COMMUNITY



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Language and Literacy

Build a Letter: Themed Alphabet

EZ.001.LA.1001-1002

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify letters of the alphabet.
Students will distinguish between features of letters.

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. Students use small classroom manipulatives to form uppercase and lowercase letters on letter mats with a community/neighborhood theme. Magnetic alphabets are tactile and allow children to learn through hands-on exploration while engaging multiple senses.

WHAT TO DO

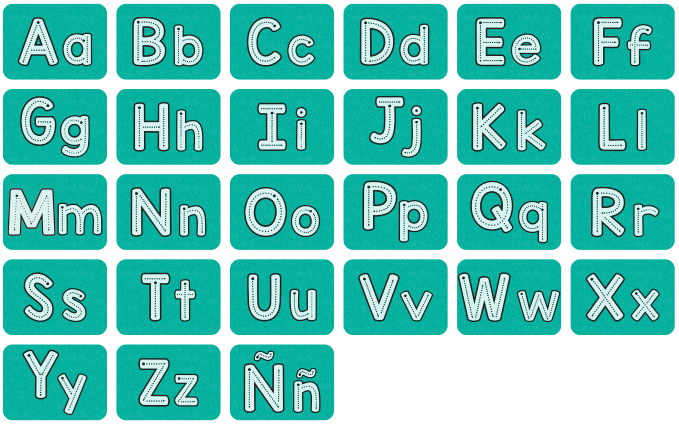
Using the themed magnetic letters as a reference or pre-activity review, encourage students to "trace" letters on letter mats. Students use the manipulatives (math link cubes and color chips) to form uppercase and lowercase letters on the mats.

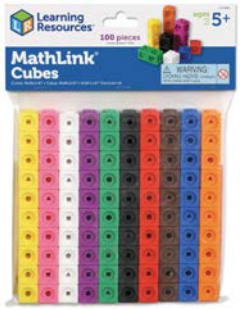
PLAY TIPS

- Ask students to form uppercase and lowercase letters using the manipulatives without tracing. In this instance, the letter mats will serve as a guide.
- Create your own letter cards. Present letters in a variety of fonts to help students begin to recognize letters in the environment. This activity helps to develop environmental print awareness.

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Mathematics

What's Missing?: Number Cards

EZ.001.LA.1003-1004

Activity Type:
Small Group

Objectives:
Students will begin to recognize numerals 0-10.
Students will compare quantities of objects by using number recognition and one-to-one correspondence.

Each themed classroom includes themed number cards. A featured activity will be included with each set of themed number cards. Students begin to recognize numerals by participating in number line activities. In What's Missing? students will determine the missing numeral in a number line after reviewing the complete number line. Number cards aid in developing subitizing, which is the ability to instantly recognize the number of items at a glance.

WHAT TO DO

1. Align the numbers in order in a number line, then have students (as a group) say the numbers with you, pointing at each number as you go.
2. Align the numbers in order again, this time removing a number. Have students say the numbers with you, prompting students to determine what number is missing. Continue with this activity, removing more numbers as students are able to recognize the missing number(s).

PLAY TIP

Turn the number cards over, face down, and mix them up. Leave one card out of the mix. Have students flip the cards over and align them in numerical order, determining the missing card.

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Mathematics

Counting and Measurement

EZ.001.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.

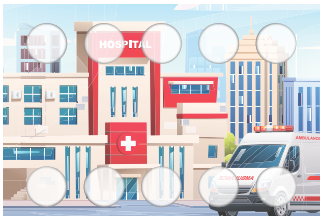
WHAT TO DO

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.001.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.

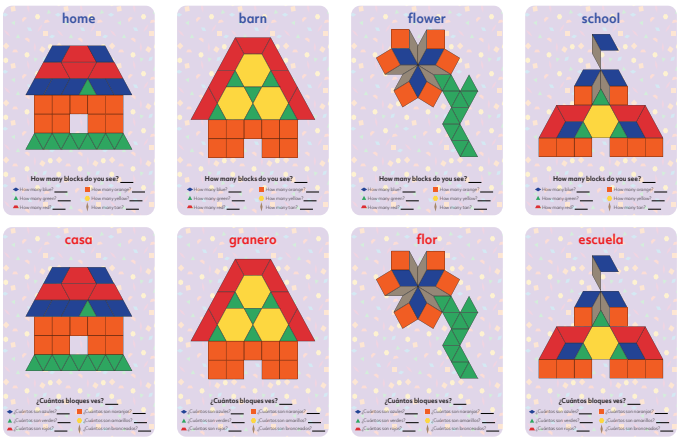
WHAT TO DO

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.

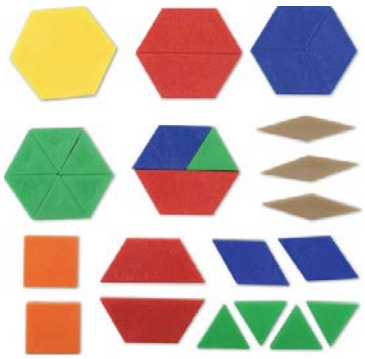
PLAY TIPS

- 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.001.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.

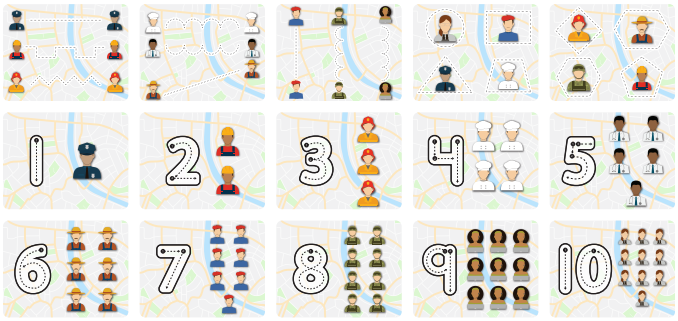
WHAT TO DO

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.001.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.001.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.

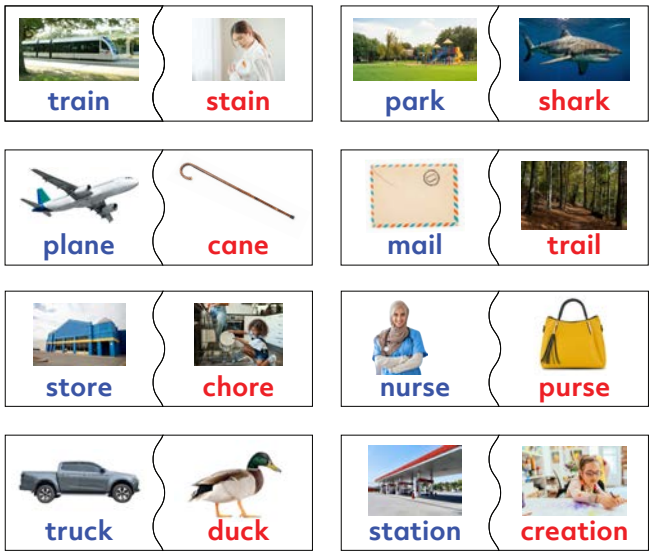
WHAT TO DO

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.001.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.

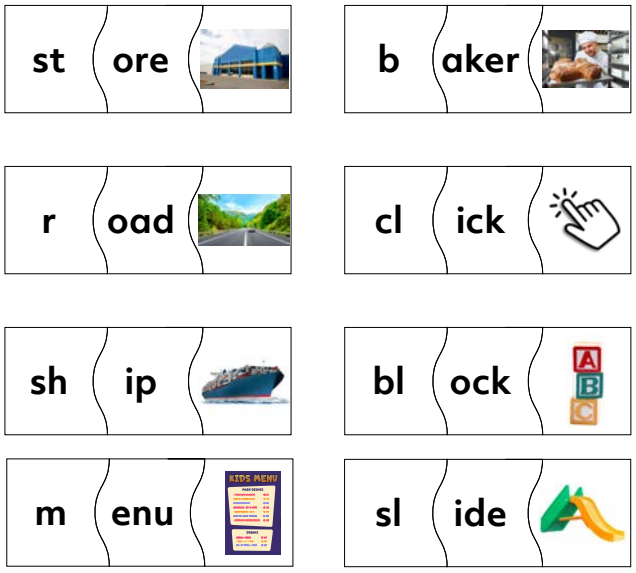
WHAT TO DO

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

Shaving Cream Words: Word Bank Words

EZ.001.LA.1012

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify letters of the alphabet.
Students will recreate 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 use shaving cream as a medium to practice writing word bank words. Young students gain from having numerous chances throughout the day to enhance their fine motor skills and finger dexterity by using different writing tools and mediums.

WHAT TO DO

Place the word bank words and craft trays filled with a layer of shaving cream in the writing center. Students can practice writing word bank words, their name, and/or the alphabet in the layer of shaving cream. To practice a new word or letter, students simply spread the shaving cream layer again.

PLAY TIPS

- Students can use a spatula to spread the shaving cream into a thin layer or use the opposite end as a writing utensil.
- Provide opportunities for students to draw freely in the shaving cream.

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Fine and Gross Motor

Street Safety

EZ.001.LA.1013

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will understand and use recognizable and new vocabulary.
Students will build coordination skills as they participate in a sequence of movements.

Rules keep us safe. Students learn the rules of the road by exploring and engaging with large scale road and safety signs through creative and imaginative play. Ride-on trikes add to the exploration and support in the development of gross motor skills.

WHAT TO DO

1. Introduce the road signs and review the meaning behind each. If applicable, have students perform the action as part of the review.
2. Block off an area of the classroom that will serve as the designated “ride-on” area to avoid collision with others (use painter’s tape or string to create boundaries). Encourage students to build a riding course within the designated area, placing the signs along the course. Encourage students to perform the action on the sign as they are riding through the course.

PLAY TIPS

- Take this activity outside to incorporate more space.
- Use orange traffic cones, empty cans, cardboard boxes, and chalk to create an obstacle course inside or outside. Be sure there aren’t any sharp corners or narrow areas that students might find difficult to navigate.

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Social Studies

Map Symbols

EZ.001.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will recognize symbols as representations.
Students will recreate symbols building fine motor skills.

Maps are pictures of places and usually include symbols to show us special places. We use maps to show us where we are and where we need to go. Students have discussions about the meaning of symbols and practice writing map symbols in sand using a legend template.

WHAT TO DO

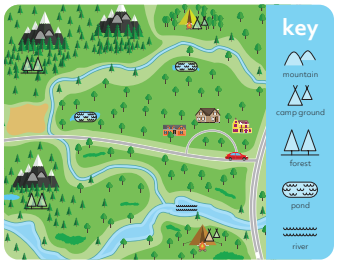
1. Begin by introducing the atlas and comparing it to a globe. This will help students connect their prior knowledge about the world. Ask students the following questions: "What features make up the land?," "What features make up the ocean?," and "How do you know what countries are home to people and animals?" Give students plenty of time to explore the atlas on their own and ask questions.
2. Fill the sand trays with colored sand. Demonstrate "drawing" in the sand with your finger. Introduce the legend examples, pointing out the symbols and discussing representation. Students can use the legends to practice "drawing" the symbols in the sand.

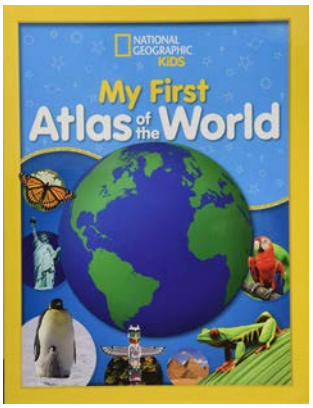
PLAY TIPS

- Encourage students to create their own symbols and share their representations.
- Go on a treasure hunt. Make a map of the classroom, hide an item in the classroom, and indicate the location with an "X" on the map. Students can use the map to find the hidden item.

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Mathmatics

Multicolor Mail

EZ.001.LA.1015

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will sort by characteristics and attributes.
Students will begin to use symbols and letters to communicate.

Students sort mail by color in this self-directed activity. Using color-coded envelopes, letters, and stamps, students sort mail by color and place in the appropriate color sorting bin. Students can use the classroom USPS Postal Box to "mail" letters after sorting. Sorting by color is one of the first steps towards developing foundational math skills. It introduces students to the concept of classification, or sorting objects based on a shared characteristic.

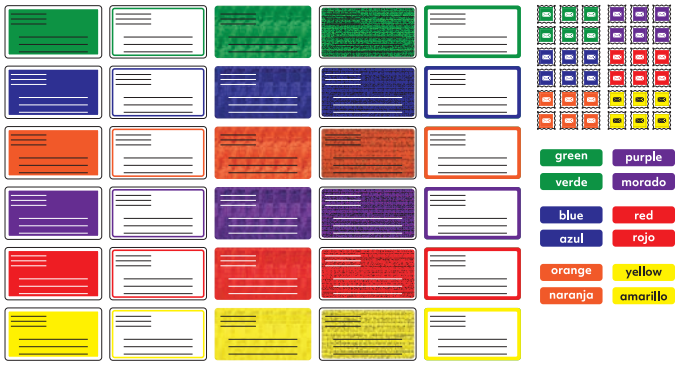
WHAT TO DO

Review all the colors on the envelopes. Students can attach the associated color stamp to the envelope, "write" a letter, and put the letter in the tabletop or classroom mailbox. The designated mail carrier adds the letters to the associated color sorting bin.

PLAY TIPS

- Ask students to sort mail in other ways, such as by recipient or letter length.
- Ask students to "write" letters to each other. Include a list of all students' names at the writing center and encourage students to write and mail a letter to a friend.

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Social Studies

Urban, Suburban, and Rural

EZ.001.LA.1016

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will identify common features in communities.
Students will demonstrate an understanding of features in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

As an introduction to urban, suburban, and rural communities, students read *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton, discussing how the environment around the house changes. Students can sort urban, suburban, and rural photo cards using sorting mats. Sorting activities reinforce vocabulary and provide the opportunity to introduce new words.

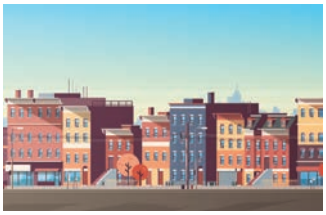
WHAT TO DO

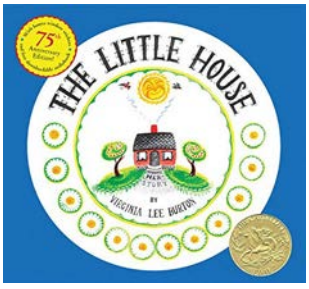
1. Read *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton, discussing how the environment around the little house changes over time. Ask students the following questions throughout: "What does the little house see?," "What does the little house hear?," and "What kind of things surround the little house?" Picture walk through the community books, making comparisons to *The Little House*.
2. After reviewing the stories, place the suburban, rural, and urban photos and sorting mats in a free-choice center for sorting and further discussion.

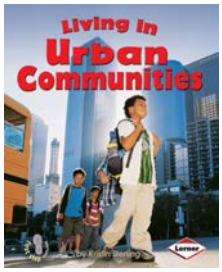
PLAY TIPS

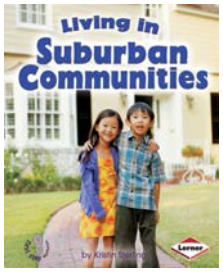
- *The Little House* feels lonely and neglected over time because she wasn't taken care of. Discuss taking care of material things. Ask questions like, "How should we treat the things that belong to us?" and "What happens when we don't take care of our things?" Relate the discussion to respecting materials in the classroom.
- Using pictures from the story, ask students to sequence the progression of events from beginning to end.

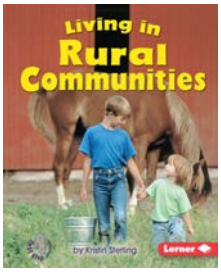
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Fine Arts

Community Dramatic Play

EZ.001.LA.1017

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will engage in associative and cooperative play for creative expression.
Students will create and recreate stories.

Students discover that a community can include many different groups of people such as a school community, a neighborhood community, and even your family! Students can create communities in the classroom by assuming new and different roles using dress-up materials, props, and other dramatic play items.

WHAT TO DO

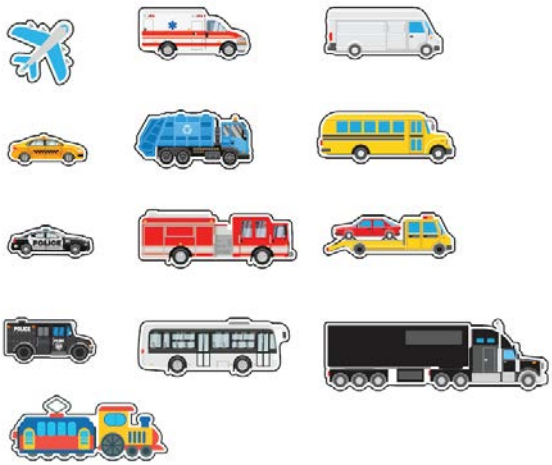
Set the scene for a community exploration center by introducing the costumes and service vehicle magnets and talking about the ways people help us (keep us healthy, keep us safe, maintain the city, help us commute, grow food, etc.). Ask students how they can be helpful at home and at school. Students can explore members of the community by role playing, using their imagination and creativity. Provide situations and prompts that help students get into character.

PLAY TIPS

- Invite family and community members into the classroom to talk about their careers, encouraging further interest and curiosity in students. If possible, visit a local library, museum, fire station, or other community location to help students feel the experience.
- Encourage students to make supportive materials like menus, mail, and medical records to enhance their role playing.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED









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Fine Arts

Transportation Movement

EZ.001.LA.1018

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will respond to different musical styles.
Students will practice body movements with control and moving with intention.

Students explore movement by moving their bodies to mimic different vehicles used for transportation. Using instruments, music, and gross motor movement cards, students move their bodies like a helicopter, airplane, train, and more! Physical activity boosts neural pathways in the brain and aids in developing motor skills and spatial awareness.

WHAT TO DO

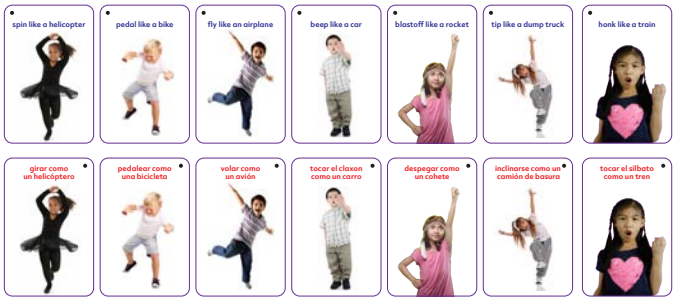
Tell students they are going to make movements like vehicles. Pass out the classroom management circles and remind them they will be doing their movements on the circle (personal bubble). Play music or ask several students to play music using the instruments. As you call out the vehicle, draw attention to the movement cards as a visual.

PLAY TIPS

Play transportation-themed gross motor games like Airplane and Red Light, Green Light.

- To play Airplane, students listen for a fact that describes them. For example, the first letter of their name, any letter in their name, favorite food, number of siblings, etc. Once they hear a fact that describes them, they fly around the room or playground like an airplane.
- To play Red Light, Green Light, students move like a car when the “light” is green and stop when the “light” is red. Add a visual support (red light, green light) to encourage quiet movement.

WHAT YOU’LL NEED





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Social and Emotional

Building Our Community

EZ.001.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will interact with peers in play-based ways.
Students will create stories and scenarios using dramatic materials.

Play is such an important part of children's learning and development. Children play and interact with their peers by exploring simple building materials and using the experiential learning classroom (murals and flooring) to recreate the city they live in. Students can build a fire department, a police station, homes, add people, and more on the community floor map.

WHAT TO DO

1. Help students celebrate the work people do in our communities by sharing books and stories from the classroom library. Be sure to reiterate that communities can be big or small and people in communities help each other by offering goods and services.
2. Introduce the build-a-community materials (wooden buildings, vehicles, community members, and blocks). Review the community helpers who live and work right alongside us in our communities. Students can use the build-a-community materials to create a community on the town flooring. Encourage students to create scenarios or provide play scenarios such as a family taking an afternoon trip to the zoo or a fire truck putting out a small fire.

PLAY TIP

While walking in the school neighborhood, stop and observe community helpers. A neighborhood walk could include observing a local construction site, garbage and recycling trucks, or a delivery service. Have discussions about the services the community helpers provide.

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Science

Motion: Push and Pull, Fast and Slow

EZ.001.LA.1020

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will experiment with slope, cause and effect, momentum, and gravity. Students will make scientific observations and predictions.

After reading *Motion: Push and Pull, Fast and Slow* by Darlene Stille, students can experiment with toy cars (with various sized wheels) and the classroom ramp. Educator can reinforce the concepts of force (push and gravity) and elevation by asking questions to encourage critical thinking. Experimenting with the materials allows students to make predictions, observe results, and ask questions. Through this play, they gain a deeper understanding of scientific concepts.

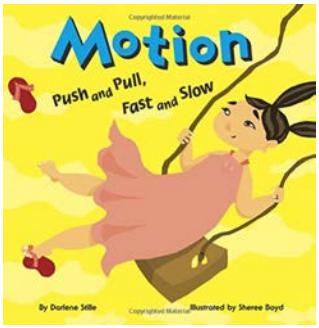
WHAT TO DO

1. Read *Motion: Push and Pull, Fast and Slow* by Darlene Stille, reviewing the concepts of motion throughout (movement, speed, force, and inertia).
2. Have students explore concepts of motion by experimenting with the ramp, cars, and trucks. Compare and contrast observations about what happens, what is the same, and what is different between the types of pulls, pushes, and resistance. Be sure to talk about car material (weight), wheel type (size), and resistance (textured path on ramp), and how they factor into movement.

PLAY TIP

Continue the push/pull conversation by engaging in additional activities around motion. Ask each student to bring in an item from home that they can make roll. Students practice making their item move and then sort by push/pull. Ask questions like, “How does your object move?,” “Can you make it move in a different way?,” and “How did you make it move?”

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Social Studies

Saving, Spending, Earning, and Giving

EZ.001.LA.1021

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objectives:
Students will begin to understand that items cost money and bills/coins have different value.
Students will act out consumer related scenarios with their peers.

Young children are just beginning to understand that we need money to buy things, we earn money by working, and there is a difference between items that we want and items that we need. By exploring money in a play-based way, students start recognizing and attaching value to coins (more vs. less). Students can create a community market in the classroom, buying and selling neighborhood market items using play money.

WHAT TO DO

Introduce the cash register and grocery store items (fruits, vegetables, canned goods, boxed goods, and payment forms) in a free-choice center. Students can add price labels to grocery items and/or trade items with one another, determining their own value system. Be sure to reinforce terms such as earn, spend, save, and borrow as students interact with the materials.

PLAY TIPS

- Sort real coins in the classroom. Set out a sorting tray and some coins and encourage students to sort by color and size.
- Introduce an estimation jar in the classroom. Fill the jar with easily recognizable items like pom poms or bouncy balls and ask students to guess how many objects are in the jar. After students have made a guess, count the items as a class. As students become more comfortable with estimating, add smaller items like erasers or beans.

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