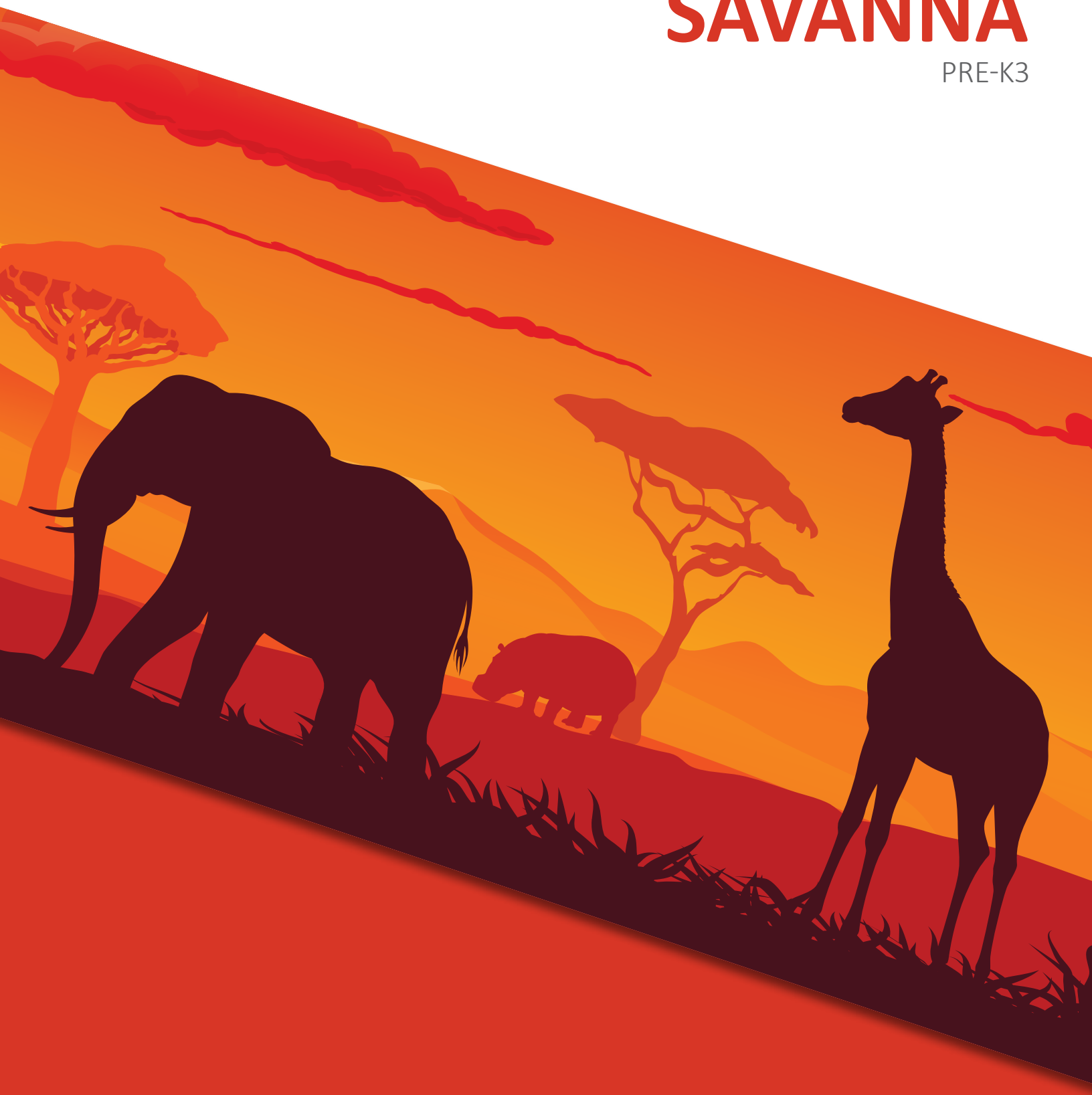
SAVANNA

PRE-K3



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Language and Literacy

Alphabet Sort: Themed Alphabet

EZ.018.LA.1001-1002

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will identify and recognize uppercase and lowercase letters.
Students will sort letters by different attributes.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Using letter tiles and sorting mats, students sort themed letters by different attributes like vowels and consonants and curvy and straight lines. This exposure and repetition to letters helps them easily recognize the alphabet in both school and everyday environments.

WHAT TO DO

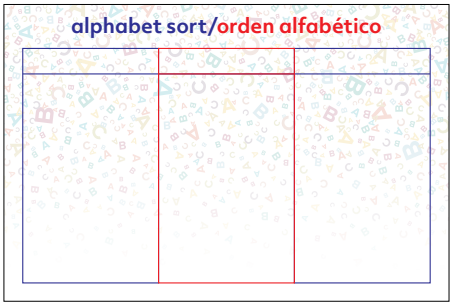
1. Introduce the sorting boards and letters to the students. Write student or teacher determined sorting categories on the boards. Consider categories such as vowels versus consonants and letter shapes, like curvy lines, straight lines, or a combination of both.
2. Place letters in a cup, bowl, or other container. Have students remove a letter, say the letter name, and sort into the appropriate category. Continue sorting until all the letters have been sorted.

PLAY TIPS

- Have students write letters in pre-determined categories rather than sort tangible letters.
- Ask students to make letters using Playdoh or clay and have them sort into categories.

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Mathematics

Animal Dice Match: Number Cards

EZ.018.LA.1003-1004

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will recognize numbers.
Students will strengthen their number recognition skills by using 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 can use numerical tools to match and organize. Engaging in number-matching and ordering games helps students strengthen their number recognition skills while encouraging them to subitize. Understanding which numbers come before and after others enhances their grasp of number value and sequence.

WHAT TO DO

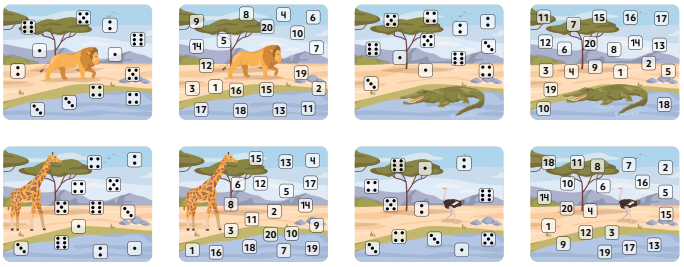
1. Place the animal dice cards, dice, math counters, and number cards in a free choice center. Demonstrate rolling a die and using a counter to mark a number on a card. Ask a student to select the correct number card as you mark a number.
2. Encourage students to take turns in the free choice center rolling a die, reading the number, marking the number with a counter, and selecting the correct number card to correlate with the rolled number.

PLAY TIPS

- Use the dice and blocks to create towers. Have students roll a die, count the number of dots, and build a tower with the corresponding number of blocks, counting as they stack.
- Use numbered dice (1-12) instead and match to number cards.

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Mathematics

Counting and Measurement

EZ.018.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.

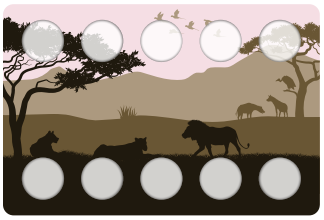
WHAT TO DO

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.018.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.

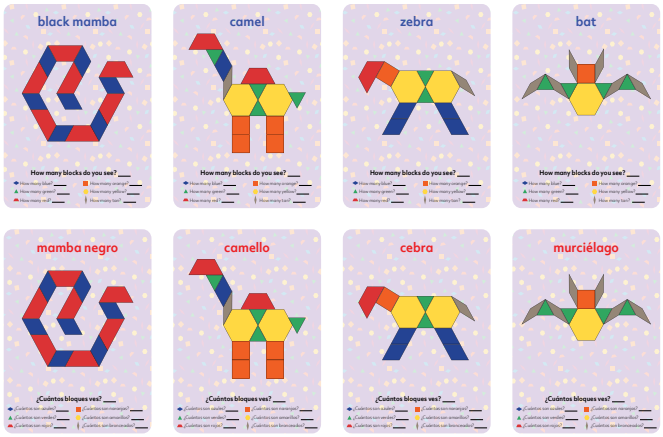
WHAT TO DO

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.

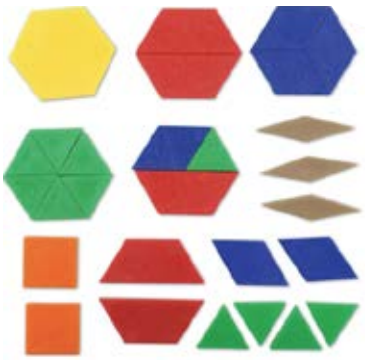
PLAY TIPS

- 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.018.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.018.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.

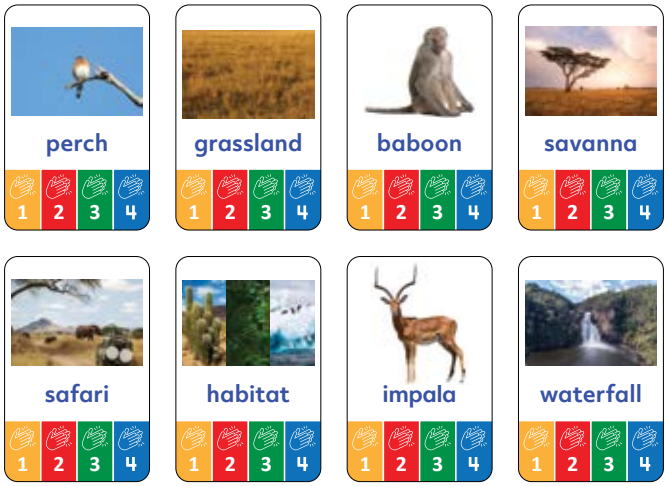
WHAT TO DO

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 Awareness

EZ.018.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.018.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.

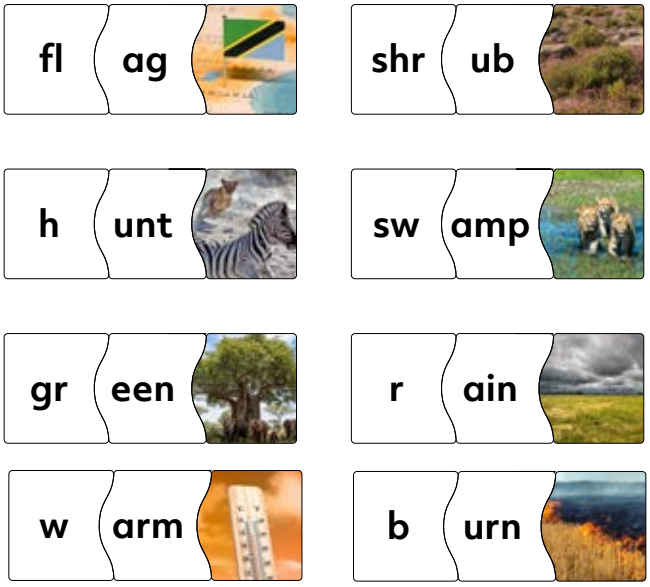
WHAT TO DO

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

I Spy in the Grass: Word Bank Words

EZ.018.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Free Choice

Objective:
Students will find and recognize sight words.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. Students can search for word bank words in sensory bags filled with shredded paper to simulate grass. Styrene word bank words and matching cards are provided. As students become familiar with more words from the word bank, their understanding of sentence and story meanings improves, boosting their reading comprehension and confidence.

WHAT TO DO

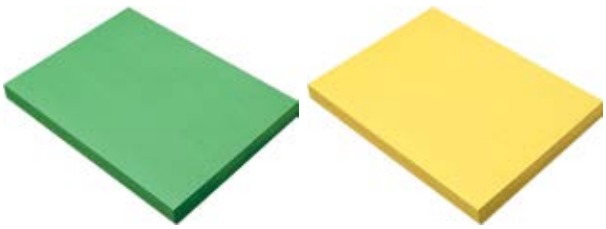
Shred green and yellow paper using the cutter to simulate grass (paper cutter is not for student use). Add the paper to several gallon-sized Ziploc bags. Add several word bank matching cards to each Ziploc bag as well. Encourage students to match the word bank cards to the word bank matching cards in the Ziploc bags. Ask students to call out letters as they match the word bank words to word bank matching cards.

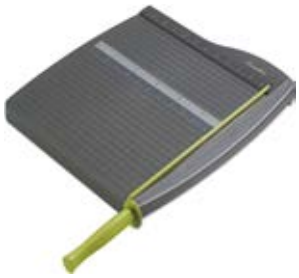
PLAY TIPS

- Consider adding other sensory materials to the Ziploc bags to simulate the savanna like dried corn, lentils, and brown rice.
- Have students trace the letters of the word bank word with their finger as they manipulate the Ziploc bags.

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Social and Emotional

Mindful Movements

EZ.018.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will enhance their listening skills.
Students will control their body to make intentional decisions and movements.

Young children learn to control their body, respect personal boundaries, and focus on the moment by listening to detailed directions and instructions. Students move like different animals in the savanna by exploring animal movement cards and listening to direction from the educator. Listening plays an integral part in a child's development. As children become more proficient in listening, they enhance their communication abilities, including the development of their vocabulary, speech, and language skills.

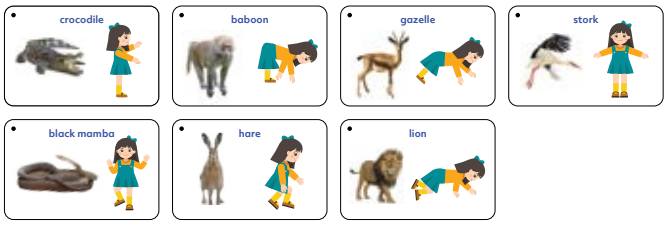
WHAT TO DO

1. Review animal behaviors using the animal movement cards. Give each student a personal space mat and reiterate the purpose (to give each friend their own space without bumping into another friend). Allow students to practice each animal behavior after positioning the personal space mats.
2. Practice each animal behavior a second time, asking students to think about each movement before they display the movement. Introduce the word *mindful* as the practice of focusing entirely on something without letting distractions interfere.

PLAY TIPS

- Ask students to think about the word mindful and share what it means to them. Guide the conversation, if needed, with the following: "Mindful means to pay attention to what is happening right now." Draw attention to what is happening in the classroom at that moment. Ask students to think about mindful walking, exercising, writing, etc. and consider how mindfulness changes the action.
- You can learn a lot about mindful movements by observing animals. Encourage students to observe animals in nature or at home and facilitate a discussion about mindfulness in animals.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Termite Mound Textures

EZ.018.LA.1017

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will manipulate materials for realistic representations and fine motor development.

Termites are an integral part of the ecosystem in the savanna. They are nutrient cyclers, habitat creators, and a food source for other animals. Termite mounds shape the plains around them, breaking up the flatness of the savanna. Students can create mounds using faux dirt at the Termite Mound Sensory Table and explore the behaviors of faux insects and other animals as they use the mound for shelter, burrowing, and creating dens. This sensory-rich experience helps students develop a deeper understanding of wildlife behavior and the interconnectedness of the savanna ecosystem, fostering curiosity and a greater appreciation for nature.

WHAT TO DO

1. Share books about termites like *Termites* by Martha Rustad and *Squash Woods Adventures: Termite Trouble* by Ethan Soto to build background knowledge. View termite mound images with students, sharing that some termites live in mounds (Africa) and others live in soil or dry wood. Termites in Africa build tunnels underground which allow water to better soak the soil.
2. Encourage students to create termite mounds out of play dirt and explore the variety of insects. Be sure to differentiate between the termites and other insects.

PLAY TIPS

- Observe and describe an insect's three-part body (head, thorax, and abdomen).
- Make insects out of clay or Play-Doh. Include the three-part body.

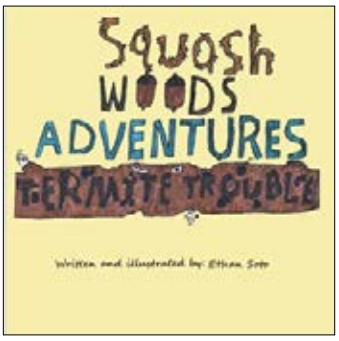
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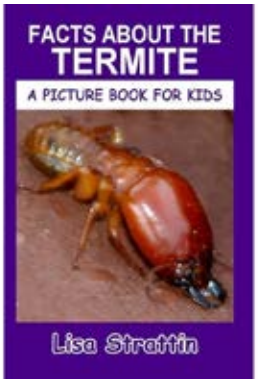














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Geography and Culture

Bring the Rain

EZ.018.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will discuss cultural customs and traditions, including their own.

Many Maasai villages in the African savanna gather to do a rain ceremony after a long, dry season. These ceremonies consist of rhythm, movement, and chants to ensure rain comes; often the king holds the power to make rain. After reading *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* by Verna Aardema, students can talk about the importance of rain to the African savanna and explore body movement and musical instruments to create rain dances of their own. Teaching young children about cultural differences broadens their perspectives and fosters greater tolerance and acceptance of others.

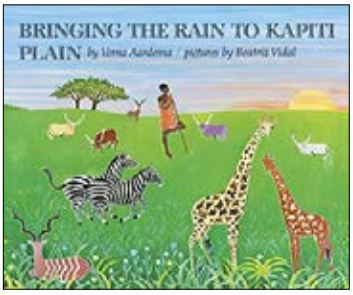
WHAT TO DO

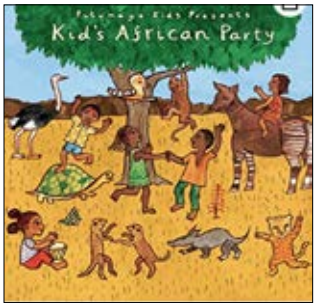
1. Introduce *Bringing the Rain to Kapti Plain* by Verna Aardema by showing the colorful cover illustrations. Picture walk through the book first and identify as many animals as possible, listing them on a whiteboard or chart. Read through the book, discussing how drought affects plants, animals, and people. Explain that modern day rain dances occur in Africa as a tradition during drought periods.
2. Encourage students to listen to African music. During or after listening to traditional music, place the instruments in a free-choice center and encourage students to play along with the music or create chants and dances of their own to share with the class.

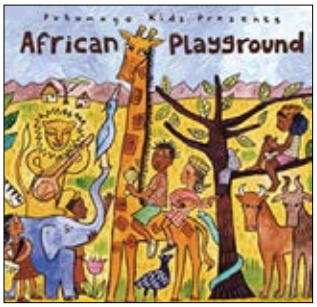
PLAY TIPS

- Guide an instrument session by encouraging students to shape their sounds. Ask “What if” questions such as, “What if you start playing your instrument very quietly and gradually get louder?” and “What if you play a long sound using your instrument followed by some short sounds?”
- Use the instruments to discuss and demonstrate patterns. You can also write out the patterns on a whiteboard or chart paper (AABB, ABAB, ABCABC).

WHAT YOU’LL NEED











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Play-Based Learning Materials

Fine Arts:



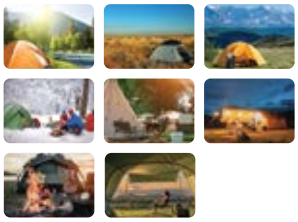










Fine and Gross Motor:







Games:







Science:




Puzzles:






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