

Free Play

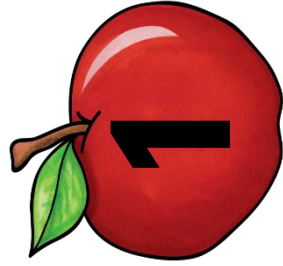
Management and Procedures



How Free Play Works

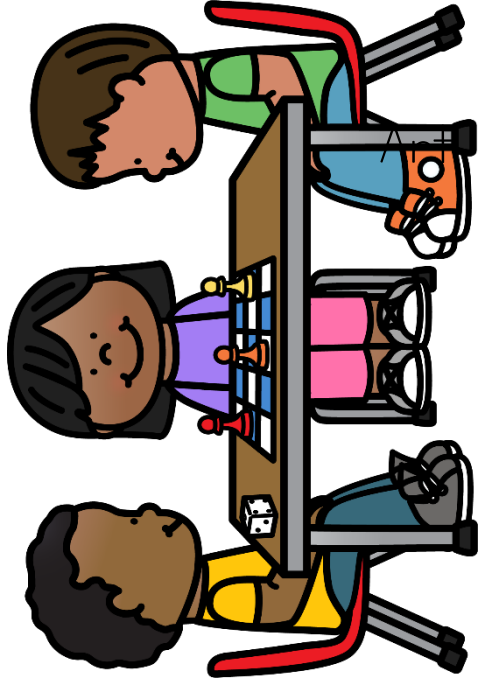
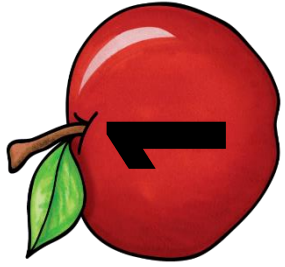


The Teacher Bin



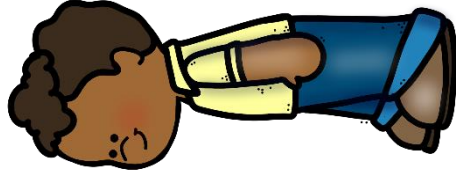
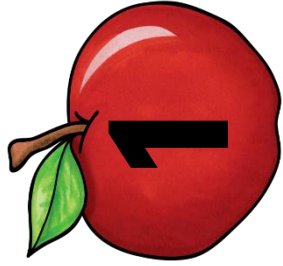
Your play group is given a number.

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You cooperate and play with the
same group until your number is
changed.

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Each play time, check the **play time**
board and your number to see your
play area

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Stay in your play area until the time
is up.

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When free time is over it's clean-up
time for your area.

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Rules For Free Play



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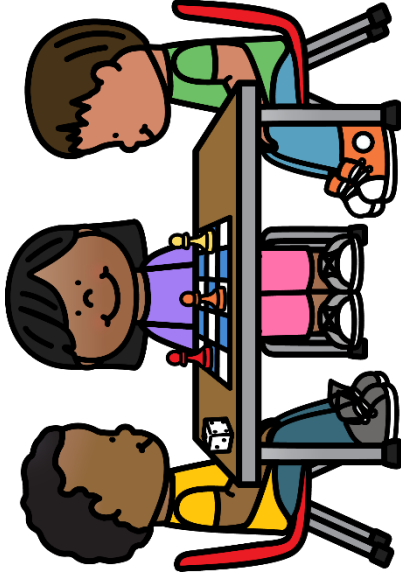


Good Team Work

Sharing-Listening-Working and Playing

Together

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Plays Fairly

Follow the Rules in your play area.

Follow directions.

Don't Cheat

The Teacher Bin



Plays Well in Play Areas

Takes care of materials and equipment being used

Uses inside voices

Appropriate movement

Takes care of self, not worried about others.

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Clean -up Time

Cleans up Play Area

Puts toys away in the correct spot

Wash any messes

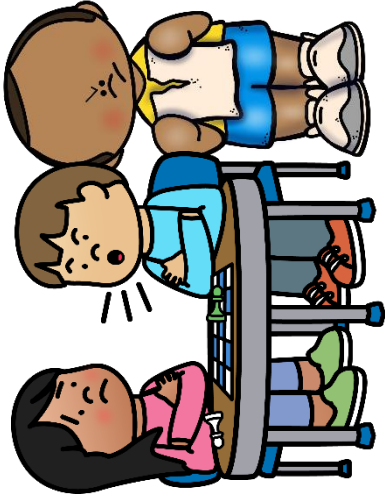
Not Appropriate Free Play



Bad Team Work

Not Sharing–Not Listening–Arguing

Not Working and Playing Together



Not Playing Fairly

Doesn't follow the rules in your play area.

Doesn't follow directions.

Cheats

The Teacher Bin



Doesn't play well in play area

Doesn't takes care of materials and equipment being used

Loud voices

Inappropriate movement

Doesn't take care of self, worries about others.

The Teacher Bin



Clean -up Time

Doesn't Clean up Play Area

Doesn't help put toys away in the correct spot

Doesn't wash any messes

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The Teacher Bin

Free Play

I love free play time for my kindergartners, but it is becoming an activity time that is becoming extinct in so many classrooms. It is being replaced by longer rigorous lessons and testing. I believe in the importance and benefits of free play. Play is important to healthy brain development. It is through play that children at a very early age engage and interact in the world around them.

Free play promotes

Creativity

Imagination

problem solving

Physical-Cognitive and Emotional Strength

rich language experiences.

Healthy Brain Development

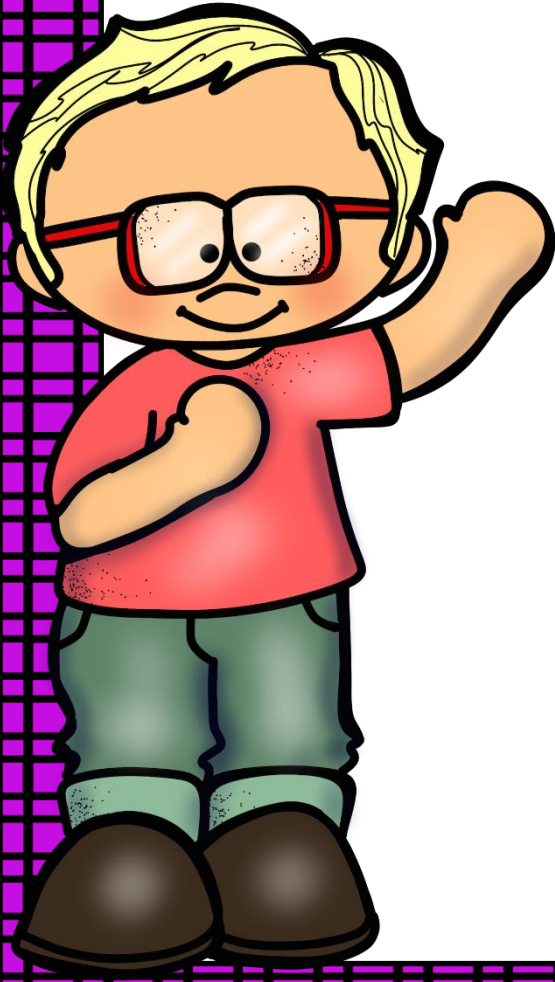
The article by Alliance for Childhood is excellent and should be read.

Organized and Manageable Free Play

I know many teachers dread the idea free play because it means bedlam!

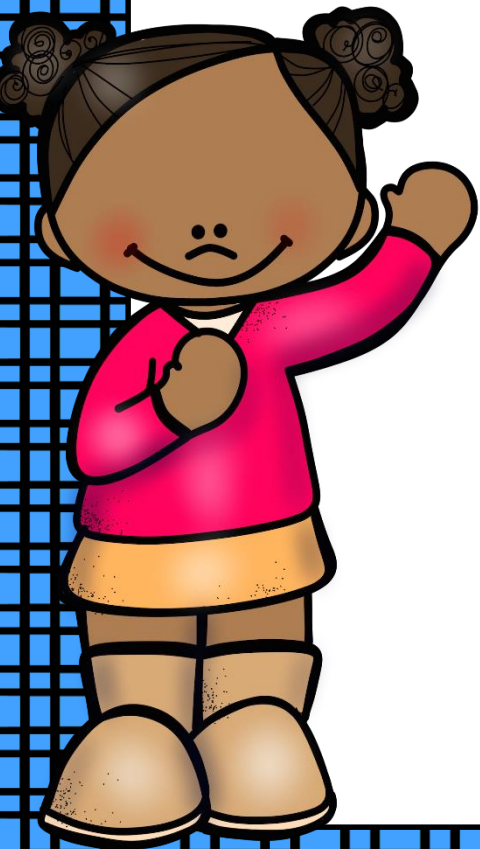
Organizing free play time can make all the difference in making this an important part of the kindergarten day.

The key to teaching is procedures and management.



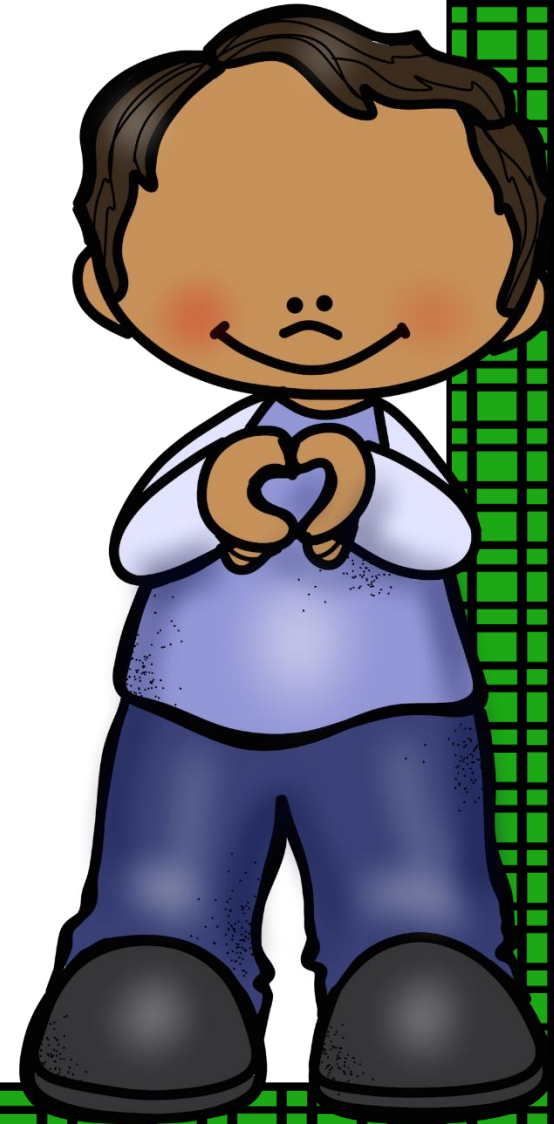
My Organized Free Play Time

- Free play time needs the procedures and management to be successful.
- Free play time is approximately 20-30 minutes along with a less than ten minute clean up.
- I divide free play into six play areas, mainly because I have six tables. I have shown in this resource eight play areas that are interchangeable throughout the year.



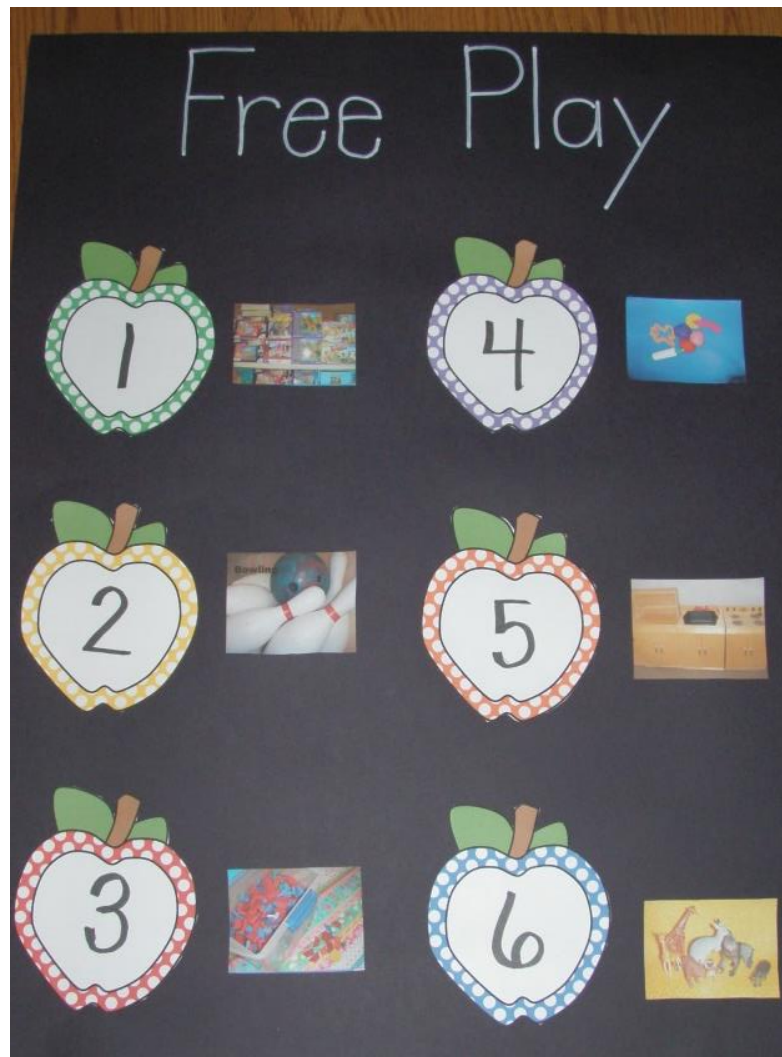
Daily Routine Set-up

- Four or five children play together in one play area a day. (Each month I change the play group children.)
- They rotate each day and must play in only that play area for that day.
- I have a chart which shows the children what play area they are in for the day.



My chart is on a large tag board. The number indicates the table the children are sitting at for that month. (You may not want a table group and have another way of grouping your children, I just like to change play groups monthly.)

I laminate the board and use Velcro on the activity card and the board. I am the only one who may change the free play board not the kindergartners.





The Teacher Bin



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My activities are divided into eight categories

Art
Creative play
Motor Fun
Math Manipulative
Games
Dramatic Play Area
Writing Center
Science

The children go through two rotations of the free play before I change the six activities. That means I have the same free play activities up for 12 days.

I set up special free play areas during different times during the year. They sometimes center around holidays or theme units.



Art

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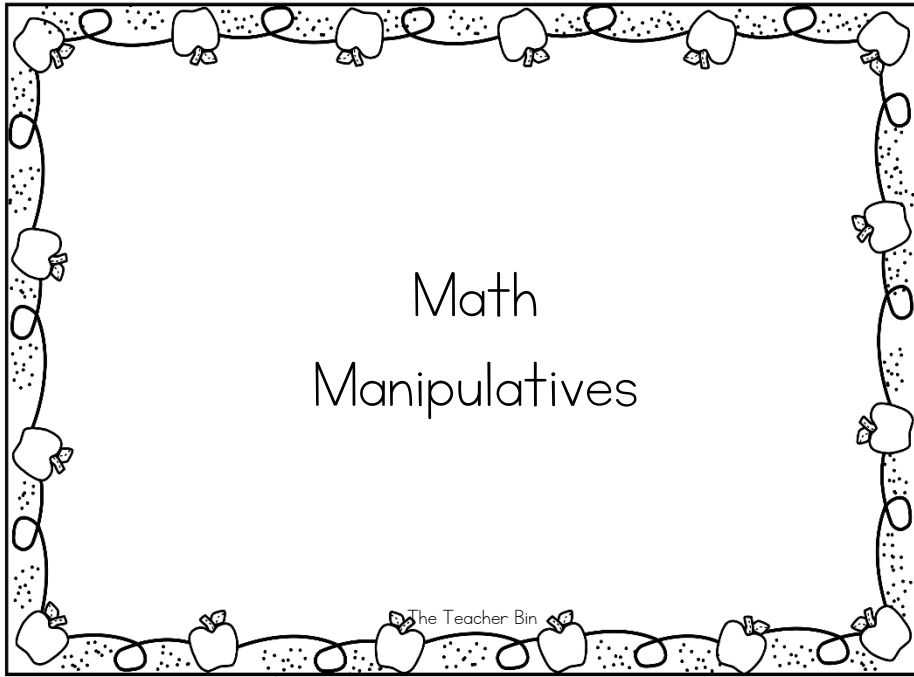
Motor Fun

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Creative
Play

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Math
Manipulatives

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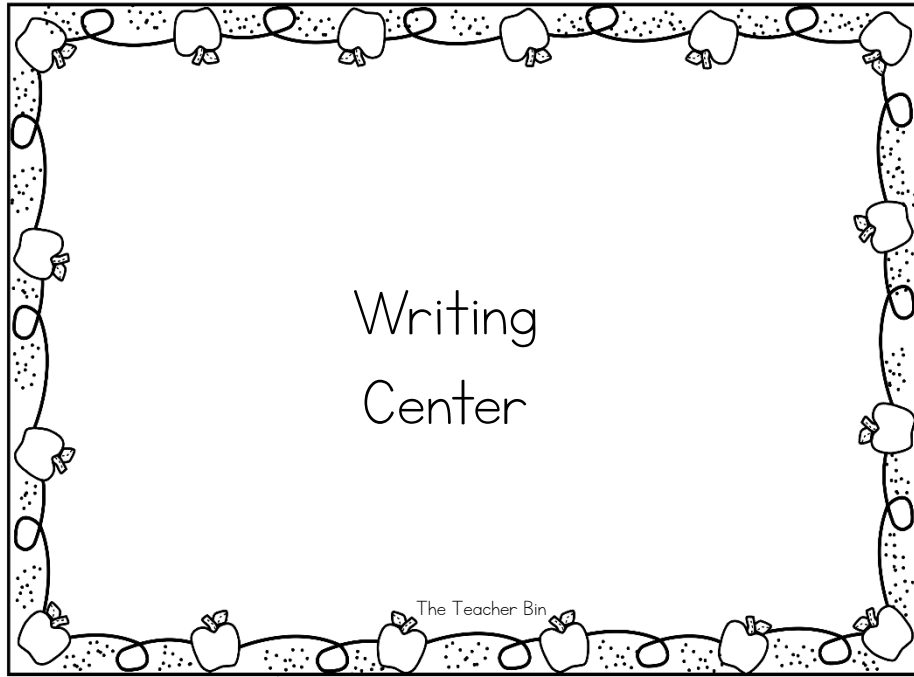
Games

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Dramatic
Play Area

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Writing
Center

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Science

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Storage and Procedures

Storage and procedures are key to free activity time.

- I usually have the activities in a numbered tub and stored on a numbered shelf . That is where the kids find their activities and that's where it is returned.
- If some activities are too large, I show the children where it is stored.
- When it is clean up time, I have a clean-up song on
- Music-I like it to be cleaned up before the song is done. That means, others join in to help with the clean up.



I store the activities cards in a recipe box alphabetically. I found this is the easiest way to find and store cards. I used small index cards for each eight categories.



ART/CRAFT

1. **Tempra paint cakes** are like water colors , just richer colors.
2. **Liquid tempra** -great for chart paper
3. **Dot painters** -RULES - only dot not smear. You can purchase dot marker books with many pictures to dot. I buy mine at Lakeshore .
4. **Play-Doh** - Cookie cutters, rolling, pins
5. **Water colors**- birds, flowers, rainbows etc.
6. **Drawing books**-Love these books-there are many kinds of available. Usbornes books have many kinds of drawing books.
7. **Colored pencils**. I like the twistable colored pencils best, but they are expensive. Great for coloring small books
8. **Markers** I sometimes have specific projects to work on or I even use washable markers, let them color, and then use water and brush over the marker to give a different effect.
9. **A special Project**- it is a classroom project that may be done through the 12 days. A class book, paper quilt, cards, any project you need done.





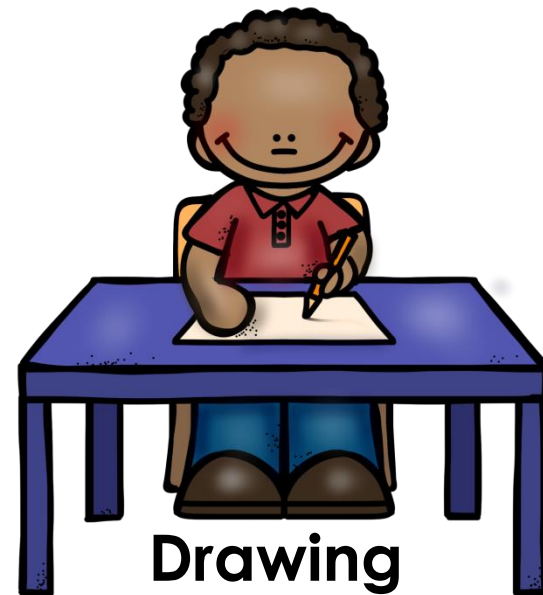
Mural Painting

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Easel Painting

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Drawing

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Crayons

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Clay or Play Dough

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Water colors

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Tempra Cakes

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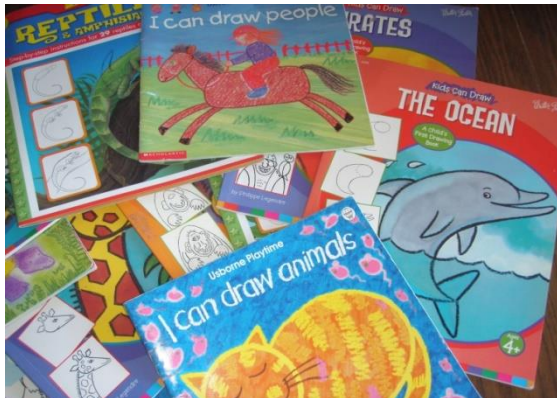
Liquid tempra

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Dot Marker

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Drawing Books

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Colored Pencils

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Craft Beads

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Creative Play

1. **Legos**– The kids always know what to build with Legos!
2. **Blocks** – Kids always love blocks
3. **Lincoln Logs**– Many houses, fences seem to be built with Lincoln Logs
4. **Mobilos**–In all my years of teaching this is always the most popular building toy!
5. Train Tracks

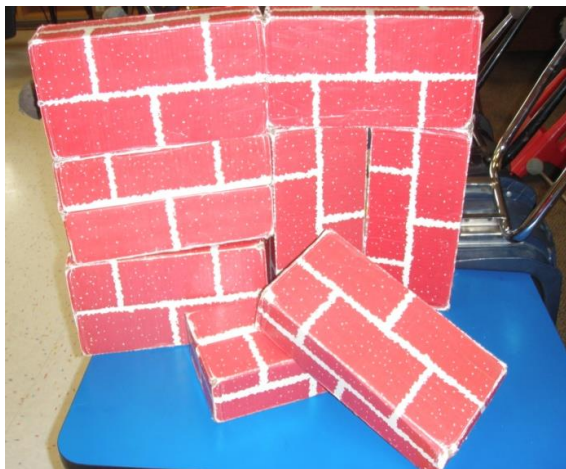
The rest of the pictures are animals I purchased at the dollar stores. I buy about 4-5 packages of animal toys and they are a hit of the classroom. They sort them, trade them, line them up, they fence them in, imaginations go wild with the animals!

5. Dinosaurs
6. Horses
7. Zoo animals
8. Sea Animals
9. Insects
10. Amphibians



Legos

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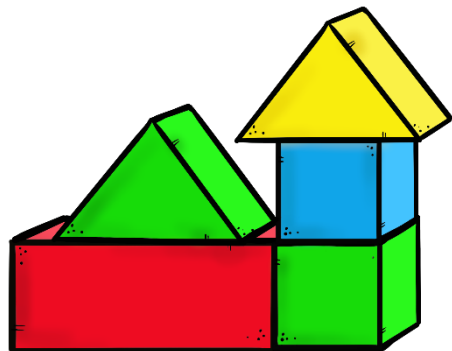
Blocks

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Lincoln Logs

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Blocks

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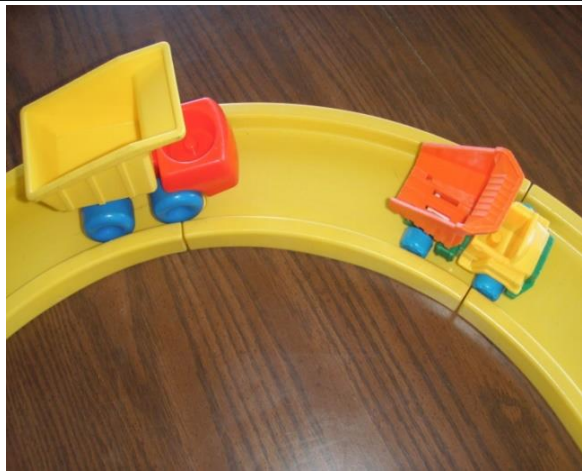
Bridge Building

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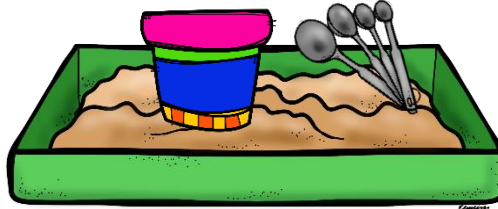
Mobilos

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Car Tracks

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Sand Table

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Wooden Train Track

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Chalk

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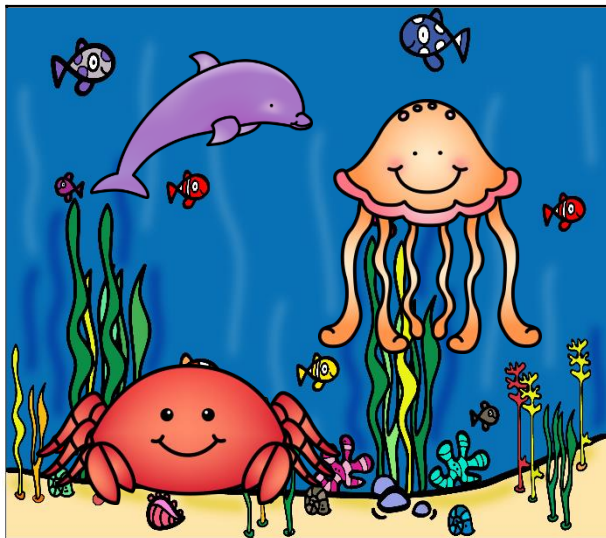
Zoo Animals

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Horses

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Ocean Animals

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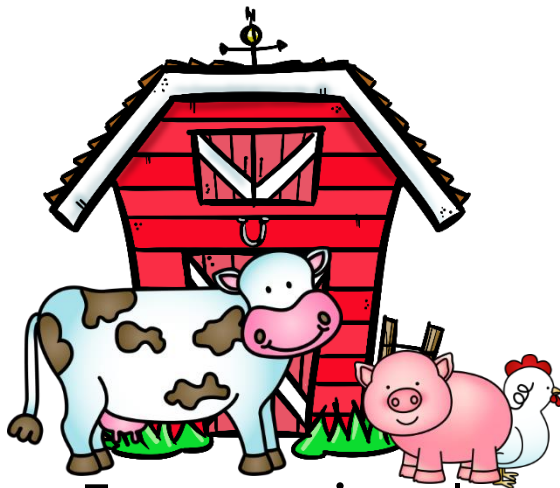
Insects

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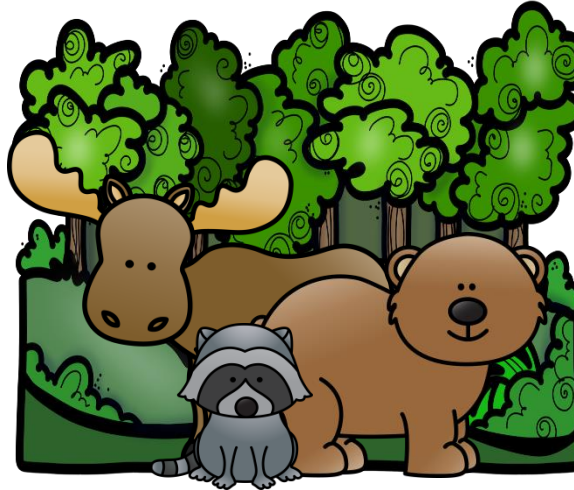
Frogs

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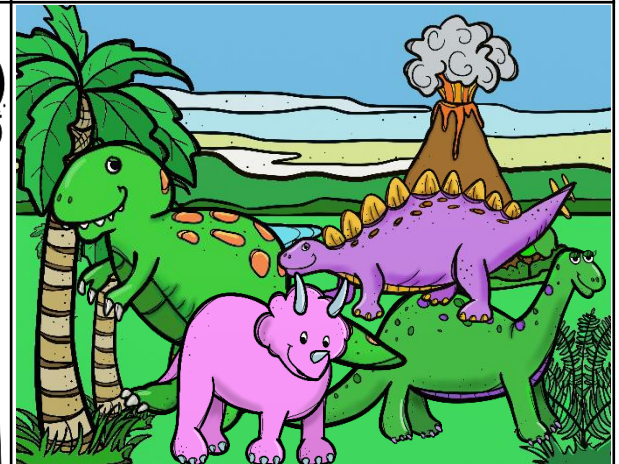
Farm animals

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Forest animals

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Dinosaurs

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Physical Fun

I do have a large classroom, but some of the activities are done outside of my classroom, I set the parameters.

1. **Hula Hoops**- It's amazing to see how the kids improve.
2. **Jump Ropes**- Again it is amazing to see how they improve over the year!.
3. **Bowling**-Two children set up the pins, while the other partners each bowl two times, then switch.
4. **Twister**-I just let the kiddos do the best they can.
5. **Nylon Scarves**-I give two to each child. They toss them in the air, to each other.
6. **Balloons**- Each child has a balloon. Toss in the air, pass the balloon, but don't let it fall on the floor!
7. **Noodles and Balloons**- The kids try to hit the balloon with a noodle across a line marked with tape.
8. **Balls**-No kicking, just dribble.
9. **Bean bags** - Have turns throwing rings or bean bags on a rubber shapes or squares.
10. **Dancing**
11. **Hopscotch**
12. **Music**
13. **Yoga**





Hula Hoops

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Jump Rope

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Bowling

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Twister

The Teacher Bin



Scarves

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Balloons

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Balls

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Bean Bags

The Teacher Bin



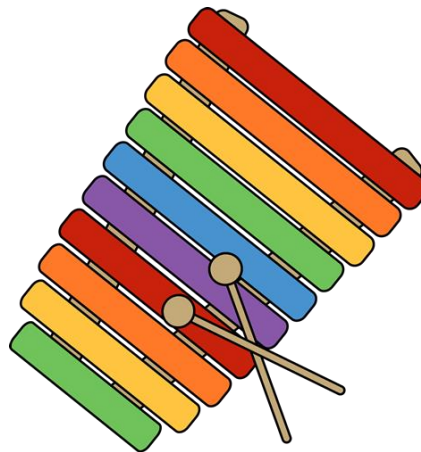
Dancing

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Hopscotch

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Instruments

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Yoga- Yoga Cards

<https://shop.pinkoatmeal.com/>

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Math Manipulatives

You may have several other math/science manipulative you can put in this category, peg boards, geo boards, colored wooden beads, etc. When I use any of the following Math Manipulatives they are always a game. There are many great games to play with each.

1. Bears - sort, count, measure, pattern
2. Unifix Cubes - sort, count, measure, pattern
3. Pattern Blocks - create designs, pattern. There are several pattern designs which can be purchased.
4. Tangrams - patterning
5. Change Links - patterning, measuring, also purchased patterns.
6. Dominoes - the kids love dominoes!
7. Geo-Boards - Kiddos love this activity
8. Base Ten Games - Lots of games to play with the Base Ten manipulatives
9. Coin Games
10. Colored Blocks
11. Dice games
12. Tiles
13. Two Sided bean games
14. Clocks
15. Shapes
16. Balance Scale
17. Hour Glass
18. One hundred Charts





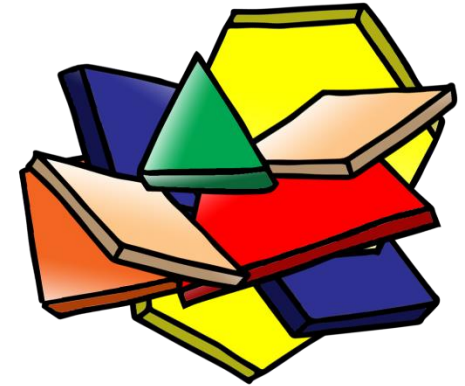
Bear Counters

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Unifix Cubes

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Pattern Blocks

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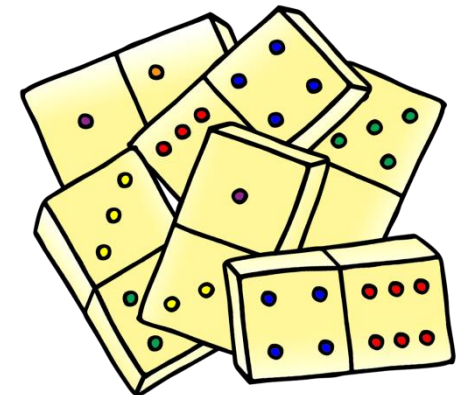
Tangrams

The Teacher Bin



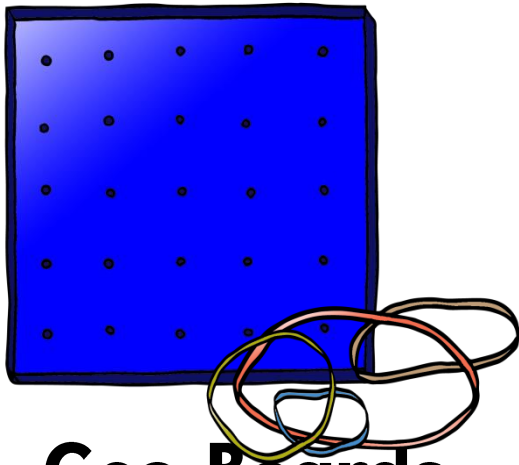
Chain Links

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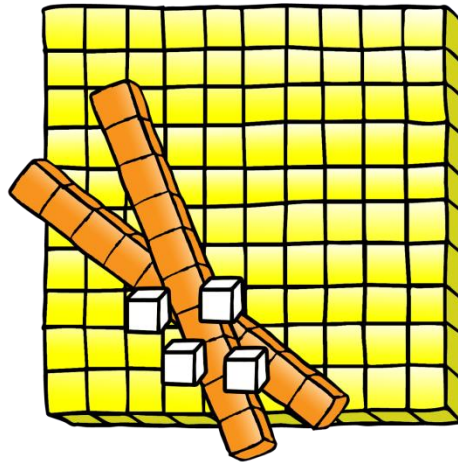
Dominoes

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Geo-Boards

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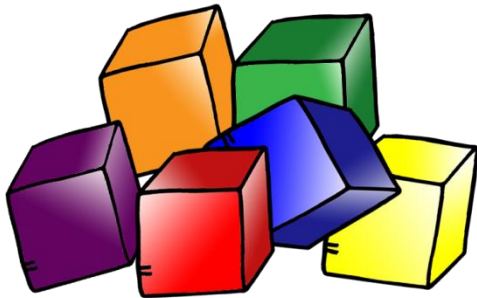
Base Ten

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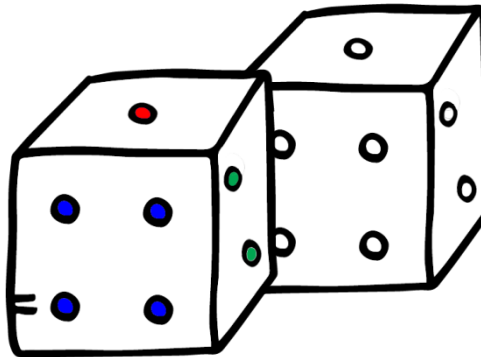
Coins

The Teacher Bin



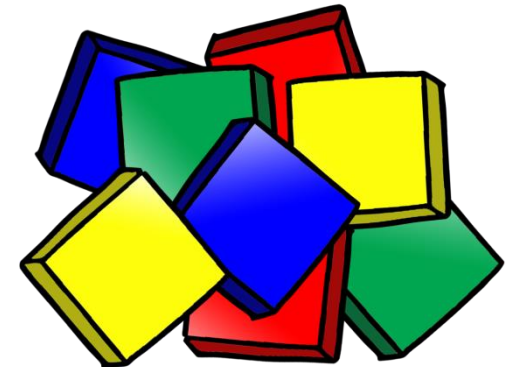
Colored Blocks

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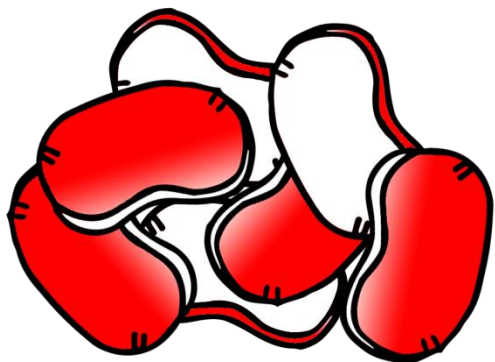
Dice

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Tiles

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Two-sided Beans

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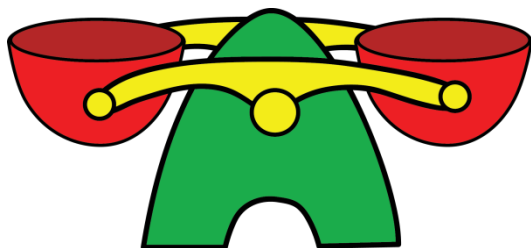
Time

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Shapes

The Teacher Bin



Balance scale

The Teacher Bin



Hour Glass

The Teacher Bin

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 |
| 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 |
| 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 |
| 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |

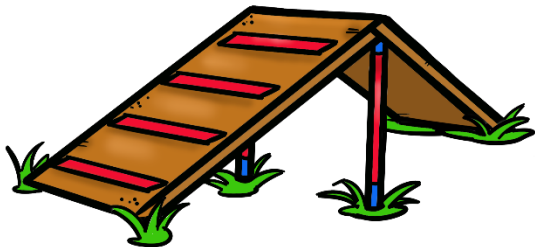
100 Charts

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Science

Science in free time is an excellent way to let kiddos explore and discover. The science you want to teach in your themes or units can be enjoyed during free time and with smaller groups. Chaos happens with large groups, but small groups is fascinating!





Ramps and Racing

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Magnets

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Mixing Liquids

The Teacher Bin



Rocks

The Teacher Bin



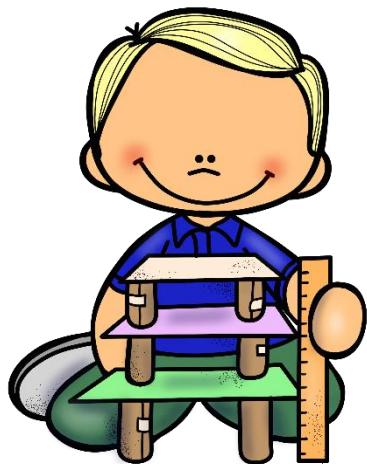
Senses

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Water Sink and Float

The Teacher Bin



Tower Building

The Teacher Bin



Measuring

The Teacher Bin



Gum Drop Tower

The Teacher Bin



Fun with Mirrors

The Teacher Bin



Shells

The Teacher Bin



Water Sink and Float

The Teacher Bin



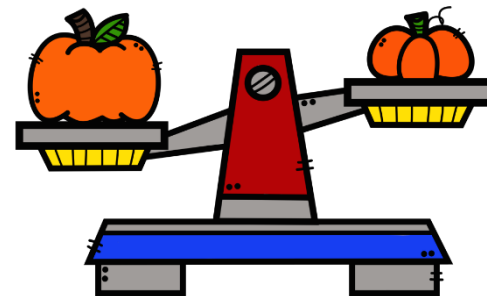
Gardening

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Magnifying Glasses

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Scales

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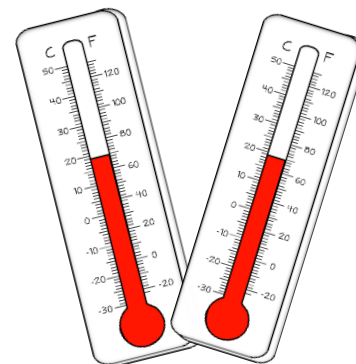
Bones

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Nature

The Teacher Bin



Thermometer Experiments

The Teacher Bin

Games



Any game can work in this category. I buy 6 games of one kind(one for each table) Most of my games come from Goodwill.. Before we play a game in free play time, we play it in class as a whole group.

1. **I Spy books**- I often let the kids use magnifying glasses. They really don't need them, but love to use them!
2. **Puzzles**-the puzzles can be floor puzzles or 25-50 piece. One puzzle per table.
3. **Board Games**-I start out with Candy Land, Sequence for Kids. The kids love board games and not always played at home anymore.
4. **Card Games**-Old Maid-Crazy Eights - Many varieties
5. **Minute to Win It games**. They love the challenge! I just Goggled a few easy ones to play.
6. **Dominoes**-get game for matching and counting.
7. **Memory**- We play several kinds of memory games. The kids always beat me!
8. **Boogle**-I just combine many games together. The kids make the word and show a partner and then they keep the card. The person with the most cards win.
9. **Dice Games**
10. **Dominoes**
11. **Partner Games**



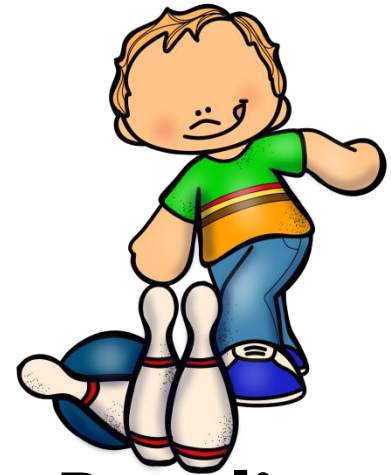
BINGO

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Card Games

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Bowling

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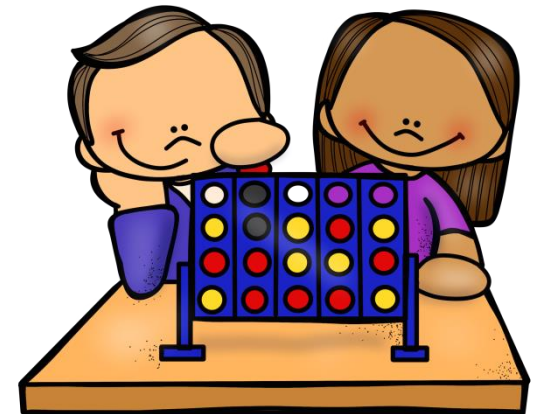
Dominoes

The Teacher Bin



Games

The Teacher Bin



Partner Games

The Teacher Bin



Dice Game

The Teacher Bin



Marbles

The Teacher Bin



Reading

The Teacher Bin

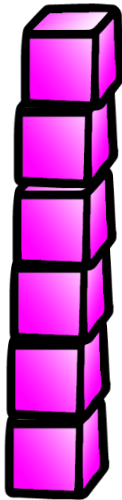


Puzzles

The Teacher Bin

Minute to Win It Games

(Block Stacking)



The Teacher Bin

The Teacher Bin

Literacy

Literacy in free play can be a creative time for kiddos to enjoy fun literacy centers.





Author's Chair Puppets

The Teacher Bin



Book Maker

The Teacher Bin



Stamping

The Teacher Bin



Magnetic Letters

The Teacher Bin



I-Pad

The Teacher Bin



Listening

The Teacher Bin

Dramatic Play

Dramatic play areas can be simple or complex. The kids make-up and pretend almost anything.

1. **Tracks and cars** - The kids are so busy making the tracks and changing them they could play forever.
2. **Kitchen**- the kitchen area becomes the every restaurant for dramatic play.
3. **Beach** - Towels, umbrellas can be a whole beach scene.
4. **Author's Chair**-Bring out books, stuffed animals, or puppets and kids read as an author.
5. **Pirate center**- a sand table with buried alphabet and a few jewels, a couple of hats and you have a Pirate center.
6. **Restaurant**- Your kitchen area is a restaurant with some fake food, notebook, and empty soda cans.
7. **Architecture firm**- Pictures of buildings, graph paper, pencils, rulers and clipboards and you have a Architecture firm.
8. **Outer Space**- more complex, but you can make it easy with an old keyboard, phone, and a few pictures of space.
9. **School**- You don't even have to do much, but show the area to play and before you know it the kids are doing your morning routine.
10. **Vet- Pet Store** -For all the stuff animals
11. **Camping**
12. **Western Days**
13. **Fire Safety**
14. **Weather Station**



This play area is endless!

Dramatic Play Areas



**Cookie Store
(Clay)**

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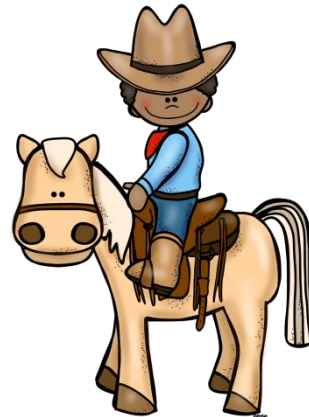
Camping

The Teacher Bin



**Construction
Toys**

The Teacher Bin



**Cowboy
Center**

The Teacher Bin



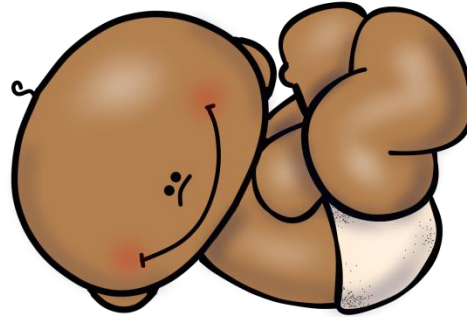
**Detective
Center**

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Doggy Daycare

The Teacher Bin



Dolly Daycare

The Teacher Bin



Fire Station

The Teacher Bin



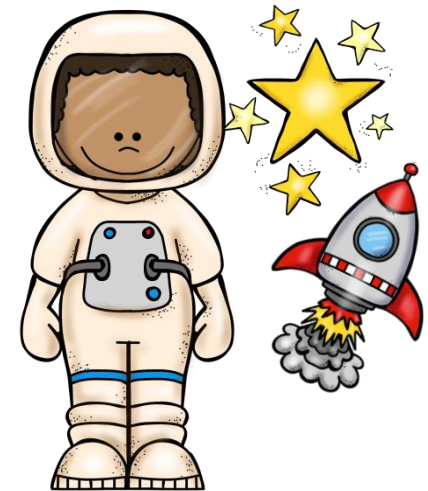
Gingerbread Store

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Post Office

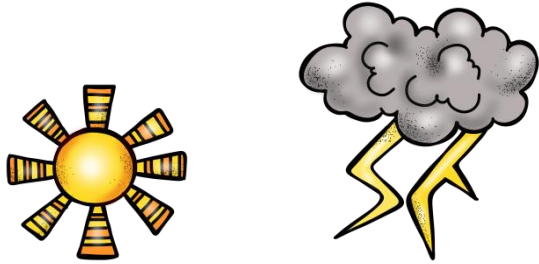
The Teacher Bin



Space

The Teacher Bin

Weather Station



The Teacher Bin



Grocery Store

The Teacher Bin



Farm

The Teacher Bin



Pet Store

The Teacher Bin



Picnic Time

The Teacher Bin



Pizza Time

The Teacher Bin

Writing Center

My writing center is always up in my classroom. The topics are...

Drawing-Writing

Illustrate Poems

Lists

Magazine Writing

Letter Writing

Book Writing

Post Cards

Topic Cards Writing

**Writing
Card Making**

Recipes

Names

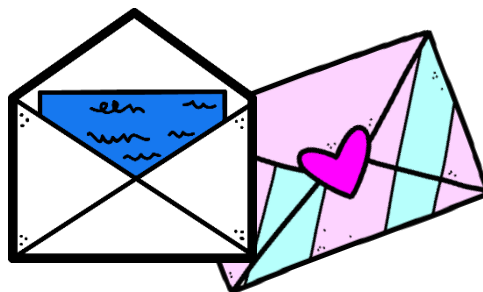
I don't have the center with all the topic areas up at once, that is why I like to use it as part of my free play. There may be only 2 choices up early in the year.





Drawing-Writing

The Teacher Bin



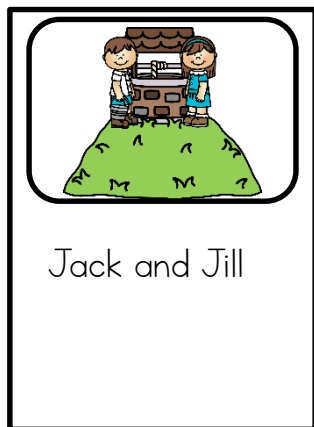
Letter Writing

The Teacher Bin



Writing

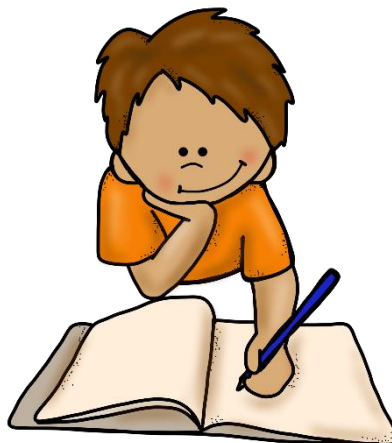
The Teacher Bin



Jack and Jill

Illustrate Poems

The Teacher Bin



Book Writing

The Teacher Bin



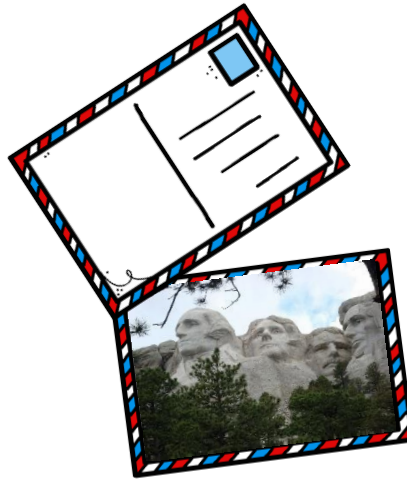
Card Making

The Teacher Bin



Lists

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Post Cards

The Teacher Bin



Recipes

The Teacher Bin



Magazine Writing

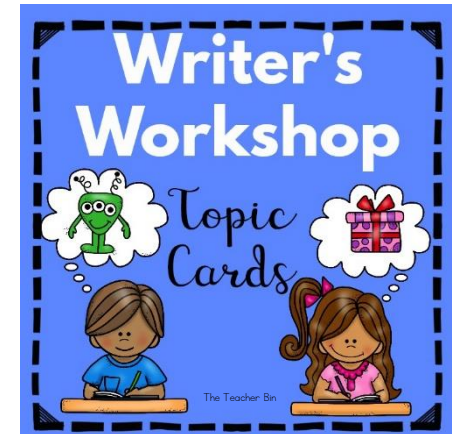
The Teacher Bin



(Make a Name Ring)

Names

The Teacher Bin



Topic Cards Writing

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Thank you so much for purchasing my free- Play time management lesson plan and visiting my sight.

Please leave feedback if you were happy with the unit.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at theteacherbin@gmail.com.

Enjoy Free Time!

Make free play a regular and enjoyable part of your school day!

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