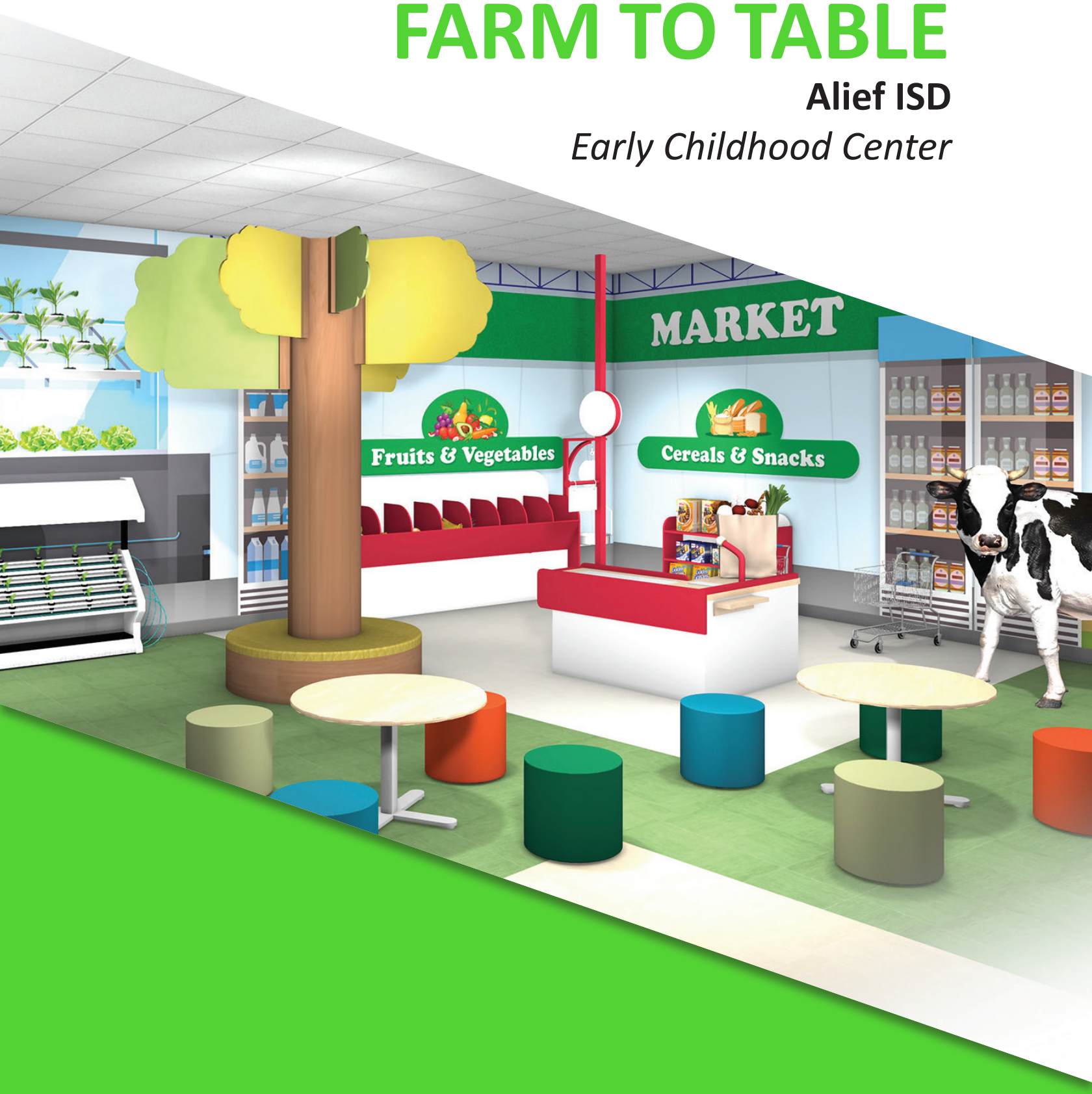
FARM TO TABLE

Alief ISD

Early Childhood Center



EXPLORATION™ zones

by Exhibit Concepts, Inc.

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EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

Welcome to your new classroom! You may be experiencing many emotions—excitement, uncertainty, even apprehension. This is completely expected. Experiential learning may be new to you as a concept or theory, but rest assured, many of the principles that bind experiential learning have likely been applied by you for years. Experiential learning embodies the active participation, social engagement, and meaningful connections that we know are the pillars of play-based learning. Play is how young children learn!

This guide is intended to support you as you transition to a new classroom environment. You will find helpful background information on the theory, activity ideas organized by skill domains, experiential learning resources, and tools to assist you in reflective teaching practices. Most importantly, have fun with your students in this new learning environment. The classroom space really is a second teacher and the possibilities are endless!

What is Experiential Education?

Experiential education is a theory that acknowledges humans as active participants in the learning process. In the classroom, students are at the center of the learning process, actively engaging and participating in decision-making. Students' interests and needs drive topics of study with small group and individual projects evolving from their curiosities and real-life events. Experiential learning environments, like museums and zoos, naturally provide opportunities for inquiry-based learning that inspire curiosity and passion. These same features and opportunities are available in experiential learning classrooms.

How does experiential education impact your role as a teacher?

Teachers learn about students by actively listening and observing. You listen to conversations, observe students' choices, and communicate with families. Through this listening and observing, you can make assumptions about what students know and provide new materials, activities, and experiences that help expand upon this knowledge. By asking open-ended questions and encouraging students to make observations, students begin to build a schema that continues to grow.

How does experiential education impact the students' role?

Students are at the center of the learning process. Students' interests and needs drive topics of conversation and participation in activities. Students in experiential learning classrooms make choices and decisions throughout the day. They choose whether they play alone or in a group, they choose activity options that sound most appealing, and they choose to engage with interesting materials and equipment.

How Do I Use an Experiential Education Classroom?

A new classroom can be overwhelming, not only for you, but for your students too. Being prepared can help manage those overwhelming feelings and set you up for success in your new environment. Before introducing the classrooms to your students, take a gallery walk in each classroom, taking in the sights and sounds without interruptions. As you are noticing and observing features in the classroom, think about big ideas or themes that might naturally stem from these features. You can list activities or play-based items that might align with these ideas; several activity ideas and accompanying items are provided in the educator guide to help you get started. Introduce the classrooms to the students by taking a community gallery walk. Ask students to describe what they notice, how they feel, and what they would like to know more about.

What Will I Find in Each Experiential Education Classroom?

Each experiential education classroom includes similar best practices and strategies for working with young children, not only in the design but in the supportive activities. The unique themes and content can lead to new ideas and projects stemming from students' interests and questions. Each classroom includes:

- **A General Supply Kit:** A collection of materials that can be used in open-ended ways
- **Magnetic Boards:** Engagement tools for group learning or individual interactions
- **A Classroom Library:** Developmentally appropriate Spanish and English, non-fiction and fiction books, that support the theme
- **Sensory Exploration:** A station or area that encourages inquiry-based investigations
- **An Educator Guide:** A facilitation tool that includes supportive activities and ideas for assessment

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ACTIVITIES



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FARM TO TABLE

What's in a Grocery Store?

FT.01

VII.B.2 Child demonstrates an understanding of what it means to be a consumer.
VIII.C.1 Child creates or recreates experiences through dramatic representations.

Grocery stores are much more than places to buy food. Grocery stores are the pillar of a community and bring people together. In small groups, students make comparisons between authentic grocery stores and classroom faux produce and packaged food products. Students sort by product type and check out using the simulated grocery scanner.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Introduce the grocery items, cash register and money, and reusable shopping bags to the students. Students can explore the items and roles associated with the setting and items.
2. As an educator-directed experience, ask students to explore ways to sort the items. Students can sort by fruits vs. vegetables; bottles, boxes, and cans; and by refrigerator vs. pantry, among countless other ways.

TEACHING STRATEGY

In addition to using faux food items, you can also add real food containers from home. Encourage friends, parents, and other educators to save empty containers to add to the grocery story. Please take allergen precautions.

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FARM TO TABLE

Down on the Farm

FT.02

VI.B.3 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the relationship of organisms in their environments.
VIII.C.1 Child creates or recreates experiences through dramatic representations.

Humans and farm animals contribute to the mutual well-being of one another. Humans provide food, shelter, and empathy to farm animals and farm animals support the need for human food and other byproducts. Students explore the roles and relationships animals and humans assume by engaging in free group exploration of farm-associated materials.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Make a brainstorm web with a large or small group. With the farmer in the center of the web, brainstorm the animals you might find on a farm. Discuss the relationship between a farmer and the farm animals.
2. Set out the farm play materials. You can set the stage for play by providing scenarios, such as: feed the farm animals, plant the seeds, or build a barn. Students can also freely explore the materials, setting up their own scenarios.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Play farm animal charades before introducing the farmer costumes and farm animals. Students can take turn pretending to be a farm animal while encouraging others to guess the animal's identity. The assumption of identity can extend to dramatic play.
- Add the farm animals to a sensory table or plastic bin filled with water and dish soap and ask students to give the farm animals a "bath."
- Make some "hay" by shredding paper bags and encouraging students to color the hay brown and yellow.

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FARM TO TABLE

Pollination Demonstration

FT.03

II.D.1 Child understands (receptive) and uses (expressive) a wide variety of words to label, describe and make connections among objects, people, places, actions, and events.
III.D.2 Child uses information learned from books by describing, relating, categorizing, or comparing and contrasting.

Pollination is the process that allows plants to reproduce. Simple classroom demonstrations can help young students understand this process. Using a large, labeled diagram of a flower, educator can point out parts of a flower asking for students to repeat new terms. A follow-up demonstration using chalk and cotton balls can reinforce the terms and clarify the abstract process.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. After reading *Animal Pollinators* by Jennifer Boothroyd, review the animals and insects that can serve as pollinators. Highlight the labeled diagram of a flower, pointing out the parts and function of the following and asking students to repeat new terms: flower, petals, leaves, stem, and roots.
2. Ask students to color their individual flower with marker or crayon. Ask students to color the center of the flower with a piece of chalk. After students are done coloring, have them place their flowers around the classroom. Using a cotton ball (bee), stop by each flower and rub the cotton ball in the center of the flower. What do you notice about your cotton ball? The chalk (pollen) transferred from the flower onto the bee.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

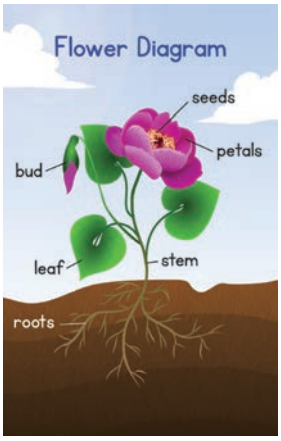
- Turn the “bee” (cotton ball) into a visual replica by adding construction paper wings and antennae.
- Use other materials to serve as pollinators and pollen, such as: pipe cleaners, straws, tape, clothes pins, and felt (pollinators), and glitter, baby powder, and crushed Cheerios (pollen).

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FARM TO TABLE

Farm to Table Word Bank: Alphabet Stamps

FT.04

III.C.1 Child recognizes and names at least 20 letters (upper- or lower-case letters).
IV.A.1 Child intentionally uses marks, letters, or symbols to record language and verbally shares meaning.

Each themed classroom includes a word bank. A featured activity will be included with each themed word bank. **Alphabet Stamps:** Students use alphabet stamps to find letters that match letters from words in the word bank. Students can make their own word bank over time to leave in the writing center.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

Place the alphabet stamps, ink pads, index cards, and word bank in the writing center to encourage free exploration. Students can also "write" word bank words with the stamps or create new word bank words from environmental print or words from the classroom library.

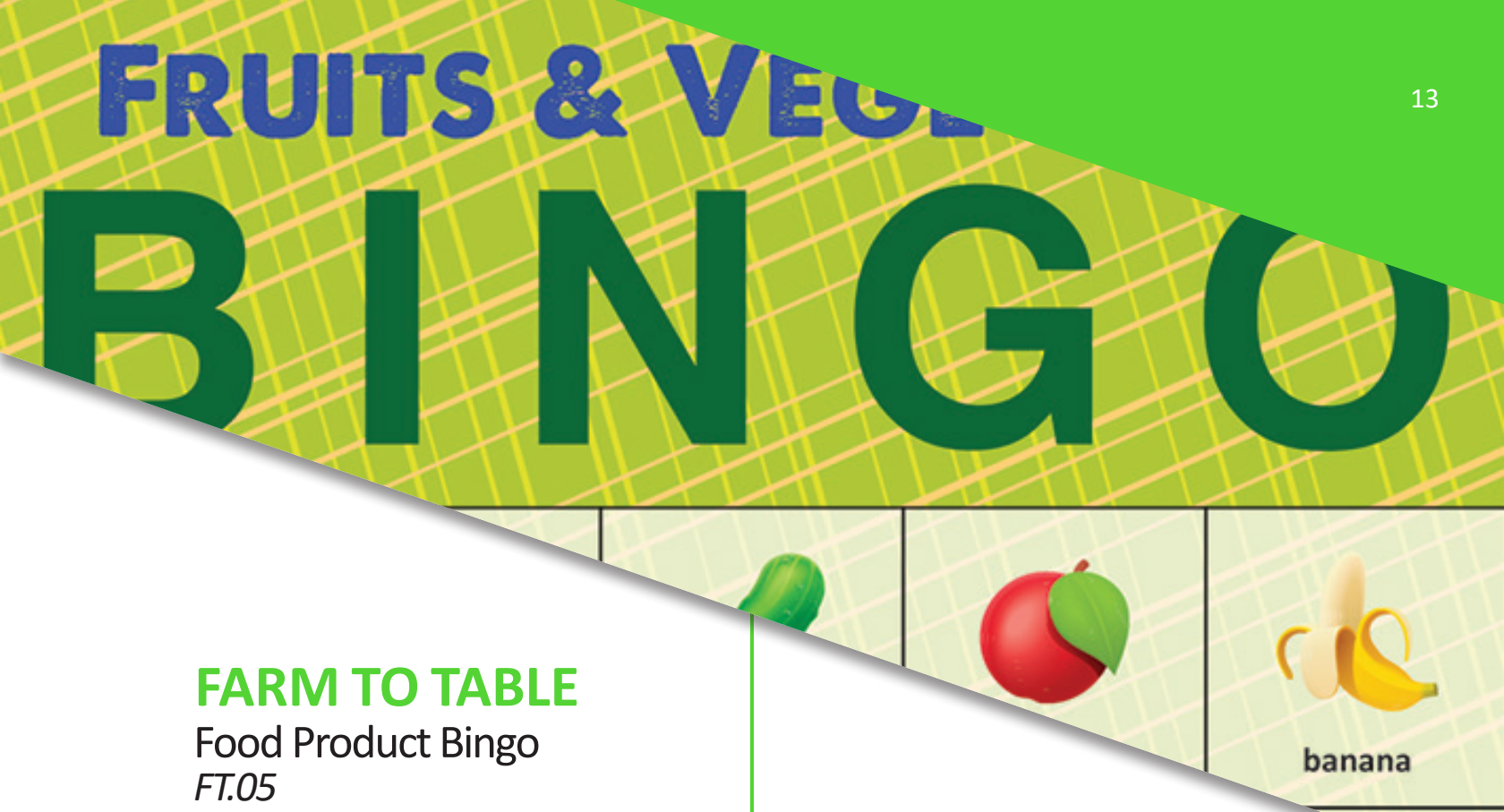
TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Make simple alphabet cards to use in the writing center. Include each letter of the alphabet and encourage students to find the matching alphabet stamp.
- Add envelopes to the writing center and challenge students to "write" a letter to a family member or friend using the alphabet stamps.
- Use clean stamps (no ink) to stamp impressions into Play-Doh.

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FARM TO TABLE

Food Product Bingo

FT.05

II.D.1 Child understands (receptive) and uses (expressive) a wide variety of words to label, describe and make connections among objects, people, places, actions, and events.
III.A.3 Child recognizes that all print carries meaning and serves as a means for communication.

Bingo games help students learn to associate pictures with words and help build a robust vocabulary. Using images from the classroom grocery market, students match the product to the corresponding item as it is called out from the Bingo caller.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

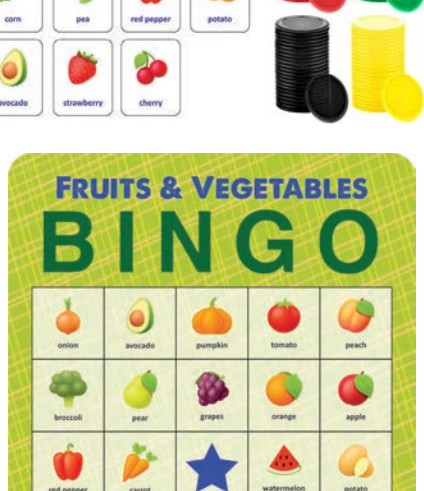
1. Pass out the Bingo cards and go over the words and pictures on the game boards. Explain that each box will be covered with a Bingo chip as an item is called out. A box may be covered once and some boxes may be left over.
2. As you call out items from the caller cards, be sure students are using the Bingo chips to cover an item. Remind students that Bingo looks like a filled row.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Bingo games can be easily created to apply to other concepts. You can create a Bingo game for alphabet recognition, word bank words, pictures, and even numbers using laminated paper or contact paper.

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FARM TO TABLE

Retelling a Story

FT.06

III.D.1 Child retells or re-enacts a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

In the book titled, *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins, Rosie is an oblivious little hen that leads a sly fox on a walk and into mishaps. Students practice retelling the story in the Hen House using props such as puppets and in-class made scenery after listening to the group read aloud.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Read *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins, pointing out positional words like over, under, around, near, and far as you are describing Rosie's position to the fox.
2. Before a second reading, use the tissue paper (or construction paper) to cut out shapes to simulate props from the story, including the rake, pond, haystack, windmill, fence, beehive, and chicken coop. During a second reading, ask students to assume character roles by using the puppets and following along on the simulated story props.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Print story maps from education sites (www.teacherspayteachers.com, www.twinkl.com) and have students follow along as you read the story.
- Place the puppets and storytelling props in the classroom Hen House for students to retell the story as a center-based activity.

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FARM TO TABLE

Farm to Table Alphabet: Sensory ABC Bags

FT.07

III.C.1 Child recognizes and names at least 20 letters (upper- or lower-case letters).

Each themed classroom includes a magnetic alphabet. A featured activity will be included with each themed magnetic alphabet. **Sensory ABC Bags:** Using alphabet boards as a reference, students letter hunt in a rice bag. Students use their sense of sight and sense of touch to find letter tiles that match the alphabet board. The letters on the alphabet board match the themed magnetic letters.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

Add rice to the containers, roughly ¾ container full. Add one set of letter blocks and mix up in the rice. Encourage students to find letters in the containers and match to the alphabet board.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Use the included bases to introduce rhyming words. During small group or large group interactions, you can switch out beginning letters to say, out loud, rhyming words. Leave the letter tiles and bases in the writing center to encourage free exploration and matching word bank words.
- Turn this activity into a sensory ABC bag. Fill a gallon-sized bag ¾ full of rice and add paper letters, magnetic letters, or the letter blocks. Seal the bag with packing tape. Students can search through the sealed bag to find the letters and write down once they find a letter.

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FARM TO TABLE

Create a Recipe

FT.08

III.A.3 Child recognizes that all print carries meaning and serves as a means for communication.
IV.A.1 Child intentionally uses marks, letters, or symbols to record language and verbally shares meaning.

After reading the book *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert, students create recipes using items from the U-Pick garden center. Ingredient cards with visuals and recipe boards from the U-Pick garden center help students sort items into food categories.

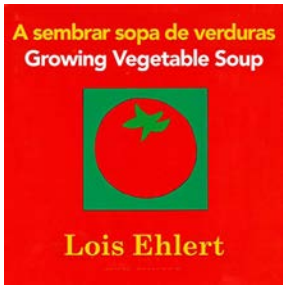
DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Read aloud *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert, drawing attention to the vegetables on each page. On chart paper, draw a two-column graphic, labeling one side “vegetables” and one side “fruits.” As a group, recall vegetables from the story and record in the column. Brainstorm fruits for the second column and record.
2. Introduce the recipe boards and ingredient cards to the students, highlighting the direct correlation to items in the U-Pick garden center. Students apply their understanding of fruits and vegetables to create recipes that sound interesting to eat. Students can share their recipe with the class.

TEACHING STRATEGY

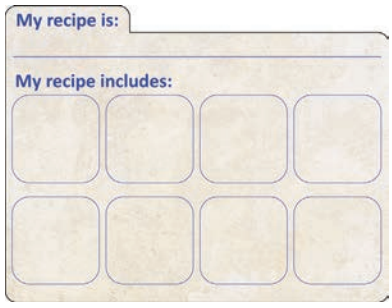
Students can make vegetable soup using construction paper vegetables and paper plates. Cut out a variety of vegetables and leave in the writing center along with paper plates and glue sticks. During center-based learning, encourage students to create their own vegetable soup by gluing vegetables onto their pot (paper plate).

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I Can Recycle

FT.09

III.D.2 Child uses information learned from books by describing, relating, categorizing, or comparing and contrasting.
IV.B.1 Child discusses and contributes ideas for drafts composed in whole/small group writing activities.

Recycling is an important concept to introduce to young children as they are learning to become environmentally responsible humans. Educators can model recycling in the classroom by co-creating, with students, a list of recyclable items and designing a recycling center with categories that become part of the classroom routine.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. After reading *Recycling is Fun* by Charles Ghinga, introduce the class to the recycling bags and start a list of recyclable materials on chart paper. Ask the following questions: "What does it mean to recycle?," "What do you recycle at home?," "What can you recycle in the classroom?," and "Why do we recycle?" Post the list and continue to add items as you have discussions about recycling in the classroom.
2. You are likely to use the paper recycling bag most often in the classroom. Encourage students to place scraps of paper in the bag and be sure to use both sides of a piece of paper when creating process art in the classroom.

TEACHING STRATEGY

Create an anchor chart with your students, highlighting other ways we take care of our planet. Start with planet Earth in the middle and branch out with ideas such as: turning off lights when we aren't using them, riding a bike instead of driving a car, and using public transportation. Continue to add ideas as you have more classroom discussions.

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Plant Sort

FT.10

VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the characteristics of organisms.
V.E.1 Child sorts objects that are the same and different into groups and uses language to describe how the groups are similar and different.

Students explore the life cycle of plants, sort fruits and vegetables, and discover elements of the growing process by exploring the Plants Magnetic Activity Tin in a self-directed way. Students can further enhance their understanding of plant life cycles by interacting with deconstructed plant diagrams and putting them back together.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

Introduce the Plants Magnetic Activity Tin and Plants Instant Learning Center as a center-based activity. Include paper for students to use to create their own plant pictures, using the deconstructed stamps and diagrams. Encourage students to create an imaginary plant and share details with the class.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Extend the activity by sorting seeds. Using paper cups or a sorting tray and a collection of seeds, have students sort by type, color, and more. Have discussions about the origin of the seeds.
- Provide students with a live flower to dissect during center-based explorations. Flowers with large parts like lilies, tulips, and daffodils work well. Encourage students to look for the flower parts indicated in the Plants Magnetic Activity Tin.

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FARM TO TABLE

Plant, Fruit, and Vegetable Puzzles

FT.11

V.C.2 Child creates shapes using materials and/or manipulatives.
V.C.4 Child recognizes common shapes, regardless of orientation and size.

Students learn about parts to whole relationships and problem solving by manipulating puzzle pieces. Developmentally appropriate puzzles with a plant-based theme spark curiosity and encourage students to find out more about the plant growing process and parts of a plant.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

Puzzles are a wonderful free-choice or center activity as they help young children think critically, visually discriminate, and problem solve with little assistance or direction. Place the puzzles in a free-choice center for individual or peer-to-peer exploration.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Students can make their own puzzles by tracing puzzle pieces, coloring a picture on their tracing, and cutting out the pieces, with adult assistance.
- Play puzzle mash-up. Put all of the puzzle pieces on the floor in a pile. Students return the pieces to the correct base, adding a critical thinking element to the fun!
- Play puzzle hunt. Hide a few pieces of a puzzle and encourage students to find the missing pieces to make a whole.

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FARM TO TABLE

Welcome to the Farm Magnetic Board

FT.12

II.D.1 Child understands (receptive) and uses (expressive) a wide variety of words to label, describe and make connections among objects, people, places, actions, and events.
VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the characteristics of organisms.
IV.A.1 Child intentionally uses marks, letters, or symbols to record language and verbally shares meaning.

Through free exploration, students can manipulate, sort, and organize farm animal, crop, and farm feature magnets in new ways. Students identify animals and crops they would see in their own environment and consider how agriculture is important to their daily life.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

Place the farm-themed magnets on the magnetic wall for free exploration. Encourage students to sort the magnets, match, have discussions about farm features, and use the magnets to tell a story about life on the farm.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Add the magnets to the writing center to entice tracing. Students can trace the farm animals and crops, and add details using a variety of art materials (crayons, markers, tissue paper, construction paper, glue, etc.).
- Create a class farm story using the magnets. Choose a character, feature, and crop from the magnet selection. You can record your story on chart paper and continue adding details or create a new story each day!

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FARM TO TABLE

Seed and Bean Sort

FT.13

V.E.1 Child sorts objects that are the same and different into groups and uses language to describe how the groups are similar and different.
IX.B.1 Child shows control of tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.

Young children have a natural desire to sort and classify as they make sense of the world around them. Using real seeds and beans and sorting boards that provide direction, students sort and organize in many ways. As an extension, students can consider other ways to sort and organize that are relevant to them.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Distribute a handful of beans/seeds and a paper plate or paper towel to the students. Invite students to sort their objects in any way they would like initially: by size, kind, color, shape, etc. As students are sorting, ask them how they are sorting.
2. Distribute the sorting mats and encourage students to use the categories on the mats to sort.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Soak the beans and seeds in water overnight and dissect them the next day. Students can make comparisons between a dry bean/seed and a wet bean/seed.
- Talk about the different ways a seed can travel: by wind, water, animals, and even on the bottom of your shoe! *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle is a great story to read about the travel path of a seed.

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FARM TO TABLE

Hydroponics: Where Does Food Come From?

FT.14

VI.B.2 Child observes, describes, and discusses the life cycles of organisms.

Agriculture conversations and activities in the preschool classroom help shape positive attitudes toward food that lead to healthy eating decisions in the future. When young children learn about hydroponics and the history behind growing food, they can apply their understanding to hydroponic observations and activity opportunities in the classroom. Students participate in an observation walk and share as part of the daily classroom routine.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to think about all the different things plants need to grow. Record on chart paper. Is soil one of those needs? Explain that hydroponics (big word!) is growing plants in water. Water gives the plants all the needed nutrients.
2. Do a gallery walk of the classroom hydroponics system (walk and talk). Ask students what do you notice? Point out specific details of the system to students. After setting up the hydroponics system for growth, continue daily gallery walks and simple journaling. Students can keep track of daily and weekly changes and help you monitor pH levels.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Familiarize yourself with the process of hydroponics. Several resources include: *Hydroponics: The Essential Hydroponics Guide* by Andy Jacobson (provided), National Agricultural Library www.nal.usda.gov, and National Park Service www.nps.gov/articles/hydroponics.htm.
- Experiment with other root supporters like Rockwool or cotton balls and compare plant growth. What do you notice about growth rate, plant size, and plant appearance between plants growth with different root supporters?

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FARM TO TABLE

Making Observations

FT.15

VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the characteristics of organisms.
IV.A.1 Child intentionally uses marks, letters, or symbols to record language and verbally shares meaning.

Observation is an integral part of the inquiry process. When young children learn how to observe, they make new discoveries and in turn, fit the new discoveries into their existing schema. Educators can ask students focused questions as they use observation tools such as magnifying glasses and tripods while observing plant and life cycle specimen in acrylic sets.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Leave the specimen and magnifiers on a table for free exploration. Use the specimen as a starting place to ask the following questions: “What do you see?,” “What do you think this is?,” and “What do you notice about this object?”
2. Encourage students to build an exhibition of objects. They can create “signs,” display items like a museum exhibition, create invitations for friends and family, and hold an opening. Children gain knowledge from the experience and confidence by sharing it.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Build a classroom collection of natural items to observe in a learning center. Encourage children to collect items when outside on walks or recess. Continue building the collection as seasons change and invite families to contribute items to the classroom collection.
- Students can make a simple specimen box using a shoebox or old tin and ring dividers. Students can place natural items found outside in their individual specimen box and even “label” items using stickers.

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EXPLORATION™ zones



FARM TO TABLE

Composting in the Classroom
FT.16

VI.C.1 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses earth materials, and their properties and uses.
VI.C.4 Child demonstrates an understanding of the importance of caring for our environment and our planet.

Students discover that composting is important in keeping our Earth and environment healthy and also essential in growing crops. After reading *Wonderful Worms* by Linda Glasser, educator can begin a composting center using bins, needs-based signage, and compost worm purchasing recommendations.

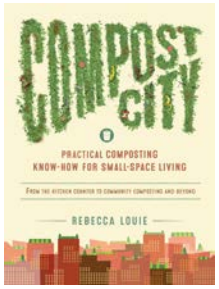
DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. After reading *Wonderful Worms* by Linda Glaser, reiterate that all of our food comes from the Earth. Through composting (big word for preschoolers, although, repeated exposure helps to build a robust vocabulary), we can recycle our leftover food so that it returns to the earth. Brainstorm and chart a list of food/materials that can be composted, e.g., paper, food scraps, leaves, and introduce the "Our Compost Bin Needs" sign.
2. Setting up the worm bin is fun and low maintenance! Worms eat the vegetative food scraps and turn them into fertilizer. Place the worm bin in an area with good ventilation, add wet newspaper strips and soil to the bottom. Add worms and food scraps/paper scraps as they become available in the classroom. Draw attention to the "Our Compost Bin Needs" sign throughout the day and continue to have discussions about the life cycle: life, death, decay, and rebirth.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

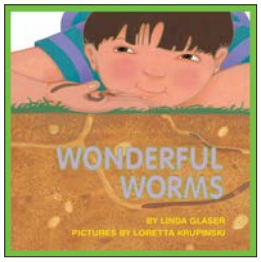
- Familiarize yourself with the process of composting. Several resources include: The US Composting Council https://www.compostingcouncil.org/page/Education and the Environmental Protection Agency https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home.
- Be sure to purchase your worms from a reputable source. Red wrigglers are recommended but manure worms also work. Worm resources include: Uncle Jim's Worm Farm https://unclejimswormfarm.com and/or local breeders of vermicomposting worms Texas Jumpers www.texasredworms.com.

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FARM TO TABLE

Life Cycle Exploration

FT.17

VI.B.2 Child observes, describes, and discusses the life cycles of organisms.

Sequencing cards help reinforce abstract concepts and allow students to refine ideas as they learn new information. Life cycle of a butterfly, chicken, and frog sequencing cards give students the opportunity to manipulate the stages in a self-directed way.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

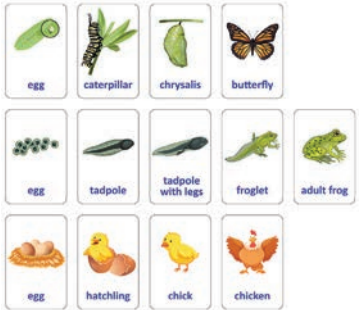
1. You can introduce the concept of a life cycle by reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. Explain that a life cycle is the change that happens to a living creature over its lifetime. What changes happen to the butterfly from the start of an egg?
2. The life cycle sequencing kit and life cycle sequencing cards work well as a center-based activity. You can ask students guiding questions as they are exploring the materials. Ask guiding questions such as: "How would you put the frog/chicken/butterfly in order by change?," "Describe how the frog/chicken/butterfly has changed," and "How have you changed since you were born?"

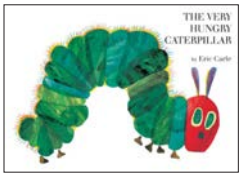
TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Add the life cycle manipulatives to a sensory bin. For the frog life cycle manipulatives, add water, food coloring, rocks, and lily pads cut from foam sheets. For the chicken life cycle manipulatives, add corn, shredded paper to simulate straw, and sticks to build a chicken coop. For the butterfly life cycle manipulatives, add sticks and shredded tissue paper.
- Print additional life cycle sequencing cards (4-5 visuals), laminate, and add the cards to the science center for free exploration. The life cycle of a bee and the life cycle of a flower are two examples to explore.
- Ask children to bring in photos of themselves as infants. Post the photos and ask students to make predictions about who is in each photo. Have discussions about how they have grown and changed since the photos were taken.

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FARM TO TABLE

Growing a Garden

FT.18

VI.B.1 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the characteristics of organisms.
VI.B.3 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the relationship of organisms in their environments.
VI.C.1 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses earth materials, and their properties and uses.

Growing a classroom garden is a community effort and includes participation from the entire class! After reading *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle and *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss, the class will record what is needed to transform a seed into a plant on chart paper using sequencing cards. The students can grow individual plants, a classroom plant, or small group plants, recording observations as the seeds transform.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

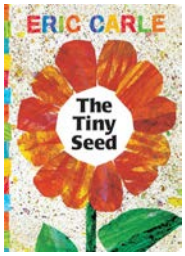
1. Read *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle and *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss, comparing and contrasting the two books and discussing what a seed does. You can record new vocabulary words on chart paper to be displayed.
2. Give students a starter container and ask them to fill the container halfway with potting soil. Place the seeds in the center of the cup and cover the seeds with soil. Add a small amount of water and leave the containers in a location that receives considerable sunlight. Consider the seed packet directions and water accordingly each day.

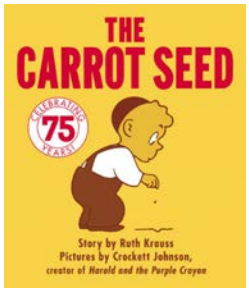
TEACHING STRATEGY

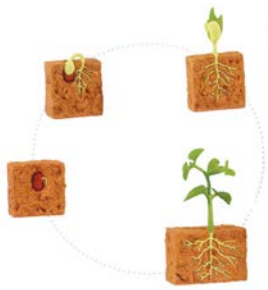
Ask students to "record" their daily observations of the seed. Students can make comparisons to the daily observations of the hydroponic plants. Are the changes between the plants the same? Are the changes different? Measure the growth using non-standard and standard measuring tools.

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FARM TO TABLE

Mobile Dairy Classroom Outreach

FT.19

VII.B.3 Child discusses the roles and responsibilities of family, school, and community helpers.

Southwest, Southland Dairy Farmers teach students about the dairy industry and the role of dairy farmers through a traveling milking parlor outreach program. Instructors demonstrate how to milk a cow, describe how the milk goes from the farm to the consumer, and then answers questions. Several ways to prepare for and extend the outreach experience are included.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Outreach programming gives preschool students the opportunity to experience authentic activities without the challenges of leaving the classroom. Before inviting the Mobile Dairy Classroom, continue discussing where the food we eat is grown and emphasizing how important farmers are to our daily lives.
2. Ask students where milk comes from (dairy farm). Tell students that milk provides them with calcium, vitamin D, and other important vitamins that help them grow. Students can think about the foods they eat that are made from milk by participating in an action poll. Say the following poll statements:
    - Jump up and down if you had cereal with milk on it for breakfast.
    - Reach up high if you like yogurt.
    - Run in place if you drink milk with your lunch or dinner.
    - Bend to the side if you like string cheese for snack.
    - Spin around if you like chocolate milk.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Southwest, Southland Dairy Farmers, Mobile Dairy Classroom is a free outreach program. Be sure to schedule an experience well in advance to make connections to the Farm to Table classroom.
- Turn Ole Bessie into a milking station. Fill a rubber glove with water and tie off the opening. Prick the end of a finger with a needle and allow students to grasp and squeeze the finger downward into a bucket.

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FARM TO TABLE

Seed and Bean Mosaics

FT.20

VIII.A.1 Child uses a variety of art materials for sensory experiences and exploration.
IX.B.1 Child shows control of tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.

Students use dried beans and seeds to create animal mosaics. Mosaic boards and a variety of bean and seed shapes, sizes, and colors are available for free exploration.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. Mosaics were created in ancient times and made of tiny colored pieces of stone, pottery, glass, or other materials arranged together to make a pattern or image. Students can make a simulated mosaic using a template and beans/seeds. In a center-based learning area of the classroom, provide students with the mosaic templates and assortment of beans/seeds. Students can use glue to adhere beans/seeds in patterns and/or shapes. Educator can make an example to leave out as inspiration.
2. As an extension, students can make their own mosaic boards out of paper or cardboard. They can use stencils or Farm to Table magnets to trace an outline and fill in the template with beans/seeds.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Pre-paint your beans/seeds with tempera paint and allow to dry. Students can use the additional colors to enhance mosaic templates or make new patterns and/or shapes.
- Create a bean/seed classroom mural to be displayed. Draw templates on butcher paper and ask students to fill in the templates over a period of time.

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FARM TO TABLE

All of the Pollinators

FT.21

VI.B.3 Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses the relationship of organisms in their environments.
VIII.A.2 Child uses art as a form of creative self-expression and representation.
IX.B.2 Child shows increasing control of tasks that require eye-hand coordination.

Students learn that many insects and animals can serve as pollinators including butterflies, bees, moths, and even birds and bats! Students become pollinators by becoming their favorite pollinator and pollinating faux flowers around the classroom.

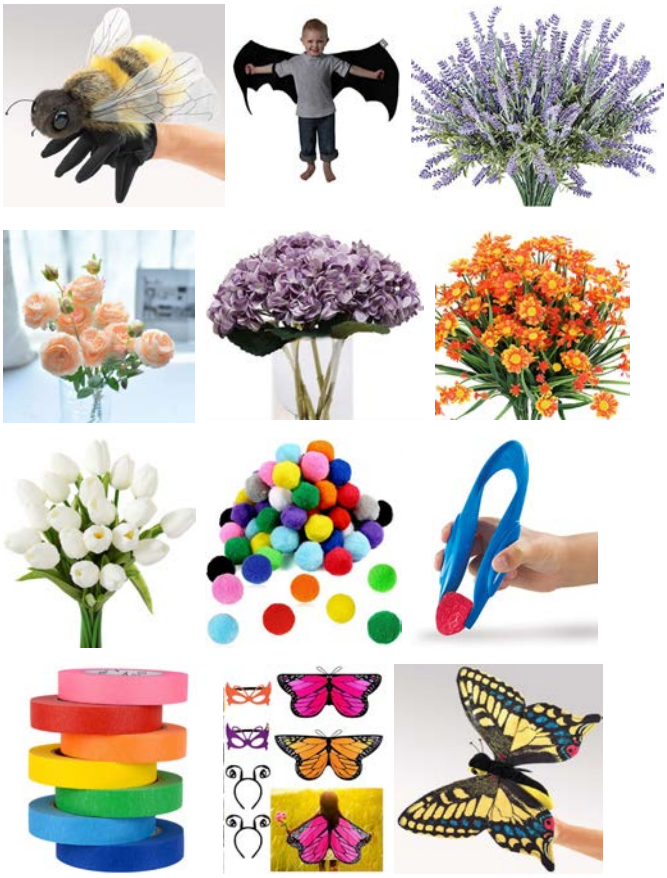
DOING THE ACTIVITY

Set up the materials for students to explore freely. Demonstrate a pollination simulation using the faux flowers, pom poms, and jumbo tweezers. Students can "pollinate" the faux flowers as they assume the role of pollinator, moving pom poms from one flower to another.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Give students a pollination directive such as, "pollinate all of the lilacs with blue pom poms," or "pollinate all of the roses with red pom poms." Students can work on color or number recognition with educator directives.
- Create additional pollinator puppets using simple materials like paper, craft sticks, and pipe cleaners. Students can use the puppets during their dramatic play.

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FARM TO TABLE

Tabletop Sensory Bins

FT.22

VIII.C.1 Child creates or recreates stories, moods, or experiences through dramatic representations.
IXB.1 Child shows control of tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.

Sensory bins encourage open-ended exploration as children use their senses without the expectation of an end product. Rotating materials in the sensory bins is important to incite curiosity and encourage the use of all senses. Students are provided tactile materials with a farm-to-table theme to explore and manipulate.

DOING THE ACTIVITY

For easy clean-up, empty the sensory material (lentils, beans, or corn) into the plastic container and add additional materials (farm animals, farm toys, and blocks) for enhanced play. Be sure to swap out the sensory material and have discussions about material texture and shape.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Encourage children to add materials to extend pretend play, such as paper or pom poms to serve as fruits and vegetables, and craft sticks that can be turned into a fence.
- Turn the sensory bin into a mud exploration center by mixing brown tempera paint, water, and cornstarch. Students can give the animals a “bath” in a sensory bin of fresh water.

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FARM TO TABLE

Plants Can't Be Still

FT.23

IX.A.2 Child coordinates sequence of movements to perform tasks.

Plants are living things, and just like humans, they eat, grow, and move! Students are introduced to the book *Plants Can't Sit Still* by Rebecca E. Hirsch and discover the many ways plants and their seeds move. Students try out the movements with their own bodies while listening to music that encourages swaying and plant-like movements.

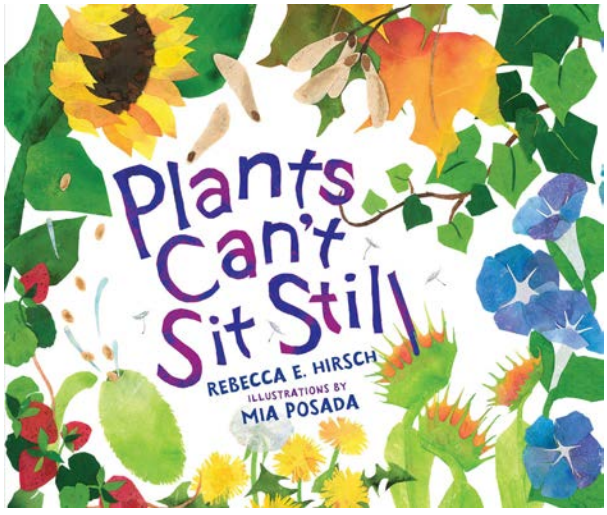
DOING THE ACTIVITY

1. After reading the book *Plants Can't Sit Still* by Rebecca Hirsch, invite students to think about all of the ways plants move. Ask the students to think about their walks to school or out riding their bike. What do they notice about the way plants move?
2. Tell students they are going to make movements like plants. Pass out the classroom management circles and remind them they will be doing their movements on the circle (personal bubble). Have the students explore the following movements as you call them out: wiggling, stretching, lifting, reaching, folding, unfolding, climbing, creeping, swaying, and skipping.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Try movements that require moving from one place to another, such as: bouncing, exploding, flinging, whirling, floating, gliding, skipping, and galloping. You can make a line on the floor using painter's tape to encourage students to keep a personal bubble.
- Create a dance that mimics the life cycle of a plant (repetition). Have students think of a movement for seed, germinate, sprout, and flower and repeat the movements to create a dance.

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FARM TO TABLE

Play-Doh Worms

FT.24

V.A.2 Child counts up to 10 objects with one-to-one correspondence.
V.B.1 Child uses objects, pictorial models, and/or a verbal word problem to represent adding up to 5 objects.
IX.B.2 Child shows increasing control of tasks that require eye-hand coordination.

Exploring Play-Doh increases fine motor strength and skills. Students squish, roll, sculpt, and mold Play-Doh to create worms to match the number of worms on an activity mat. As students are strengthening the small muscles in their fingers, they are making one-to-one associations.

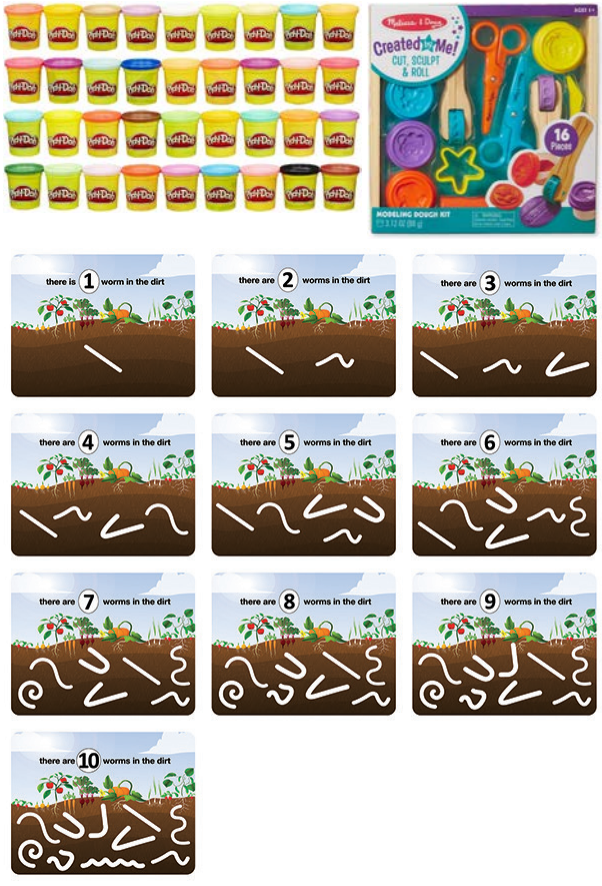
DOING THE ACTIVITY

The worm mats and Play-Doh can be used in a center-based learning area. Introduce the materials, asking students to manipulate Play-Doh worms to match the corresponding worm mat. Encourage students to make shorter and longer worms, discussing the size difference between the worms.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Use the Play-Doh in dramatic play! Children can manipulate Play-Doh to create mud, grass, water, and structures for the farm animals.
- Create additional Play-Doh mats using farm-themed backdrops printed on cardstock or laminated paper. Encourage children to design farm animals out of Play-Doh.
- To focus on one-to-one associations rather than fine motor development, use pipe cleaners or yarn as worms.

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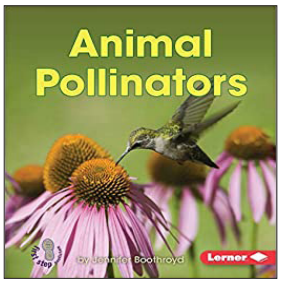
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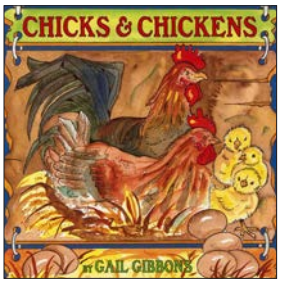


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NON-FICTION



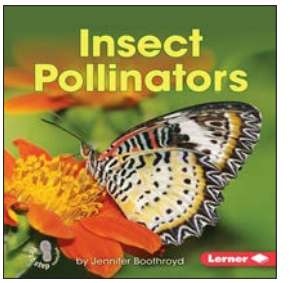
Animal Pollinators



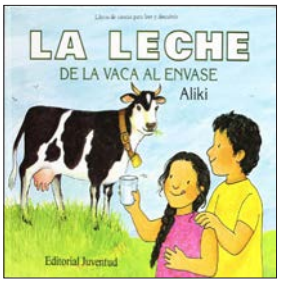
Chicks and Chickens



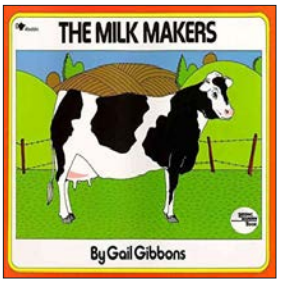
Don't Throw That Away!



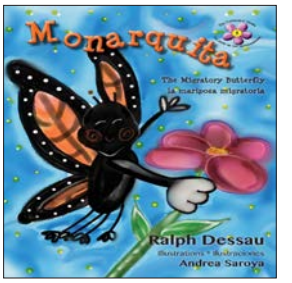
Insect Pollinators



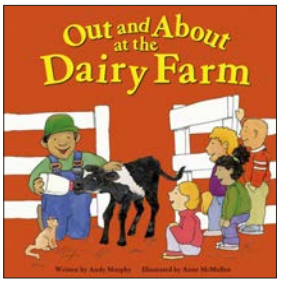
La Leche de la Vaca al Envase



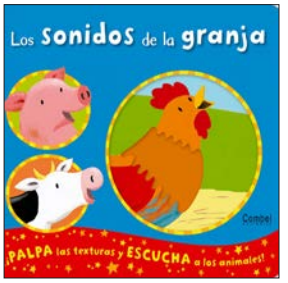
The Milk Makers



Monarquita



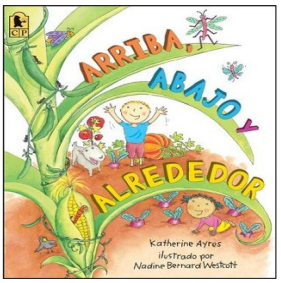
Out and About at the Dairy Farm



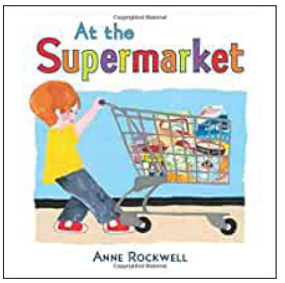
Los Sonidos de la Granja

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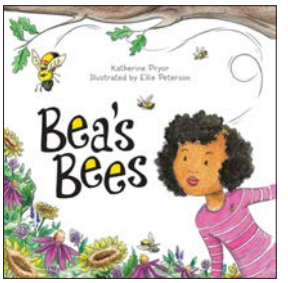
FICTION



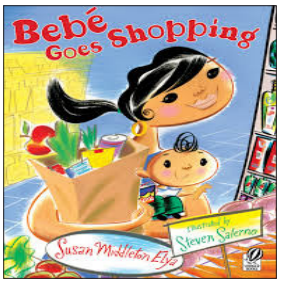
Arriba, Abajo y Alrededor



At the Supermarket



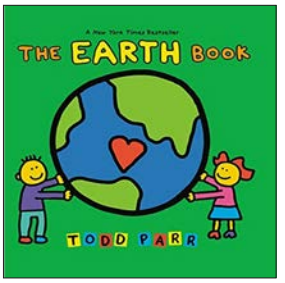
Bea's Bees



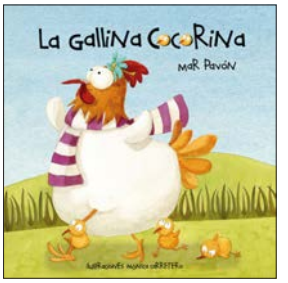
Bebe Goes Shopping



Compost Stew: An a to z Recipe for the Earth



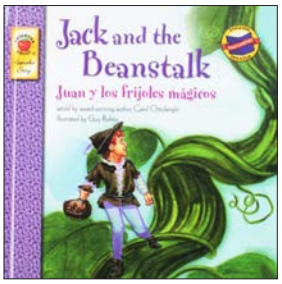
The EARTH book



La Gallina Cocorina



The Honeybee



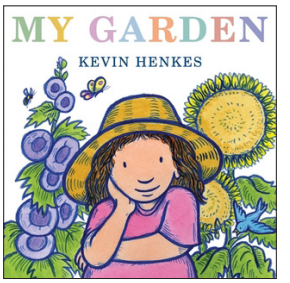
Jack and the Beanstalk
Juan y los Frijoles Magicos



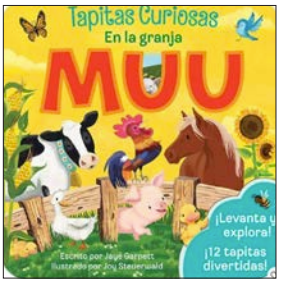
Kaia y las Abejas



Lola Planta un Jardin



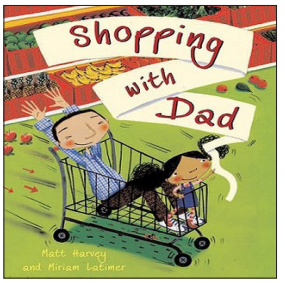
My Garden



Muu



Planting a Rainbow



Shopping with Dad



Tokyo Digs a Garden



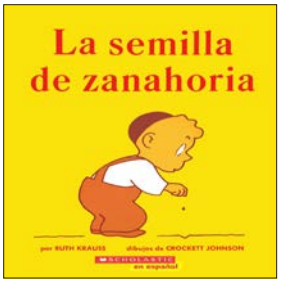
Vivamos la Granja!



We Dig Worms



La Semillita



La Semilla de Zanahoria

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GENERAL SUPPLY KIT



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GENERAL SUPPLY KIT

























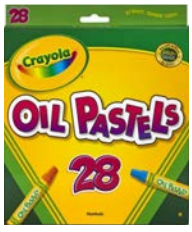












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ASSESSMENT TOOLS



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Activity Rubric Scale

Student:_____ Class:_____

Date:_____

Activity or Skill:_____

_____

4 **Achieved-** The student frequently demonstrates the ability to apply the knowledge or perform the skill accurately in several environments without support.

3 **Progressing-** The student demonstrates understanding or use of the knowledge or skill in one or more environments with some support.

2 **Emerging-** The student is beginning to show understanding or use of the knowledge or skill in one environment with extensive support. The student is unable to demonstrate the skill without assistance.

1 **Introduced-** The student has been exposed to the knowledge or skill as part of the educational curriculum but demonstrates no measurable understanding of the knowledge or skill at this time.

Notes:_____

_____

_____

_____

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Anecdotal Note Observation Form

Student:_____ Date:_____ Time:_____

Objective for this observation:

List of others in the context:

Context:

Notes:

Preliminary thoughts regarding observation:

Educator's Signature:_____

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General Observations

DATE	TIME	SKILL	OBSERVATIONS

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Picture Portfolio

Student:_____

Date:_____

Learning Center:_____

(Include photo or sample of student's work)

Notes:_____

_____

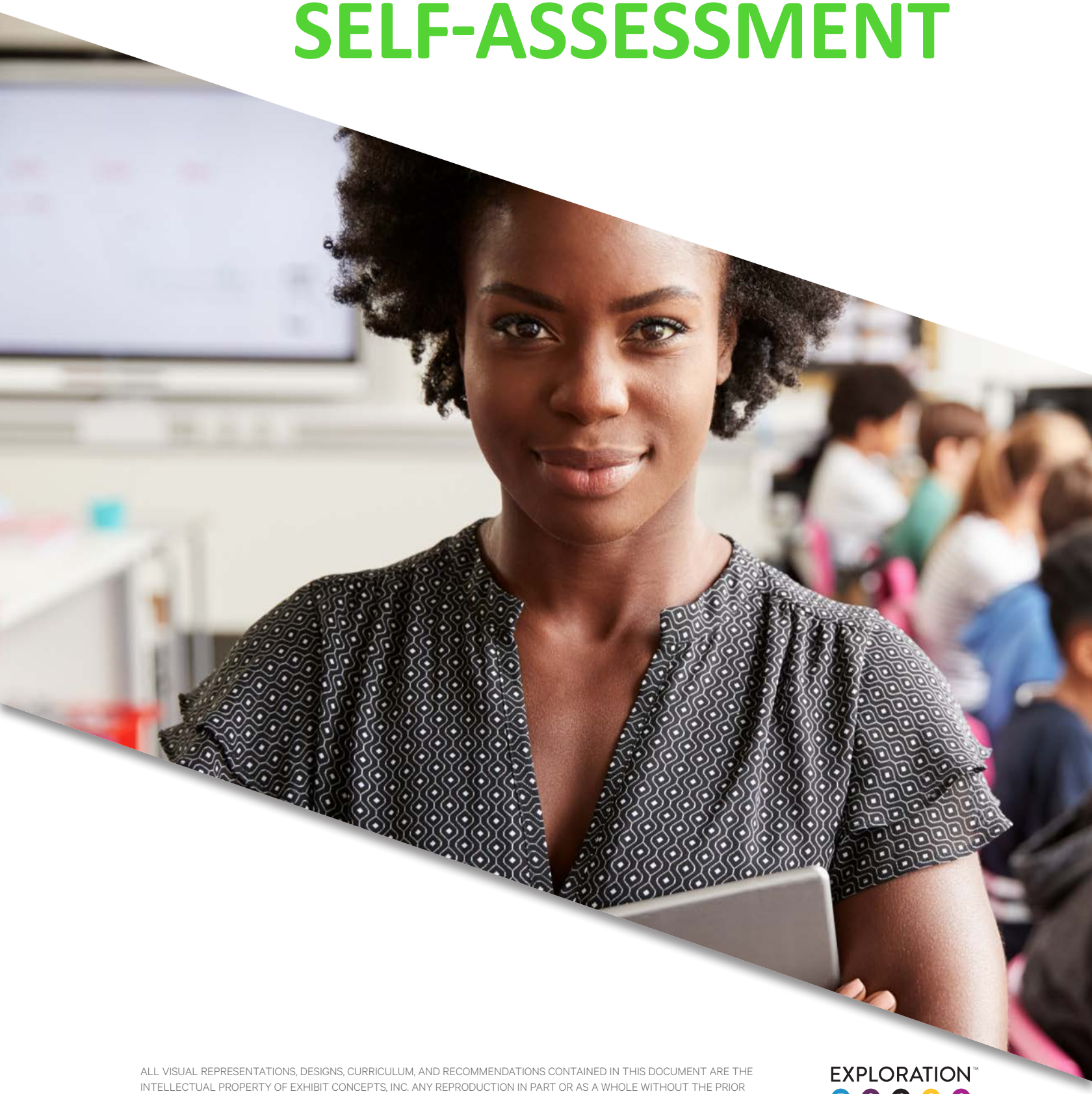
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TEACHER SELF-ASSESSMENT



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Self-Assessment of Benchmarks of Experiential Education Implementation

Name:_____ School:_____ Date:_____

WHEN I PLAN...	LACKING	EMERGING	PRACTICING
I plan activities and experiences that follow the interests of my students.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I consider multiple learning modalities.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I consider new and novel items to engage students.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
WHEN I TEACH...	**LACKING**	**EMERGING**	**PRACTICING**
I give students choices.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I ask open-ended questions that help students think creatively and critically.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I observe my students.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I identify and respond to the existing knowledge and skills each student brings to an activity or experience.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I help students make connections between existing and new knowledge.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I use developmentally appropriate concepts and vocabulary to introduce new content.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
I individually reflect on how to continuously improve my instruction.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
IN MY CLASSROOM...	**LACKING**	**EMERGING**	**PRACTICING**
My students are active in the learning process by:			
• choosing items to engage with and participating in activities that interest them.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• working through problems and activities in real-life situations.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• collaborating with peers, as developmentally appropriate.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• initiating their own investigations.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• asking questions.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
• making observations.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
My students recognize and use developmentally appropriate vocabulary and concepts.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐
My students are intrinsically motivated.	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐

My definition of experiential education is:

I'd like to know more about the following in regard to experiential education:

My strengths:

Areas I'd like to improve upon:

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