

# Letters & Literacy



Additional Literacy Experiences for  
the Unit,  
"Super Shapes"



# Important Information

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

Activity Title	Page #	Letter(s) to Integrate	How?
Stamp It!	4	Letters in the names of shapes	During the experience, the children will use common materials to create shapes as they stamp paint. As the children create, draw each shape on a sheet of white paper and then print the shape word under it. For instance, you might draw a circle and then print the word <i>circle</i> . Talk about the letters in each shape word as you print it. Do any of the children have any of the letters in the shape words in their own names? After the children finish creating shapes while stamp painting, allow their creations to dry. Then, working with children who you believe are ready, talk about the shapes they created. Encourage them to point to and identify the shapes. Then, write each shape name beside the shape OR help the children write with your help if you believe they are ready to do so. Talk about the letters in the name of each shape as you (or the children) write it.
Makin' Mosaics	9	M	This experience invites children to use small squares to create mosaics. As the children create, print the word <i>mosaic</i> on a piece of paper and talk about the letters that make up this word. Can those children who are ready hear the sound the letter M makes at the beginning? As a follow-up experience, have children who are developmentally ready print either a large capital letter M or a lowercase m on a sheet of white paper. Then, have the children use small paper squares to transform the letter into a mosaic. As the children create, talk about the shape of the paper as well as the colors they choose to use. Additionally, talk about the letter M. Can the children think of any words that begin with the same sound as the word <i>mosaic</i> ?
Quilt Fun	11	QU	During this experience, the children will be playing a game that uses a quilt. After playing the game, print the word <i>quilt</i> on a sheet of paper while the children watch. Name each letter as you print it. Then, talk about the sound the letter Q makes at the beginning of the word <i>quilt</i> . Note that the letter Q always goes with the letter U in order to make its sound. Can the children think of any other words that start with the same sound as <i>quilt</i> ? Next, invite children who are developmentally ready to cut scraps of wrapping paper or even fabric into small squares and triangles to then glue on a piece of construction paper to create a quilt. Once finished, help each child print the word <i>quilt</i> on his/her creation OR

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Dressing in Patterns	13	P	During this experience, the children will dress in different patterns such as plaids, stripes and polka dots. As the children play, talk about the patterns they choose to wear. Additionally, print the word <i>pattern</i> on a sheet of paper and talk about the letters that make up this word. Can the children hear the sound the letter P makes at the beginning of this word? As the children dress up, use your cellphone to take pictures. Then, when the children finish playing, have each child help you type a text message to his/her parents/guardians that describes what he/she was doing. For instance, the child might say, “I dressed in polka dot patterns today.” Then you could add, “We learned that the word <i>pattern</i> begins with the letter P.” Send the message along with the photo.
Nature Symmetry	15	S	During this experience, the children will explore the concept of symmetry as they look at leaves. While the children explore, print the word <i>symmetry</i> on a sheet of paper. Talk about each letter as you write it. Then, point out the S at the beginning of this word. See if the children can make the S sound. Do any of them have an S in their names? After the children finish exploring the symmetry of leaves, have each child choose one leaf to cut in half and glue on to a sheet of construction paper. Then, once glued, print the sentence, “This leaf is symmetrical.” on each child’s creation. Talk about letters as you do so. Then, challenge the children to point out the letter S. Can they find it? Do they remember the sound the letter S makes?
Curved or Straight?	16	Letters in each child’s name	As part of the Exploring Together experience, the children will explore the differences between curved lines and straight lines as they relate to shapes. This concept (curved and straight) also applies to letters! As a follow-up experience, have children who are ready print their names on a large sheet of white paper. As they do so, talk with them about which letters have straight lines and which have curved ones. The children might even discover that some letter (like P, D, G, etc.) have both curved AND straight lines! Once the children finish writing their names, they can decorate them as desired before taking them home.