

Letters & Literacy



Additional Literacy Experiences for
the Unit,
"Look Up!"



Important Information

The following experiences are designed to complement the Gee Whiz teaching unit, "Look Up!" 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 “Look Up!”

Activity Title	Page #	Letter(s) to Integrate	How?
Look Who Flew In	4	P	During the experience, the children will meet Patty the Pilot. As part of the experience, for those children who are ready, print the sentence, <i>Patty is a pilot.</i> on a sheet of paper while the children watch. Say the words <i>Patty</i> and <i>pilot</i> as you point to the words in the sentence. What do the children notice about the letters at the beginning of both these words? Hopefully they will note that they make the same sound and are the same letter. Do any of the children have names that begin with the letter P? Next, have the children help you use blue painter’s tape to make a large capital and lowercase P on the floor. The children can then use toy airplanes to take off and land on these large letters.
Paper Helicopter Fun	9	H	During this experience, the children will experiment with paper helicopters. While the children play, print the word <i>helicopter</i> on a sheet of paper while the children watch. Talk about each letter as you write it. Then, challenge the children to make the sound they hear at the beginning of this word. Do any of the children have a name that begins with the letter H? Next, provide the children with construction paper and scissors. Have the children cut the construction paper into strips. You will want to have them cut some of the strips across the long side and others across the short side. This way, they will end up with long and short strips. Then, challenge the children to glue the strips on full sheets of construction paper to create the letter H (capital). This will require some problem-solving as well as fine motor control. As the children work, be sure to talk more about the letter H and the sound this letter makes in words, like <i>helicopter</i> .
Rocket Engineers	11	R	As the children participate in this experience, they will use assorted materials to build their own rockets. As the children work, print the word <i>rocket</i> on a sheet of paper. Talk about the letters that make up this word and then focus on the letter R. Do any of the children have this letter in their names? What sound does the letter R make at the beginning of rocket? Then, once the children complete their rockets, play the game, “Rockets Up!” To play the game, say a word out loud. If the word begins with the letter R, the children will make their rockets blast off and fly around the room. If the word you say does not begin with the letter R, then their rockets should remain on the ground. This is a fun way for children to practice

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Birdhouse & Nest Builders	13	B and N	During this experience, the children will create birdhouses or build nests with blankets. As part of this experience, print the words <i>birdhouse</i> and <i>nest</i> on separate sheets of paper while the children watch. Be sure to name each letter as you write it. Then, talk about the sounds the children hear at the beginning of both words. Do any of the children have names that begin with either sound? Next, introduce the game, “Birdhouse or Nest?” Before you can begin the game, have the children build a birdhouse with blocks and a nest with blankets. Put the sheets of paper with the words <i>birdhouse</i> and <i>nest</i> on the corresponding structures. Then, invite the children to pretend to be birds flying in the sky. When you say a word, the children must decide if it starts with a B (like birdhouse) or an N (like nest) and fly to the appropriate structure. Continue to play the game for as long as the children show interest.
A Noisy Bird	14	W	The children are going to learn more about woodpeckers as part of this experience. As a follow-up, use the woodpecker vocabulary card (English) to talk about the letter W at the beginning of this word. Once again, ask the children if any of them have a name that begins with the same letter. Challenge the children to make the sound they hear at the beginning of the word <i>woodpecker</i> . Can they think of any other words that begin with the same sound? Next, locate a large piece of wood (scrap lumber), some large nails and small hammers. Because this is a woodworking experience, you will want to do it one-on-one or with a maximum of 2 children at one time. Have the children use a crayon to make a large letter W on the wood. Then, have the children use the nails and hammer to tap holes along the letter W. The nails will not stay in the wood but instead just be used to make holes...like a woodpecker’s beak.
A Bat Snack	19	B + many others	During this experience, the children will pretend to be bats as then eat berries...a favorite bat snack. After eating, print the titled, “Berries Bats Like” on a sheet of paper. Talk about the letter B at the beginning of the words <i>berries</i> and <i>bats</i> . Then, have the children create a list of other berries they believe a bat might like to eat. As they make suggestions, print them on the chart. As you do so, be sure to name letters and talk about beginning sounds. Can the children think of any berries that also begin with the letter B?