

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES FOR LITERACY & EARLY LEARNING



Michigan Early Learning Standards for 3 and 4-year-old children

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

1. Children demonstrate a growing ability to use originality or vision when approaching learning; use imagination, show ability to visualize a solution or new concept.
2. Children demonstrate the quality of showing interest in learning; pursue learning independently.
3. Children demonstrate an interest and eagerness in seeking information (e.g., be able to see things from a different perspective, fiddling with something to figure it out or attempting a reasonable solution).
4. Children demonstrate the capacity to cope with change, persist, move ahead with spirit, vitality, and a growing belief in one's ability to realize a goal.
5. Children demonstrate a growing capacity to make meaning, using one's habits of mind to find a solution or figure something out.
6. Demonstrate increasing ability to be together with others, in play or intellectual learning opportunities and/or making positive efforts for the good of all; join a community of learners in person and digitally as appropriate.
7. Exhibit a growing regard for one's mind and capacity to learn, demonstrate the capacity of consideration for others; show a growing capacity to self-regulate and demonstrate self-efficacy.
8. Children are becoming accountable or reliable for their actions to self and others.

CREATIVE ARTS

1. Children show how they feel, what they think, what they are learning through visual arts.
2. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through listening, participating in, and creating instrumental and vocal music experiences.
3. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through movement and dance experiences.
4. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through dramatic play.
5. Children develop rich and rewarding aesthetic lives.

LANGUAGE AND EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

1. Children begin to understand written language read to them from a variety of meaningful materials, use reading-like behaviors, and make progress towards becoming conventional readers.
2. Begin to develop writing skills to communicate and express themselves effectively for a variety of purposes.
3. Develop abilities to express themselves clearly and communicate ideas to others.
4. Children grow in their capacity to use effective listening skills and understand what is said to them.
5. Begin to develop strategies that assist them in viewing a variety of images and multimedia materials effectively and critically.
6. Develop positive attitudes about themselves as literate beings – as readers, writers, viewers, and listeners.
7. Children begin to understand that communication is diverse and that people communicate in a variety of ways.

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

1. Children demonstrate an increasing ability to comprehend or understand the English language at an appropriate developmental level.
2. Children demonstrate an increasing ability to speak or use English at an appropriate developmental level.
3. Demonstrate increased understanding and response to books, storytelling, and songs presented in English and increased participation in English literacy activities.
4. Children demonstrate an increasing ability to write words or engage in early states of writing in English.
5. Children interact with peers in play, classroom and social situations using English with increasing ability and comfort; use first language when appropriate and share home culture.

TECHNOLOGY LITERACY – EARLY LEARNING & TECHNOLOGY

1. Children use a variety of developmentally appropriate digital tools to learn and create.
2. Children work together when using developmentally appropriate digital tools.
3. With adult support and supervision, children interact with developmentally appropriate digital resources to locate and use information relating to a topic under study.
4. Children can explain some ways that technology can be used to solve problems.
5. Children begin to understand how technology can be used appropriately or inappropriately.
6. Children begin to learn to use and talk about technology tools appropriately.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT

1. Children develop and exhibit a healthy sense of self.
2. Show increasing ability to regulate how they express their emotions.
3. Develop healthy relationships with other children and adults.
4. Children increase their ability to understand and control their bodies and learn that regular physical activity can enhance their overall physical, social, and mental health.
5. Children experience growth in gross motor development and use large muscles to improve a variety of gross motor skills in a variety of both structured and unstructured and planned and spontaneous settings.
6. Children experience growth in fine motor development and use small muscles to improve a variety of fine motor skills both in structured and unstructured settings.
7. Children participate in activities that encourage self-motivation, emphasize cooperation, and minimize competition.
8. Children become aware of and begin to develop nutritional habits that contribute to good health.
9. Children begin to have knowledge about and make age-appropriate healthy choices in daily life.
10. Children recognize that they have a role in preventing accidents or potential emergencies.

EARLY LEARNING IN MATHEMATICS

1. Children begin to develop processes and strategies for solving mathematical problems.
2. Children begin to use language of mathematics by applying emerging skills in representing, discussing, reading, writing, and listening (e.g., translating a problem or activity into a new form; a picture, diagram, model, symbol, or words).
3. Children begin to develop skills or recognizing, comparing and classifying objects, relationships, events and patterns in their environment and in everyday life.
4. Children extend their understanding of numbers and their relationship to one another and things in the environment.

5. Children begin to develop skills of sorting and organizing information, seeing patterns, and using information to make predictions and solve new problems.
6. Children explore and discover simple ways to measure.
7. Children build their visual thinking skills through explorations with shape and the spaces in their classrooms and neighborhoods.

EARLY LEARNING IN SCIENCE

1. Children develop positive attitudes and gain knowledge about science through observation and active play.
2. Children show a beginning awareness of scientific knowledge related to living and non-living things.
3. Children show a beginning awareness of scientific knowledge related to the earth.

EARLY LEARNING IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Children begin to understand and interpret their relationship and place within their own environment.
2. Children begin to recognize that many different influences shape people's thinking and behavior.
3. Children show growth in their understanding of the concept of time and begin to realize that they are a part of a history, which includes people, places, events, and stories about the present and the past.
4. Children begin to explore the reasons for rules and laws, the importance of a democratic process, and the responsibilities of being a member of a classroom, a family, and a community.
5. Children increase understanding about how basic economic concepts relate to their lives.
6. Children increase their understanding of the relationship between people and their environment and begin to recognize the importance of taking care of the resources in their environment.

The Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten are meant to apply to all three and four-year-old children in Michigan, both those whose development is typical and those with differing abilities and backgrounds. It recognizes that young children's growth, development and learning are highly individual.





Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy

The ten practices below have been deemed as essential and created by a sub-committee of the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators. The purpose of this work is to increase Michigan's capacity to improve children's literacy by identifying a small set of research supported literacy instructional practices that could be a focus of professional development through the state. The focus is on classroom practice and the belief is that use of these practices every day could make a measurable positive difference in the state's literacy achievement.

These practices do not specify one particular program or approach to literacy instruction. Use of these practices would leave considerable choice for instructors and agencies. These elements could be used through the day, not just during literacy instruction, but in all opportunities for learning. The practices listed can be used within a variety of overall approaches to literacy instruction and within many different structures of the day; the document does not specify one particular program or approach to literacy instruction.

1. Intentional use of literacy artifacts in dramatic play and throughout the classroom

Reading and writing materials are not only present but used throughout the classroom environment.

- Within daily opportunities for dramatic play, the teacher provides, models use of, and encourages children's engagement with appropriate literacy artifacts, such as:
 - order pads, menus, and placemats for a pizza parlor
 - traffic signs, maps, blueprints, and building-related books in the block/construction area
 - envelopes, stationery, postcards, stamps, and actual mail for a post office
- Within centers and other areas of the classroom, children are encouraged to interact with reading and writing materials, such as:
 - books related to construction or building in the block or construction area
 - simple recipes for making snacks
 - labels that indicate where items go
 - children's names, for example on cubbies and sign-in sheets, which may vary over time (e.g., first with photos then later without photos)
 - writing materials in each area of the classroom, for drawing and writing about objects being observed in the science area

2. Read aloud with reference to print

Daily read alouds include verbal and non-verbal strategies for drawing children's attention to print, such as:

- Running finger under words
- Noting specific features of print and letters (e.g., "that is the letter D like Deondre's name")
- Asking children where to start reading
- Counting words
- Pointing out print within pictures

3. Interactive read aloud with a comprehension and vocabulary focus

The teacher reads aloud age-appropriate books and other materials, print or digital, including sets of texts that are thematically and conceptually related and texts that are read multiple times, with:

- Higher-order discussion among children and teacher before, during, and after reading
- Child-friendly explanations of words within the text
- Revisiting of words after reading, using tools such as movement, props, video, photo, examples, and non-examples, and engaging children in saying the words aloud
- Using the words at other points in the day and over time
- Teaching of clusters of words related to those in the text, such as vocabulary related to the garden or gardening

4. Play with sounds inside words

Children are supported to develop phonological awareness, or conscious awareness of sounds within language, especially a type of phonological awareness called phonemic awareness, which involves the ability to segment

and blend individual phonemes within words through various activities, such as:

- Listening to and creating variations on books with rhyming or alliteration
- Singing certain songs (e.g., “Willoughby, Walloughby...”; “Down by the Bay”; “The Name Game”; “Apples and Bananas”)
- Sorting pictures and objects by a sound or sounds in their name
- Games and transitions that feature play with sounds (e.g., alliteration games, a transition that asks all children whose name begins with the “mmm” sound to move to the next activity)
- “Robot talk” or the like (e.g., the teacher has a puppet say the sounds “fffff ” “iiiiii” “shhhh” and children say fish)

5. Brief, clear, explicit instruction in letter names, the sound(s) associated with the letters, and how letters are shaped and formed

Instruction that has been shown to be effective in fostering development of letter-sound knowledge is supported by tools such as:

- A high-quality alphabet chart
- Cards with children’s names
- Other key words to associate with letter-sounds (e.g., “d” is for dinosaur)
- Alphabet books with appropriate key words
- References throughout the day (e.g., “That sign says the store is open. The first letter is “o”. It makes the “oh” sound: ohpen.”)

Research suggests that we should set a benchmark of children naming 18 upper case and 15 lower case letters by the end of pre-K10 and should teach letter-sound associations, rather than letter names or sounds alone.

6. Interactions around writing

Adults engage in deliberate interactions with children around writing. Opportunities for children to write their name, informational, narrative, and other texts that are personally meaningful to them are at the heart of writing experiences. These deliberate interactions around writing include the use of interactive writing and scaffolded writing techniques.

- Interactive writing involves children in contributing to a piece of writing led by the teacher.
- Scaffolded writing involves the individual child in generating a message the child would like to write.

7. Extended conversation

Adults engage in interactions with children that regularly include:

- Responding to and initiating conversations with children, with repeated turns back and forth on the same topic
- Encouraging talk among children through the selective use of open-ended questions, commenting on what children are doing, offering prompts

- Engaging in talk, including narration and explanation, within dramatic play experiences and content-area learning, including intentional vocabulary-building efforts
- Extending children’s language
- Stories of past events and discussion of future events

8. Provision of abundant reading material in the classroom

The classroom includes:

- A wide range of books and other texts, print and digital, including information books, poetry, and storybooks accessible to children
- Books and other materials connected to children’s interests and that reflect children’s backgrounds and cultural experiences, including class- and child-made books
- Recorded books
- Books children can borrow to bring home and/or access digitally at home
- Comfortable places in which to look at books, frequently visited by the teacher(s) and by adult volunteers recruited to the classroom

9. Ongoing observation and assessment of children’s language and literacy development that informs their education

The teacher engages in:

- Observation and assessment that is guided by
 - an understanding of language and literacy development
 - the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten (2013) and, if applicable, – the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (2015)
- Observation that occurs in multiple contexts including play
- Use of assessment tools that are considered appropriate for prekindergarten contexts
- Use of information from observations and assessment tools to plan instruction and interactions with children

10. Collaboration with families in promoting literacy

Families engage in language and literacy interactions with their children that can be drawn upon and extended in prekindergarten. Prekindergarten educators help families add to their repertoire of strategies for promoting literacy at home, including:

- Incorporating literacy-promoting strategies into everyday activities such as cooking, communicating with friends and family, and traveling in the bus or car
- Reading aloud to their children and discussing the text
- Encouraging literacy milestones
- Speaking with children in their home/most comfortable language, whether or not that language is English
- Providing literacy-supporting resources



Five fun, easy, and powerful ways to help your child grow smarter.

LOVE

MAXIMIZE LOVE
MANAGE STRESS

Babies and toddlers thrive when their world feels loving, safe, and predictable. Respond with smiles, words, and touch to help them see, hear, and feel your love. You will help them develop a sense of security and self-control.

TALK

SING AND POINT

Babies learn language from the moment they are born. Respond to their sounds, and later, their words. Connect through eye contact and a loving tone of voice, while pointing to help them know what you are talking about.

COUNT

GROUP AND COMPARE

Every child's brain is wired for math. Talk about numbers, shapes, patterns, and comparisons as you go about your routines together. Watch your child learn to love math.

PLAY

EXPLORE THROUGH
MOVEMENT AND PLAY

Babies are like scientists who love making discoveries. Watch to see what interests your child, then encourage their curiosity and help them learn when they play and explore.

READ

AND DISCUSS STORIES

Reading turns kids into confident thinkers. Make books a regular part of your relationship from the very beginning. With infants, point at the pictures and speak with excitement. With toddlers, just make it fun.



Find SUCCESS BASICS videos, tips, and tools at:
successstartearly.org



Success Basics is a member of the Basics Learning Network, which began with the Boston Basics Campaign and is now a coalition of local initiatives working to make sure every child gets a great start in life.

In Kent County, Success Basics is brought to you by the Nurturing Parent Power Workgroup of the Great Start Collaborative of Kent County, with support from:

Believe 2 Become, an initiative of the Doug & Maria DeVos Foundation • Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative (ELNC) • Family Futures • First Steps Kent • Grand Rapids Community College • Grand Rapids Public Schools • Great Start Parent Coalition • Groundwork Community Consulting • Head Start for Kent County • KConnect • Kent ISO • Steelcase Foundation • Strong Beginnings

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JANUARY – ANIMALS/SIMILAR/DIFFERENT

Hello, Hello

by Brenden Wenzel



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**bright, stripes, spots, giant, pattern, pose, wild, proud, chant**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Define what author and illustrator mean. This is a book where the author and illustrator are both the same. This author/illustrator, Brendon Wenzel, is known for drawing and painting illustrations that also give you some good information about the story. Read the story the first time and ask what the children thought about the illustrations. Then reread the book and stop at each page to ask what the children have learned from the illustrations and colors. How do the illustrations describe the animals? What animals in this book, would they like to learn more about? Ask if they enjoyed this book. What about it did they enjoy?

Approaches to Learning: After reading this book several times, ask the children if there is an animal that they would like to learn more about? The specific names of all of the animals are found at the back of the book. As answers are given, make materials available at centers or tables for self-exploration. Help the children to develop learning goals for what they would like to learn, and what they would like to make to show what they learned about their animal of choice.

Dual Language Development: The animals in this book are illustrated in vivid color. Increased understanding of the color words are important to daily routines and learning. They should be learned as sight words with color knowledge that can match each word. A good way to do this is to pair a color word card with a very common object and help the child memorize a simple sentence to go with it. For example: The apple is red, The berries are blue, etc. If they have practiced these sentences, when they see something red and can't come up with the color name, you can say, "The apple is that color." This will stimulate memory and help with color recognition.

Creative Arts & Technology: Animals and their movements provide great dance and movement activities for children. There are many action words to go with animals. Practice what they could look like. i.e.: horses/gallop, snakes/slither, elephants/stomp, penguins/waddle, bunnies/hop, bears/swim, monkeys/swing, birds/fly, etc.

There are many songs on YouTube to allow fun in creative movement. Talk about how the internet provides many opportunities for music.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqz4z9aQRJY

www.youtube.com/watch?v=30ePPeUbwSs

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Talk about the similarities and differences in animals. Have each child talk about which is their favorite animal and why. Talk about the rules for taking turns and listening in a group. While others are talking, assure that everyone is listening and being respectful. Explain that everyone has their own opinion and way to see the world and that no answer to this discussion is right or wrong. Ask the children, after hearing everyone's perspective, if anyone has changed their mind or has given another animal a place on their favorite list.

Mathematics: Talk about the concept of weight. Animals have many similarities and differences in weight. Use a scale to weigh everyday objects and line them up from lightest to heaviest. Compare the smallest to the largest and talk about how size accounts for weight. Play the game, Who Weighs More, and estimate this with animals. Who weighs more: a bird (robin) or a dog, a hippo or a horse, a frog or a cat, and other obvious examples to illustrate the concept of weight and size.

Talk about measurement with rulers and yard sticks. Have each child bring in their favorite stuffed animal and measure how many inches it is. Make a graph of the findings.

Science: Expand on observational skills by rereading the story and asking the children to tell which animal they observe to be illustrated with the most detail. Which animal would they like to draw?

Read the note from the author at the back of the book. Talk about what endangered and vulnerable species means. Go over a few on the list that follow and show the animal that is labeled as vulnerable or endangered. Talk about some ways that we all can work to protect them. Ask the children what animal they would like to say "Hello" to.

National geographic has some search engines for great pictures and facts of animals of interest.





www.kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/

www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/p/proboscis-monkey/

Social Studies: With discussion about endangered animals, the children will understand what animals need to thrive. They can also talk about how they can protect the environment by being a better citizen. (i.e.: not disposing of plastic in the environment or water, etc.)

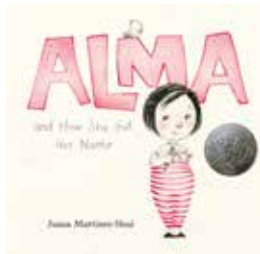
A sense of contribution can be established by walking outside with bags and rubber gloves to intentionally pick up litter. If the setting is a school grounds, this could happen routinely to allow for the development of how to take care of living things and to protect other children and wildlife.

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: New Year's Day World Peace MLK Day Dress Your Pet Backwards Day	LOVE What wishes do you have this New Year for those you love? What do you wish will happen this year and what do you wish to learn.	TALK Discuss what a mammal is. It has body hair and feeds their baby with milk. Name some mammals.	READ The zebra is a threatened animal. He has beautiful stripes and begins with the letter "Z." Make a list of other words that begin the same.	TALK Look at pictures of a zebra and a leopard. How are they the same? How are they different?	Make Polar Bears Use equal amounts of shaving cream and glue to make puffy paint. Use it to paint in a bear's shape on paper and add googly eyes.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	TALK Pandas come from China. Pandas living in zoos eat bamboo, apples, sweet potatoes and carrots. Eat some of these foods today. Have a sweet potato relay race.	TALK The giant panda is a national treasure and he is vulnerable. The red panda is endangered. Use a white paper plate and black paper to make a panda head.	COUNT Throw all of the mittens from the house or class in a pile. Match them and count how many pairs there are.	TALK Smooth, Furry or Feathered? Place some scraps of fur or furry fabric, feathers and smooth fabric in a tub. Add flashcards of animal pictures. Enjoy playing with the textures. and matching them to the cards.	LOVE Establish a quiet place where a child may go if they need to work through feelings. Talk about calming and slow breathing strategies. Practice them.	PLAY Today is National Dress Your Pet Day Talk about what clothing would be comfortable for your pet. With help, cut a fabric triangle for a pet scarf.
 PLAY	READ The hippopotamus is a vulnerable animal and lives in Africa. He spends a lot of time in the water. Hippo begins with the letter "H." Make a list of all words you can think of that begin the same.	COUNT A hippo is a large mammal who weighs about 10,000 pounds. Baby hippos weigh 60-100 pounds. Use a scale to learn how much you weigh.	PLAY Guess the Animal The child pulls an animal cracker out of the box. They make the animal sounds and movements until the others guess what animal they have. Eat the animals at the end.	Take a tour of a Virtual Zoo. There are several on the internet. Here's one in Australia by Robert Irwin at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YBRu5JFHmw	TALK Discuss Martin Luther King. Read a story about him. What do you learn from him? How can we be more like him?	Visit the Library
 PLAY	COUNT GUMMY BEAR MATH Use bears for sorting by color, graphing and counting by 1's, 2's, 5's.	TALK What is the name of the city you live in? The State? The Country? Do you know your address?	TALK The elephant is vulnerable. Did you know that they are very smart? They have no fingers or hands so they use their trunk to feel things.	READ Read <i>One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish</i> by Dr. Seuss Cut fish from red and blue paper and practice counting to 10, 20.	Porcupine. Feel a risk broom to feel the prickly end. This is how a porcupine feels. Draw a large oval for the body and circle for head. Dip a fork in tempura paint to make it's quills.	PLAY Place a laundry basket outside. Throw snowballs into it.
 PLAY	READ Go outside and paint letters in the snow. Use paintbrushes and tempura paint with a watery consistency	TALK Play Mystery Animal Hold a toy animal or name of an animal out of sight. Use words to describe it and have the child guess what it is.	Make a zebra mask. Cut out eyes on a white paper plate. Have the child paint black stripes on the plate. When paint dries, glue on a triangle nose and ears.	READ The cheetah is a vulnerable animal. He is a large cat that lives in Africa and is a fast animal cheetah begins with the letters "CH." Name other words that begin the same.	LOVE Talk about how to care for a pet. They have basic needs for shelter, nutrition and love. What pets do you love?	TALK Talk about what backwards means. Can you walk backwards? Eat a backwards lunch. Dress backwards.

Alma and How She Got Her Name

by Juana Martinez-Neal



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**name, story, decide, grandmother, great-grandmother, sailor, world, ancestors**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

This story is about a girl named Alma. Write the word Alma out and spell it to learn what letters make up this name. Sound this name out and talk about how the letters put together make up this name. Help each child write out their first name on a card and have them each spell and sound out their name out loud. Talk about listening attentively and being respectful by not interrupting.

Mix up the name cards and ask the children to say each name that they are able. When stumped have them begin by sounding out the first few letters. Talk about how some people have first, middle and last names. Have each child say their full name. If they don't know the full name ask them to talk to their parents and practice saying it.

Approaches to Learning: Look at the book cover for *Alma and How She Got Her Name*. Ask the children what they may wish to learn in this story. What questions do they have about it before reading? Have the children predict the outcome for how they think Alma got her name? What is her name story?

Do they know how they got their first name? Does someone else in their family have the same name? Is there a story about how they got their name?

Dual Language Development: Post the name cards for every child in the room. For several weeks have the children wear name tags. During circle or morning time, have the children practice using the names by saying “Good Morning _____” to each person. Place the name cards by a familiar space for each child such as a cubbie or coat hook. Review these names as high frequency words for several weeks. When needed, practice the beginning sounds of the name for phonological awareness.

Roll out playdough and have each child make their name in dough.

Creative Arts: Make marshmallow names. Give each child a large name card with their first name printed on it. With Elmer's glue, have them trace a letter in glue and then line with mini-marshmallows. Do this for each letter. It's a tactile and different visual display of their name.

Go to the following web site to learn a name song to sing with the name cards:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GxbKzlu050

If I could paint my house.....Draw your house and think about what color you would like to see it painted if you could choose any color. Paint it that color and see if you like it.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Talk about how computers may help us find information or solve problems.

Go to the following site: www.babynames.com/name to learn what meaning a name has. Research the names for the people in your family. Look at the names of friends. From using a name card, type the desired name in the search engine at that site. Have an adult tell you the name's meaning.





Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Talk about how a name may come from a person's gender, family, race, culture and language. Ask each child to take the chart home and talk with their family about answers for it. When finished it will be used for a group talk at the classroom/childcare site. Look for countries of origin on a globe. How does your name make you feel? Listen to the other's feelings with respect.

Child's First Name	Middle Name	Other Middle Name	Last Name
Where did this name come from?	Where did this name come from?	Where did this name come from?	Where did this name come from?
Culture or country of origin?	Culture or country of origin?	Culture or country of origin?	Culture or country of origin?

Mathematics: Talk about how families are shaped in many ways. Cut out pictures of families from magazines. Be sure to account for diversity in many categories. Place the cut-outs on a table and ask the child to sort into categories. There are many different categories to select from: number of people, families with one parent, families with two parents, families with babies, etc.

Science: After looking at the countries of origin for the children's names and families on the globe, talk about the major features of the country being discussed. Is it near an ocean? Is there a tropical forest in that country? What is the weather like? Are there mountains? Etc. Are there any stories that the families may tell about the country? Does the family visit this country or area?

FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Groundhog's Day Valentine's Day President's Day Tooth Fairy	TALK Review how to cover a sneeze. Make a personal pack of tissue in a ziploc bag. Practice on the ziploc for fine motor skills.	READ Find the Rhyme Say 3 words where 2 rhyme. Have the child name the 2 rhyming words.	TALK Discuss the significance of Ground Hog's Day. Go outside to see if you can see your shadow. Make a prediction.	LOVE Describe your bedtime routine. What would you like it to include. Tell this to the ones you love who put you to bed.	PLAY It's cold outside! Play music while your child dances. As the music stops everyone FREEZE!	Visit the Library
 PLAY	READ There are two letter "R's" in the month of February. Make a list of all things that you can think of that begin with that letter.	COUNT On a counting chart, keep track of every time you see someone shoveling or plowing snow this month. Count them at the end of the month.	TALK Discuss how families need to work together. What jobs could you do around the house? Make a job chart and see if you can do your part.	READ Talk about the significance of a STOP sign and look at the word. What shape is the sign? STOP is the opposite of GO.	LOVE Talk about what Valentine's Day means. Make Valentine cards and sign your name for people you love.	COUNT Sort and count all of your Valentine cards and candy. Read all of the cards with an adult.
 PLAY	TALK Discuss what opposites are. Name objects that are: near/far open/shut big/small loud/quiet	COUNT We have had 44 president's of the United States. Do rubbings of a Lincoln penny. Count pennies. Look at dollar bills and discuss value. Washington \$1 Lincoln \$5 Jackson \$20	The President lives in the White House. Look at pictures of this residence. Use boxes, tubes, tape and glue to make a large house. Paint it white when finished.	PLAY What's in the box? Place objects that begin with the letter "N" in the box (i.e.: nickel, noodle, nut, needle). Describe them and have the child guess.	TALK Families around the world live in many different style of houses. Talk and look at pictures of a variety of homes: igloos, castles, grass huts, round houses, homes on stilts, boat houses, etc.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	COUNT Stand on one foot for three seconds, five, ten, etc. Then try the other foot!	LOVE Make a book of what you love to do with your family. Make a page for what you love to do for each month of the year.	TALK Discuss the signals of a traffic light. What do the colors mean? Draw a traffic light.	TALK Invite grandparents in to talk. Ask them what they love about this role and what they like to do with their grandchildren. Have them talk about life when they were a child.	Make a family tree. Draw a tree trunk with large branches. Trace the hands of each member of the family. Cut out the hands and place them on the tree for leaf branches.	PLAY Go outside and gather up snow in a large tub. Bring it indoors and make snow sculptures on a table.
 PLAY	Draw a family portrait. Talk first about how to gauge the size of family members. Place lines for height on the paper to help create size proportions	READ Read "Knuffle Bunny" by Mo Willems. How did the boy feel and how did he get help in the story?	National Tooth Fairy Day Practice brushing your teeth today. Take a close up picture of you smiling. Use it to draw a self-portrait.	LOVE Who and what do you love? Talk about how this emotion makes you feel.	Sing "All I Really Need" by Raffi You can find this song at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=eerjiaH8dRE	READ Read the book "Are You My Mother" by PD Eastman. List all the jobs that your mother does for you and your family.

We're Going on a Treasure Hunt

by Kelly Di Pucchio



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**ahoy, treasure, gold, squid, bravery, starboard, hurricane, plank, bountiful, hideous**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

After reading the book the first time, talk about some of the pirate language that is in the story. Redefine the words and phrases: ahoy, me hearties, shiver me timbers, ARRRR. Do some teacher-led interactive writing with one sentence for each of these words or phrases. As the sentences are created, write them for the children to see. If the children are having a hard time getting started, the teacher can give sentence starters or clues.

Approaches to Learning: Develop an activity using a Shared Thinking approach. In sustained Shared Thinking, adults and children develop knowledge and meaning together (co-construct) as they become involved in sharing and clarifying their understandings.

Ask each child to draw a pirate ship and include all of the important parts and pieces that a pirate would need. When finished, ask the children to share what their ship looked like and what it included. After everyone has listened and had the chance to ask each other questions, ask them to draw a new ship that includes even more detail that they would like to have developed into their own book cover. For this book, each child will be the author and the illustrator.

A classroom demo of Shared Thinking can be seen at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=6H2oEMrC1ME

Dual Language Development: Dress up in pirate garb (head scarves, earrings, hats, jewels, swords, eye patches, etc.). Teach the following pirate words and their meanings: Ahoy-hello, matey-friend, aye-yes, land lubber-one who does not go out to sea, heave ho-throwing an object, shiver me timbers-scare me, me hearties-my strong friends. Play pirates and use the vocabulary.

Creative Arts: Make a Pirate Chest—Materials Needed: Large cardboard box, construction paper, paint brushes, glue and glitter glue.

The children use their hands to tear pieces of construction paper—big and small (no scissors! This develops hand muscles!) After the “paper tearing” party, provide the children with bowls that have glue in them and paintbrushes. They brush glue on the box and press the pieces of construction paper on the glue. Cover the entire box (outside only! not the inside) and cover the lid of the box this way as well. When dry, brush over the paper with glitter glue. The box is AWESOME and SHINY when dry!

Play pirate music and use bandanas as dancing scarves while playing different tempos of music. When you stop the music, the children freeze. Use the following site to play pirate music: www.youtube.com/watch?v=exads7KV-Y0&list=PLFA95A4FD68261A71

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Talk about the wide variety of technology tools and uses. The tools we use have different uses from adding numbers to helping us do research and learn facts, taking pictures and playing music to dance. We can dance to pirate music from YouTube or download a list of pirate songs from Pandora or iTunes. We can even ask Alexa to play pirate tunes for us. When you listen to pirate music, does it help you “feel” more like a pirate?





Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Walk the Plank—When pirates were asked to leave their ship, they walked on a board called a plank until they were off. Put a piece of masking tape on the ground and walk on it in a straight line, without falling off. When you get to the end, jump! You can also secure a 2x4 to two milk crates for a bigger challenge.

Mathematics: Pirates talk much about treasure. Look at real coins and talk about their value. Use small boxes and decorate them like treasure chests. Place coins in two boxes and count the value of each box to learn which chest has the biggest treasure. Depending on the ages of the children, you can use all pennies or use a collection of coins that they know the value of. This activity can also be used for sorting coins into piles of like coins.

Science: Talk about the critical elements of a map. Pirates followed maps to travel the sea. Draw a treasure map that shows a backyard or playground. Mark where you will bury a treasure. Have others follow it to see if they can find the treasure.

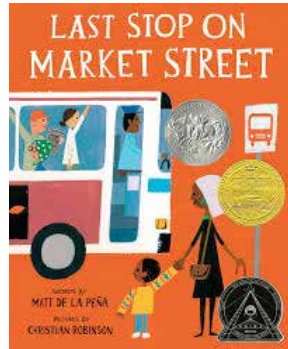
Social Studies: Ask the children if they think that pirates are Shy? Sad? Afraid? Quiet? How would they describe them? Read “How I Became a Pirate” by Melinda Long and David Shannon. How would you feel if you were on a pirate ship all the time? Would you miss people who were sensitive, caring, willing to share, etc.? Is this a community that you would like to belong to? Why or why not? Is it better when your world has rules and boundaries that are fair for everyone? Do you feel better when you practice the rights of others? Talk about how living a “real” pirate life may be less than satisfying.

MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: St. Patrick's Day Spring Begins Poetry Day	TALK Talk about fire safety. Discuss a fire escape route for the setting. Have a drill. Practice other necessary drills.	LOVE After reading "How I Became a Pirate," talk about how the boy in the story missed being loved. Discuss how you feel loved and how you share love.	READ Treasure begins with the letter "T." Make a list of all things you can name that begin with that letter.	PLAY Make treasures and coins from playdough: 1 cup flour, 1/2 cup salt, 1 cup boiling water, 3t alum, 2T oil.	Turn the playdough into "Pirate Playdough." Add black tempura paint and gold glitter. Save some dough for yellow paint and glitter to make gold coins.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	COUNT Captain Hook's Ring Toss Use any type of hook (you can buy plastic pirate hooks as well). Cut rings from poster-board. Toss the rings onto the hook. Count the number you hook.	READ Gold begins with the letter "G." Make a list of all things you can name that begin with that letter.	TALK Discuss how pirates sail the world. Look at a globe and talk about the bodies of water, continents and countries.	TALK Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean to discover America in 1492. (over 500 years ago) Show his voyage on the globe. Where in the world would you like to sail?	LOVE Practice a calming activity. Have the children sit quietly, close their eyes and listen to a song about sailing. www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEO6gYCFbr0 How did the music make you feel?	READ Make a list of word pairs that mean the same thing. Big - Large Quiet - Whisper Tiny - Small Review and read the list.
 PLAY	READ Read the "Pirate Jamboree" After reading turn the pages and have the children tell the story.	Pirate Names Pirates have great names. Do you know a few? Use word cards and have the child combine an adjective and a noun to create a pirate name. Make a name button to wear while playing pirate.	TALK Discuss St. Patrick's Day, leprechauns and shamrocks. Trace and cut out green shamrocks. Potato prints are also a great St. Patrick's Day art project.	TALK Make a list of everything the children now know about pirates. Next make a list of questions they may have and new information they would like to learn.	COUNT Make a list of all the animals that you know by name. Talk about how to be a good pet owner.	Happy Spring! Talk about the season and signs of Spring. Plant grass seed or wheat grass in a cup. Let's think green!
 PLAY	TALK Sing "If You're a Pirate and You Know It." to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It." www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDKIKiMIYv4	PLAY Swashbuckling Breadsticks Have a sword fight with breadsticks (the other hand goes behind the back). When one breaks, you may eat.	COUNT Cannonball Battle Place paper islands on the ground. From behind a line, child throws bean bags. 10 throws per child. Winner has the most hits to the islands.	TALK Talk about things that float. Get a large tub of water and predict if an item will float or not. Test them. Make pirate boats out of styrofoam plates, wooden skewer masts and paper sails.	PLAY Treasure Hunt Cut circles from cardboard and squares from aluminum foil. Have the children cover the coins with foil. Hide them and go find the treasure	Practice the following skills: Snap Zipper Button Tie Buckle a Belt Close Velcro
 PLAY	TALK List things that come in pairs.	PLAY Make pirate scarves by cutting fabric triangles or rectangles. Tie at the side of the head. Make eyepatches from felt and elastic roping. Use eyeliner pencil for an awesome mustache.	COUNT Count the number of days for the month of March.	LOVE Ask the child what they would do if they found a four leaf clover. What do they wish for their loved ones. What do they wish for our world?	TALK Recite a pirate poem: Once I saw a pirate. He was so big and mean. He had an arm and a hook. The scariest thing I've seen.	He came up to me and smiled. I just shook in fear. But then he said, Don't be afraid. It's just a costume dear!

Last Stop on Market Street

by Matt De La Pena



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**freckled, ducked, patter, sagged, lurched, sunset colors, crumbling, graffiti, soup kitchen**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

This book is content rich. A few questions to ask: What is the last stop on Market Street? What are CJ and Nana doing there? What is a soup kitchen? Who eats there?

There are many examples of prepositions in this story. These are great words to act out for understanding. Examples from the story are: CJ hopped **on** the bus, CJ was sitting **across** from a blind man, CJ ducked **under** his Nana's umbrella, CJ stepped **off** the bus. Do dramatic play in an open area with some chairs and tables using some of these words: on, off, over, under, around, against, before, behind, below, by, away from, in front of, near, up, down,

Approaches to Learning: After the story has been read other times, ask the children to listen to the story with no interruptions and see if they can really study CJ's Grandmother—Nana. Tell the children the when the story is finished you will want them to tell you how Nana is the same or different than their grandmother.

In different families Grandma has different names. Sometimes this reflects a family's culture and where they are from. Make a list of all the different names that the children use for their grandmothers/grandfathers.

Dual Language Development: It is helpful to know some strategies for use of Sheltered English Instruction. This is an approach for teaching dual language learners which combines teaching language and content instruction. These strategies can be used in a group of diverse learners and are effective for all. It allows English Language Learners (ELL) to be in settings where they learn the same content as the other children and may help the English language learners as well. A few strategies to try are:

- Increase wait time, be patient.
- Respond to the student's message, don't correct errors.

- Simplify the teacher language and use gestures.
- Don't force oral responses. Gestures and drawings work. Speech will emerge.
- Demonstrate when possible. Use visuals and manipulatives.
- Make the lessons sensory. Allow the students to touch, taste, smell and listen when possible..
- Pair or group the ELL students with native speakers.
- Support the student's home language and culture. Bring it into the classroom.

The book, *The Last Stop on Market Street* is available in Spanish and is called: *Última parada de la calle Market*.

Creative Arts: After reading the book ask the children if they have ever been on a city bus? Have them sit in a bus seat format and sing, *The Wheels on the Bus*. www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fh_aD5EswXk

In the book CJ listens to a man playing a guitar and he can see many things in his mind. Have the children close their eyes and listen to soothing music of a beautiful guitar with singing. Ask them when the song is finished to open their eyes, share and draw what they imagined.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Have the child use a digital camera or phone camera to take pictures of "unexpected" beauty in their world. This can be done on a walking trip or throughout a week as the child sees something that makes them happy and they would like to capture. Print their favorite one and let them dictate a sentence or two to explain it. This could be turned into a class book or display.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: CJ's feelings change from the beginning to the end of the story. Listen to the story again and stop as you hear clues as to what CJ is feeling. Make a chart with two sections that tells what he is doing or saying and across from that in the next column tell what he may be feeling at that time Bluebird, Bluebird in and out my window, Bluebird, Bluebird in and out my window...





Teach taking turns as a child then goes to the end of the line when they complete the circle as bluebird and the next child is the bluebird.

Mathematics: Give the child a paper cut-out of a school bus, poker chips and cards with numbers on them from 1-20. They work with a partner to pull a number card and then place that number of chips (riders) on the bus. The partner checks the work and they take turns until the number cards have been completed.

Use the seed to sort and make patterns. Glue some of the favorite patterns onto a small stiff paper to make a collage.

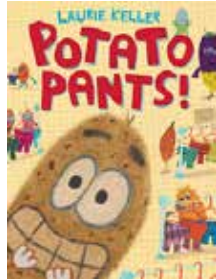
Social Studies: Ask the children if they are aware that there are soup kitchens in our community. Talk about some of the economic reasons why people may need help with food at times in their lives. Discuss that CJ and his Nana have made a choice to help others. Do they gain anything by doing this? Do people have a role in helping others to the extent that they can? Identify a local soup kitchen and ask the children to bring in one or two canned items that they may need.

APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Easter Passover Earth Day Spring	TALK Have the children tell a story of something they remember doing with a grandparent or elder.	READ Write one memorable sentence from the story on the grandparent on a sentence strip. Practice reading it. Cut it apart by word and put it back together.	LOVE What is one thing you love doing with a grandparent or elder? Draw a picture of this and give it to them with love.	COUNT Give the child a hundreds chart on paper. Help them circle the ages of specific family members.	TALK Have the child ask their grandparents or elders for their country or state of origin. Plot these on a map of the world.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	TALK The Market Street book reminds us that people do not all have the same things in life. What do you have that you are grateful for?	READ Sometimes two letters blend together to make one sound. In the Market Street book, CJ whispered and saw his shadow. Make a list of other words that begin with "wh" and "sh."	Passover Observe the Passover season by making a list of all the places that you would like to walk to. Do you have any great family expressions that have been handed down by an elder?	PLAY This is also a great motor task. Place tape on the floor in a zigzag pattern. Bunnies hop like this when they are getting away from their prey. Hop like a bunny on the tape as it turns.	Easter Observe the Easter season by planning an Easter Egg Hunt. Each child may hide one egg and be asked not to "find" the one they hid. Count the eggs when found.	LOVE Ask someone you love to take you for a ride on a public bus. Close your eyes and think about what you hear. Open your eyes to see unexpected beauty.
 PLAY	PLAY Week of the Young Child Visit your local children's museum to celebrate children and play!	PLAY Turn on a timer for 5 minutes and hide it. Have the child find it. Have them do the same for you or the next child.	TALK Talk about the difference between wants and needs. Make a list of things you want. See if the items are basics, something you need or luxury.	READ Good-bye, Winter! Hello, Spring! by Kazuo Iwamura. Walk outside to look for signs of Spring.	COUNT Teach the child how to play "Go Fish" and enjoy the game.	Family Treasures Choose an item that has family value. Talk about who it belonged to in the family and why it is important. Share this story and form questions that remain.
 PLAY	COUNT Earth Day Make a list of how you may be good to the earth and our environment. Count how many ideas there are. Go outside and pick up litter.	READ Read "Planting a Rainbow" by Lois Ehlert: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sti3PXBeVag	TALK Have you ever seen a real rainbow in the sky? Look at pictures of rainbows. Use small sponges and tempera paint to paint a rainbow.	COUNT Use Jelly Bellies to make a mini rainbow. Place them in groups of 2, 5, and 10. Count them.	PLAY Can You Read My Mind? Player thinks of an object and gives hints until others guess.	LOVE Cuddle up with someone you love and read a book together. Before bed, tell each other a bedtime story.
 PLAY	LOVE Animals need food too. Make a bird feeder and hang it in a spot where it can be seen. Paint a large pinecone with peanut butter and roll in bird seed.	READ Make two sets of alphabet cards. (one upper and one lower case) Sort them: All upper, All lower and match the same letter upper to lower.	PLAY Look at photos of birds and butterflies. Use pencil and water color paints to create your favorites.	LOVE Make a list of your families traditional foods that you absolutely love. Talk about how this tradition makes you feel and why you love it.	TALK Fill a large tub with water. Use cups and measures for quarter, third, half and full cups. Also quarts, half and full gallons. Pour and talk about these measurements.	READ Collect twigs and see if you can break them to make letters.

Potato Pants

by Laurie Keller



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**excited, fancy, patience, panic, inhale, exhale, scared, shocked, forgive and stripes**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Talk about the role of a good speaker and have the child(ren) introduce their potato and use words to describe the pants that you created. Give the potato (as referenced in Creative Arts) a name, and share with the group in a presentation.

Approaches to Learning: Explain to the child(ren) what being creative means. Part of being creative is to be able to see new images and ideas and to have fun while you are doing it. Take the illustrated book cover off the book and talk about the book title with no illustrations. Ask what they think potato pants are and what they would look like. Read the story the first time and tell the children to close their eyes and picture they story as you read.

What did they see? Now, look at the book cover together and read it again. Let them know that the author used a very different way to print and display the words in this story. They look like the main character potato is feeling. Do real potatoes have feelings? Talk about the difference between non-fiction and fiction.

Dual Language Development: Have a wide assortment of fruits and vegetables on display. These are common words in English. Have a flashcard with the printed name for each object. Have the child hold the item and find the name card with verbal clues. Use the name of the food item in a sentence. Eat some of the items for snack times as appropriate.

Creative Arts: Give the children a paper with a pattern drawn on it. When cut out, this would be pants for a large potato. They may use markers and scissors to decorate and cut. Do they want stripey, dotty, bold, zigzaggy, checkered, or some other type of pants? Encourage creativity and talk about the elements of creativity: Coming up with many ideas before you begin the work, originality (ideas and design that are different) and great detail. Design the pants and tape them onto your potato.

Participate in a Potato Fashion Show Parade. Show your potato to others and join in the parade and show your Potato Pride.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Take digital pictures of the decorated potatoes and upload them to a slide show format. Show the Potato Parade in digital manner, like in a slideshow.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Talk about the strong feelings and moods that the potato character in *Potato Pants* had. What would it feel like if you approached problems that way?

As the potato had himself inhale and exhale when he got excited he was trying to calm himself down. Try deep breathing techniques with the child(ren) and play soft music to generate feeling of calmness. Instruct them to breathe in 4 strokes and breath out one long breath. Talk them through this. Talk about how people do yoga and meditation to stay calm and that this is a good thing to do when needed. There are many helpful exercises on the internet for young children such as : www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvF9AEe-ozc

Mathematics: Have a wide variety of potatoes in a pile. (small red potatoes, fingerlings, yukon golds, large russet, sweet potatoes, yams, etc). Sort them by type, color and size. Create patterns and have the students replicate. Use a variety of pattern formats (AB, ABA, ABC, ABCD, ADBC, BAA, etc)

Teach the potato counting rhyme and use real potatoes to act it out.

One potato, two potato, three potato, four

Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more

Eight potato, nine potato, count them up to ten





Let's put our potatoes back, and count them up again.

Science: Sprouting sweet potatoes: First, use your knife to chop the sweet potato in half. Next, fill the clear container with water. The clear container will allow children to observe the growth of the roots. Then, insert 4 toothpicks into the middle of your sweet potato half. You will want to position your toothpicks so that 1-2 inches of the cut portion of the sweet potato is covered with water when placed in your container. The toothpicks will hold your sweet potato upright in the container and allow water to circulate under the bottom. Be sure to keep the water levels up as the days go by. Within several weeks the children will be able to make some great observations on new growth. Have them observe routinely and report on the changes they see. They could use paper on clipboards to sketch observations over time.

Social Studies: Remind the children that potatoes really don't need pants to thrive. This story was created to have a fun time and allow us to be silly.

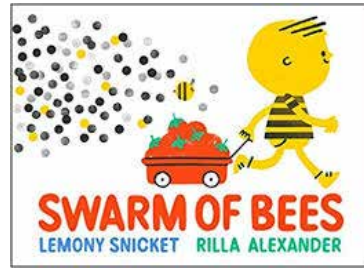
People really do need things like pants and other clothing, food, shelter and love to thrive. Potatoes can help meet the need for food for us. Talk about why each of these things are needed and what happens to people who don't have them. We need to take care of our land and have income and housing in order to survive. If there is a community garden or farmers market to visit to learn more about how people take care of their land, that would be a great additional lesson.

MAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Cinco de Mayo Mother's Day Memorial Day	LOVE Talk about how we do things that make those we love happy. What makes you happy that a loved one may do for you?	READ There are some great potato stories. Read <i>Jamie O' Rourke and the Big Potato</i> <i>The Tiny Seed</i> <i>The Enormous Potato</i> <i>Supertato</i>	PLAY Cut bell peppers in half, clean out seeds and use them for print making. Also make prints with broccoli.	READ Potato begins with the letter "P". List all of the words you know that begin with that letter.	Cinco de Mayo is the festival day for Mexican Independence. Practice counting to five in Spanish in addition to a few key Spanish greetings. Enjoy Spanish music.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	LOVE Make your mom a Mother's Day card. Tell her how much you love her and what you love that she does for you.	Celery Flower Paintings Cut a celery stalk evenly about 4" from the bottom. Cover the cut end of it with paint and use it as a stamp to make the flower petals of a plant. Paint the flower stalk with a brush.	COUNT Go for a walk outside and count all of the signs of spring	TALK If you were an author and wanted to create a funny/creative story about a fruit or vegetable, which one would you pick? Could you dictate this story so it may be recorded?	READ Make a book from your fruit or vegetable tale. Place the dictated print on each page and child creates an illustration. Make a book cover with title and author's name.	Fruit of the week What was your favorite fruit this week? Use a bowl display of fruit and practice drawing it by pencil sketch.
 PLAY	PLAY Fill a play produce stand with real vegetables. Give the child a basket with a number on it and have them shop for that amount. Can also use cards with vegetable names for shopping.	READ Vegetable begins with the letter "V" Name all the words and names you can think of that begin with that letter.	Bean Mosaic Use a wide assortment of beans for a sensory tub. Sort and fill them into containers. Use them to glue onto a stiff paper to make a mosaic.	COUNT Collect rocks outside. Guess how many will fit into your hand. Fill a jar. Etc.	TALK Place a fruit or vegetable into a surprise bag. Have a child reach in and describe how it feels. Can they or others name what it is?	Visit the Library
 PLAY	Lemon, Lime and Orange Toss Use the fruit above to play toss. You can also have a relay race by placing them in a wooden spoon.	PLAY Cereal Box Puzzle Cut the front of a cereal box into 5-6 puzzle pieces and have the child put it together.	Make a vegetable or fruit sweet bread with the child(ren) Zucchini Bread Carrot Muffins Banana Bread with Chocolate Chips. Yum!	COUNT Have a group of children name their favorite fruit and vegetable. Count the like answers and make a graph.	TALK From a display of fruit, practice naming each type. Select a different fruit for each day this week that you will have for lunch.	Carrot Painting Use a full carrot (with the green stalk) as a paint brush. The pointed tip is the end to dip into paint as needed.
 PLAY	TALK What is your name and where do you live? Practice this information.	PLAY Pretend to be caterpillars or worms by crawling on the ground. Gallop like a horse. Hop like a frog. Tip toe like a bird.	TALK Lie on a blanket outside and listen for the birds. What do you daydream about?	READ I Spy...Find objects nearby that begin with a particular letter and give a clue. i.e.: I spy something on the table that begins with the letter "F" Child takes a turn next saying "I Spy....."	READ Sign up for your library's summer reading program! Grand Rapids Public Library's Summer Reading Challenge at: www.grpl.org	Shuck corn and cook it for a meal. Kent District Library's Summer Reading at KDL: www.kdl.org

Swarm of Bees

by Lemony Snicket



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**swarm, angry, sailor, bricklayer, chefs, pounce, balcony, food truck, and sack**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Develop language around insect and bee body parts. Use a simple drawing of a bee to identify: head, thorax, abdomen, antennae, legs, head, stinger. Which of these body parts are similar to a person?

Approaches to Learning: Have the child(ren) tell you everything they know about bees. Make a list. Then have them tell you everything they wish to know and list the questions they may have. Ask them if they are afraid of bees. List all of their fears. After the story we would like to learn more about bees and all the good things they do for us. What else would you like to learn about bees? Use the ideas generated to plan some meaningful lessons that allow the children to guide the study of bees. Remind them of their questions throughout the studies.

Dual Language Development: Enjoy honey for a snack accompaniment. Make honey butter and use it throughout the week.

Recite the following bee hand play:

Here is the beehive. (Hold up one hand made into a fist.)

But where are all the bees? (Both hands palms up as if asking a question.)

Hiding away where nobody sees. (Hold the other hand over the fist as if hiding it.)

Here they come flying out of their hive, (Keep one hand in a fist and have the other "fly" around it.)

One, two, three, four, five! (Hold up one finger at a time to count.)

Creative Arts: Create a representation of a honeycomb. Use bubble wrap, yellow paint and a roller. Roll the paint onto the bubble wrap very softly and place the painted side onto a piece of white paper. Pat the bubble wrap gently on all surfaces. Remove the wrap to see the honeycomb.

Fingerprint Bees: Give each child a piece of paper. Let them draw or paint some flowers on the paper. Have them press their finger into paint or ink to make fingerprint bees. Decorate the bees with markers or crayons.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Talk about how to navigate children appropriate websites and why they need adults to monitor which sites they go to. There are several science websites for young children on bees. Here you can see swarms of bees and learn why bees are important: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA05LOfPbIY

Peep and the Big Wide World. Go to: www.peepandthebigwideworld.com/en/kids/pathways/3/animals-and-plants/videos/170/insect-individuality/

Watch the video of children exploring the earth to find small creatures. Go with small shovels, spoons and see through insect containers to begin collecting insects.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: The bees (and the boy) in this story are angry! Sometimes it can feel good to be angry. And sometimes it can feel better to stop. What other emotions do you see in the book? Draw faces to express a range of emotions. Do you recall a time when you were angry? Could you tell that it felt better after the anger left you? Do you know some ideas for helping the anger get better faster? Discuss ideas for helping redirect your body when you get angry such as:

- Talk about it
- Pop bubble wrap
- Squish playdough or squeeze a stress ball
- Wrap your arms around yourself and squeeze
- Draw what's bothering you or scribble on paper and rip it up
- Do jumping jacks, stretches or wall push ups
- Put the palms of your hands together, push and release





Mathematics: Use Honeycomb cereal to do counting, adding and take away problems. Use the cereal to also do estimations as you place it on small containers. How many honeycombs are in a quarter cup, third cup, half cup and cup. Take the honeycombs out and count. Talk about how the cup sizes are used for measuring.

Science: Talk about the insects that were collected in outdoor observations and other insects that live in the neighborhood. Talk about the following bee facts: 1. Bees are insects, 2. Bees make honey. They are the only insects that make food that we eat. They use the honey to feed their babies and to eat during the winter. Bees also eat pollen from flowers. 3. The queen bee is the leader of a beehive and the only one in the hive that lays eggs. There are also worker bees (female) and drones (male), 4. Only female bees sting, 5. Beekeepers raise bees for their honey. They use smoke to calm the bees so that they can gather honey or move a hive, 6. Bees have compound eyes. They cannot see red and can see very fast movement.

Social Studies: Place the following books in the center. Talk about any new respect that has been gained for what bees do in nature and for people.

1. *The Beeman* by Laurie Krebs
2. *UnBEElieveables* by Douglas Florian
3. *What IF There Were No Bees* by Suzanne Slade
4. *The Buzz on Bees* by Shelly Rotner
5. *Are You a Bee?* by Judy Allen

JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Donut Day Father's Day Summer Begins	READ Bee begins with the letter "B" Name as many other objects and names the begin with the letter "B".	COUNT Make a list of all know insects. Count how many are on your list. Brainstorm with others.	Draw a simple insect with ovals for the head and body. Include the antennae, head, thorax abdomen, legs, and perhaps a stinger.	Use round stamps or a slice of carrot to make ants with ink. Stamp out the three main body parts and use a marker to give other detail.	READ Make a list of all the words that you can think of that rhymes with Bee.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	LOVE Who do you and what do you love? Talk about how that emotion makes you feel.	PLAY Use clothespins and tissue paper to make a butterfly. You may also add pipe cleaner for antennae. Run around with it and help it fly.	PLAY Dig in the dirt to find worms and observe them. Gently play with them until you return them to the top of the soil. Crawl like a worm.	TALK Sing a favorite song. Sing it fast, slow, quiet and loud. Sing " <i>The Itsy Bitsy Spider</i> " " <i>The Ants Go Marching</i> " " <i>Shoo Fly</i> "	PLAY Make Ants on a Log. Use celery strips and fill them with peanut butter. Top the peanut butter with a row of raisins (ants).	Buy Honeycomb cereal. Use it for a sensory tub. Glue it to paper to make a larger honeycomb.
 PLAY	READ Read <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> . Sequence it by section from memory.	Open locks with a key. Open and lock a door for practice. Talk about when it's safe to open a door for others and for whom.	PLAY Flight of the Bumblebee In a circle pass a bean bag like a hot potato. When the music stops the person with the bag has been stung.	Watch ladybugs hatch in a see through habitat. Buy them at: amzn.to/2IVtdAN	COUNT Use playdough to make insects. How many different types can you create? Count them. Sort them by shape and color.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	TALK Make an egg carton insect. Cut the bottom of the carton in half lengthwise. Use three sections, paint and pipe cleaners. Introduce your insect and talk about it.	PLAY Play Bug, Bug Insect Use the format for Duck, Duck, Goose and change the words.	READ Read out loud, three words where two rhyme. Have child(ren) identify the words that rhyme.	Make a paper bowl ladybug. Turn the bowl upside down and paint it red. Paint black dots on it and use paper strips to make legs and antennae. Cut a black circle for the face. Add eyes and a smile!	READ In the book <i>Swarm of Bees</i> the mother has a new hairdo. Hairdo begins with the letter "H" Make a list of words that begin with "H".	LOVE Draw a picture of your Mother and try to also draw her hairdo. Make a list of all the things you love about your Mom and share that with her Have Mom do this back for you!
 PLAY	It's June The outside is green. Find all the green things indoors that you can. Walk outside and make a list of all the signs of summer.	COUNT Find plastic flies or other insects. Place 10 or more in the hand and toss them up in the air and onto a table. How many are dead? (on their back) How many are upright or alive?	READ Mother begins with the letter "M". Make a list of all the words and names you know that begin with that letter.	TALK Learn a insect nursery rhyme such as <i>Little Miss Muffet</i> or <i>There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly</i> . Try to recite it in a it in a group or alone.	Have a picnic outside and look for insects. Gently collect them and identify them. Use a magnifying glass to see them in detail.	Draw observational sketches of all the insects you have found.

Should I Share My Ice Cream

by Mo Willems



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**share, ice cream, awesome, yummy, tasty, wrong, flavor, cheer, and plan**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Talk about the story sequence. Write each sentence on a sentence strip in order to practice reading them, and place them in the proper sequence.

1. Elephant gets ice cream and is excited
2. Elephant thinks of Piggie and of all the reasons why and why not to share
3. Elephant loses the ice cream
4. Piggie comes by with an ice cream cone
5. Piggie shares

Spend some time retelling the story in the story sequence. Role play the story.

Approaches to Learning: Share the title of the story and ask the children to predict how Elephant is feeling. As you discuss how it looks that Elephant is feeling, ask if others could talk about what he is thinking. How are Elephant's thoughts related to whether he should share his ice cream? Elephant has his own ideas and opinions. Talk about what they could be. Talk about why friends share. Have the children cite examples of when they have shared. Have they ever shared when it was hard to do so? Give examples.

Dual Language Development: Use the sequence cards to draw illustrations for the story. Use the illustrations to retell the story.

Taste and tell. Have each child take a taste of ice cream and use one word to describe how it tastes. Use a word that has not been used by another. Encourage use of words in the story and others. i.e.: awesome, yummy, sweet, super, great, tasty, nice, cool, delicious, wonderful, delightful, superb, good, chocolatey, crunchy, freezing, etc.

Creative Arts: Talk about how an ice cream cone is really two shapes that are placed together. The cone is a triangle and the ice cream is a circle. Practice making those shapes and making squares and rectangles as well. Draw the shapes, name them and practice cutting them out. Be creative and think of other objects that can be

made from squares (book, waffle, hot pad, picture frame). Have some items there to share that are square. Do the same with the rectangle, circle and triangle. Use the triangles and circles to make ice cream cones.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Talk about how the internet may be used for story time as well as games and movies. Go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHCfEQEbxfw to hear a reading of this story. Draw a picture from the story when you are finished listening.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Elephant surely displayed a host of feelings in this story. Look at several pages and talk about what he was feeling. Can sharing be hard to do?

Should I Share My Ice Cream? activity- Use cardstock or heavy paper and roll it into a cone shape. Adjust it until the opening is wide enough to fit a baseball size plastic ball. Tape it together.

Place a ball inside one of the cones to serve as the "ice cream." Each child passes the ball from one to another as they pretend to share their ice cream. They may talk to each other as they do this to say "Would you like to share my ice cream?" They can also practice saying please and thank you.

Mathematics: Ice Cream Math—Cut 20 triangles to look like ice cream cones. Place the numbers 1-20 on each one. Get a box of pompoms and small tongs. Use the tongs to place the number of pompoms on top of each cone like scoops of ice cream that correspond to the number on the cone. When finished have the child count each one out loud to check that the number of scoops and the number on the cone match. Line up the cones in numerical order.





Science: Make fluffy patriotic slime—Red, White and Blue

Ask the child(ren) if they have ever noticed how when the sidewalk is icy, they put salt on it to melt the ice and make it safer for walking. The salt they put on the sidewalk mixes with the ice and because it's freezing point is lower than the temperature of the unsalted ice, the sidewalk melts. To test this and observe, place salt on ice cubes and watch the process.

Social Studies: Talk about how all people are different and may have different ideas such as their favorite ice cream. What is your favorite ice cream? Make a list of the favorite flavors from all in the discussion group. Is there a larger group that you may use to do a favorite ice cream survey (family, another class)? Place the ice cream types on a chart or graph. What was the most popular flavor? Least popular? If you could invent an ice cream, what would you want in it?

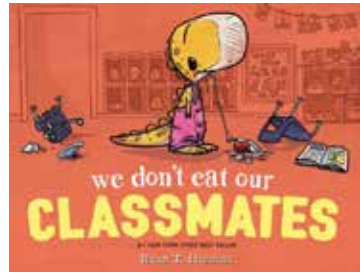
In this story there were two main characters. How were they the same and different? How were they different in their approach to sharing?

JULY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: 4th of July National Ice Cream Day Hot Dog Day Day of Friendship	COUNT Make a list of the names of all your friends. Count the names.	PLAY Play patriotic music and march. Create your own marching style.	Fireworks in a Jar. Fill a clear jar 3/4 full of water. Mix 4 T's of oil and drops of food coloring and then pour into the water.	LOVE Go to a parade as a family. Talk about what this holiday means to your family.	Marble Fireworks Put paper in a shallow box top with a few spoons of paint on the paper. Place 2 marbles on the paper and rock top for fireworks.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	READ Share begins with "SH". Practice that sound. What meaning does it have as you say it in isolation? List other words that begin with SH.	TALK List all the ice cream flavors you know. After this go to the store and pick one that you have never had. Talk about it and why you liked it or not.	Make your own ice cream sundae. Use colored paper and tear or cut it to make the bowl, ice cream and all the toppings you would like.	READ Read and retell other ice cream stories, i.e.: <i>Gorilla Loves Vanilla</i> , <i>From Cow to Ice Cream</i> and many more.	Make your own bubbles: 1 cup light corn syrup, 2 cups dish soap, 6 cups water. Let set 4 hours. May use red or blue food coloring.	Visit a farmers market. Look at all the fruits and vegetables that are red. Can you make a list of them?
 PLAY	TALK List all the qualities that make a good friend. Which one would you like to practice to get better at?	LOVE Create a circle of friends display. Draw a large circle and have each child place a painted hand on the circle. Talk about why we need friends.	PLAY On a sunny day go outside and find a friend's shadow. Dance with it. Do creative shadow dances.	Make fingerprints with an ink pad and paper. Use a magnifying glass to compare your prints with a friend's. We are all unique.	PLAY Use playdough to make hamburgers and hot dogs. Also make some fruit or vegetables that you would like to complete this meal.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	Car Wash Go outdoors and wash toy cars or a real car. Fill sponges with water and practice squeezing them out.	READ Play catch. Shout out a number as you throw the ball and a letter as you catch the ball.	COUNT Find stones and place them in a long line. Count them.	The Compliment Game Sit in a circle and toss a beanbag to another and then give them a compliment.	READ Use flashcards to practice writing familiar letters in the sand.	Plan and enjoy a picnic outside. Use a blanket to sit on and play music. Invite a friend.
 PLAY	LOVE Family High Fives Have each family member trace a hand on paper. Cut it out. Print one thing you love about them on each finger.	READ Dictate the names of all your friends and family. From flashcards practice how to read them.	READ Re-read <i>Should I Share My Ice Cream?</i> together. Point to the words as they are read and use the pictures to practice expression.	TALK Cut out pictures from a magazine and make up a story about them.	Friend Book Make a book with one page for each friend. Draw their picture and dictate a sentence about what you like about them.	Practice how to set the table. Talk about how to do this and how to clear your own dishes when finished.

We Don't Eat Our Classmates

by Ryan T. Higgins



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**nervous, T-Rex, classmates, ponies, delicious, determined, lonely, appetite**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Read the story and do a Scaffolded Writing activity. After reading, ask a child what they would like to write about this story. What is something they liked in the story? Help the child finalize the message. The adult writes the sentence down and gives the child a paper with one line drawn where each word of this sentence will go. Ask the child to copy each word on a line. If they need assistance with the writing task, help them. When finished, the adult and the child read and reread the message.

Approaches to Learning: Talk about how we may show respect for other children and people around us. Of course, we don't eat them, but how should we treat them? Even when another does something that you do not like, what could you say that is respectful? Practice these responses. The T-Rex did not know how to hold herself back until she learned how. Talk about how we have boundaries around ourselves and others. How did T-Rex learn to keep her boundaries? Her Dad said to her: "You see, Penelope, children are the same as us on the inside." What did he mean by that?

What did it take for Penelope to stop eating the children? Did it feel good for her to grow into a caring T-Rex?

Dual Language Development: This is a fun story that should draw attention as it's read. Upon introduction to this book, hear and repeat the title: "*We Don't Eat Our Classmates*." This title can be said with gestures and emphasis. As the story is read, stop at key points and direct the children to shout and sign this phrase.

Other words in the story that can be read with body language for meaning are: **nervous, surprised, delicious, lonely.**

Creative Arts: Enjoy singing songs about being friends and the good feelings that brings. Sing: *If You're Happy and You Know It*, *The More We Get Together* and *Will You Be a Friend of Mine*?

The last song is sung to *Mary Had A Little Lamb*:

Will you be a friend of mine,
Friend of mine, Friend of mine?
Will you be a friend of mine,
And _____ around with me? (Fill in the blank with a movement such as hop, dance, wiggle)

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Talk about the use of a computer and the keyboard. Write a note to a friend and then type it on a computer. Print it and draw a picture on it to complete it.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Have a discussion with children about what they think makes a good friend. The following are some possible responses:

A good friend:

- shares his/her toys – doesn't get mad easily – listens to me
- is fun to be with – plays with me – cares about me

Make fingerprints and compare:

Materials: white paper, marker, stamp pads (washable!), magnifying glasses, baby wipes (for clean up!)

Show the children how to make a fingerprint on the paper and how to use the wipe to clean up. Use the magnifying glass to look at their print. Have them compare their prints to their friends' prints.

Record voices and compare:

Can you identify your friends by their voice?

Materials: The children's voices on tape! This will take some preparation time before. Take each of the children aside and talk into the microphone saying something like "Hello, Who am I?". You should write down the order of the voices you record. Leave the tape or CD in the science area for the children to listen to and guess the voices.





Mathematics: Draw a large tree trunk. Have all children and adults place their hand in tempura paint and make a leaf handprint on the tree. When finished count how many handprints there are. How many fingers are there? Which handprints are the largest and smallest? How many adult hands are there? How many child's hands are there?

Science: Have each child lay down on a large roll sheet of paper and draw the outline of their body. They may then give detail to this figure. Try to use the authentic color and style of hair. Look into mirrors to take about eye shape, noses, mouth, etc. Talk about large body parts and their functions. Look at length of arms and legs. Again, we are all different and have similarities at the same time.

Social Studies: In the story, Penelope's mom bought her a favorite backpack and her dad packed her a huge lunch. They asked her questions about her day at school and gave her good advice.

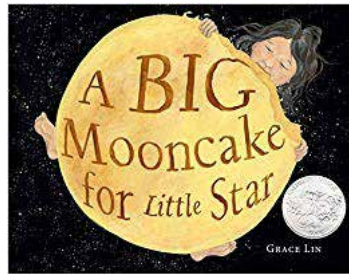
Ask the children who their family members are by name. What is their first name and last name? Who else lives with you in your family? As you talk about families also talk about how everyone's family is the same and different as well.

AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: National Dog Day Friendship Day Watermelon Day	LOVE Our hearts are known for the love we know. Who do you love? How should you show them?	TALK Use a real stethoscope and listen to your heartbeat. Ask a friend if you may listen to theirs. Talk about this experience.	COUNT Look at real photos or cut-out photos of people from magazines. Count how many people you see in each photo and match the photo with a number card.	TALK Discuss the first and last names of your family members. What is your address? What is your telephone number?	READ Read <i>Stick and Stone</i> by Beth Ferry. Point to the words in the book as you read to connect written and spoken.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	COUNT Count out rocks that have been found outside. Talk about and use ordinal words, "first," "second," "third," etc.	PLAY Play with sponges in a small tub or pool. Squeeze them out with both hands to develop fine motor muscles in the hands.	TALK Discuss with the children activities where they should say "Please" and "Thank You." Draw or paint a picture of one of these activities.	Learn to set a placesetting at a table. Do dramatic play of one child being a waiter and the other sitting as a customer. Practice when to say, "Yes, Please" and No, Thank You."	TALK Use magazines and cut out pictures of people using manners. (holding a door, smiling and listening, covering a sneeze, etc. Cut them out, make a collage and talk about each one.	TALK Go to the Farmer's Market. Learn the names of fruits and vegetables. Buy a new fruit and taste it.
 PLAY	READ Classmates are our friends. Friends begins with the letter "F." Make a list of words that begin with that sound.	PLAY There are many games that teach self-regulation. Play Red Light, Green Light, Duck, Duck, Goose, Red Rover. Talk about waiting for a turn.	TALK Make up the beginning of a story about one of your friends. Have the child add to it or finish it.	READ "Have a good day," is a great way to say goodbye to someone. Day begins with the letter "D." Make a list of words that begin the same	COUNT Eat watermelon and save the seeds. Count them. Group them in sets of five and ten.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	READ Read <i>Enemy Pie</i> by Derek Munson. Talk about how to turn your best enemy to your best friend. Why is this better? How may you be a good friend?	COUNT Count the number of steps it takes to walk to several indoor locations. Walk outside and do the same.	PLAY Manners Tea Party Hold a tea party and have a treat with your tea. Practice table manners.	TALK Trace and cut out a hand. Explain why it is important to wait for a turn in a group. Have the children raise their paper hand when they would like to talk.	COUNT National Hot Dog Day Make a list of all the dogs you know. Count them. Draw a picture of your favorite dog.	LOVE Don't go to the car wash! Let your child help you wash the car. Tell them how much you love and value their help.
 PLAY	COUNT Practice saying the days of the week. What day was yesterday. What day was tomorrow. Count the days in August on a calendar for as far as you can.	Practice important facts: Child's Address Phone Number Parent's Name	TALK Practice how to dial phone numbers on a phone. When a connection to a person is made practice phone manners. "Hello, may I please speak to....." "Thank you"	LOVE Dictate a letter to a friend that an adult will write. Tell them what you love about them. Draw a picture of you and your friend doing what you love to do with them.	READ Read a story and as you reach each page, prompt the child to tell you what the picture tells.	PLAY Practice throwing balls outside into a laundry basket. Make sun tea and enjoy.

A Big Mooncake for Little Star

by Grace Lin



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**mooncake, nodding, snuggled, tiptoed, tiny, nibble, delicious, remembered**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Talk about if it would be possible for Star's mama to place a mooncake that she baked in the sky? Is this story real or fiction? This story is what is called a myth or legend. It tells a fictional story that explains how something is made or came into being.

How do the pages or illustrations look different than other books? Why are the pages black? Do they remind you of the night sky? Do they show you the shapes of the moon?

Have a back and forth conversation about this book. **Strive for Five** back and forth exchanges.

Approaches to Learning: Let's make a list of what we already know about the moon. The author of this story has taken much information about the moon and turned it into a work of fiction that also helps us learn about the moon. What did you learn about the moon from this story? The author approached this story of telling you about the moon with much imagination and creativity. What parts of the story are fiction or use of the author's imagination?

Dual Language Development: Traditionally the **Moon Festival** marks the end of the summer harvest in mid-September. To the farmers of China, the festival is a celebration of thankfulness for heaven's bounty. It has been celebrated by the Chinese people since at least the first century. One celebration food for this festival is the round-shaped mooncake cookie. This is like our celebration of Thanksgiving. The Chinese feel that red foods bring them good luck and they eat red foods at the Festival. Can you name foods that are red? Write the word moon and use it in other sentences. Have you looked at the moon? What shape did it have when you saw it?

The Chinese also believed that a lady and a rabbit live on the moon and smile down on them. Can you draw a picture of a moon with a lady and a rabbit on it? Be sure to give them a smile.

Creative Arts: Show children a variety of Chinese symbols and compare them to our alphabet. Talk about mooncakes and show photos. It is believed that once long ago

the Chinese used to send secret messages that were baked inside the mooncakes to one another. Read the book, *Thanking the Moon: Celebrating the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival*, by Grace Lin. After reading the story children will make their own mooncakes and write their name on the top. Compare the messages inside fortune cookies to mooncakes. After participating in the activity, children will enjoy snacking on fortune cookies and reading their fortune.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Discuss how to turn the computer on and off.

Talk about Cyber Safety Rules: Keep Safe, Keep Away and Keep Telling. Identify personal information that should not be shared on the Internet (name, address, phone). Know how to use a computer only when an adult is supervising and to tell an adult if anything on the Internet doesn't seem to be right.

Go to the following site to view the Chinese Alphabet. Can you make the character that is the first letter of your name? Draw a mooncake and place this character on top of the cake. www.citypix.info/charts_new.php

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: There are many different legends that go along with the Moon Festival celebration. During the moon festival one can ask the lady in the moon for a wish. The lady may grant the wish, but only if it is unselfish and meant to better or help someone else. What wish do you make that would help someone else?

Read the book, *The Moon Lady* by Amy Tan and *Thanking the Moon, Celebrating the Mid-Autumn Festival* by Grace Lin. After reading a book and discussing the legend behind it, children will think of things they would like to wish for. Remind the children that their wishes must be unselfish. Talk about how people celebrate in a variety of ways.

Mathematics: We are only seeing one side of the moon. So why does the moon look like a big circle sometimes and a banana others?





The answer is that we see phases of the moon.

What we see as being a full moon, crescent moon, half moon, and no moon all come about due to how we see the sun reflecting off the moon. When we see the full moon it is because more light is hitting the surface of the moon we see. There are 8 phases of the moon:

1. New Moon: When we can't really see much of the moon at all
2. Waxing Crescent: Crescent moon that is growing (waxing)
3. First Quarter: Half moon
4. Waxing Gibbous: 3/4 moon that is growing (waxing)
5. Full Moon: When we see the whole moon
6. Waning Gibbous: 3/4 moon that is shrinking (waning)
7. Last Quarter: Half moon
8. Waning Crescent: Crescent moon that is shrinking (waning): Sliver moon

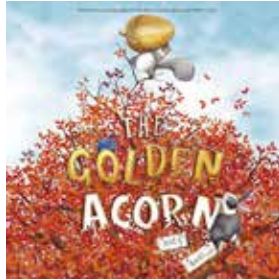
Cut these phases out of eight yellow circles. Use a glue stick to place them on a paper in order and count them.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Labor Days Autumn begins Chinese Moon Fest. Yom Kippur Talk Like a Pirate Day	Little Star is a character's name in "A Big Mooncake." List all the words you know that begin with "L" and then with an "S."	PLAY Moonwalk Listen to show music and pretend you are walking on the Moon. Can you move in slow motion?	LOVE Have you ever heard the expression "I Love You to the Moon and Back!?" Make someone you love a greeting card that says this and tell them why.	Moon Dust Writing Squeeze black/grey paint into salt. Mix it and lay it on a tray over bubble wrap. Use rocks to draw numbers and letters.	COUNT Predict how many seeds an apple has. Cut it into parts (fractions) and count the seeds.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	READ Read the book <i>Goodnight Moon</i> to the child. Reread it together.	PLAY Smashing Moon Rocks Fine Motor task Make moon rocks from playdough. Count them. Use a small wooden hammer to smash them.	COUNT Star Addition Place stars with numbers on them on a table. Roll a die and select a number. Roll it again to select another number. Count both numbers together. How many in total?	TALK Learn Space nursery rhymes: <i>Hey, Diddle Diddle</i> <i>Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star</i> <i>Star Light, Star Bright</i>	Blue Moon Craters Cut a large circle from white yard stock. Use Elmer's glue to form small circles on the larger one. Let the circles dry. When the glue is dry use light blue watercolors to paint the moon.	COUNT List all the things that are in the sky. Count your list and ask others to add to it for you.
 PLAY	LOVE Make round cookies (Mooncakes) together. Eat them with your family like the Chinese tradition. Use this time to express your love and wishes for the upcoming year.	TALK Talk about the 4 main phases of the moon: Full, Half, Crescent and Sliver. Trace and cut patterns of each. Glue them on black paper.	READ Chinese Moon Festival Read the book "The Moon Lady" by Amy Tan. Write down one unselfish wish each and place them in a special box.	PLAY Cut a brown grocery bag from the bottom to shorten it and then cut a large hole in one side of it to make a space helmet.	PLAY Apple Hide and Seek Take turns hiding an apple and giving clues to find it.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	TALK & PLAY Pretend you are a space pirate. Make a spaceship from a cardboard box. Use pirate words such as: Ahoy, Matey, Shiver Me Timbers, Arrr.	READ Read the book, "If You Decide to go to the Moon" by Faith McNulty. Look at pictures of spaceships and use large boxes and paper to make your own. Take pictures of the new creations.	Alphabet Star Search Sensory Tub. Fill a tub with black beans or other beans. Place small stars cut from stiff paper with a letter on them. Search for them and name them.	PLAY Make Moon Boots Attach a sponge to the bottom of each shoe with a rubber band. Walk slowly to feel like you are walking on the moon.	COUNT Place pillows on the floor and cover with a large bed sheet. Step across it with moon boots on and count your steps. Walk around it and do the same.	READ Read a story at bedtime. Talk about your bedtime routine. What else would you like it to include?
 PLAY	Teach the child how to set the table. Practice this skill.	PLAY Cut an apple in half. Use it as a stamp to make apple prints with tempura paint.	TALK The Moon is Round Go for a walk to see as many round objects as you can. Talk about the squares, rectangles and triangles too.	TALK Talk about safety procedures for crossing the street. Take a walk to practice.	READ Read <i>Papa Please Get the Moon for Me</i> by Eric Carle What was the best thing about this book?	LOVE Go outside and look at the Moon. Make a wish for someone you love.

The Golden Acorn

by Katy Hudson



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**trophy, prized, different, compete, train, overtake, tangled, lonely**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

Read the story several times then practice techniques to highlight dialogic reading. Dialogical reading is an interactive read-aloud technique that strengthens understanding and early literacy skills.

Completion Prompt—Have the children orally fill in a blank at the end of a sentence. Squirrel LOVED being the _____. At the end of the story squirrel knew that his friends would ALWAYS come _____.

Recall Prompt—Ask a question to encourage children to remember what happened in the book. Tell me what happened on this page.

Open-Ended Prompt—Encourage the children to tell whatever they want about a picture in the story

“WH” Prompt—Ask the “wh” questions that begin with “what, where, when, why and who.”

Use these questions to draw attention to story detail and reinforce vocabulary. What did the squirrel win when he found the Golden Acorn? After the race with all the friends started why did the squirrel have to keep going back to his friends? They kept getting _____ in the tree.

Distancing Prompt—Help relate the story and pictures to experiences outside of the story. They can be experiences the children have had. Has anyone ever been in a race before? What was that like? Have you ever found an acorn? Are there any trophies in your home or family? What does this story remind you of?

Approaches to Learning: Show the children a bowl of acorns. Allow each child to take one to examine it closely. Ask them to close their eyes and imagine that finding the right acorn outside could make you famous and you would get awarded with a trophy. Could you imagine finding an acorn that was golden? Ask what questions they have about acorns?

The author of this story took an idea about a simple squirrel and an acorn and made it fun. Ask the children if that makes them wonder about what stories they could write one day?

Dual Language Development: This link below could be used for at-home reading of the book and for review of what was read prior. Discuss what happened at the story beginning, middle and end. www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeVLwaz_1vk

Creative Arts: Have the children cut out large acorn shapes that have been drawn on brown paper or a large paper bag. Give them tissue paper in fall colors. Have them rip small pieces of tissue and use a glue stick to adhere it to the acorn

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: This story provides great talking points on how to develop respect for others and their varying physical abilities. Talk about how we may show respect for the rights of others.

Talk about how we are all different and the same. We are the same in that we can all participate in a group and value each other. Sometimes being a member of a group requires that we do things differently than we would on our own. The squirrel in the story demonstrated a great example of how to do this.

Teamwork requires: trusting others, good communication, understanding that we have different skills, ability to change and support of everyone on the team.

When a team member can't do what is asked of them, we must forgive them. Talk about what forgiveness means. Define the qualities of being a good friend and how valuable it is to have as many friends as we can.





Establish the Golden Acorn Award. Present it when you see a child demonstrate great friendship, teamwork or forgiveness. Develop a Golden Acorn happy gram and present it to the child to share with their family.

Mathematics: Acorn Math—Use the number words 1-10 on flashcards. Sort acorns to place the correct number of acorns next to each number word.

Talk about the concept of adding numbers together and taking numbers away. Practice this on a table with the acorns. i.e.: Add two acorns to two more. How many do you have? Take one away. How many do you have now?

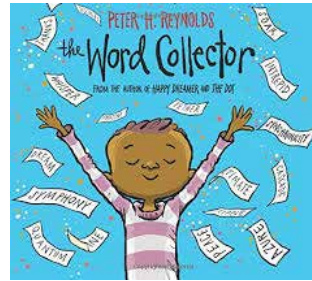
Science: To build interest in our natural environment, talk about the observable characteristics of all of the seasons. Take a walk outdoor to collect signs of fall. Be sure to include a collection of leaves of many colors. When indoors, sort some of the items by color, shape, etc. Do leaf rubbings. Place the leaf between two pieces of paper and rub the top sheet with chalk or crayons without a paper cover.

OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Columbus Day United Nations Day Dental Hygiene World Animal Day Halloween	TALK In the story the squirrel learns the value to friendship is better than a trophy. Talk about the qualities of being a good friend: shares, listens, plays with all, fun and accepting of others.	LOVE Talk about the emotion of love. Who do you love? Draw their picture and dictate a sentence to tell one of them why you love them.	TALK Talk about how we all have a distinct voice. Record each child on tape saying, "Hello boys and girls, who am I?" (Record who they are in order). Play back to group and let them guess.	PLAY Provide a stethoscope and allow the children to listen to each others heartbeats.	PLAY Place a chair in the middle of an empty space. In teams of two, one child is blindfolded. They need to find the chair and sit in it by listening to the other child's directions.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	TALK Mix fall colors. Place equal amounts of red and yellow, blue and green and orange and yellow paints into separate baggies. Seal the baggie and mix with your hands. What do you see?	PLAY Talk about the importance to teamwork and how communication is key. Hold a three-legged race. Children have a partner and they are tied together at one ankle. The first team to cross the finish line wins.	LOVE Establish the concept of a quiet place where a child may go when they need to. Help them identify a favorite book or toy that they love and they may bring it. They can go there at will or when asked to rest.	COUNT Count and sort a variety of apples. Play apple hide and seek. Hide it and use hot and cold hints while another tries to find it.	TALK Discuss how people are all the same and different too. Make fingerprint stamps of the thumb. Look at it with a magnifying glass. Look at others to compare.	PLAY Keep the ball in the middle. Children hold the edges of a very large box top. (from a furniture or appliance store) Place a ball on the top. Try to work together to keep the ball in the middle.
 PLAY	TALK Harvest Box Place fall items in a box one at a time. Have the child feel it to guess what it is. (corn, apple, squash, pumpkin, pepper, acorn, leaf, etc.)	COUNT Count and sort squash and gourds. Put them in order by size. Sort by shape and color. Weigh them and record the weight.	PLAY Use a parachute outside and have the children place leaves on it. As they use it, they can sing (to tune of <i>Wheels on the Bus</i>) The leaves on the tree, come falling down, let's rake them up.	TALK Autumn is another word for the fall season. Sing some autumn songs: www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPm7JTGfHcA	READ In <i>The Golden Acorn</i> the Judge was in charge of the acorn race. Judge begins with the letter "J." Make a list of word that begin the same.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	Fall Water Table Add fall items to your water table for the children to guess and then test what will sink and float: pumpkins, gourds, pine cones, leaves, etc.	TALK Give each child a bag. Go for a walk to collect different leaves. Talk about how different they are. Use new words to describe them: prickly, crumbly, shiny, tiny, gigantic, golden, etc.	Fall Sensory Bin Place all the leaves that were collected into a sensory bin with acorn and pinecones and other fall scatter. Use tongs to put in and out of bowls.	TALK What are the smells of fall? Talk about this. Make pumpkin playdough. Mix pumpkin pie spice into orange playdough. Wow, does this smell good!	LOVE List what you love about the fall and what you love to do. Share this information with someone you love so you may enjoy it together.	TALK Discuss all the possibilities for a Halloween costume. What would you like to be and why?
 PLAY	TALK Talk about daily oral hygiene routines. Use mirrors to practice how to brush teeth.	PLAY Talk about sharing. Give one container of bubble solution to two children. Ask them to share it evenly and talk about this as they play 5 minutes at this task. How did it go?	PLAY Pumpkin Relay Use small pumpkins to do spoon or other relay races. Pass the pumpkin in a circle to music until the music stops.	Make Jack-O-Lantern Pizzas Use English muffin halves and pizza sauce. Use cheese, sausage, olives, etc to make hair and face.	TALK Practice crossing the street and looking both ways. Talk about crossing lights and signals. Talk about the safety rules for Halloween.	HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

The Word Collector

by Peter Reynolds



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**most, trouble, strangers, bully, destroy, frowning, kind**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

After you read the book one time and introduce the new vocabulary, invite the child to read this book with you and follow the sequence below for every page:

P-Prompt a child to say something about the page

E-Evaluate their response

E-Expand their response by adding new information or rephrasing

R-Repeat the initial prompt to see what they now understand

Approaches to Learning: Have the children look at the cover of the book. Show them and tell them the title: *The Word Collector*. Ask if they could talk about what a collection is. What do they think the boy is doing? Ask questions such as: What do you see on the pieces of paper that the boy is throwing up in the air? Why do you think he is doing that? Have you ever collected anything? What type of collections have you heard of? What would a person do with a word collection? What questions about the book do you have before we read it? Write the children's questions down.

Read the story aloud and then see if the children is able to answer the questions that they generated.

Dual Language Development: The boy in this story loved words. He had a card for each of his favorite words. Make a list of the child(ren's) favorite words and begin a card collection for them. Review them and find a special box to decorate for this prized collection. Now they are Word Collectors too!

Creative Arts: Early November is a great time to collect leaves. Either go outside together or ask the child to take the week to find as many interesting leaves as possible. Use these leaves to sort by color, shape, size. Then use the leaves to do crayon rubbings. Place the leaf vein side up and place it on white paper. Place another white paper on top and use a crayon with no paper on it to rub gently across the surface of the leaf. A beautiful leaf will appear. Use fall colors of red, yellow, orange and brown. Nature can provide some wonderful art materials.

The boy in the story used his words to make poems and then songs. Sing poems that are songs like he did. i.e.: *Hey Diddle Diddle*, *Five Little Monkeys*, *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, *I'm a Little Teapot*, *Itsy Bitsy Spider*, and many more.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Talk about how every person has their own self interests and strengths. Ask the children to identify something that they would LOVE to collect if possible. What do they like to play? How do they like to spend their free time? Talk about the similarities and differences.

Alphabet Bean Bag Toss—Draw a letter of the alphabet on each bean bag. Have the children toss them into one of three tubs. (They could make the letter sound as they toss). When all finished, have them see how many words they can make from placing bean bags together. Talk about how words are made up of many letter sounds.





Mathematics: Counting collections—Place collections of small items in bags. Have the children select a collection, count it and record it. The counting can be done on a number line that goes to 20 so they know how to write down the final number for the collection. Start with collections that go up to 10 and increase to 20. Have them trade collections with each other and do this again. Have them answer questions such as “How many more would you need to have 15 or 20?” Engage them in math conversations.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Have each child take a picture of their collection and that of others so that a bulletin board may be created with a collection display. Give simple directions for the use of the phone or digital camera. Demonstrate how to find the photo function on each device.

Science: Ask the child(ren) to think about what they would like to collect. Talk about some items that are readily available and possible to find at no cost. i.e.: rocks, marbles, leaves, bugs, beads, acorns, beans, etc. They could also use a collection of small items that they already have available such as: small cars, coins, etc,

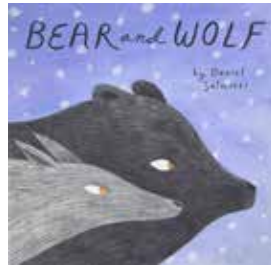
As the collections come back lay them out and ask the children to make observations. What do they have in common? How are they different? Divide each collection by color, size, shape or another consideration. Ask each child to explain why they divided them like they did. Will they continue to collect the same objects or do they have ideas for other things that they would like to collect? Do other family members have collections?

NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Veterans Day Diwali World Tolerance Day World Kindness Day Thanksgiving	Start a collection of coins in a jar. Look at the coins and talk about their value and their names: Penny, Nickel, Dime and Quarters.	LOVE Words can hurt! Talk about how you feel when a friend uses unkind words to you. How may you practice kindness and love.	READ Practice identifying all the letters you know by name. Do you know their sounds Every letter makes a sound.	READ Pour salt in a box top. Practice writing letters and words in the salt.	COUNT Make popcorn and use for counting in muffin tins. Eat some as well!	Visit the Library
 PLAY	READ List all of the words that you can think of that are opposites.	Collections begins with the letter "C." Make a list of all the words you know that begin with that letter.	Practice dressing in winter clothes: snow pants, coats, hats, mittens, scarf, boots. Where will they be kept?	Go outside to collect small sticks. Use them to make letters: H,A, E, F, I, K, L, M, N, T, V, W, Y and Z.	COUNT Use a bag of assorted nuts in the shell and muffin tins to sort, match, count, etc	TALK Talk to your child about when they may need to call for emergency help. Demonstrate how they would dial 911
 PLAY	TALK Teach how to cover a sneeze. Use water in a spray bottle to show how a sneeze may spread germs into the air.	COUNT Use blocks as counters. As you read have the child move a counter for each word you say on a page.	Diwali is the Hindu Festival of Lights. Houses are decorated with paper chains. Make a paper chains to decorate the room.	READ Do you know what a book title is? Demonstrate how to turn a page and which direction to read.	LOVE People are as different as the things they collect. Talk about how it is OK to be different and that all people need and deserve our love and respect.	Visit the Library
 PLAY	READ Read a story. Follow the story by pointing to the words. What were some of your favorite words?	PLAY Paint with an ear of corn. Roll the corn onto one or more colors of paint and then roll onto another paper to create a design.	COUNT Use a sentence from a story that was just read. Write it on a strip of paper and cut it into individual words. Arrange the words to recreate the sentence.	READ Words begin with the letter "W." Make a list of all the words you know that begin with that letter.	READ What are illustrations? Understand that pictures are realtor to print. Dictate a sentence about a family collection and draw a picture to show it.	READ Write a language experience story from your adventures today. Place it in book format and draw illustrations. Make a book cover.
 PLAY	LOVE Talk about how we are thankful for those we love. May a list of all you and your family are thankful for.	READ Read a story about the first Thanksgiving. What would you like for your dinner? What can you help prepare?	PLAY What's in the Bag? Place objects in a paper bag. Say "I have something here that begins with the letter. Give clues and children guess.	READ Thanksgiving begins with the letters "TH." Make a list of five words that begin with that letter blend.	LOVE Talk about a project that you and others could do to make someone's life better. Plan for what is needed and talk about how helping made you feel.	TALK Talk about safety. Discuss the exit routes for all emergencies: Fire Intruder Stranger

Bear and Wolf

by Daniel Salmieri



Language and Early Learning Development: Introduce the following words that the children will hear in the story before you read it (**windless, glistening, snout, creatures, comfortable, cloudy, depths, cave, pack, faded, swaying**). Vocabulary gains are greatest if the words are discussed directly before, during and after the reading. Talk about what each word means before the story. Show pictures of each word if possible as well. Show the children what each word looks like as it is written.

After defining each word and reviewing the words on word cards, ask the students after each word is reviewed, if they could come up with a sentence where they use the word. Hints and gestures are encouraged. Which of these words is each child's favorite? Allow them time to try to write it or the first few letters of it. Great to spend at least 15 minutes a day on vocabulary reviews.

Tell the children that after you read the story aloud, you will play "I Remember." After the reading each child will tell one thing they remember about the story.

Approaches to Learning: Look at the cover of this book. Ask the children what they notice about the drawings on the cover? What type of art products do they think was used for the drawings and book cover? The lines on the animals look like real animal fur. Locate the title of the book and point out how it is read from left to right. Show the children the name of the author. Explain the roles of the author and of the illustrator. In the case of many books, the author and illustrator are two different people. In the case of this book, Daniel Salmieri did both functions.

Ask the children to look at the cover closely and predict what they think this story is about and what happens in the story? What do you wish to learn about these characters in the story?

Dual Language Development: After looking at the book cover, ask ELL children if they know how to say "Bear and Wolf" in their native language. If not, see if you can locate this for them. It's great to share this with the entire group as they will learn an appreciation for other cultures as well.

Name and recall the two main characters in this story. An introduction to words of winter is also apropos after this story is read.

Creative Arts: This story could encourage dramatic play with four characters: bear, wolf, bird and fish. The setting could be two locations; one that features a spring scene and one that is winter. The characters would go between the two. The children

could draw the two scenes with one depicting summer and the other with the detail of winter. As the adult reads the story, the children do what the characters in the book dictate.

Technology Literacy-Early Learning and Technology: Talk about how to click and drag on a keyboard. Go to: www.abcy.com/games/one_hundred_snowballs

This site is a game that gives the children a chance to build in the snow with 100 snowballs.

Social, Emotional and Physical Health Development: Take a silent walk outside. Use your eyes, nose and ears to take in everything that is around you. Come inside to talk about what you saw, smelled and heard. How did it feel to be silent and hear silence?

Brown Bear Class Book: Sight

Read the book: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Who Do You See?* Take a picture of each child in your class. Mount each child's picture on a page and use the caption "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, who do you see? I see _____ looking at me." Create a book cover laminate, and bind and you have your very own Brown Bear Group Book.

Mathematics:

Build-A-Snowman: Children roll a die, identify the numeral and count out that amount of snowman pieces. They add the pieces of snowman (there are 10 pieces in all) until they have completed it. The pieces are two white felt circles (the stiff kind of felt), black felt hat, blue felt scarf, two wiggle eyes, orange felt nose, 3 buttons.

Graph: Mittens/Gloves: Children bring mittens or gloves from home. Lay them in a vertical line on a graph on the floor and compare and count the two sets to see which has the most. (mittens or gloves)

When finished with the graph, sort the gloves and mittens by color and size.

Science: Bear and Wolf used their eyes, nose and ears. Talk about the five senses. Have fun exploring them more.

Build a Tower Blindfolded: Sight

Give children some wooden cubes or small blocks. Have them sit at the table and try to build a tower with all of the blocks without it falling over while wearing a blindfold. You may want to only give them 7-10 blocks. Do this without the blindfold and compare.

Smelly Dough: Smell





Make scented playdough and add Kool-Aid instead of food coloring. The Kool-Aid powder will not only color the dough, but it will make it smell wonderful too! If you don't use Kool-Aid, you can also add extracts such as orange, spearmint, vanilla, peppermint, etc.

Sound Shakers: Hearing

To make the sound shakers, fill pairs of small cardboard tubes with small objects that made sounds such as rice, nuts and bolts, sand etc. Cover the ends of the tubes with paper and tape.

Students select tubes, shake and listen, and identify the pairs that make the same sound.

DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Special Days: Winter Begins Hanukkah Christmas Kwanzaa	READ Spray shaving cream on a table to give the effect of snow. Practice writing letters in the snow.	READ The wolf and bear in the story both had a wet, black nose. Nose begins with the letter "N." Make a list of other words that begin the same.	TALK Play the game "I Already Know." List the things the children already know about winter. Then list what they want to know.	TALK Take pictures of the children playing in the snow. Dictate and write out sentences for each picture.	COUNT Winter Sensory Tub Fill it with packing peanuts, pom poms, cranberries, etc. Use clothespins as tweezers to transfer the items to bowls & count	Visit the Library
 PLAY	PLAY Make playdough snowmen. Rolling balls is great fine motor work. Trim with strips of felt, pipe cleaners, buttons, etc.	Practice putting on and taking off snow pants, coat, mittens, hat, boots and scarf.	Snowflake Slime Slowly stir 1/2 cup of Elmer's glue and 1/2 cup of warm water together. Add silver glitter and snowflake table scatter. Slowly stir in 1/2 cup Sta-Flo liquid starch and blend. Then use hands to continue mixing.	PLAY Ice Skating Use 2 paper plates, one under each foot and slide around the room. Play ice skating music. Stop the music and call "FREEZE"	READ Read your favorite Holiday story. Ask thinking questions after such as: *Why do you think...?" *If you were the author what would you make happen next?" *Is there a better ending to the story?"	PLAY Cut shapes from paper: circles, rectangles squares, triangles. Glue them on paper to make a variety of snowmen. Lastly, cut our paper snowflakes.
 PLAY	COUNT Make a list of all the animals you can think of that play in the snow. Count this list.	READ WINTER ends with the letter "R." Listen to how it sounds at the end of this word. Make a list of other words that begin with the same sound.	PLAY Make ice rainbows. Use bottles of colored water and an eyedropper. Place drops into a clear glass with crushed ice. Watch the colors travel down the ice and blend.	HANUKKAH Explain what a menorah is. Have the children build a menorah with blocks and 8 cardboard cylinder tubes. May add a yellow paper flame to one candle each day.	WINTER Think of as many words as you can to describe winter. How does winter feel to you? How does winter sound? How does winter taste?	Visit the Library
 PLAY	Wrap Holiday Gifts Use cookie cutters as stencils to trace on paper and cut out shapes. Use these shapes for gift tags.	TALK Discuss the composition of snow. Measure how much water is in snow by filling a glass jar with snow. Let it melt and measure how much water is remaining.	LOVE MERRY CHRISTMAS! Enjoy this day with the people you love. Tell them you love them and why. Hugs all around.	TALK KWANZAA Light a candle to celebrate Kwanzaa. Talk about the meaning of this holiday.	READ Make an A, B, C Book that celebrates winter.. Baby, it's cold outside!	COUNT Make hot chocolate with mini marshmallows. Count the marshmallows. Place them in groups of 2, 5, 10.
 PLAY	LOVE Have the child sign their name to thank you notes. Practice with them how to say thank you and what they love about the gift and the person who gave it to you.	PLAY Bubble Freeze If this is a very cold day, go outside with a large bubble wand and make a bubble. Within a minute, you can watch it freeze!	Examining Snow Put a piece of black paper in the freezer for several hours or overnight. Go outside and catch snowflakes. Examine them with a magnifying glass.	Snowman Snack Use 2 English Muffin halves and place one above the other. Spread cream cheese over both. Use a carrot nose, raisins for detail and a fruit roll-up for the scarf.	TALK Review how and when to dial 911. Talk about avoiding strangers and the procedure to follow if lost.	COUNT HAPPY NEW YEAR! Do a countdown to the New Year. Count backwards 10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1

Technology Resources for Young Children Websites for Parents and Caregivers

BabyCenter – www.babycenter.com

A comprehensive, dynamic and informative site for parents starting with prenatal care and extending to late childhood with chat rooms, articles from experts, and discussion boards.

Be Active Kids – www.beactivekids.org

An innovative, interactive physical activity, nutrition and food safety curriculum for preschoolers designed to develop positive physical activity and nutrition habits for a lifetime of good health.

Born Learning – www.bornlearning.org

A public engagement campaign that helps parents, grandparents and caregivers explore ways to turn everyday moments into fun learning opportunities. Web content is available in English and in Spanish.

Child Fun – www.childfun.com

A family website with many things of interest to adults and kids—craft ideas, coloring pages, newsletters, and forums.

Colorín Colorado – www.colorincolorado.org

A free web-based service that provides information, activities and advice for educators and Spanish-speaking families of English language learners (ELLs).

Everything Preschool – www.everythingpreschool.com

This site contains over 30,000 Preschool Education Activities separated into over 100 Themes, 26 Alphabet Areas, & Lesson Plans. Parents and child caregivers can adapt the activities to their own situation.

Family TLC – www.familyTLC.net

Parenting tips, family activities, articles on child development, and many child-friendly and age-appropriate activities are featured on this site.

First Steps – www.firststepskent.org

Provides resources and links for parents and caregivers in Kent County. It also provides information about the early childhood systems building with information on The Ready By Five early childhood millage.

Get Ready to Read – www.getreadytoread.org

A website that provides parents, educators, health-care professionals, and all advocates for children with information to build early literacy skills by integrating emergent literacy screening and learning activities into routine early childhood education, child care, and parenting practices.

Google Translate – www.translate.google.com

Google's free service instantly translates words, phrases, and web pages between English and over 100 other languages.

Grand Rapids Public Library – www.grpl.org

Search for books, movies, and music. View the Upcoming Events to see story times and other family events. Explore the Kids section to see how talking, writing, reading, playing, and singing are important for kids of all ages.

GR Kids – www.grkids.com

A website for parents of kids from 0-12 years old, including a comprehensive event calendar, giveaways, blog, day camps, classes, links to area parks, academic resources and area story times.

The International Children's Digital Library – www.en.childrenslibrary.org

Great resource for teachers and parents of ELL children. It features beautiful picture books in a variety of languages.

Kent District Library – www.kdl.org

Search for books, movies, and music. View the calendar to see upcoming story times and other family events. The Early Literacy section has printable activities, reading resources, and more!

Kids Health – www.kidshealth.org

An all-encompassing site that will appeal to parents, kids, and teens. Practical parenting information, homework help, teen advice and straight talk from professionals throughout the world as well as doctor-approved health information about kids from birth through adolescence make up the core of this site.

Parents as Teachers – www.parentsasteachers.org

Parents as Teachers is the over-arching program philosophy of providing parents with child development knowledge and parenting support.

ParentTime – www.parenttime.com

This website offers free advice for parents and parents to be. Offers comprehensive parenting tips on pregnancy, newborns, and infants.

PBS – www.wgvu.org/education-kids/

Parent's guides to children's media, games and education. See all that our local PBS features in our community.

PNC Grow Up Great – www.pncgrowupgreat.com

A comprehensive, bilingual, school readiness initiative to help prepare children from birth to five for success in school and in life. Website offers tips and activities.

Preschool Rainbow – www.preschoolrainbow.org

Provides information and resources on preschool activities and lessons, as well as parenting tips and products.

Reading Rockets – www.readingrockets.org

Offers a wealth of reading strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help young children learn how to read. Content offered in English and Spanish.

RIF-Reading is Fundamental – www.rif.org

Parents can click on topics such as motivating your child to read, choosing good books, reading aloud, activities and articles. Kids can find games, online books, and activity labs.

Teaching Tolerance – www.tolerance.org

This site is dedicated to reducing prejudice, improving intergroup relations and supporting equitable school experiences.

Zero to Three – www.zerotothree.org

Lots of information on infants and toddlers for both parents and professionals.



Websites For Kids

Fun Brain – www.funbrain.com

Who ever thought learning math could be so much fun? Test your math skills with these fun and interesting games. Includes some teacher and parenting resources.

A to Z Animals – a-z-animals.com

A website that is an A-Z encyclopedia of animals children can explore to learn more about their favorite animal.

Mother Goose – www.mothergoose.com

This site offers FREE games, crafts, rhymes, stories, videos, recipes and clip art for young children, families and teachers.

Sesame Street – www.sesameworkshop.org www.sesamestreetincommunities.org

Games, videos and activities for preschoolers brought to you by the characters of Sesame Street.

Starfall – www.starfall.com

A free website to teach children to read with phonics. For preschool/kindergarten.



The Great Start Collaborative of Kent County serves as the local infrastructure for governance, planning, investment, and innovation for Michigan's Great Start system. Our collaborative is part of a network of 55 Great Start Collaboratives working in every county in Michigan through the Michigan Office of Great Start.

Charged with ensuring that all children birth to age eight, especially those in highest need, have access to high-quality early learning and development programs and enter kindergarten prepared for success, the Office of Great Start has outlined a single set of early childhood outcomes against which all public investments will be assessed:

- Children born healthy
- Children healthy, thriving, and developmentally on track from birth to third grade
- Children developmentally ready to succeed in school at the time of school entry
- Children prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade

Kent County's Great Start Collaborative works to ensure that the Office of Great Start's outcomes and recommendations are realized in our community through the collaborative efforts of parents of young children, members of the faith and business communities, local philanthropic organizations, educators, and leaders of the local public agencies providing the majority of early childhood services in the community. The Great Start Collaborative assesses the needs of young children and families in their communities, identifies community assets for addressing those needs, and plans for systemic change.

Visit www.greatstartkent.org to learn more!



Who are we?

The Great Start Parent Coalition (GSPC) is a group of parents and caregivers dedicated to informing, shaping, and supporting the early childhood work in their community. The GSPC provides training in leadership and advocacy skills to build public support for early childhood investment and a stronger voice for children, preparing them for success in school and life.

Come to a Parent Coalition Meeting!

The Parent Coalition meets one Thursday night a month. Visit www.greatstartkent.org for meeting topics and locations. We provide free dinner, free childcare, and professional development credit for childcare providers through Great Start to Quality. Come learn, network with other parents and caregivers, and enjoy an evening out!

Participate in our Diaper Drive!

Want to make a difference in the lives of babies around Kent County? Help us keep 'em covered by participating in the GSPC's Diaper Drive! Find out how you can get involved in our ongoing diaper drive at www.diaperdrivekent.org





Early Learning Communities Play & Learn Groups

Early Learning Communities

Early Learning Communities is a collaborative, community-based partnership to enrich the quality early learning experiences of young children by strengthening the skills of early childhood caregivers and educators. Grand Rapids Community College, First Steps and the Grand Rapids Public Schools are leading the initiative, in partnership with many other community organizations.

**ELC Playgroups only run from September through June and match up with Grand Rapids Public Schools academic year. If Grand Rapids Public Schools close for inclement weather, Playgroups are canceled.*

To find the playgroup schedule for the current month go to: www.grcc.edu/laboratorypreschool/earlylearningcommunitiesplayandlearngroups



How It Works:

Early Learning Communities hosts Play and Learn groups throughout Grand Rapids at a number of elementary schools and community organizations—all held during different days and times. If you are a parent or caregiver of a child between the ages of two to five, join us for this free, weekly, 90-minute program to learn about child development, early reading strategies and positive discipline. While you play with your children, you'll get great ideas of things you can do to prepare them for success. The curriculum for the Play & Learn Groups is aligned with Michigan Department of Education expectations for kindergarten readiness. Receive free a book when you attend!

The Early Learning Communities is working with a number of community partners to continue to strengthen the relationships between children, their families and caregivers, and their schools in order to make the transition into Kindergarten as smooth, comfortable, and successful as possible.

For questions, email: ELC@grcc.edu or call the Community Liaison at (616) 234-2410

Katie L.



Kent District Library Early Literacy Headquarters for Kent County Families

For a list of programs such as our free Early Childhood Essentials classes for caregivers and parents plus a full menu of story time options for all ages, visit kdl.org/events.

Visit our interactive early literacy play spaces available at each KDL branch.

Alpine Twp. Branch

5255 Alpine Ave. NW

Alto Branch

6071 Linfield Ave.

Byron Twp. Branch

8191 Byron Center Ave. SW

Caledonia Twp. Branch

6260 92nd St. SE

Cascade Twp. Branch

2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE

Comstock Park Branch

3943 W. River Dr. NE

East Grand Rapids Branch

746 Lakeside Dr. SE

Englehardt Branch

200 N. Monroe St.
(Lowell)

Gaines Twp. Branch

421 68th St. SE

Grandville Branch

4055 Maple St. SW

Kelloggsville Branch

4787 Division Ave. S

Kentwood

(Richard L. Root) Branch

4950 Breton SE

Krause Memorial Branch

140 E. Bridge St.
(Rockford)

Nelson Twp. / Sand Lake Branch

88 Eighth St.

Plainfield Twp. Branch

2650 5 Mile Rd. NE

Spencer Twp. Branch

14960 Meddler Ave.

Tyrone Twp. Branch

43 S. Main St.
(Kent City)

Walker Branch

4293 Remembrance Rd. NW

Wyoming Branch and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

3350 Michael Ave. SW

Service & Meeting Center

814 West River Center Dr. NE

KDL
Kent District Library

**Information.
Ideas.
Excitement!®**

616.784.2007 | kdl.org



What is the best gift you can give your child? A library card!

Visit one of our 8 easy locations!

Main Library

111 Library Street NE ■ 616.988.5400
Mon–Thu 9:00–9:00 | Fri–Sat 9:00–6:00
Sun 1:00–5:00*

*Labor Day to Memorial Day

Madison Square Branch

1201 Madison SE ■ 616.988.5411
Tue–Wed 10:00–6:00 | Thu 12:00–8:00
Fri–Sat 10:00–6:00

Ottawa Hills Branch

1150 Giddings SE ■ 616.988.5412
Tue 10:00–6:00 | Wed 12:00–8:00
Thu–Sat 10:00–6:00

Seymour Branch

2350 Eastern SE ■ 616.988.5413
Mon–Tue 12:00–8:00 | Wed–Thu 10:00–6:00
Sat 10:00–6:00

Van Belkum Branch

1563 Plainfield NE ■ 616.988.5410
Tue 10:00–6:00 | Wed 12:00–8:00
Thu–Sat 10:00–6:00

West Leonard Branch

1017 Leonard NW ■ 616.988.5416
Mon–Tue 12:00–8:00 | Wed–Thu 10:00–6:00
Sat 10:00–6:00

West Side Branch

713 Bridge NW ■ 616.988.5414
Tue–Wed 10:00–6:00 | Thu 12:00–8:00
Fri–Sat 10:00–6:00

Yankee Clipper Branch

2025 Leonard NE ■ 616.988.5415
Mon–Tue 12:00–8:00 | Wed–Thu 10:00–6:00
Sat 10:00–6:00

Ride to Read: Ask at the desk of any Grand Rapids Public Library about free round trip bus rides on a Rapid bus to and from the library!

Kids can say goodbye to overdue fines!

Grand Rapids Public Library no longer charges overdue fines on kid and teen materials (books, movies, music). That means that you won't be charged when you return something past the due date.

There's so much to see and so much to do at the Grand Rapids Public Library!

Taking your children to the library is one of the best and most important things you can do for them. Put a monthly visit to the library in your plans for spending more time with your children.

- Books
- Movies
- Music
- Magazines
- Storytimes
- Holiday Programs
- Craft Programs
- One Book, One City for Kids
- Summer Reading Challenge
- eBooks/eAudiobooks
- Play areas



616.988.5400 ■ www.grpl.org

To see a current schedule for Baby + Me Storytime, Toddler Time and other events go to:
<https://www.grpl.org/calendar-events>

Learning... on the go!

At Home:

You can turn everyday household chores and activities into fun learning games for your child.

Doing Laundry:

Laundry is a frequent activity that young children love to join in — from watching clothes tumble to matching up socks. Laundry activities can build math and cooperation skills. Feeling useful also helps children feel good, which encourages them to continue to want to be helpful. Your child can:

- Make piles of the light clothes and the dark clothes.
- Find matching pairs of socks.
- Find all the shirts to put into a pile for folding.

At Meals:

For many, meals are a time when the whole family comes together. Mealtime discussions can help your child's development and foster learning. Mealtime interactions help children use language to analyze sequence, and predict while promoting a joy of language.

- Ask your child to tell you a story about their day or tell them a story about your day.
- Create family traditions at meal times such as a song that you always sing or a game like "I Spy" that you always play.
- Let your child help make the meal – tear the lettuce for the salad, stir the spaghetti sauce or put napkins on the table.

Source: Tips were developed for Born Learning by Mind in the Making, a project of the Families and Work Institute. For further information on early learning tips for parents, visit www.bornlearning.org

At Bedtime:

Help your child wind down at the end of the day and discover ways to make bedtime less stressful and more calming for all involved. Creating a bedtime routine that your child comes to expect makes the transition from an active day to a quiet time easier.

- Create a consistent bedtime schedule that your child can count on.
- Create traditions: First, we take a bath and brush our teeth, then we read a story, give a kiss and go to sleep.
- Your preschool child can take an active role in planning bedtime traditions and use special time for listening to stories, making up stories or for talking about the day.

Traveling:

Are we there yet? Turn that trip or errand into a simple, fun learning game that helps your child make sense of the world around her/him. Use driving time to enhance your child's natural curiosity and find ways to interact and connect with your child.

In the Car

Use car time to talk about your child's day. Ask specific questions: ("Did you draw in preschool?" or "Did you eat a cheese sandwich?") Talk with your child about where you are going in the future ("We are going to the market on the way home") to help him/her develop thinking and planning skills. Use car travel as a time to sing. Play a tape or CD, or sing songs you know or love.

On the Bus:

Riding public transportation exposes your child to different people and new things.

On a Walk:

Taking your child on a walk is not only good exercise, but also allows them to experience nature and learn about the outdoors. Focus on the present moment and being with your child. Look at the walk through your child's eyes. How might a bug look to your child? What sounds do cars or birds make? Is it cloudy, warm or cold?

- Make up rhymes or sing marches as you walk. Try walking and singing or chanting fast, then slow.
- Help your child learn to be safe by stepping at corners and driveways and showing him or her to look both ways for cars.

Public Places:

Errands can equal education. Your everyday outing or errands can be a chance to connect with your child and to encourage her/his early learning.

At the Grocery Store:

Learn valuable tips to help keep you and your child's trips to the grocery store stress free and educational.

- Let your child make food choices. Should we buy apples, oranges or grapes today?
- Have your child find the items listed in your coupons.

At the Park:

Parks and playgrounds are very active places for children. Discover ways to transform activity into learning.

- How fast can you run toward the big tree?
- Which slide is bigger, the red one or the silver one?
- Have your child count the number of swings.

At the Library:

Libraries are full of learning opportunities and are wonderful places for exploring language and books.

- Fill out an information card for your child's own library card.
- Ask your child to pick out their favorite topic in the children's section.
- Teach your child about proper care and borrowing and returning books.



FREE PRESCHOOL

success
starts **early.**

CALL NOW FOR OPENINGS

When you are looking for preschool for your 3- or 4-year-old, consider the free options that may be available. Some families will qualify for a Great Start Readiness preschool opening through Kent County school districts or select private centers. Others will qualify for Head Start preschool.

Both Great Start Readiness and Head Start offer a quality preschool program, nutritious food, family support, health and educational assessments, and accommodations for children with special needs. In some areas transportation is available as well.

Children may start preschool from September through February if openings are available and as new offerings occur. Once your child starts preschool, focus on attendance. Good attendance habits start in preschool, and attendance in kindergarten is a big factor in long-term school success.

CALL
TODAY!

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS NOW!

616.447.2409

SuccessStartsEarly.org
FreePreschoolKent.org

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CARE ABOUT QUALITY

success
starts **early.**

FIND THE BEST FOR YOUR CHILD

Greatstarttoquality.org makes it easy for you to identify quality child care and preschool, helping you get the best for your child and the most for your money.

A 5 Star rating system is in place to help you make a good choice. Always ask, "How many Stars do you have?" You can award your own "Stars" based on your child's happiness when you visit the site.

State quality standards for care are based on safety, professionalism and early learning.

Once your child starts preschool, focus on attendance. Good attendance habits start in preschool, and attendance in kindergarten is a big factor in long-term school success.

NEED HELP FINDING QUALITY FOR
YOUR CHILD?

greatstarttoquality.org
successstartsearly.org

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SAFE PLACES

success
starts **early.**



EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO FEEL SAFE

It's a basic human need to be safe, protected, and loved.

When your little one feels safe and secure, he will have the energy to explore, listen, and develop all the brain power he will need for the rest of his life.

When your child grows up in a peaceful, calm, and happy home, she will be healthy and able to focus on learning her very first skills.



If your home was built before 1978, have it tested for lead poisoning hazards.

Might your child have asthma? Clean air in the home is as important as medicine.

Keep conversations peaceful and calm around small children.

Store poisonous chemicals out of reach of children... not under the kitchen sink.



**CALL
TODAY!**

NEED HELP WITH A HEALTHY HOME?

616-241-3300 for help with your home safety
616-336-3909 for help with a peaceful home environment

successstartsearly.org
healthyhomescoalition.org
network180.org

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GOOD HEALTH

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starts **early.**



HELP YOUR CHILD GROW UP HEALTHIER, SMARTER, AND STRONGER

Your child can't learn when he is tired, hungry, restless, or sick.

Every child needs plenty of rest, fresh fruits and vegetables, outdoor exercise... and checkups with the trusted doctor and dentist you see regularly.



Start each day with breakfast and make time for a healthy lunch.

Make time for lots of physical play, and plenty of rest, every day.

Brush teeth after every meal and limit sugary drinks such as juice and soda.



**CALL
TODAY!**

NEED HELP WITH FINDING A DOCTOR OR DENTIST?

Health Net of West Michigan
616-726-8204

SuccessStartsEarly.org

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Important Dates to Remember

[illegible]

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency Fire/Police/Ambulance	911
Poison Control	
Police Department (non-emergency)	
Fire Department (non-emergency)	
Hospital or Urgent Care	
Dentist	
Doctor's Office	

Electric Company	
Water Company	
Gas Company	
Phone Company	
Insurance Company	
Location of Fuse Box	
Location of Fire Extinguisher	

Other Important Phone Numbers

THIS CALENDAR PROVIDES A YEAR-LONG GUIDE OF LITERACY AND EARLY LEARNING ACTIVITIES FEATURING THE MICHIGAN EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS OF QUALITY FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND THE ESSENTIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES IN EARLY LITERACY. THE LITERATURE THAT HAS BEEN SELECTED FEATURES NEW BOOKS THAT SHOULD FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER LEVEL LEARNING AND RICH VOCABULARY. THE DAILY ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHT KEY COMPONENTS OF SUCCESS BASICS WHICH ARE FUN AND POWERFUL WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN GROW SMARTER AND PREPARE THEM FOR SUCCESS IN SCHOOL AND BEYOND.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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For contact information on our calendar partners visit:

Great Start of Kent County: www.greatstartkent.org

Grand Rapids Public Library: www.grpl.org

Kent District Library: www.kdl.org

Schuler Books and Music: www.schulerbooks.com



Funding from the Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education supports the implementation of Great Start.

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Kent District Library
www.kdl.org

