

Letters

E P S U X

a b c

Literacy Packet



INTRODUCTION

Our curated literacy packet is a practical toolkit designed to make literacy engaging and accessible for young learners. In this packet, you'll find valuable tips for reading to children, a thoughtfully selected list of recommended books, story shelf inspiration, and hands-on provocations to bring literacy to life!

Our focus is on real-world strategies that foster a love for reading while building fundamental skills. Dive into the resources, discover new stories, and engage in activities that make literacy an enjoyable and meaningful part of your child's everyday learning journey.



10 Tips for Engaging Storytime Experiences

1

Read with Enthusiasm:

Infuse energy and enthusiasm into your read-aloud sessions. Use expressive tones, varied voices for characters, and engage children by emphasizing key emotions and events in the story.

2

Choose Interactive Books:

Opt for interactive books that encourage participation, whether through lift-the-flap features, textured pages, or opportunities for children to chime in during repetitive phrases. Interactive elements enhance engagement.

3

Follow the Child's Lead:

Allow children to guide the pace of the reading. If they show interest in a particular page or ask questions, take the time to explore and discuss, fostering a responsive and interactive reading environment.

4

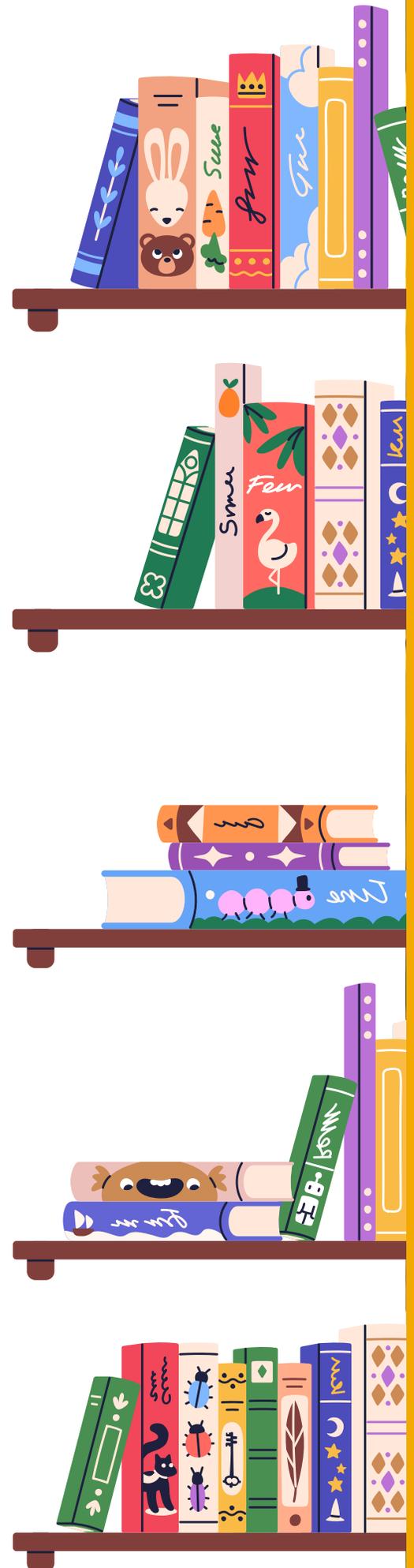
Select Diverse Topics:

Introduce a variety of topics and genres to cater to different interests. From animals and adventure to humor and emotions, offering diverse reading experiences broadens children's exposure and engagement.

5

Incorporate Props and Visuals:

Enhance comprehension by using props or visual aids related to the story. This can include puppets, pictures, or simple drawings to bring characters and settings to life, making the narrative more tangible.



6**Encourage Predictions:**

Foster critical thinking by encouraging children to make predictions about the story's outcome. Ask open-ended questions that prompt them to think ahead and anticipate what might happen next.

7**Allow Movement Breaks:**

Recognize that children may need to move around during a read-aloud. Incorporate short breaks for movement, allowing them to wiggle or stretch before returning to the story. This accommodates different learning styles.

8**Revisit Favorites:**

Embrace repetition by revisiting favorite books. Children often benefit from hearing familiar stories multiple times, reinforcing vocabulary, comprehension, and a love for certain narratives.

9**Connect to Real Life:**

Relate the story to children's real-life experiences. Connect characters or events to their own lives, fostering a deeper understanding and personal connection to the narrative.

10**Create a Cozy Reading Environment:**

Set the stage for a positive reading experience by creating a cozy and inviting reading environment. Use comfortable seating, soft lighting, and perhaps a favorite blanket or cushion to make the reading time enjoyable & comforting.



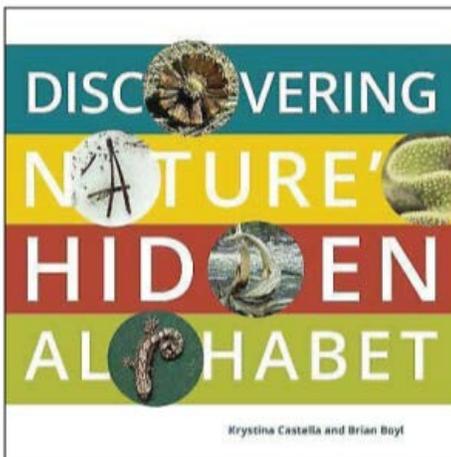
BOOKS WE LOVE

We're highlighting some of our favorite books that incorporate the ABC's, Lines, and Rhymes!

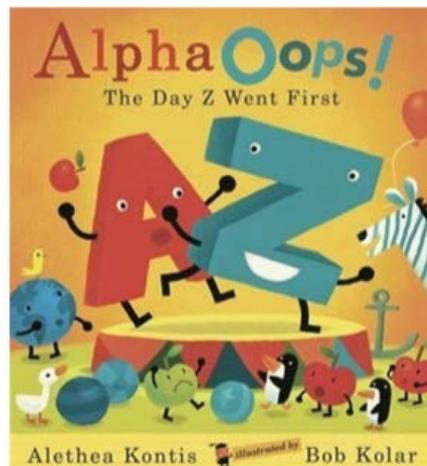


ABC's in Daily Reads **A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**

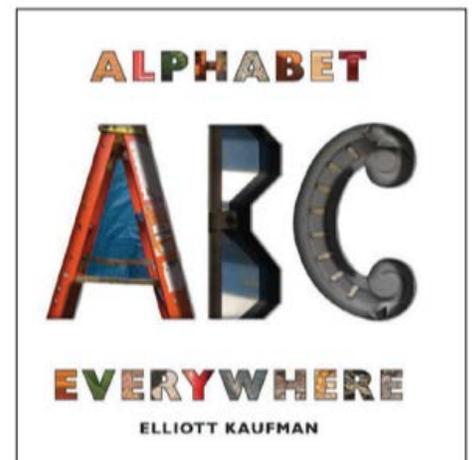
Reading books that incorporate the alphabet engages children in seeing letters in engaging contexts, providing a foundation for emergent literacy skills. Beyond the simple recognition of letters, these literary experiences immerse children in the visual and narrative richness of language. Exploring letters within stories helps develop not only letter recognition but also an understanding of their role in forming words and conveying meaning. This holistic approach to alphabet exploration not only enhances early reading skills but also instills a positive and enjoyable association with literacy, fostering a confident and enthusiastic approach to language development.



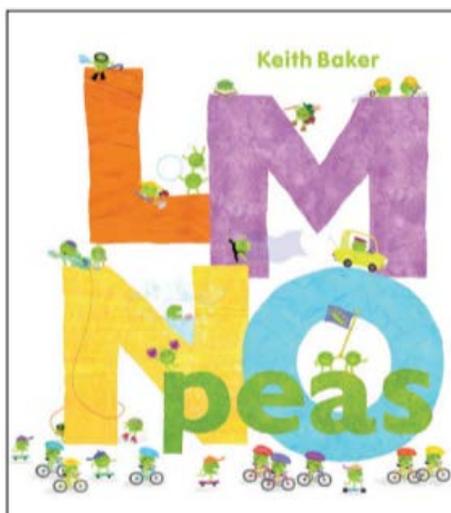
Discovering Nature's Hidden Alphabet,
by Krystina Castella & Brian Boyl



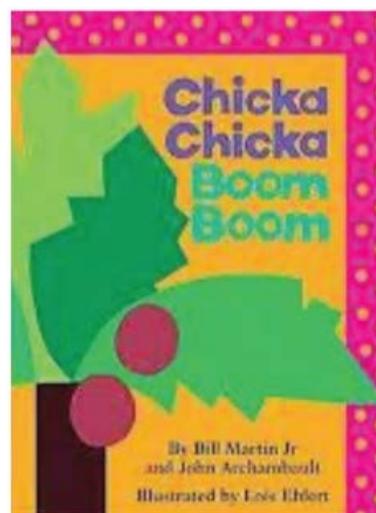
Alpha Oops! The Day Z Went First
by Alethea Kontis



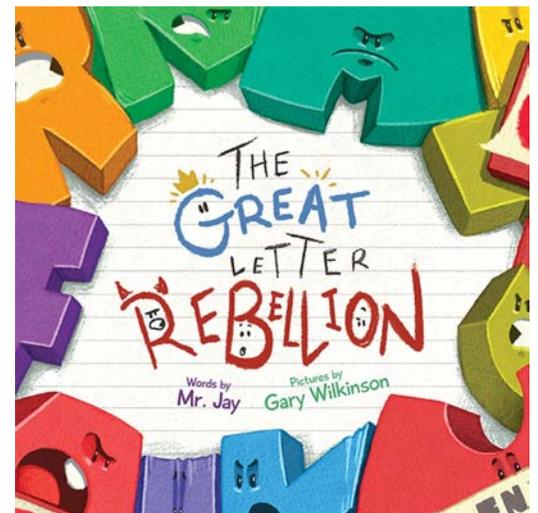
Alphabet Everywhere
by Elliott Kaufman



LMNO Peas,
by Keith Baker



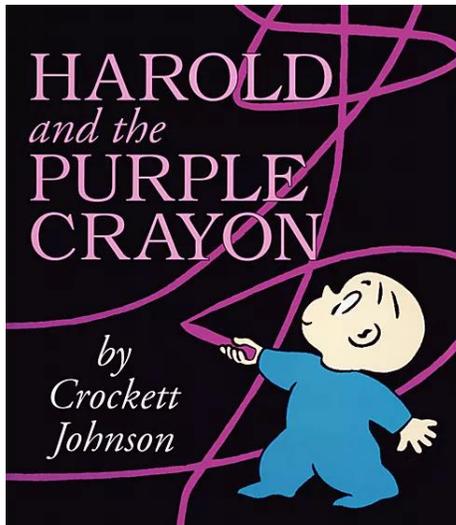
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom
by Bill Martin Jr.



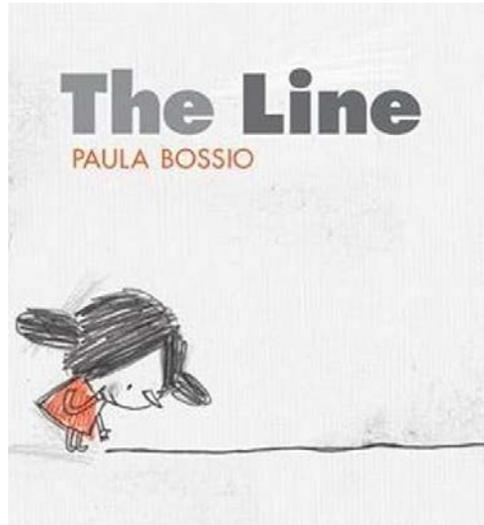
The Great Letter Rebellion
by Mr. Jay

Let's Look at Lines

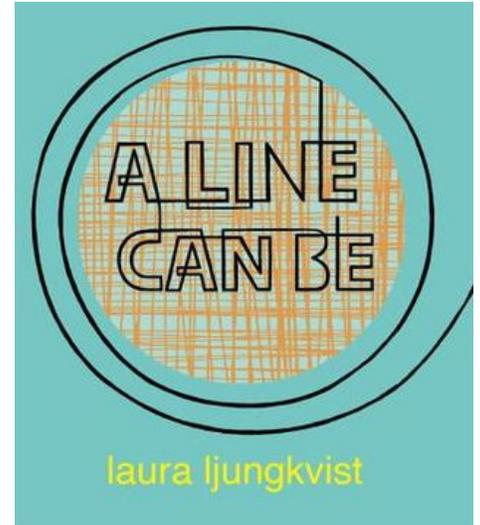
Engaging in activities that involve exploring and creating lines plays a pivotal role in supporting emergent literacy skills among young children. Beyond the basic act of making marks on paper, these experiences contribute to the development of fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, essential prerequisites for later writing proficiency. Additionally, the spatial awareness cultivated during line exploration helps children understand the arrangement of symbols and shapes on a page, laying the groundwork for future understanding of written language. This multi-sensory approach not only nurtures emergent writing skills but also cultivates a positive attitude toward literacy, promoting a joyful and confident approach to language development.



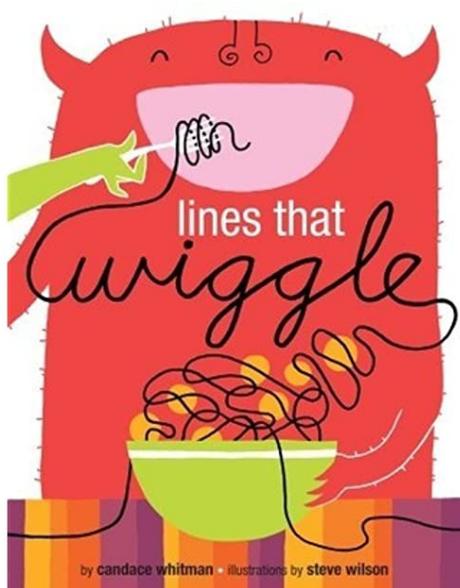
Harold and the Purple,
by Crockett Johnson



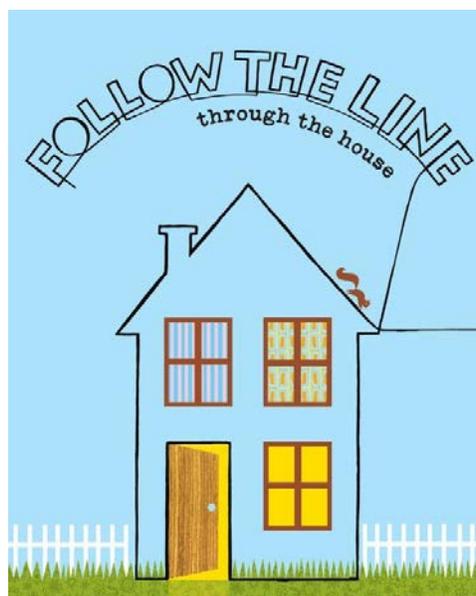
The Line,
by Paula Bossio



A Line Can Be,
by Laura Ljungkvist



Lines That Wiggle,
by Candace Whitman



**Follow The Line
Through the House,**
by Laura Ljungkvist



Lines,
Suzy Lee

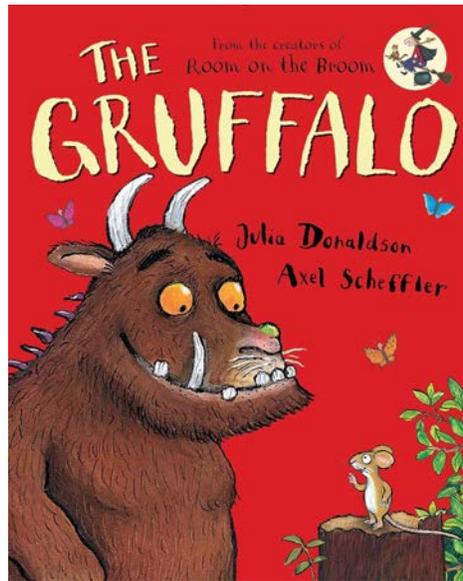
Rhyming Rhythms



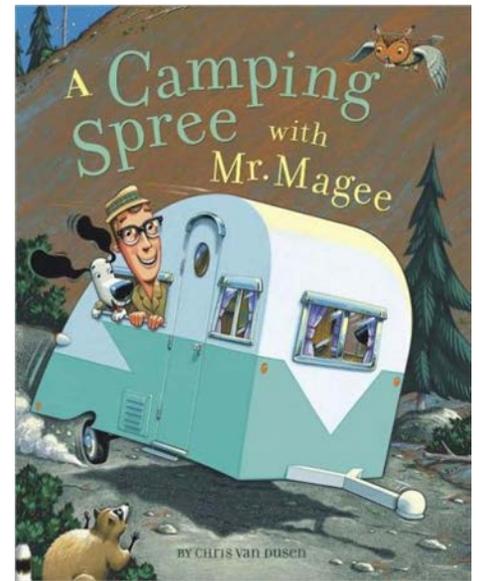
Incorporating books that rhyme is a strategic and enjoyable approach to early childhood literacy. Rhyming books provide a rhythmic cadence that captivates young listeners, making language more engaging and memorable. The predictable patterns in rhyming texts create a sense of anticipation, encouraging children to participate in the reading experience. Beyond the entertainment value, exposure to rhyming words enhances phonological awareness, a crucial skill for developing reading proficiency. The repetition and rhythm in rhyming books also support language acquisition, vocabulary expansion, and cognitive development. By introducing children to the playful world of rhymes, we not only make reading a pleasurable experience but also lay a foundation for strong literacy skills that will benefit them throughout their educational journey.



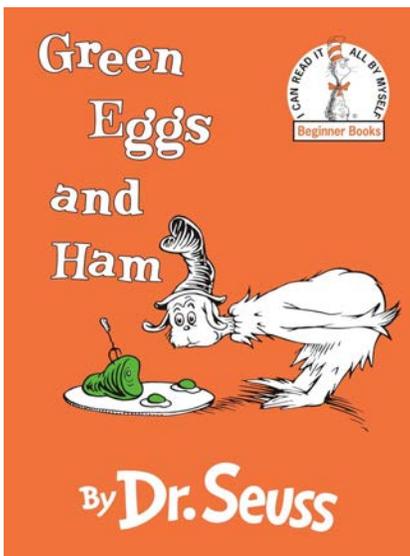
A Home Can Be . . .,
by Stephanie Seidler



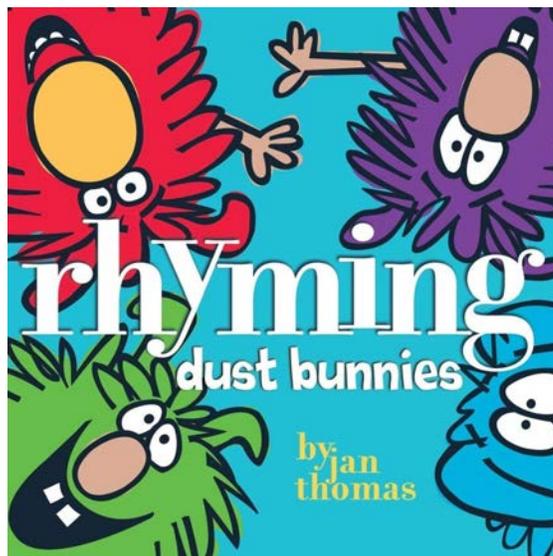
The Gruffalo,
by Julia Donaldson



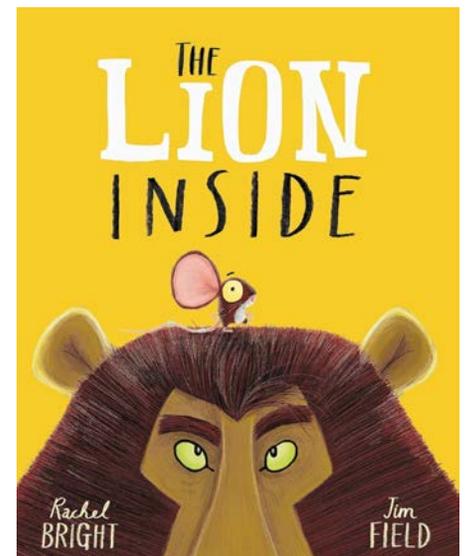
**A Camping Spree
With Mr. Magee**,
by Laura Ljungkvist



Green Eggs and Ham,
by Dr. Seuss



The Rhyming Dust Bunnies
by Jan Thomas



The Lion Inside,
by Rachel Bright

STORY SHELF INSPIRATION

Setting up "story shelves" with accessible books and corresponding toys creates an engaging reading space for children. This dynamic environment encourages hands-on exploration, allowing young readers to delve into stories through both text and play. The intentional pairing of books and toys not only enhances literacy but also fosters cognitive development, language skills, and creativity. The "story shelves" become a multifaceted hub where children can immerse themselves in narratives and bring beloved characters to life.





We're Going on a Bear Hunt, By Helen Oxenbury

Bring a beloved story book to life by connecting toys with corresponding materials. You can offer several "small worlds" or focus on one story in particular, e.g. We're Going on a Bear Hunt.



Into the Deep for Shark Week

Focus on highlighting a topic of interest by using books, toys, and loose parts. For example, if you observe an interest in the topic of sharks, gather shark toys, shark books, and other materials that may connect to, represent, and expand upon sharks, the ocean, etc.



Represent One Book in Limitless Ways

Inspired by the book "A Home Can Be...", create various provocations that bring the book's themes to life. One week, you can transform your sensory table into an ocean scene, filled with water, shells, and toy sea creatures, inviting children to explore the wonders of marine life through sensory play. While another week you may provide sticks, clay, and crinkled paper, encouraging children to unleash their creativity as they build nests and treetop homes, inspired by the book's depiction of various habitats. These play provocations not only extend the learning from the story but also provide rich opportunities for imaginative play, sensory exploration, and hands-on learning.



ACTIVITIES

Sensory-rich, hands-on experiences that support emergent literacy skills.





Exploring Lines + Sand

MATERIALS

- Sand (Alternatives: oats, non lumpy soil)
- Shallow tray
- Wooden Stick (Alternatives: toothpick, popsicle stick, small/thin branch, pen/pencil/crayon)
- Diagram of different lines for your child to model (e.g. zig-zag, dotted line, curvy, etc.). You can draw different lines over a chalkboard, over construction paper, etc.

DIRECTIONS

- Fill a shallow tray with sand and provide a thin stick so they can explore "line making."
- Because the tray is shallow, they'll most likely take note of the effects their marks and various "scribbles" make. No matter where they take this provocation, they are utilizing their fine motor skills that greatly contribute to symbol making.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Encourages exploration of different types of lines**, such as straight lines, curves, zigzags, and loops, providing a diverse range of fine motor challenges and fostering early writing skills.
- **Promotes sensory exploration** by engaging children in the tactile experience of manipulating sand to form different lines, stimulating sensory receptors and enhancing a multi-sensory learning environment.
- **Cultivates a positive attitude toward learning** as children engage in a playful and hands-on activity, promoting a sense of enjoyment and curiosity in the process of experimenting with different types of lines in the sand.



Letters + Water Provocation

MATERIALS

- Chalkboard or one colored sheet of construction paper - Try to avoid using white paper, as it will be difficult for the child to see the water over the white.
- One thin paintbrush
- One cup or jar of water
- Diagram of different letters for the child to model. You can draw different lines over a chalkboard or construction paper, use letter magnets, letter puzzle pieces, etc.

DIRECTIONS

- Place a sheet of paper, cardboard, or chalkboard down with an accompanying cup of water and paintbrush.
- Display letters for the child to refer to as they explore mark-making with water.
- If the weather is nice, bring this provocation out on the sidewalk - another surface that's great for water painting!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Children will practice forming letters of the alphabet using a paintbrush and water, **reinforcing letter shapes and strokes necessary for writing.**
- Engaging in the precise movements required to paint letters with water **develops fine motor control, enhancing coordination and dexterity.**
- Following the sequence of strokes required to form each letter **promotes sequential thinking and planning skills**, important for organizing thoughts and actions.



Create Your Name With Loose Parts

MATERIALS

- Tinker Tray filled with loose parts:
 - E.g.: pom-poms, sticks, leaves, links, sequins, cut pipe-cleaners, feathers, stones, sea glass, string, clothes pins
- Board or sheet of paper
- Writing utensil (chalk, marker, pen, etc.)
- Optional: Glue if you want to make this a permanent piece

DIRECTIONS

- Write the child's name in large, clear print over a board or piece of paper/cardboard.
- With the tinker tray of loose parts nearby, allow the child to trace the letters of their name with a variety of materials.
- If making a permanent piece or sign, have your child apply glue first. Allow the materials to dry and let the child decide where to hang their name,

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Observing and engaging with something that is representational of who they are (name) **boosts self-esteem and pride**, while the open-ended materials **offer creative expression**.
- Printing the child's name in large clear font **supports awareness of the letters & spelling**.
- **Concepts of size, shape, space, and quantity are enforced** as the child has to organize and align materials over the letters of their name.
- Utilizing small materials and delicately balancing them over the letters **enhances fine motor control, dexterity, and hand-eye coordination**.



Letters With Loose Parts

MATERIALS

- 1 sheet of paper: Divide into 4-8 pieces depending on your child's level of engagement.
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 dark marker (sharpie)
- Various loose parts. E.g. pipe-cleaners, pom-poms, rocks, twigs, shells, sea glass, buttons, etc.

DIRECTIONS

- Cut one sheet of paper in either 4, 6, or 8 pieces based on child's stage of development.
- Write one letter on each sheet. We recommend starting with lowercase letters first.
- Stack the letters on top of one another, creating a pile to choose from. You can get the ball rolling by "drawing a card first," and recreating the letter you picked with loose parts. Your child can go after, in which you both continue until all the "cards" are up.
- Adjust the number of cards based upon your child's engagement. You may do less this time or more another time after.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Engaging in the process of creating letters with loose parts **enhances letter recognition skills.** Your child will **visually identify and reproduce the shapes and forms of letters, reinforcing their understanding of the alphabet.**
- Children **engage with language and literacy** as they can discuss the names and sounds associated with each letter, **reinforcing phonemic awareness and language skills.**
- Creating letters with loose parts **requires attention to detail, concentration, and focus.** Children need to carefully arrange and position the loose parts to form each letter, **enhancing their ability to sustain attention.**



Letters + Water Beads

MATERIALS

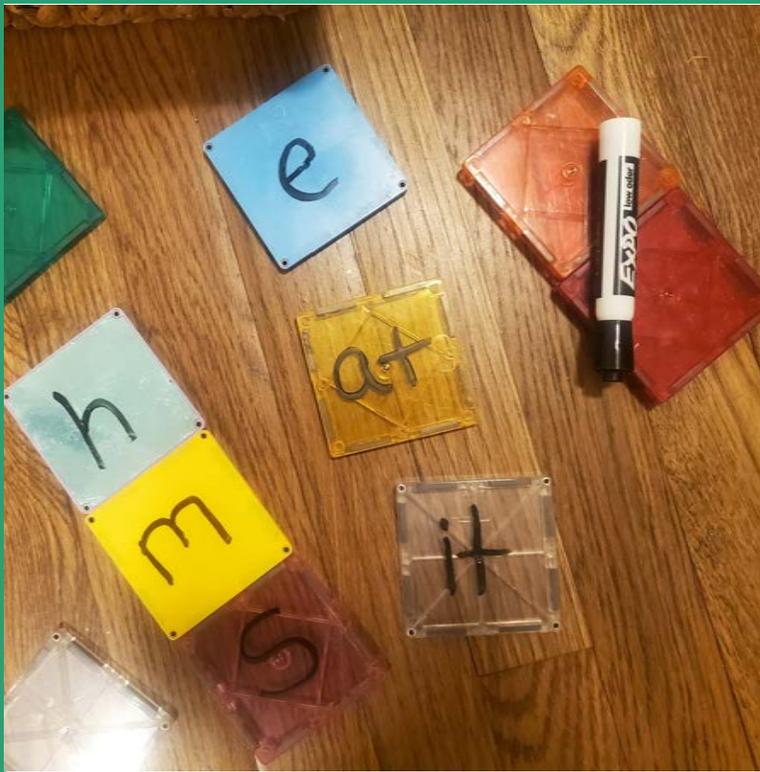
- Sensory bin/table or large container
- Water
- Water beads such as orbeez
 - Alternative to Orbeez (water, sand, shredded paper, dried beans)
- Wooden letters
- Optional: Materials to support sensory table play: cups / measuring cups, spoons, tongs, bowl, etc.

DIRECTIONS

- Fill your sensory bin or large container with water and water beads / orbeez.
 - Orbeez need approximately 24 hours to absorb the water and grow so plan ahead!
- Once the orbeez are ready for play, add letters and accessories to the bin for open play!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Children will **practice identifying letters of the alphabet** as they explore the sensory bin filled with water beads and letters, reinforcing their ability to recognize and differentiate letters.
- **Engages tactile sensory exploration** by manipulating the water beads and letters stimulates the sense of touch, **promoting sensory integration.**
- Sensory play with water beads provides opportunities for sensory regulation as children explore different textures and sensations, helping them to self-regulate & manage sensory input.



Magna Words

MATERIALS

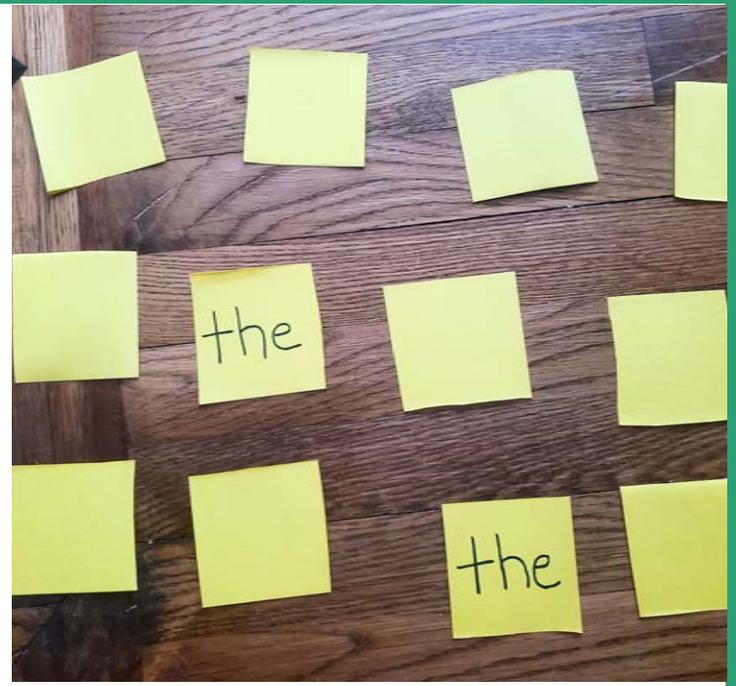
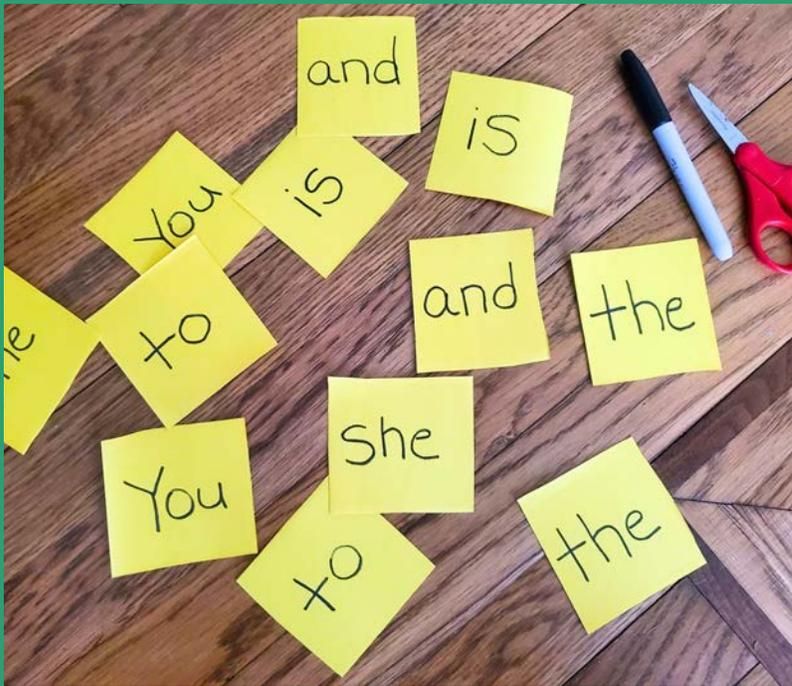
- 1 Pack of Magna Tiles
 - If you do not have magna tiles, use cut sheets of construction paper instead
- 1 white chalk marker or dry erase marker

DIRECTIONS

- Choose 6 - 8 Magna Tiles, in which you write one letter on approximately 3-4 tiles (consider the letters "s," "t," "m," and "h").
- On the other 3-4 tiles, write couplets such as "at," "it," etc.
- Allow your child to combine the tiles to create different words and/or welcome them to explore the magna tiles in their own ways (even if they're not creating words, they're still seeing and playing with letters).
- As your child creates different words, you can say the words out loud so the child can hear the words and see them at the same time.
- When finished, you and/or your child can easily wipe away the letters. On other occasions, consider asking your child to create their own letters if they exude interest in doing so.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Creating words with Magna-Tiles helps **children recognize and learn letter shapes, sound-letter correspondence, and spelling. It enhances their phonemic awareness and builds foundational literacy skills.**
- Forming words with Magna-Tiles **provides an interactive and hands-on approach to spelling practice.** Children can **visually see and manipulate the letters, reinforcing correct spelling patterns and improving their spelling skills.**
- Manipulating the tactile Magna-Tiles and visually perceiving the formed words **offer a multi-sensory learning experience.** This stimulates different senses, **facilitating better retention and understanding of the words.**



Sight Word Search & Memory Game

MATERIALS

- 1 sheet of paper
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 dark marker (sharpie)

DIRECTIONS

- Cut one sheet of paper in either 6, 8, or 12 pieces based upon child's stage of development.
- Write one sight word on each piece of paper
 - If you opt for 6 pieces, write 3 sight words 2x
 - If you opt for 8 pieces, write 4 sight words 2x
 - If you opt for 12 pieces, write 6 sight words 2x
 - These are some sight words to choose from: "the," "and," "is," "it," "in," "he," "she," "you," "I," "to"
 - Depending on your child's level, you can also invite them to write the letters/words if they feel comfortable doing so.
- Hide the pieces around a small play space/area in which your child can go on a scavenger hunt looking for the words.
- After all the words have been found, organize them face-down for a memory game.
- When your child flips over the paper, say the word out loud so they can make the connection.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Develop sight word recognition skills** by associating written words with their corresponding visual representations, **enhancing their ability to identify and remember sight words**, which are commonly used words that appear frequently in reading.
- Matching games **promote cognitive skills such as memory, concentration, and attention to detail**. Children must remember the location of the sight words and **use visual discrimination to find matching pairs**.



Create Your Name With Natural Materials

MATERIALS

- Various (accessible) artifacts from nature:
 - E.g.: Leaves, sticks, rocks, shells, pinecones, acorns, flowers, branches
- Optional:
 - Large sheet of paper and dark marker
 - To write out child's name and act as a model for them to copy.
 - Camera to take a picture of their work

DIRECTIONS

- Go for a walk outside or visit a local park where your child has access to natural materials.
- Write out their name on a large sheet of paper to act as a reference for them as they work.
- If your child does not want to create their name, it is okay! Simply exploring natural materials still exposes them to lines and curves - the features that make up letters!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Motor Skills Development:** Enhance both fine and gross motor skills as children manipulate natural materials to form letters and shapes, fostering precision and control in handling smaller objects while also engaging larger muscle groups in the process.
- **Letter Recognition:** Reinforce letter recognition through hands-on activities with natural materials, promoting both visual and tactile understanding of each letter.
- **Spatial Awareness:** Foster spatial awareness by arranging natural materials to form letters, encouraging an understanding of spatial relationships and proportions within the letter structure while engaging in gross motor movements.
- **Name Recognition:** Strengthen name recognition as children use natural materials to spell out their names, reinforcing the connection between written symbols and personal identity through a combination of fine and gross motor actions.
- **Sequential Thinking:** Cultivate sequential thinking as children follow the steps involved in creating each letter of their name with natural materials, enhancing logical and orderly thought processes through a combination of fine and gross motor actions.



Letter Scavenger Hunt

MATERIALS

- Clipboard with paper or notepad
- Pencil or coloring utensils
- Optional: Devise to take photos - If you have your phone, allow your child to take pictures of their discoveries of letters around the house and/or neighborhood.

DIRECTIONS

- Inform your child that you'll be going on a letter scavenger hunt! Welcome them to bring along a pad or clipboard with paper to document their discoveries.
- As you and your child walk around the neighborhood, invite them to find letters and words. This may come in the form of street signs, storefront signs, or perhaps they create letters with branches and other natural artifacts.
- Once they find letters or words, invite them to either take pictures of their discovery, and/or try to sketch their observations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Encourages the recognition of letters of the alphabet** in various contexts, reinforcing their ability to identify letters both in isolation and within words.
- **Develops observation skills** as they search for hidden letters outdoors, sharpening their ability to notice details and patterns in their environment.
- **Utilizes problem-solving skills as they strategize and think critically** about where to search for hidden letters, developing their ability to approach challenges creatively.
- Discussions about the letters found during the scavenger hunt **promotes language development and vocabulary expansion** as children describe observations and discoveries.
- Engaging in physical activity outdoors **promotes the development of gross motor skills** such as running, jumping, and climbing as children move around the outdoor space - exercising the big muscles are crucial for the control and coordination of fine motor skills.



I SPY the Letter...

MATERIALS

- Notepad
- Writing utensil/s
- Optional: binoculars

DIRECTIONS

- Invite your child to join in on a game of "I spy!"
- Have your child pick a letter that represents the things they'll want to look out for (e.g. letter "s" - **stop** sign, **shell**, **squirrel**, etc.)
- When they find something that begins with the chosen letter, they can either sketch their findings and/or write the word out/compile a list in their notepad.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Children will practice identifying specific letters of the alphabet as they play "I Spy," **reinforcing letter recognition skills.**
- Engaging in "I Spy" challenges children to visually discriminate between different letters amidst other visual stimuli, **honing their ability to distinguish letter shapes.**
- Children will **develop attention to detail** as they search for specific letters within their environment, **sharpening their observational skills.**
- Participating in "I Spy" **encourages language development** as children **articulate their observations and communicate their findings using descriptive language.**



Storytelling: Shadow Puppets

MATERIALS

- You and your child can use your hands & bodies to create shadows for storytelling.
- Optional: Incorporate related toys, cut-outs, and materials to supplement the story.
- Corresponding book of interest (optional)
- Clear wall space or white bedsheet
- Light source such as a flashlight or projector.

DIRECTIONS

- Set up a bright light source behind a white sheet or wall. Provide materials for children to create their own shadow puppets.
- Welcome children to experiment with casting shadows using their hands, toys, or puppets.
- Children use their shadow puppets to tell stories, improvising dialogues and movements to bring their narratives to life.
- After play, discuss what children enjoyed and any challenges they encountered, fostering learning through reflection.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Children will **express their creativity and imagination** by creating and manipulating shadow puppets to tell stories and create scenes.
- Engaging in shadow puppet play **encourages children to develop storytelling skills** as they narrate stories, create dialogues, and structure narrative sequences.
- Shadow puppet play **provides opportunities for children to communicate ideas, feelings, and narratives verbally** as they engage in storytelling and dialogue with their others.
- Children will **exercise creative problem-solving skills** as they adapt their puppet movements and storytelling strategies to achieve desired shadow effects and storytelling outcomes.



Storytelling: Puppetshow Performance

MATERIALS

- A set of puppets:
 - Hand puppets, finger puppets, puppets, sock puppets, plush dolls, etc.
- Optional:
 - Corresponding book of interest (if applicable)
 - Cut out the center of a cardboard box to make a "stage."

DIRECTIONS

- Utilize puppets to create or reenact a beloved story.
 - You can perform a show for your child, they can put on a show for your, or you can all work together.
- Optional: Read a relative book first or after puppet play.
- Experiment with different tones of voices, volumes, and sounds based on the characters you're playing with.
- Be flexible! If the story takes a turn, go with it! This allows for greater imagination and thought processes!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Develops effective communication skills** as children articulate dialogue and express emotions through puppet characters, promoting language development and storytelling abilities.
- **Fosters creative expression** by encouraging children to invent unique stories, characters, and scenarios for their puppet show, cultivating imaginative thinking.
- **Introduces an understanding of narrative structure** as children organize their puppet show with a clear beginning, middle, and end, enhancing comprehension of storytelling elements.
- **Supports emotional regulation** as children express emotions through their puppet characters, providing a healthy outlet for emotional expression and understanding.



MADE FOR CHILDREN. DESIGNED FOR YOU.

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