

CRUISING THE KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

What will my child learn in kindergarten?

This packet contains an overview about the curriculum covered during the kindergarten year. You will also find fun learning ideas for you and your child inside!



English Language Arts

READING

Comprehension:

Children are given opportunities to talk about stories and participate in teacher directed activities to develop story meaning. Key concepts include:

- making predictions before, during, and after reading
- drawing conclusions from stories, a picture, events or experiences
- sequencing important events
- retelling story, rhyme, event, or experience
- telling the main idea and detail from pictures
- discuss and compare adventures of the characters
- answer questions about key details and other information shared

Literature:

Children are encouraged to self-select materials for pleasure and information. Children develop personal responses through art and drama. Writing is an important part of each day. Don't forget to expose your child to both informational (non-fiction) and literary (fiction) texts.

Phonological Awareness and Phonics:

Children will have daily opportunities to become fluent with phonemic awareness skills as they learn to hear, identify and manipulate units of sound. Children will also work with phonics which connects the sounds to written letters.

Specific skills include:

- identify syllables in a spoken word
- identify and produce rhyming words
- segment words into individual sounds
- blend sounds into words
- identify beginning, middle, ending sounds in words
- read high frequency words
- apply phonics skills by reading decodable text

Information and Study Skills:

- identify basic parts of a book (front cover, title, author, illustrator)
- select and participate in activities independently and with peers

LISTENING / SPEAKING / VIEWING

Children participate in a variety of large and small group activities that help develop these important communication skills:

- listen attentively and courteously
- follow one and two step directions
- introduce self
- express own feelings, needs, reaction to events, and opinions
- share ideas and information in group situations to develop group discussion skills
- ask and answer questions with *who, what, where, when, why, how*

TECHNOLOGY

Olathe has implemented iPads in every classroom at the elementary level.

- Encourage collaboration with 1:1 ratio
- Learn about digital citizenship and safety
- Process and interact with curriculum utilizing 21st Century technology
- Create and demonstrate learning in all curricular areas



Becoming a Reader

Emergent Reading

Children....

- Know what books are
- Build a repertoire of stories and rhyme
- Play at reading
- Develop early concepts and skills basic to reading
- Learn to use language both spoken and written

Tacking Print

Children...

- Begin to figure out how written language works
- Recognize that marks on paper are not random
- Pay attention to the written language

Early Reading

Children...

- See how language and written symbols work
- Read simple stories
- Learn how to decode

Extending Literacy

Children.....

- Know they can read and that reading contributes to their lives
- Are ready to expand reading

Text Questions

Ask your child a couple of these questions after you have read a story together

- Find a letter they know
- Find a word they know
- Find the letter than begin with their first/last name
- Find a letter in their name
- Find their favorite letter
- Find the letter _____
- Find the letter with the sound _____
- Find the letter after _____
- Find the letter between __ and __
- Find a small word
- Find a large word
- Find a word with one (tow, three, etc.) letters
- Find a word that begins with _____
- Find a word that ends with _____
- Find the word _____
- Find a color word ____
- Locate a punctuation mark (period, question mark, exclamation mark, etc.)

Vowel Sounds

Short Vowels

Aa



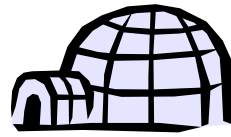
apple

Ee



escalator

Ii



igloo

Oo



octopus

Uu



umbrella

Long Vowels

Aa



acorn

Ee



eagle

Ii



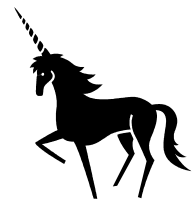
ice cream

Oo






















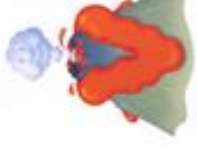






overalls

Uu



unicorn

Aa		Bb		Cc		Dd		Ee		Ff	
Gg		Hh		Ii		Jj		Kk		Ll	
Mm		Nn		Oo		Pp		Qq		Rr	
Ss		Tt		Uu		Vv		Ww		Xx	
								Yy		Zz	

Bibliography of books for Phonemic Awareness

Cronin, Doreen	<i>Click, clack, quackity quack: an alphabet adventure</i>
Dragonwagon, Crescent	<i>All the Awake Animals Are Almost Asleep</i>
Escoffier, Michael	<i>Take Away the A: An Alphabeast of a Book! (2014)</i>
Ferry, Beth	<i>Stick and Stone (2015)</i>
Fleming, Denise	<i>Beetle Bop</i>
Galdone, P.	<i>Henny Penny</i>
Hague, K.	<i>Alphabears</i>
Hobbie, Holly	<i>Puddle's ABC</i>
Lies, Brian	<i>Bats at the Ballgame (and others in his Bats series)</i>
Lewis, W.	<i>Buzz Said the Bee</i>
Parenteau, Shirley	<i>Bears on Chairs (also Bears on Beds)</i>
Shaw, N.	<i>Sheep on a Ship</i>
Seuss, Dr.	<i>Fox in Socks</i>
	<i>There's a Wocket in My Pocket</i>
Winthrop, E.	<i>Shoes</i>

Bibliography of Selected Alphabet Books



Baker, Keith	<i>LMNO Peas</i>
Bayer, J.	<i>A My Name is Alice</i>
Bingham, Kelly	<i>Z is for Moose</i>
Blake, Quentin	<i>Quentin Blake's ABC</i>
Boynnton, S.	<i>A is for Angry</i>
Bruel, Nick	<i>Bad Kitty</i>
Catalanotto, Peter	<i>Matthew A.B.C.</i>
Dragonwagon, C.	<i>Alligator Arrived with Apples: A Potluck Alphabet Feast</i>
Hoban, Tana	<i>26 letters and 99 cents</i>
Kellogg, S.	<i>Aster Aardvark's Alphabet Adventures</i>
Lichtenheld, Tom	<i>E-mergency!</i>
Lobel, A.	<i>On Market Street</i>
Martin, Jr. B.	<i>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</i>
Pallotta, J.	<i>(several other titles by this author)</i>
Sendak, M.	<i>Alligators All Around: An Alphabet</i>
Seuss, Dr.	<i>Dr. Seuss's ABC</i>
Siebold, Kim	<i>ABC Now You See Me</i>
Wood, Audrey	<i>Alphabet Adventure</i>



Reading Ideas for at Home Enjoyment

Audio books/online books/books on CD

- ◆ Consider recording audio or video as you read to your child then he/she can enjoy the story over and over.
- ◆ As you read the story your child can make an audible sound when it is time to turn the page (clap hands, tap table, ring a bell, blow a whistle). When they listen to the story the sound will then clue them to turn the page.
- ◆ Enlist relatives to record videos reading books and share these with your child. This will be a special treat, and it is reinforcing the importance of reading.
- ◆ Local libraries also have a selection of books on tape/CD for check-out.
- ◆ Talk about the adventures the character went on in the story.
- ◆ After listening to the story have your child look at the pictures and retell it with their own words. 😊 Does not need to be exact 😊
- ◆ Talk about what was your favorite part of the story.

Restaurant Reading

- ◆ Many restaurants offer children menus. Use the menu as an activity to pass the time while waiting for your food.
- ◆ Read the menu with your child asking questions about the menu: how many times do you see "hamburger"; how many "t" words; are there words that begin with the letter of your child's name?; find the shortest word on the menu; the longest word; what are your favorite foods on the menu?
- ◆ If possible take the menu home and continue to read over it together.
- ◆ Make a menu together for a home cooked meal.



Don't Throw Away that Cereal Box!

- ◆ Encourage the reading of cereal boxes at breakfast time.
- ◆ After the box is empty, add it to your child's toy shelf, you might even begin a play store. The boxes can be used to find letters, words, and even numbers.
- ◆ Cover a box with plain paper and children can design their own cereal. Be sure to name the cereal, describe it, draw a picture of it and add games to the box.
- ◆ Use the cereal box for a mailbox, as described in this packet under "A Mailbox Inside the House!"

Magnet Fun

- ◆ Magnetic letters are a very valuable tool for fun around the house. These make great refrigerator decorations or use on any surface that is magnetic.
- ◆ These letters can be purchased at toy stores and discount stores.
- ◆ Write messages with the letters.
- ◆ Children can practice spelling their name.
- ◆ Have fun, just having the letters within reach will encourage play with letters!



Learning the 26 letters...

- ◆ Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator.
- ◆ Allow your child to trace the letters you have written on paper with their finger.
- ◆ Write the letters with chalk on the sidewalk.
- ◆ Find letters in a favorite book.
- ◆ Use toothpicks, Play-doh, or sand to form the letters.
- ◆ Spray shaving cream on a cookie sheet and form the letters in the shaving cream. This can also be tried with pudding or finger paints.
- ◆ Highlight one letter at a time, if it is "B" everything that begins with B that day is talked about, written, and used in a song!
- ◆ Label items in the house: chair, desk, door, table etc. Children can not only learn the names of things but will also benefit from seeing these words, hearing about the letters and seeing your writing.
- ◆ Check out ABC books from the local library
 - [The Bird Alphabet Book](#)
 - [The Butterfly Alphabet Book](#)
 - [Chicka Chicka Boom Boom](#)
 - [Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten](#)
 - [A You're Adorable](#)
- ◆ Sing the ABC song
- ◆ Make cards with the letters on them and use these to play concentration (use half of the alphabet at a time)

Poetry, Songs, Movement and Rhythm Benefit Children

Poetry, song, movement and rhythm lend themselves naturally to engaging children. Anything put to music, directions, questions, alphabet or stories will grab the attention of young learners. Children are introduced to words rich in images that allow them to view the world in many different ways. Poetry, songs, rhythm and movement stimulates a child's imagination and increases their listening and speaking vocabulary.

- check out poetry books from the local library
- talk about the poem(s) with your child
- re-read the poem(s) with your child, pointing out simple words, repeated words, and rhyming words
- after several rereads as the poem becomes familiar stop and let your child supply the next predictable word(s)
- sing songs in the car
- sing directions- you will be amazed at how jobs get accomplished
- allow for movement throughout the day; dance, skip; hop; jump

Favorite Poetry collections:

Take me Out of the Bathtub (Alan Katz)

The New Adventures of Mother Goose (Bruce Lansky)

Sing a Song of Popcorn

First Rhymes (Lucy Coats)

The Ice Cream Store (Dennis Lee)

Favorite Poets: Kalli Dagos, Dennis Lee, Eve Merriam, Judith Voirst, Lucy Coats, Brod Baggart and Bruce Lansky

Try these CD's:

Fisher Price Little People Sing

Along Favorites; Songs from the Farm

ABC Music 50 of the Best Kids Songs Ever

Becoming a Writer

Scribbling Stage

- Children use a combination of picture and word scribble

Pre-Communicative Stage

- Children begin to “pretend-write” using random letters usually without meaning

Semi-Phonetic Stage

- Children begin to recognize that there is a relationship between sounds of words and letters

Phonetic Stage

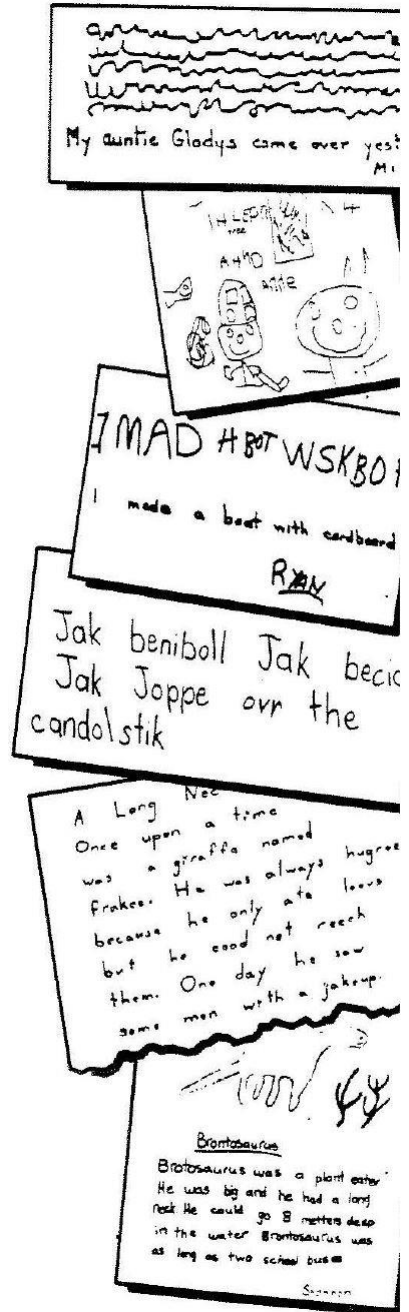
- Children represent all sounds phonetically

Transitional Stage

- Children begin to use common vowel patterns and spell common words correctly

Independent Stage

- Children use many writing conventions correctly and begin to question inconsistencies



Manuscript Stroke Descriptions

<p>A Slant left. Lift. Slant right. Lift. Slide right.</p> <p>Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.</p> <p>a</p>	<p>B Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.</p> <p>b Pull down straight; push up. Circle forward.</p>	<p>C Circle back.</p> <p>c Circle back</p>	<p>D Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.</p> <p>Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.</p> <p>d</p>	<p>E Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right; stop short. Lift. Slide right.</p> <p>e Slide right. Circle back.</p>	<p>F Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right; stop short.</p> <p>f Curve back; pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.</p>
<p>G Circle back. Slide left.</p> <p>Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight; curve back.</p> <p>g</p>	<p>H Pull down straight. Lift. Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.</p> <p>h Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight.</p>	<p>I Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right.</p> <p>i Pull down straight. Lift. Dot.</p>	<p>J Pull down straight; curve back. Lift. Slide right.</p> <p>j Pull down straight; curve back. Lift. Dot.</p>	<p>K Pull down straight. Lift. Slant left. Slant right.</p> <p>k Pull down straight. Lift. Slant left. Slant right.</p>	<p>L Pull down straight. Slide right.</p> <p>l Pull down straight.</p>
<p>M Pull down straight. Lift. Slant right. Slant up. Pull down straight. Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight.</p> <p>m</p>	<p>N Pull down straight. Lift. Slant right. Push up straight.</p> <p>n Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight.</p>	<p>O Circle back all the way around.</p> <p>o Circle back all the way around.</p>	<p>P Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.</p> <p>Pull down straight. Push up. Circle forward all the way around.</p> <p>p</p>	<p>Q Circle back all the way around. Lift. Slant right.</p> <p>Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight; curve forward.</p> <p>q</p>	<p>R Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left. Slant right.</p> <p>r Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward.</p>
<p>S Curve back; curve forward.</p> <p>s Curve back; curve forward.</p>	<p>T Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.</p> <p>t Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.</p>	<p>U Pull down straight; curve forward; push up.</p> <p>Pull down straight; curve forward; push up. Pull down straight.</p> <p>u</p>	<p>V Slant right. Slant up.</p> <p>v Slant right. Slant up.</p>	<p>W Slant right. Slant up. Slant right. Slant up.</p> <p>w Slant right. Slant up. Slant right. Slant up.</p>	<p>X Slant right. Lift. Slant left.</p> <p>x Slant right. Lift. Slant left.</p>
<p>Y Slant right. Lift. Slant left. Pull down straight.</p> <p>Slant right. Lift. Slant left.</p> <p>y</p>	<p>Z Slide right. Slant left. Slide right.</p> <p>z Slide right. Slant left. Slide right.</p>	<p>1 Pull down straight.</p>	<p>2 Curve forward; slant left. Slide right.</p>	<p>3 Curve forward. Curve forward.</p>	<p>4 Pull down straight. Slide right. Lift. Pull down straight.</p>
<p>5 Pull down straight. Circle forward. Lift. Slide right.</p>	<p>6 Curve down. Curve up and around.</p>	<p>7 Slide right. Slant left.</p>	<p>8 Curve back; curve forward. Slant up.</p>	<p>9 Circle back all the way around. Pull down straight.</p>	<p>10 Pull down straight. Lift. Curve down; curve up.</p>

Writing Fun at Home

Children love to write, give them many opportunities throughout the day. Make sure that your children are seeing you write, this sends the message that writing is important.

Some of the following items can be in a “special box” just for writing fun!

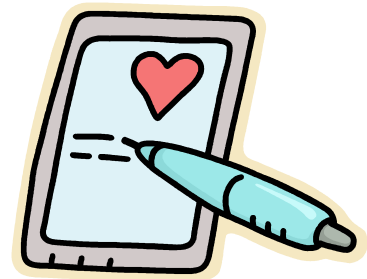
- ◆ paper (lined and unlined)
- ◆ envelopes
- ◆ post cards
- ◆ pencils, pens, erasers
- ◆ markers, crayons
- ◆ decorative stamps and stamp pads
- ◆ stickers
- ◆ stapler
- ◆ hole punch
- ◆ ruler
- ◆ pencil sharpener
- ◆ tape and glue



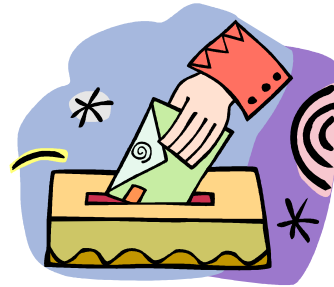
Write short notes to your child. Hide them in “surprise” places, these will be fun to find and equally fun to read together.

Places to hide notes:

- ◆ lunch boxes
- ◆ book bags
- ◆ under pillows
- ◆ on the mirror in the bathroom
- ◆ on a bedroom door
- ◆ in a dresser drawer
- ◆ under a dinner plate
- ◆ under the toothpaste tube
- ◆ inside a favorite book
- ◆ in a shoe
- ◆ on a beautiful summer day provide chalk and write messages to each other on the sidewalk and driveway



Children can use their “special box” of writing materials to write back to you!



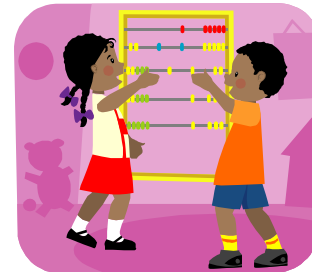
A Mailbox Inside the House!

Everyone in the family can have a mailbox inside the house! The mailbox could be on a bedroom door, or in the kitchen, the den or even in the laundry room. Family members can write to each other and then will wait in anticipation for return mail.

- ◆ make mailboxes from cereal boxes, shoe boxes or any small box
- ◆ have a family night to decorate the mailboxes
- ◆ take turns being the “Mail Carrier” for the day
- ◆ special cards, birthday, Mother’s day, “It’s Spring” can appear in these mailboxes
- ◆ these notes going back and forth will encourage reading and writing

Mathematics

Kindergarten children learn math concepts and skills through concrete experiences. Classrooms are equipped with manipulatives which are used to teach the following concepts:



Counting and Cardinality

- Recognizes and names numbers 0-20
- Counts in sequential order
- Counts to 100 by ones and by tens
- Counts to tell number of objects (*one-to-one correspondence*)
- Compares numbers between 1 and 10 (*more, less, same*)
- Compares two groups of objects (*greater than, less than, equal to, about the same*)
- Writes number 0-20

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

- Understands addition is putting together and adding to
- Understands subtractions is taking apart and taking away
- Solves + and - word problems using objects, drawings, or acting out
- Fluently adds and subtracts within 5

Number Sense and Operations in Base Ten

- Works with numbers 11-19 using place value (*tens, ones*)
Ex: $18 = 10 + 8$

Measurement and Data

- Describes measurable attributes of objects (*length, weight, height*)
- Compares objects with same measurable attribute (*more of/less of, taller/shorter, heavier/lighter*)
- Classifies/sorts objects and counts the number of objects in each group

Geometry

- Identifies basic two-dimensional shapes (*circle, square, triangle, rectangle, hexagon*)
- Identifies basic three-dimensional shapes (*cubes, cones, cylinders, spheres*)
- Describes relative position of objects (*above, below, beside, in front of, behind, next to*)

Math at Home and On the Go!

Talk about Math Concepts **EVERYDAY!**



Number Recognition

Use a calculator, remote control, or calendar to locate numbers.

Practice writing numbers in shaving cream, sand, finger paint.

Counting



How many plates do you need for supper?

Count the number of steps, windows, doors, clocks

Count shoes, buttons, toys

Use a calendar to count the days until Kindergarten
Ask which group of toys has more (greater) or less (fewer)

Shapes

Go on a *shape hunt*. – Look for shapes everywhere!

Talk about the name of a shape and its attributes (ex: *round, no corners, no straight sides = circle*)

Make shapes out of Play-doh or clay

When ready, talk about two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes (ex: *a can of soup is a cylinder; it has circle on each end*)



Sorting/Classifying

Sort your laundry – by color, type, size

Sort silverware, dishes, and cups to help put away

Sort toys into groups by color, shape, size

Compare groups of objects and ask which one has more/less/about the same

Measurement

Compare objects using terms more/less, taller/shorter, heavier/lighter

See how many steps it takes to get to the kitchen, bathroom, etc.

Discuss who is the shortest/tallest in the family.

Kindergarten Social Studies: *Sense of Self*

History

History in kindergarten will consist of students learning through self-awareness and individual experience. They will examine how making choices to meet their daily needs at home and in school affects their lives. Students will recognize and evaluate how they are part of larger social and cultural groups by analyzing their personal history, and where they live, and how this changes over time. They will recognize significant Kansas events, symbols, and family customs.

Ideas: customs, symbols (e.g., state bird—Western Meadowlark, state flower—Native Wild Sunflower, state animal—American Buffalo, state insect—Honeybee, state amphibian—Barred Tiger Salamander, state reptile—Ornate Box Turtle, state tree—Cottonwood)

People/Roles: self

Places: my home, my school, my city, Kansas, United States of America

Events: Kansas Day

Compelling questions:

- What are some of the important choices we make in class and at home, and what are the consequences?
- What are your responsibilities at home and at school?
- Why do Kansans celebrate Kansas Day every year?
- How have you changed since starting Kindergarten?
- How did different symbols come to represent Kansas?



Civics/Government

Civics and Government in kindergarten will consist of students recognizing the existence and importance of rules at home and at school. They will understand the role of authority figures at school and home and why they are needed. Students will recognize appropriate classroom behavior and identify characteristics of a friend, a helpful classmate, and a leader. They will recognize and demonstrate traits of being a good citizen. They will also be able to recognize the United States flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, and demonstrate manners related to the flag and pledge.

Ideas: rules, leadership, authority, citizens and citizenship, respect, flag, and management of conflict

People/Roles: parent, guardian, teacher, principal, citizen, student, friend, classmate

Places: my home, my classroom, my school

Events: recess, assemblies, classroom celebrations, Pledge of Allegiance

Compelling Questions:

- In the classroom, what are the consequences to others when you take on the role of a friend, helpful classmate, or leader?
- Why do we need people of authority and rules at home and at school?
- How does my behavior affect my family; how does my behavior affect my class?
- Do rules ever change and why would they change?
- If people are good citizens, how does that benefit them, their family, their school, and their community?



Geography

Geography in kindergarten will consist of students being introduced to the importance of geography words and the location of several major geographic features. Students will begin to identify human and physical features of their local surroundings including home, school, and neighborhood. They will establish mental maps to help them navigate their school setting or the route from home to school. Students will be able to describe seasons and how seasonal changes affect their daily lives.

Ideas: location, directionality, distances, seasons, weather, natural environment, man-made environment

Places: Kansas, United States, my home, my school, my neighborhood, my hometown

Compelling Questions:

- How does the season influence my choice of what to wear to school?
- How does having a mental map of my school make me a more responsible person?
- How are experiences different for people who live in the city and people who live in the country?
- How does the weather change by season in Kansas?
- What do I see when I look out the window that is man-made and what is from the natural environment?



Economics

Economics in kindergarten will consist of students being able to understand that people make choices because they cannot have everything they want. People work at jobs to earn money to pay for what they want and need. Students will recognize needs are defined as those things that are a necessity to life. They will understand that money can be used to purchase goods and services. Services are something one person does for someone else. Goods are something one can touch or hold. Students will recognize and evaluate the benefits of saving money.

Ideas: goods, services, wants, needs, work, money

People/Roles: worker, saver, spender, decision maker

Places: job

Compelling Questions:

- What happens when you have to choose between two things you want?
- How might saving improve someone's life in the future?
- Why do people want to have a job?
- What is a job you would like to have someday?
- What goods and services are provided at school?

<p>purchase to spend money to buy something</p>	
<p>goods things that people make or grow, things that people buy or sell</p>	
<p>services work done by somebody for someone else</p>	
<p>jobs work that someone does for pay</p>	
<p>needs things you need to live: food, clothing, and shelter</p>	
<p>wants things people would like to have</p>	
<p>choices to make a decision based on wants and needs</p>	
<p>savings money that is kept to use later</p>	

Purposeful Play

In Kindergarten, your child will have daily opportunities to be involved in purposeful play activities in the classroom.



Purposeful play involves **playing** and **learning**. It is beneficial for all students no matter their level of academic performance.

Reading, writing, math, social studies and science opportunities will be woven into play experiences for kindergarten students.



Purposeful Play encourages students to:

- communicate ideas
- manage their feelings and emotions
 - play cooperatively
- build their stamina for learning
- build level of independence
- engage in creative expression
 - enhance their imagination
 - explore real-life situations
 - develop fine motor skills
- learn about letters and sounds
 - explore print
 - build words they know
 - group, sort, classify
- estimate, weigh, measure
 - learn about numbers
- enhance cognitive skills
 - extend their thinking

Science

Key concepts in science are integrated into the curriculum throughout the day. Children learn through inquiry, knowledge, and application processes. These key concepts include:

Earth and Space: Children develop a knowledge of daily patterns of change

- observe seasonal changes and daily weather conditions
- identify questions about our natural environment
- make decisions based on weather
- the sun and moon have relative locations to the earth and can be observed

Life Science: Children explore basic characteristics of plants and animals

- observing plant growth and development from a seed
- telling the difference between wild and tame animals
- recognize that living things grow and change
- identifying body parts of children and other animals
- compare five senses of humans to other animals' senses
- observing living things and how their needs are met

Physical Science: Children explore and discover the basic properties of matter

- observing objects that are attracted by a magnet
- exploring sources of light and investigating shadows
- identifying objects in water as floating or sinking
- observing that the form of an object can be changed
- developing an awareness of the importance of recycling by practicing good recycling habits

Health:

- sharing feelings in appropriate ways
- classifying foods into food groups
- recognize and apply basic safety practices
- identify and practice personal hygiene habits and behaviors to

prevent
illness



Supporting Science At Home



- Place objects in the bathtub for children to play with. They will discover what sinks and floats.
- Make shadow puppets with light from the sun or a lamp.
- Discuss the size, shape, color, texture, taste, smell, temperature, length, and weight of different objects with your child.
- Discuss the weather patterns and how they affect our daily lives.
- Observe ice melting.
- Compare and contrast popcorn kernels before and after they pop.
- Observe how the wind makes objects move.
- Discuss the characteristics and needs of living things and how their needs are met.
- Observe and identify parts of plants.
- Observe how plants grow and change in a garden.
- Practice recycling.
- Make observations of the moon and its phases.
- Discuss the importance of eating healthy foods.
- Practice important safety procedures including knowing address and phone number.
- Practice personal hygiene habits.

Introducing Children To Art

Do you remember that old pop song, “You gotta have heart”? If you changed the words slightly to, “You gotta have art...lots and lots and lots of art,” that would just about say it all for parents concerned about what to do about art education becoming a “lost art”.

With budget crunches curtailing school art programs, is there any way to give your child an introduction to, and an appreciation for art? Is it worth the effort? The answer to both questions is “yes”. There are many pleasant and inexpensive ways that parents (artistically included or not) can weave art into family life. And yes, it’s worth your time to pursue them because art– whether drawing, painting, sculpture, or crafts– contributes to the physical, social, emotional, and cultural development of elementary and middle school students.

Art hones the creative thinking skills that have led to the developments of such modern marvels as the automobile and television. It also teaches children how to see and savor the form, texture, color, light and patterns of the world around them.

Here are some easy things you can do at home to nurture art



Art At Home

Supplies that you could have on hand to encourage children to create and make art at home include:

- * Sidewalk Chalk
- * Glue Stick (Elmer's glue)
- * Hole Punch
- * Scrapbook Scissors
- * Old Magazines
- * Markers
- * Paint and Brushes
- * Finger Paints
- * Colored Pencils
- * Pencils, Erasers
- * Crayons
- * Paper, plain white, colored, construction
- * Wall paper books (get stores to donate)
- * Envelopes
- * Stickers
- * Wrapping paper scraps
- * Ribbon or Yarn

This list is really never ending. Anything you have at home that you are going to consider trash is something that can be recycled for a creative project.





Nurturing your “Art Star” at Home

Look at Picture Books. Picture books often tempt a child who doesn't like to read. Your school and public librarians can suggest age-appropriate picture books that appeal to your child's interests: animals and airplanes, dinosaurs and dolls, butterflies and seashells, monsters and castles. Talk about the pictures with your child. Encourage the youngster to describe what each picture shows. What emotion does it produce? Did the artist use a pencil, pen, brush, or camera to create it?

Write and Illustrate Stories. Encourage your child to write stories, or record events and experiences. Then have them illustrate them with drawings or pictures cut from magazines.

Keep Art Supplies Available. Have on hand some basic art supplies, such as, drawing paper, scissors, paste, crayons, and pencils.

Relate Art to Everyday Life. Let your child arrange a vase of flowers, cut out cookies, decorate a birthday cake, wrap a gift, or create a greeting card.

Have Fun with Art. Be on the lookout for unusual art exhibits or workshops that children would enjoy. Encourage your child to participate in art activities at the school or other events.

