

Letters & Literacy



Additional Literacy Experiences for
the Gee Whiz Unit
“Let’s Travel”



Important Information

The following experiences are designed to complement the Gee Whiz teaching unit, "Let's Travel." These experiences are not required! Instead, they are a tool you can use to integrate an exposure of letter names, letter sounds and creative writing into the curriculum IF you feel your children are ready. This website has great information on print and alphabet knowledge. There are four sections to explore: KNOW, SEE, DO, IMPROVE. Check it out: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/effective-practice-guides/print-alphabet-knowledge>

Keep in mind that children develop at their own rates. Many four and even five-year-olds may not be ready to identify letters and this is OK. You need to think about each individual child and his/her level of development. These activities and experiences should only be used with those children who you feel are ready to explore letter concepts.

Additionally, to make sure that you are exposing children to letter names, letters sounds and writing in a meaningful way, this document provides suggested times when we feel it would be meaningful to do so.



Letter Exposure Activities for “Let’s Travel”

| Activity Title | Page # | Letter(s) to Integrate | How? |
|--------------------------|--------|---|---|
| People-Powered Transport | 6 | W | During this experience, the children will explore different modes of people-powered transport ... like walking! As an extension of this experience, with children who are developmentally ready, print the word <i>walk</i> on a piece of paper while the children watch. Name each letter as you write it and then talk about the letter W. Do any of the children have a name that begins with the same letter? Next, have the children use either sidewalk chalk (outside) or blue painter’s tape (inside) to make GIANT Ws on a paved surface or the floor. Once the large Ws are finished, the children can walk on them in funny ways. This would be a fun experience to video and then share with parents/guardians. It would also be a good video to add to each child’s portfolio. |
| Car Painting | 9 | 3-4 different letters (ones you would like to reinforce) | During this experience, the children will use toy vehicles as painting tools. As an extension of this experience, you can have the children then “drive” those painted vehicles on letters. Ahead of time, print large letters on individual sheets of white paper. Choose letters you would like to reinforce. They can be capital or lowercase letters. Then, slide the pieces of paper with the letters into individual clear sheet protectors. The children can then dip the wheels of their vehicles in paint and then “drive” them on the letters (trying to keep their cars on the line). As the children play, see how many of the letters they can name. If the children want to make their own letters to put in the sheet protectors, be sure to have extra paper and markers on hand so they can do so. |
| Let’s Ride the Bus! | 11 | B | During this experience, the children will role-play taking a bus ride. As an extension, with children who are developmentally ready, print the word <i>bus</i> on a sheet of paper while the children watch. Name each letter as you write it. Then, focus on the letter B. Do any of the children have a name that begins with the same sound? After talking about the letter B and the sound this letter makes, introduce the game, “Can I Please Ride the Bus?” Line up chairs like a bus and use a large chair for the driver (you). The children will need to say words that begin with the B sound in order to “board” the “bus.” If some children need help, that’s OK! Remember, mastery of letters & sounds takes a long time and lots of practice! |

Letter Exposure Activities for “Let’s Travel”

| Activity Title | Page # | Letter(s) to | How? |
|-------------------|--------|------------------------------------|---|
| Choo! Choo! | 12 | All of the letters of the alphabet | During this experience, the children will not just explore all of the letters of the alphabet but attempt to put them in order as well. This is going to be a challenging task but one that is a lot of fun when you do it together. In order to prepare, print the letters of the alphabet on 26 index cards (one letter per card). Mix up the cards on the floor. Explain to children who show interest that you need their help to arrange the letter cards to make an “Alphabet Train.” See if the children can name the first letter of the alphabet and then find the matching card. Now, can they name the letter that comes next and find that card as well? Once the children find the B card, have them place it next to the A card. Continue until you reach the letter Z. Then, sing the “ABC” song as the children point to each letter in the Alphabet Train. |
| Pack and Unpack | 15 | S | For this experience, you will need a small suitcase as well as old magazines, sale flyers, newspapers, junk mail, etc. Gather child-safe scissors as well. To begin, show the children the suitcase that they were using for the activity. Print the word <i>suitcase</i> on a piece of paper while the children watch. Do any of the children have a name that begins with the same sound as <i>suitcase</i> ? Next, challenge the children to find pictures in magazines, sale flyers, catalogs, etc. of things that begin with the same letter/sound as <i>suitcase</i> . Each time they find a picture, they should cut it out and put it in the suitcase. See how many things they can find. |
| Awesome Airplanes | 19 | Many different letters | During this experience, the children will create and fly paper airplanes. As an extension, with children who are developmentally ready, talk about how airlines (the companies that own the airplanes) have names. See if the children are familiar with any airlines such as American, United, Southwest, etc. If you want, you could even look at the logos for these airlines on a computer or tablet. Next, have the children use crayons/markers to create logos and airline names for their airplanes. They can draw the logos on the paper airplanes and then write or dictate the airline name for you to print on it. As you write what each child says, be sure to talk about letter names and sounds. Once the children finish their airplanes, plan a time for them to present their new “airlines” to the group. |