

Kindergarten ~~~~~ Lesson 4

CIRCLE TIME

MORNING MAIN LESSON

The Morning Main Lesson time consists of about 45 - 60 minutes devoted to Language Arts/Social Studies activities or Math. We suggest you alternate days so your child has plenty of time to explore the subject matter at hand on any given day. On some days you will no doubt spend less time, and on others, need more. Some days will also be devoted to taking special field trips.

Your child has been introduced to the first three letters of the uppercase alphabet. This week is devoted to reviewing their sounds and shapes and to printing these three letters clearly on unlined paper in your child's Main Lesson Book. Refer to the Introduction to Language Arts for a discussion about writing on unlined paper.

If your child can experience each letter through several different senses - seeing, hearing, and touching - he will be more likely to remember their shapes and sounds. The many activities presented in this syllabus will allow children of all learning styles to establish a relationship with the letters and to build an understanding that will make all the difference when it comes to learning to read and write.

Together, remember the stories you used to present the first three letters. Review the sounds that the letters A, B and C make and the images used in the stories to present each letter.

Help your child notice A, B and C in her environment, both as letters on signs and in books or magazines, and as shapes, such as "C" being seen as the crescent moon, or "A" being seen as the way a roof angles. Can all these shapes be found in items in your home? Try to cultivate a creative eye for such things - you might be surprised to find the shapes of the letters all around you!

This week, help your child make A, B and C out of semi-permanent clay. (You can use a regular potter's clay, or a commercial modeling compound that can be baked in the oven, or a homemade dough - although the homemade variety is less likely to hold up for the entire year.) These will be used throughout the year as part of periodic alphabet reviews, so keep them in a safe place. The letters can easily be made by rolling clay out into "snakes" which are then formed into the letter shape and hardened according to the directions for the particular clay or modeling compound used.

Additionally, make bread with your child this week. Form As, Bs, and Cs out of dough, and cook and eat them for lunch.

As you have previously walked some letter shapes with your child, walk A's, Bs, and Cs this week. Begin by "following your nose" in the letter shape, and move on to walking the shape while facing one direction the entire time, moving forward, back, and to the sides in the shape of the letter. (See Lesson 1 for a complete description of this exercise.)

If your child has struggled with any of these letter shapes, take extra time to make their experience more physical. Do the following art project devoted to a particular letter your child may be struggling with.

Letter Collage

Materials:

- Posterboard
- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Toothpicks, beads, rice, lentils, tiny pasta
- Arts and crafts scraps, fabric scraps

Choose a letter to work on. Help your child draw and cut out this letter from posterboard, making it very large. Then help her cut out a series of smaller letters (all the same letter) from colorful construction paper.

Gather tooth picks, beads, rice, and whatever little craft or fabric scraps you might have in your home. Any small glueable item will work.

Collage the posterboard letter by covering it with numerous smaller letters formed out of a wide variety of textures and materials. Glue on the construction paper letters, some of which have been left plain, others of which have been covered with the collage materials.

While working with your child on this project, occasionally mention the name of the letter and discuss words that start with this sound, or review the image in the story that was used to present the letter. When completed, display the collage in a prominent place to remind your child of the activity and the letter.

MATHEMATICS

This week you will explore the quality of “2.” To illustrate the essence of “2,” you might take one stick (dead, dry, and not too thick) and speak to your child about all the tiny cracks in it. Together, examine the chips of bark, the fibers, the worm holes—in spite of all these things that are a part of it, it is still very clearly “1” stick. Then ask your child to be very still while you do something magical. Hold the stick in front of you, one hand on either end, and break it in half. The shattering sound of that stick breaking and the sight of two sticks present where moments before there had been only one presents a graphic (and strangely sad) understanding of the nature of “2.”

After introducing “2” we can go on to explore ways in which it is seen in nature—day and night, sun and moon, up and down, left and right, mother and father, boys and girls. Each of these pairs leads into the idea of opposites, which can be explored in depth. Explain that neither is “better” than the other, but that both are needed to make up a world.

Eventually, this understanding of “two-ness” can be put on paper in the form of a drawing of sun and moon, or a painting of light and dark, or some other expression of opposites or pairs. In subsequent days, this understanding of “two-ness” can be related to the symbol we use when we write: 2.



Stories containing the essence of “two” usually express a battle of good and evil. Following is just such a story.

Princess Daylight

Adapted from a story in
At The Back of the North Wind
by George MacDonald

Once upon a time a queen gives birth to a baby girl. She names the princess Daylight. Many fairies come to the baby's christening, bearing wonderful gifts.

One of the guests is a wicked fairy who says that Daylight shall sleep all day and shall never see the sun. Luckily there is still one good fairy who has not yet given her gift. This good fairy gives the princess the gift of being able to stay awake all night, so she will at least see the moon. The wicked fairy demands another chance to give something, and says that if Daylight is to be awake at night, she shall be just like the moon, being strong when the moon is growing bigger or is strong and full, and weak when the moon is growing smaller or is on ly a sliver. Fortunately, there is yet one more good fairy waiting, and she adds that the spell shall last only until a prince kisses Daylight without knowing that he has kissed a princess.

And so as the princess grows, she is healthy and happy during the full moon, but is weak and sad during the shrinking moon, is awake throughout the night, and asleep at the first hint of dawn. She never sees the sun at all, and though she becomes more and more beautiful as she grows up, no king wants his son to marry her, because of the spell.

Then, in a nearby kingdom, a young prince sets out to seek adventure, disguised as a peasant. He wishes to prove to himself that he can get along just as well as other people do. One day he comes upon a house where lives a kind old woman who is actually a good fairy. She recognizes him as a prince, but does and says nothing about it. She welcomes him, giving him food and a bed for the night.

Next, the prince discovers a beautiful young woman singing and dancing in the moonlight. He watches her for hours - until he falls asleep - and when he wakes up it is daylight and he is alone. While looking for her he finds a little house he believes may be hers. He goes in and is generously fed by the cook. While he is there, he learns that the house is a favorite spot of the Princess Daylight - but of course he doesn't know that she is the dancer in the woods. That evening he goes back to the forest in hopes that the dancer will appear again.

As before, she appears with the moonrise and the prince watches her dance the whole night long. As the moon goes down she retreats into the trees until she disappears altogether. He then goes back to the old woman's cottage, where he is again given breakfast and a place to rest. Again he waits in the forest at moonrise and sees the princess dance more joyously than ever under the full moon, but suddenly clouds, thunder and lightning come and he sees the princess fall to the ground.

Thinking she is injured, he runs to her. She is not happy to see him, but soon they start talking. She asks him about the sun. He is surprised she has never seen it, and tells her how beautiful it is. Then she retreats to her cottage, not inviting him to follow.

The prince's wanderings take him into the neighborhood of the swamp fairy, who makes sure he gets lost and cannot find either the princess or the good fairy's cottage for seven days. One day towards dawn, during the time when the moon is getting smaller and smaller, he sees a person lying under a tree. She is about the size of a child, and appears to be very sick. Her eyes are closed but he does his best to revive her. When he does, she weeps and cries but won't tell him what is wrong. She seems ill and weak, and she looks quite pitiful.

Believing she is dying, he carries her to the princess's cottage in the woods, thinking the cook there might be able to help. When she moans and weeps, his heart is moved, and he kisses her. As he approaches the door of the cottage he realizes that he is, in fact, carrying Princess Daylight herself, who, by his kiss, is freed from the spell at last and has been restored to health. Of course he is overjoyed to see her, and before long they marry and live happily ever after.

After telling your child this story, help him or her draw a picture of it in the Main Lesson Book. A drawing of the sun on one side of the page and the moon on the other would show "two-ness" very nicely, as would a prince and a princess standing side by side, perhaps with a sun over his head and a moon over hers.

CREATIVE PLAY

SCIENCE - Week 4 of Fall Quarter

Take a walk in an area where there are different kinds of trees. Ask your child to feel the bark of the different trees with his hand. Point out that some bark feels smooth while other bark is rough, some objects in nature are hard and some are soft, some trees are large and some are small.



Gather autumn leaves, and as you do, talk about their various colors. Gather several leaves from each of the trees you discover. When you return home, ask your child to sort the leaves into piles, putting all of the leaves of the same type of tree in one pile. Ask your child to point out the biggest and smallest leaves, the longest and shortest, heaviest and lightest ones. Help him arrange the leaves in order from smallest to largest. Then rearrange them from shortest to longest. Can you think of any other ways to sort the leaves? What about color?

It is not desirable to teach your child the types of trees and leaves at this age. This requires a degree of mental focus and analytical thinking that will come easily when the child is older. There is no need to rush the development of these faculties.

After you have finished with all the sorting and arranging activities, press the leaves between pages of a book so that they may be added to your child's science scrapbook. It will take several days for them to be ready - don't forget them! If you wish to rush the process, you can iron them between sheets of waxed paper, cut out the leaf shapes with a 1/2" of waxed paper all around, and glue them in the Main Lesson Book.

After your day's adventure, discuss the weather conditions. Was it a hot, cold, rainy, sunny, cloudy, foggy, clear, warm, or cool day? Try to make your child aware of the weather each day, not in a heavy or analytical way, but simply as a discussion during or after any outdoor activities.

CRAFTS

Help your child make "Nature Silhouettes" as described in the *Oak Meadow First Book of Crafts*.

Make a "Pinwheel" as described in your craft book.