PET CENTRAL

PRE-K3



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Language and Literacy

Letter Hunt: Themed Alphabet

EZ.003.LA.1001-1002

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

Objective:
Students will identify and recognize uppercase and lowercase letters in different contexts and environments.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Students, with adult support, choose a letter to focus on each day, displaying the letter on the magnetic board. Students go on a hunt to find the letter in other places around the classroom, school, outdoors, etc. Providing students with targeted opportunities to find letters outside of classroom experiences helps reinforce recognition.

WHAT TO DO

1. Tell students they get to be letter detectives! Display the letter of the day on the magnetic board. Review the letter name. Ask students to find the letter in another place around the room and bring it back to the meeting area if able or share the location with the class.
2. Use the Alphabet Learning Locks to create a letter hunt game. Hide the Alphabet Learning Locks and give each child a letter key. Encourage children to find the matching lock and open the lock with their key.

PLAY TIPS

- The alphabet hunt can be left in the writing center as a free-choice activity as well. Make an alphabet list and alphabet cards that can be hidden around the room. After hiding the letters around the room, ask students to use the list to find the hidden letters, checking the letters off as they are found.
- Look for the letter of the day as you move through transition periods. Students can look for letters in the school, outside on the playground, and even report on letters found at home!
- Include a letter hunt as part of the morning meeting. Encourage students to find a matching letter in a new spot every day.

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Mathematics

Sorting: Number Cards

EZ.003.LA.1003-1004

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will sort items.
Students will reinforce 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 group items by color, shape, and size throughout their day in organic ways. They may sort cereal by color at breakfast or sort writing utensils by type in the writing center at school. Students sort Lego bricks by color, using a parachute as a mat, in a free choice center. Students can use number cards to reinforce the number of bricks in each color category. As early learners group and sort items in the classroom and in their environment, they become better at making observations and noticing details, essential for early literacy and math development.

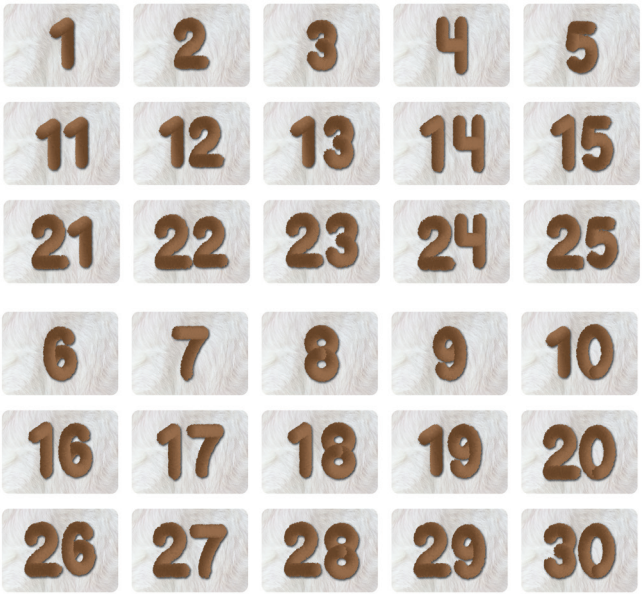
WHAT TO DO

Lay out the parachute in a free choice center and encourage students to sort building bricks by color. As they sort, have students occasionally stop sorting and make one-to-one associations by counting each building brick in a category and finding the corresponding number card.

PLAY TIPS

- Sort other items in the classroom. Collect different types of fabric and have students sort by self-identified categories. As they sort by color, pattern, or material type, have students say the attribute and share why the item is similar to others.
- Have students make towers using the building bricks. Have them choose the number card that matches the height of the tower (one-to-one correspondence).

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Mathematics

Counting and Measurement

EZ.003.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.

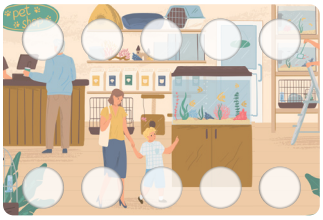
WHAT TO DO

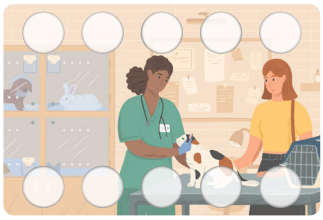
After modeling how to use the mats, place the counting and measurement mats in a learning center as a teacher-directed or student-directed experience. As a teacher-directed experience, guide students to use manipulatives to show one-to-one correspondence and length. As a student-directed experience,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

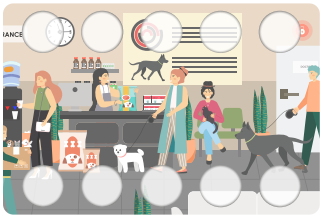
PLAY TIPS

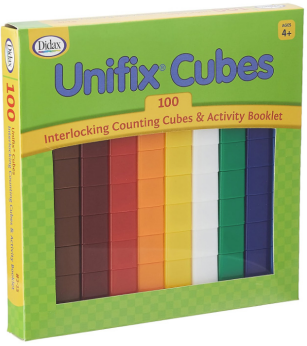
- Use the math manipulatives to reinforce sorting by color and type. Encourage students to count how many are in each category. Encourage students to think of other ways to sort the manipulatives.
- Ask students to use the manipulatives to create patterns. Create simple pattern mats (ABAB, AABB, ABB)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

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Mathematics

Making Patterns

EZ.003.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.

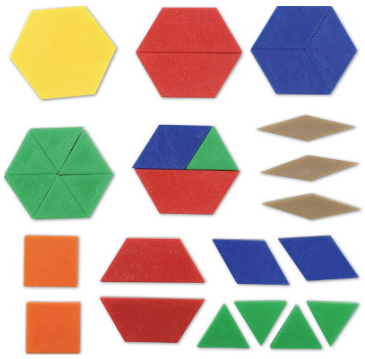
PLAY TIPS

- 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.003.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.

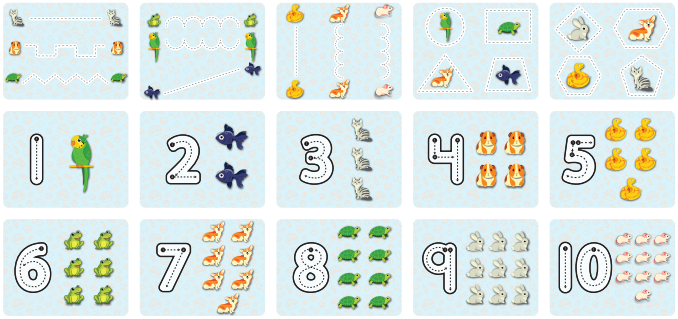
WHAT TO DO

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.003.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.

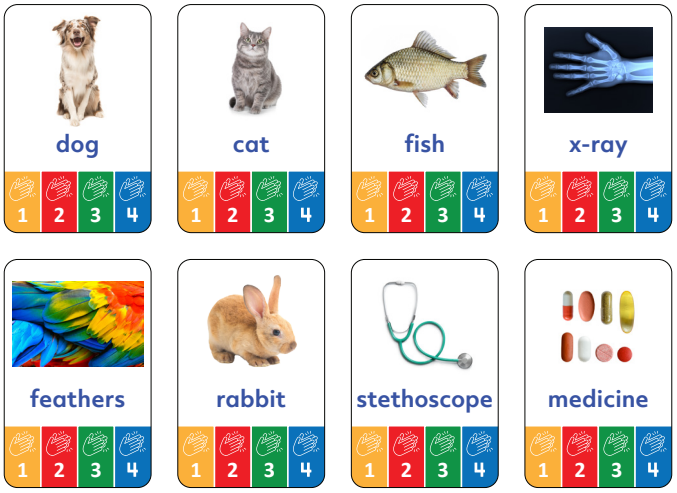
WHAT TO DO

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

Connect Links Rhyming Words

EZ.003.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.

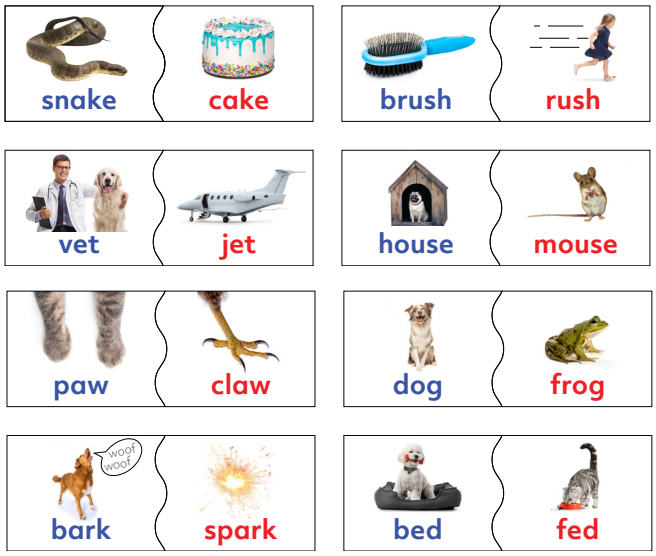
WHAT TO DO

In a small group, show students the rhyming cards while identifying each item. Have students say the name of the item. Identify two items that rhyme and model using the link-n-learns to connect the items. You can continue the activity as a small group or place in a free choice center for students to continue individually.

PLAY TIP

Play the rhyming name game. Use made-up words to rhyme with students' names. For example, say "If your name rhymes with misa, touch your head," and Lisa touches their head. This activity works well during circle time or transition periods.

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Language and Literacy

Onset and Rime Awareness

EZ.003.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.

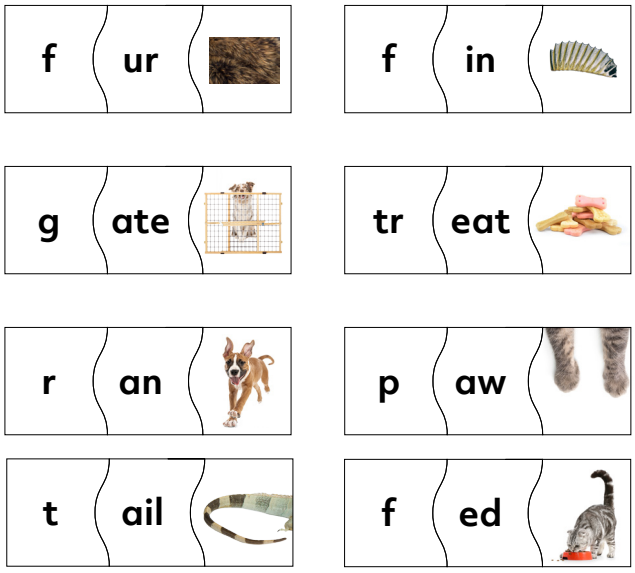
WHAT TO DO

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

Go Fish: Word Bank Words

EZ.003.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify word bank words.
Students will match word bank words to correlating photos.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. Students use word bank words, with pictures, to play *Go Fish*. Students can use associated pictures to help with word deductions. When students play card games like *Go Fish*, they further develop their ability to recognize numbers, match pairs, sort, and take turns.

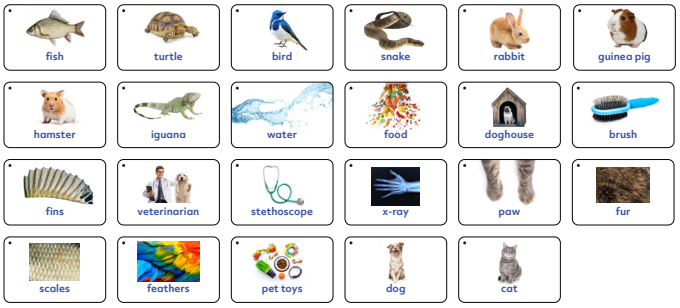
WHAT TO DO

1. Model the game of *Go Fish* with the students using the word bank *Go Fish* cards. Each player receives 5 cards. The rest of the deck is stacked in the middle of the players, face down. Players lay down any matches.
2. Each player takes a turn, asking another player, "Do you have a ____." The card requested should be one the player already has to form a match. If the opponent has the card, they give the card to the player. If the opponent does not have the card, the player takes a card from the stack. The game continues around the players until all cards are used; players count their matches.

PLAY TIPS

- Instead of stacking the leftover cards in a pile, spread the cards out in an imaginary pond and act out fishing.
- You can make your own *Go Fish* cards to practice skill development. Make cards with numbers, letters, or even students' names!

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Mathematics

Taking Measurements

EZ.003.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will use simple measurement tools.
Students will compare the length and weight of objects.

Using realistic classroom pets and nonstandard and standard units of measurement, students begin to grasp the concept of measurement. Students can continue the notion of measuring by searching for other items in the classroom to measure. Educators can introduce and reinforce measurement related terms such as taller, shorter, heavier, and lighter which students can apply to their comparison conversations.

WHAT TO DO

1. Place the items out for students to explore. Encourage students to measure the pets' length using the non-standard tools (Unifix Cubes and math links) and standard tool (tape measure). Ask questions such as, "Which pet is the longest?," "Which pet is the shortest?," and "How are the tape measure and cubes/links different?"
2. Encourage students to use the classroom balance to compare the weight of the animals. Ask the following reflection questions: "What do you notice as you put two different animals in the balance buckets?" and "What do you think will happen if you switch them?"

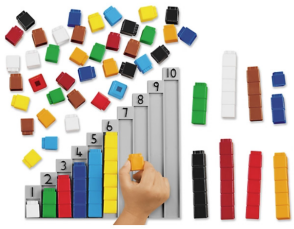
PLAY TIP

Students can find other items in the classroom to measure, even themselves! Ask students to measure a friend with the standard and non-standard tools.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Play-Doh Exploration

EZ.003.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will develop fine motor skills as they manipulate Play-Doh. Students will build structures and artifacts with creative intention.

Using pet-themed Play-Doh manipulatives, students engage with Play-Doh in self-directed ways. Students improve hand-eye coordination, small muscle coordination, and strength by manipulating Play-Doh. Play-Doh activities are also great for encouraging creative thinking and socialization.

WHAT TO DO

Add the Play-Doh and associated materials to the free choice center. Encourage children to roll the Play-Doh, use cookie cutters and pet stamps to manipulate the Play-Doh, and any additional strategies to make pet sculptures or objects.

PLAY TIPS

- Add other materials like twigs, toothpicks, and straws cut in half; prompt students to add more detail to their structures or objects.
- Use Play-Doh to roll numbers, letters, and shapes. Draw numbers, letters, and shapes onto construction paper and encourage students to “trace” the lines with rolled Play-Doh.
- Students can make their own Play-Doh in the classroom! Combine 1 cup salt, 1 cup warm water, 2 cups flour, 1 tsp. vegetable oil, and a few drops of food coloring in a bowl, and mix.

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Play-Based Learning Materials

Fine Arts:



Games:



Puzzles:



Science:



Fine and Gross Motor:



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