

Letters & Literacy



Additional Literacy Experiences for
the Unit,
"Pond Friends"

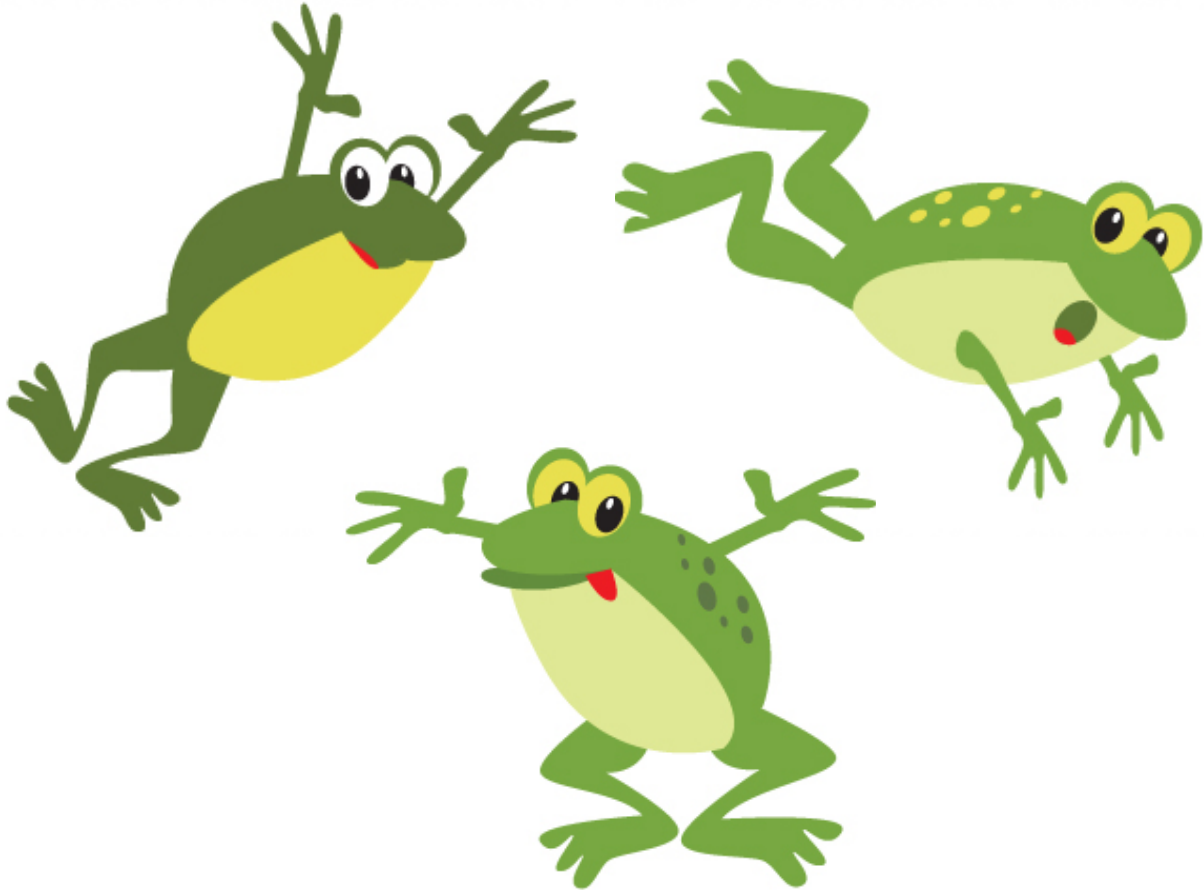


Important Information

The following experiences are designed to complement the Gee Whiz teaching unit, "Pond Friends." 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 “Pond Friends”

Activity Title	Page #	Letter(s) to Integrate	How?
Learning about Ponds	5	P	During the experience, the children will explore books about ponds and pond life. As the children look through the books, be sure to engage them in conversations. Print the word <i>pond</i> on index cards as the children watch. Name each letter as you write it. Talk about the sound the letter P makes at the beginning of the word <i>pond</i> . Then, see if those children who are ready can find the word <i>pond</i> in the books. Your most advanced children may be able to do this independently while you will need to help others. How many times can the children find this word in the books? As a follow-up experience, invite children who are interested to create their own books about the pond by folding white paper inside a construction paper cover and stapling on the left-hand side. Then these children can dictate their stories to you to write down and they can illustrate.
Tall, Tall Cattails	7	C	During this experience, the children will create their own cattails using art/craft materials. As the children create, print the word <i>cattail</i> on a sheet of paper. Name each letter as you write it. Can the children hear the sound the letter C makes at the beginning of this word? Do any of the children have a name that begins with the same sound? Next, have the children write large letter C's on construction paper. Then, they can put glue on the C's and press on soft, brown materials to make a “cattail C.” As the children create, see if they can think of other words that begin with the same sound as the word <i>cattail</i> .
Ripple Art	9	R	During this experience, the children create “ripple art” using jar lids and cups. As the children create, print the word <i>ripples</i> on a sheet of paper. Name each letter as you write it. Can the children hear the sound the letter R makes at the beginning of this word? Do any of them have a name that begins with the same sound? After the children complete their ripple art, help each child write the word <i>ripples</i> on his/her paper. More advanced children may be able to do this independently while others may need your help.

Letter Exposure Activities for “Pond Friends”

Activity Title	Page #	Letter(s) to Integrate	How?
On the Water. In the Water.	13	Letters in the words <i>sink</i> and <i>float</i>	During this experience, the children will experiment to test whether items sink or float. As they explore, locate a large sheet of white paper. Make two columns and then label them <i>sink</i> and <i>float</i> . Talk about the letters that make up each word as you write it. Which letters do the children recognize? Do they have any of the same letters in their names? Then, as children test items to see if they will sink or float, have them share their results with you. Print the name of each item in the corresponding column (sink or float). Say each letter as you write each word. Then, when the children complete their experiment, read all of the words in each column as you point to them. Do any words start with the same letter? Which column has the most? Why do the children think that is?
Hop! Hop! Hop! Then... Stop	15	H	As children participate in this experience, the children will pretend to be frogs. If desired, ahead of time, use blue painter's tape (if inside) or jump ropes/sidewalk chalk (if outside) to make a large letter H on the floor/ground. As the children hop, they can hop on the letter H. While doing so, be sure to talk about this letter and the sound it makes at the beginning of the word <i>hop</i> . Challenge more advanced children to name other words that begin with the same sound as they hop along the letter. How many different words can they think of?
Turtle Fun	19	T	During this experience, the children will help pretend to be turtles as they wear pillows on their backs (for shells). Print the word <i>turtle</i> on a sheet of paper while children watch and talk about the letters that make up this word. Do any of the children have names that begin with the letter T? What sound do the children hear at the beginning of this word? Next, with children who are ready, invite them to play a game. As the children wear the pillows on their backs and pretend to be turtles, explain that you are going to say words. If the word you say begins with the same sound as <i>turtle</i> , the children should continue to crawl around like turtles. But if the word you say does not have the same sound, the children should stop crawling and pretend to hide in their shells. Say a variety of words and see if the children differentiate between those that begin with the letter T