

Literacy Centers

1. ABC Center:

Students can be engaged in letter or word activities.

This center should have a variety of manipulatives, such as magnetic letters of the alphabet, magnetic boards or metal cookie sheets, foam letters, alphabet cereal, picture or word cards. Children manipulate the letters to spell words (sight words, theme words, classmates names etc...), sort the letters by attribute, work with blends, onsets and rimes, etc.

Suggested Activities:

- Make as many words as possible and record.
- Make rhyming words with particular patterns.
- Make 1,2,3 syllable words.
- Make adjectives, verbs, etc.
- Make 10 words from the story
- Make 10 words and illustrate each word.
- Use the "Making Words" letters and build new words.

Examples:

Use *Albert B Cub and Zebra* by Anne Rockwell for several weeks by varying the activities:

- Photocopy the pages from the book onto 11 x17 paper.
- Students select one page to work with.
- Students list all objects they can find that start with their letter on the page.
- Then students can do other activities such as alphabetizing words, grouping words by parts of speech, or groups words into 1 syllable, 2 syllable and 3 syllable words.
- Students can write alliterations such as "An alligator asked for an apple".
- Students can make their own alphabet collages or drawings. These can be put in a center for other students to identify the objects or do any of the above activities.
- One student can make a list of 5-10 words and another students can write a story including these 5-10 words.
- Students can make their own wordless alphabet books.

Use *A My Name Is Alice* by Jane Bayer for a wide variety of activities:

- Students can list all the objects, places and names for a particular letter.
- Students can select one letter of the alphabet and create the drawing and text using new objects, names and locations from the lists.

Other good alphabet books include the following:

- *Eating The Alphabet* by Lois Ehlert
- *Have You Ever Seen...?* by Beau Gardner
- *A Apple Pie* by Travey Campell Pearson
- *Faint Frogs Feeling Feverish* by Lilian Obligado is good for alliteration

2. Reading Center: (This can take place in the reading corner.)

Students can read individually, with a friend, to a friend, and in a collaborative group.

Suggested materials:

- Familiar books from book baskets.
- Big books from shared reading.
- Books published by the class and individual students
- Books from the read aloud and the class library

3. Writing Center:

Students can compose and publish work in a variety of genres. Provide a wide range of writing materials and tools. Consider a variety of writing models: personal stories, letters, recipes, journal writing, reports and descriptions.

Suggested materials:

- Materials for students to publish books (picture stamps with stamp pad, pencils, crayons, markers, variety of sizes of paper, blank books, stapler, dictionary or picture dictionary, ABC chart)
- Stories on the chalkboard or whiteboard easel.
- Reading journal/learning log.
- Greeting cards for students to make and send.
- Students can write postcards.

4. Poetry Center:

Students can read, recite or manipulate a variety of poems.

Materials suggested:

- Poems children have heard the teacher read.
- Photocopied poems the children can read.
- Large print poems to read with a pointer.
- Poetry cards mounted on stiff material.
- Small books of poems.
- Poems can be written on sentence strips to put together in pocket chart.
- Poems can be written on sentence strips, then individual words and punctuation are cut apart to put together in pocket chart.

** See Reading Response Section*

5. Listening Center:

Students can listen to a wide variety of stories, songs, and read alouds.

Extensions:

- Toss *Guided Reading Ball* after they have listened to a story to promote discussion.
- Complete a story map or flag.
- Draw favourite part of the story.
- Draw main characters/setting etc...

6. Computer Center:

Students can be engaged in a variety of interactive literacy-related computer programs or activities.

Computer Programs suggested:

- The Magic School Bus Series
- Reading Rabbit Skill Series
- Leap Ahead Series
- Living Books Series

7. Art Center:

Students can be engaged in a variety of art activities.

This center should contain basic art materials like paints, crayons, glue, coloured pencils and paper. Activities should be follow-ups to the stories they are reading in their Guided Reading groups.

Suggested activities:

- Create puppets of their favourite characters.
- Paint the scenery in the story.
- Make a collage related to the story.
- Students can choose two or three events in the story to illustrate.

8. Reading Response Center:

Students can respond to various elements in the story.

Suggested Activities:

- Students identify main ideas and supporting details using a web.
- Students illustrate the main idea -advertising for a movie.

- Students can create character webs with character in center of web and all known facts surrounding the center such as physical characteristics, feelings, actions, etc..
- Students write the events in the story on sentence strips then sequence the events in a pocket chart or on the table.
- Students can draw different backgrounds for the setting, the following week they can create paper doll characters, and the week after that they can write the story. These can be used over and over again for new stories.
- Student's can create a reader's theatre from the stories they have read.

9. Literature Circle Center:

Students can discuss various elements of the story. They may need a focus for their discussion such as most interesting character, setting, personal connections, comparing books etc...

10. Research Center:

Students can research various non-fictional elements of the story. It is helpful to provide a research template with specific questions for the students to use. It is also important to provide resources on the topic such fact files, non fictional books, magazines, encyclopaedias etc...

11. Literacy Games:

Students can play different letter and word games.

Suggested games:

- Letter and word bingo.
- File folder games.
- Junior Scrabble.
- Theme related literacy games.
- Word Searches.

12. Overhead Projector Center:

Familiar texts are copied onto overhead transparencies using a permanent marker.

Suggested Activities:

- Use plastic letters to make words.
- Students can write their own stories.
- Students can use the overhead markers to identify features of language – blends, nouns etc...
- Cut transparencies up and have students put sentences in order.

13. Vocabulary Center:

- Students can categorize words from their story -- give them 15-20 words and tell them they can only be grouped into 5 categories.
- Students can identify related words –synonyms, antonyms, and related words (words that are almost the same but not quite). They can put these words on a continuum such as bad to horrendous and everything in between, nice to fantastic, etc...
- Students can think of all words that include a certain word – such as “snow”
- Students can select phrases from their story then improve the language used by the author to make it more exciting, to make the pictures in mind stronger.
- Students can create notebook pages with interesting words by categories.
- Students can select photographs from newspapers or magazines and then list all the words that would describe the picture.

14. Pocket Chart Center:

Suggested Activities:

- Sentence strips that have to be put in order.
- Pictures and words can be included in the pocket chart
- Words can be put in alphabetical order or can be sorted.
- Pointer can be used.

15. Read The Room Center:

Students choose from a collection of pointers and glasses and move around the room reading everything in sight. The best pointers are simply pencils with fancy pencil tops or chopsticks with glitter on the ends. Bring in old eyeglasses and take out the lenses. Students can be held accountable for this center by writing down a list of things they read.