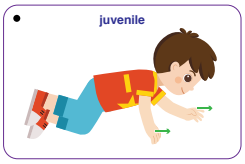
WHAT YOU'LL NEED

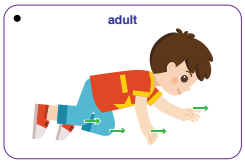














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Science

Shell and Sea Glass Sorting

EZ.006.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will explore the features of sea glass.
Students will sort and count seashells and sea glass.

One way we discover our world is by exploring it. You can find many interesting things walking along a beach like shells and sea glass! Seashells are made by animals and protect the animal's body. Sea glass is glass that has been changed by weather, waves, and salt. Students can sort beach materials into self-directed or educator-directed categories or use the materials to create imprints in Play-Doh.

WHAT TO DO

1. After reading *Sea Glass Summer* by Michelle Houts, provide students with the opportunity to explore the seashells and sea glass with the magnifying glasses. Ask students the following: "What do you notice?" and "How are the seashells/sea glass similar and different?"
2. Place the sea glass, seashells, and sorting tray in a free exploration area. Encourage students to sort by self-directed or educator-directed categories.

PLAY TIPS

- Make seashell imprints with Play-Doh. Ask students to roll out the dough with a rolling pin and explore prints in the Play-Doh.
- Fill the Touch Tank Sensory Table with sand and add the pieces of sea glass for students to find. Incorporate counting and adding to/taking away skill development by asking students to find a specific number and add more or take away.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

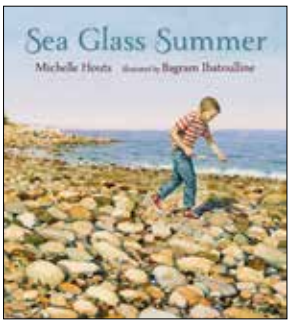














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Science

Sea Life Specimen Set

EZ.006.LA.1020

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will make observations about nature.
Students will make comparisons between sea life features and attributes.

Students examine replicas of sea and actual sea life specimens encased in acrylic using tabletop magnifiers. Students can compare sea life features and discuss attributes that contribute to thriving in the ocean. By comparing replicas to real specimens, students develop important observation skills.

WHAT TO DO

Place the sea life specimen center, sea life acrylic set, and tripod magnifier in a free exploration area. Ask students to describe what they notice and share any similarities and differences between the specimens. Compare the sea life specimens to other animals students might see in nature or even pets in their home.

PLAY TIPS

- Add the specimens to a light table or explore the specimens with a flashlight and talk about the visible differences as students make observations with light.
- Leave the sea life specimens in the writing center and encourage students to make still life drawings of their observations.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Touch Tank Sensory Table

EZ.006.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will explore science concepts through sensory play.

The Touch Tank Sensory Table can be used in a variety of ways. Students can mix colors to make discoveries about secondary colors, add aquatic animals to incorporate dramatic expression, and add sand or dirt to observe and make predictions about the effects of force (introducing new words like erosion, force, and weathering).

WHAT TO DO

The Touch Tank Sensory Table is a wonderful way to introduce physical science concepts in a play-based way. Add sand, a small amount of water, and the sea life animals to have discussions about erosion, weathering, and force. Use the cups filled with water and drop water from various heights and angles. Talk about the force that is needed to move the sand and create imprints.

PLAY TIPS

- Use the mixing trays and pipettes to mix colors. Add several liquid watercolors to the mixing tray and ask students to transfer and mix in the Touch Tank Sensory Table.
- Add numbered or lettered seashells to the sand and ask students to find numbers or letters that you call out.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED













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Fine Arts

Ocean Life Dramatic Play

EZ.006.LA.1022

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will recreate ocean themes and experiences with peers.

Students can consider multiple perspectives as they pretend to be sea creatures and/or humans living by the ocean. As sea creatures, students think about the roles of prey and predator as they camouflage with the coral or hide behind a seashell to surprise their dinner! As humans, students think about what it means to live by the ocean, appreciating the things the ocean provides and the beauty they see.

WHAT TO DO

1. Set up the materials in the submarine-themed exploration area. You can set the stage by encouraging students to assume complimentary roles, such as fish and fisher, or shark and crab.
2. As an educator-directed activity, ask students to camouflage as they transform into sea life animals. Ask students to consider the animals they must hide from or the animals they would eat.

PLAY TIP

Turn the dramatic play center into an aquarium. Students can assume roles such as aquatic life, visitor, and aquarist (caretaker of fish and underwater animals). Ask students to make entry tickets and exhibit labels using construction paper and writing/drawing materials.

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