



# The IDEA MAGAZINE FOR TEACHERS® MAILBOX®



Is your energy starting to fizzle? No worries! Look in this issue for a downpour of timely skills and unique activities that will put a spring in your step.

## Learning Centers

- 20 Build the Words Activity
- 25 Literacy and Math
- 28 Center mat and cards: decompose numbers into pairs

## Literacy

- 10 Reproducible booklet: ducks
- 16 Reading Tips & Tools
- 32 Reproducible partner game: short vowels *a* and *i*
- 53 Writing Activity Cards
- 55 Writing helper: sequencing and writing a story
- 58 Super Selections for Any Storybooks!

## Literature

- 35 *Diary of a Worm*
- 36 The Book Corner

## Math

- 33 Reproducible partner game: comparing weight
- 38 Addition and Subtraction Explorations
- 43 Building Math Skills
- 56 Mighty Math With Cubes

## Science and Social Studies

- 12 Science and More! Butterflies
- 13 Science and More! Plants
- 23 Let's Celebrate the Earth!

## Seasonal

- 6 What's the Buzz? It's Spring!
- 50 Math for the Season

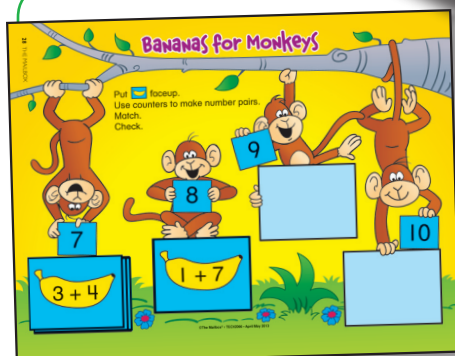
## Teacher Resource

- 2 Skills in Your Issue
- 4 Good to Know
- 5 Send Us Your Ideas!
- 15 Arts & Crafts
- 37 Displays That Are Super for Storybooks!
- 45 Problem Solved!
- 46 Our Readers Write...
- 61 Teacher Talk

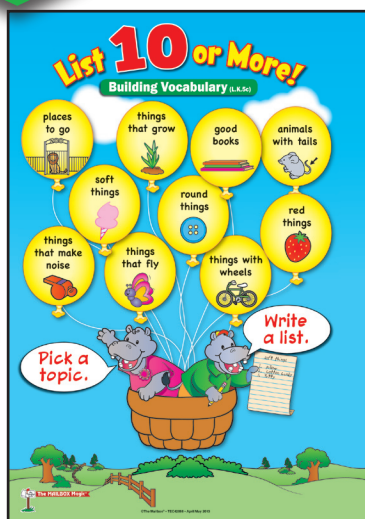
Don't Miss These!



Starting with this issue, skill lines will include the Common Core State Standards.



▶ Pages 28–30  
Center Mat and Cards



▶ Poster



▶ Gameboard

and...

Go to  
[themailbox.com](http://themailbox.com) for  
**MORE STUFF!**

# READING

tips & tools

## Read a Row

Word families (RF.K.3d)

With this variation of bingo, the matching rimes in the columns serve as helpful hints for students to read words. Choose five word families. Write six or more words for each word family on separate craft sticks and put them word-side down in a container. Using the same words shown on the craft sticks, prepare gameboards similar to the one shown for a small group of students.

To begin, give each player a gameboard and 20 game markers. Then play as in the traditional game of bingo until one child has five game markers in a row and says, "I can read a row!" After confirming accuracy, have youngsters clear their boards to begin a new round.

Jeanne-Marie Peterson  
Crozet, VA

-an	-ap	-ug	-in	-op
can	map	bug	fin	mop
pan	tap	rug	win	top
man	lap	mug	pin	hop
fan	nap	hug	tin	pop



Get six ready-to-use gameboards!

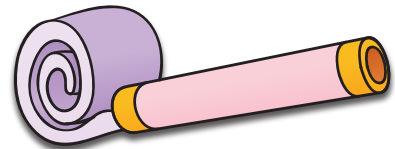
## Eat the /a/ Words!

Short-vowel discrimination (RF.K.2)

Students pretend to be anteaters for this /a/, /a/, activity! Give each child a toy party blower and have her pretend that it is an anteater's tongue. Tell her that when she hears a word with /a/ as in *ant*, she should flick her tongue, pretending to eat that /a/ word! If she does not hear /a/, have her rub her tummy to show the anteater is still hungry. Then announce words, most of which have a short *a*, and encourage youngsters to respond as directed. **For an added challenge**, have youngsters repeat the vowel sound and name that letter for each word.

Brenda McGee  
The Goddard School  
Allen, TX

**Fun fact!** An anteater's tongue is about two feet long and is used to lick up lots of ants!



## Day-by-Day Caterpillar

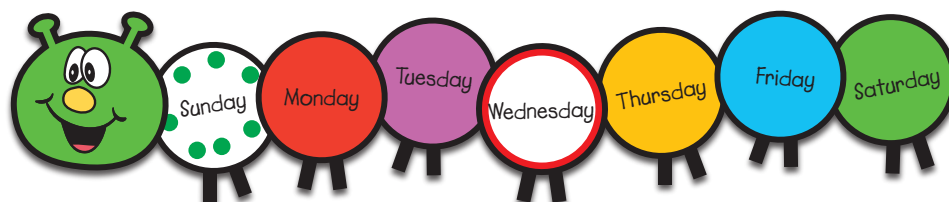
Following directions (SL.K.2), word recognition (RF.K.3)

How do listening skills, days of the week, and colors lead to a cool buggy project? Take a look! Provide each child a copy of the caterpillar patterns on page 19. Then give directions such as "Use a yellow crayon. Color the circle with the word *Thursday*." and "Find the circle with the word *Saturday*. Color that circle with a green crayon." Continue with different directions until the caterpillar patterns are colored. Then have each child cut out her patterns and order the days of the week to the right of the head. If she is correct, instruct her to glue her critter together and add construction paper legs.



**For a literature-related extension**, read aloud *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. When a day of the week is named in the story, encourage each youngster to point to that word on her caterpillar.

adapted from an idea by Diane Flohr Henderson, Kentwood, MI



Check it out!

There's a "Build the Words!" center activity on pages 20 and 21 and a skill sheet on page 22.

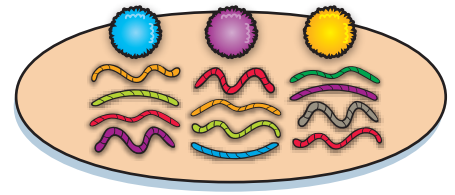
# BUILDING MATH SKILLS

## Hungry Birds

Sharing equally, number relationships

Youngsters play the role of a mother bird sharing an equal number of worms at this center. Label a resealable plastic bag with the numbers 2, 3, 4, and 6. Put 12 lengths of yarn (worms) in the bag. Set out the bag, six large pom-poms (birds), and a large brown paper nest. A child chooses a number on the bag and puts that many birds on the nest. Then she takes the worms and “feeds” the baby birds, making sure each baby gets the same amount of worms. If desired, have her draw a picture to show her work. Then she repeats the activity for a different number on the bag.

Suzanne Kobb  
South Bend, IN



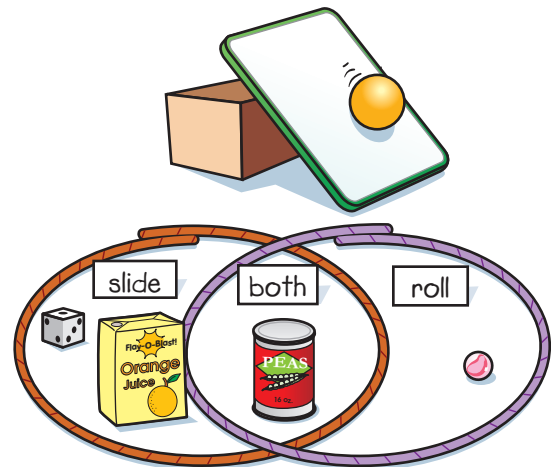
**web** Get nest patterns with baby birds.

## Ramp It Up!

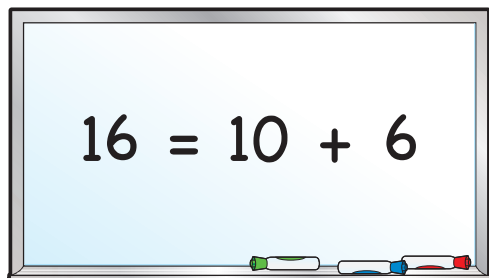
Solid shapes (K.G.B.4)

Have students compare the attributes of solid shapes with this hands-on math exploration. To prepare, lean a personal whiteboard on a wooden block to make a ramp. Nearby, set out a collection of real-world solid shapes that will slide, roll, or slide and roll (on different releases) on the ramp. Then overlap two yarn lengths to make a Venn diagram and label it as shown. Invite a volunteer to choose an object. Ask youngsters to predict whether that object will roll, slide, or both. Have the volunteer use the ramp to test his classmates’ predictions. Then have him place the object in the correct area of the diagram. Continue with the remaining objects.

Kimberly Richman, The Learning Zone, Des Moines, IA



There are ten bunnies in the garden and six bunnies outside the garden, so...



## Into the Garden?

Decomposing numbers into tens and ones (K.NBT.A.1)

Kindergartners pretend a supersize ten frame is a garden in this whole-group activity! To make the garden, use tape to form a ten frame on the floor, making sure each section is large enough for a student to stand. Then invite from ten to 19 students to pretend to be bunnies and have them hop to the garden. Lead the class in counting the total number of bunnies and write that number on the board. Then point to ten bunnies, signaling each one to hop onto a garden section. Guide youngsters to conclude that the ten bunnies in the garden plus the remaining bunnies outside the garden equal the recorded number. If desired, complete the corresponding equation on the board. Continue with a different number of bunnies for additional number practice!