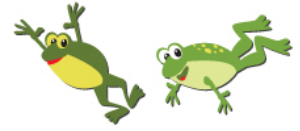


# Pond Friends



**Growing. Playing. Learning.**



Keep in mind that any materials you might need a little bit more time to gather are featured in red.

# Get Ready!

Please see the Materials List for items you will want to gather and/or prepare ahead of time.

Our next unit is packed full of experiences designed to help the children learn more about the animals and plants that call the pond their home. While exploring our, “Pond Friends” unit, the children will build background knowledge about frogs, turtles, mosquitoes and even pond plants like cattails. If you are lucky enough to have a pond in your area, plan a trip to visit with the children if at all possible. Just make sure to take extra adults with you so that children are constantly supervised. If this is not possible, use books and short videos to help the children learn what they might see, hear and even smell when visiting the pond.

The activities included in this guide are merely a starting point and not an “end all.” Please incorporate your own activities and experiences you believe the children would enjoy and adapt those in this guide to better meet the unique needs of the children in your care. Please use the Customized/Individualized Lesson Plan Sheet, Individualization Web and Connecting the Dots component to help you achieve this goal.

Don’t forget to email or send home a copy of the Family Letter with each child as you begin this unit. In addition, email or text the Digital Family Notes when you believe they would be the most beneficial. Most importantly, have fun!

## Table of Contents

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## Program Symbols for Developmental Areas

 = Language Development

 = Literacy Knowledge

 = Math Knowledge

 = Science Knowledge

 = Logic & Reasoning

 = Social Studies Knowledge

 = Social & Emotional Development

 = Music & Creative Arts

 = Physical Development & Health

 = Approaches to Learning

### Get Moving!

Activities with this icon help you address the goals of the Let’s Move! Child Care campaign ([www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)).



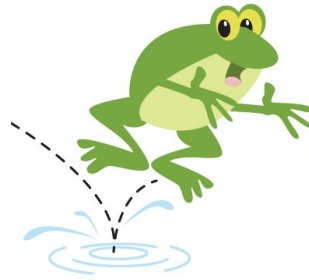
Activities with the sunshine icon may be done outdoors if you desire.



This icon helps you quickly locate some of the activities that address Character Education included in this unit

## 2 Week/10 Day Planning Grid

All the daily experiences are included on this grid so you know EXACTLY what is planned for each day.



DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
<b>Exploring Together:</b> Pretty Ponds (p.4)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Pond Building 101 (p.5)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Learning about Ponds (p. 5)  <b>Infants:</b> A Pretty Pond (p. 5)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Pond Plants (p. 6)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Clean the Water (p. 7)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Tall, Tall Cattails (p. 7)  <b>Infants:</b> Shake It! (p. 7)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Rocks & Stones (p. 8)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Rocks and Ripples (p. 9)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Ripple Art (p. 9)  <b>Infants:</b> The Stone is... (p. 9)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Sliding Across the Water (p. 10)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> On the Water. In the Water. (p. 11)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Oil and Water Art (p. 11)  <b>Infants:</b> Floating on the Water (p.11)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Tiny Tadpoles (p. 12)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Fingerprint Tadpole Art (p. 13)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> What Happens Next?" (p. 13)  <b>Infants:</b> Touch the Tadpoles (p. 13)
DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
<b>Exploring Together:</b> Hippity Hop (p. 14)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Hop! Hop! Hop! Then...Stop! (p. 15)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Count the Croaks (p. 15)  <b>Infants:</b> See the Froggie (p.15)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Fish in the Pond (p. 16)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> A "Fishy" Snack (p. 17)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Fish Underwater (p. 17)  <b>Infants:</b> My Beautiful Fish (p. 17)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Who Lives in that Shell? (p. 18)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Turtle Fun (p. 19)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> "The Tortoise and the Hare" (p. 19)  <b>Infants:</b> It's a Turtle! (p.19)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> What is Flying by the Pond? (p. 20)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Dump It Out (p. 21)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> My Own Dragonfly Wings (p. 21)  <b>Infants:</b> Learning about the Pond (p.21)	<b>Exploring Together:</b> Pond Fun Day! (p. 22)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> I Am Pretending to Be... (p. 23)  <b>Center/Small Group:</b> Can You Answer My Riddles? (p. 23)  <b>Infants:</b> All Together Now (p. 23)

### School-Age Activities:

I Went to the Pond and I Saw... (p. 24)

A Healthy Pond (p. 24)

Exploring Surface Tension (p. 25)

Freshwater vs. Saltwater (p. 25)

My Pond Diorama (p. 26)

Colorful Dragonflies (p. 26)

## DAY 1

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: What is a Pond?

Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

Inspect wooden decks and handrails for wood that has splintered and sand, or repair, in a timely fashion. This will prevent little hands from getting splinters.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Having children help pass out napkins and silverware is a meaningful way for them to practice 1-to-1 correspondence.

### Transition Time

See if the children can name things they might see in, or around, a pond before moving from activity to activity today.

Get Moving!

### Exploring Together: Pretty Ponds

(all ages, )

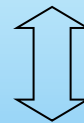
Materials:

- ☐ **"Down by the Pond" Riddle Book, prepared** - See p. 27 for preparation directions.
- ☐ **Blue blanket or bed sheet** (if blue is not available, any color will work)
- Today you will introduce a new unit, "Pond Friends." During this experience, a riddle story will encourage the children to use their existing background knowledge about ponds and pond animals to solve riddles. In the process, the children will build listening skills, engage with others and share information.
- It's story time! Sit on the floor with the, "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book. As children look in your direction, invite them to join you. Explain that today you have a special type of book to share. Note that this book is not just a story but instead a book of riddles. Challenge the children to put on their thinking caps and then show them the cover. Can any of the children guess what the riddle book is going to be about by looking at the cover illustration? Encourage more verbal children to share their ideas and then point to the words in the title of the book as you read it to the children. Once the children know that the riddle book is titled, "Down by the Pond," invite them to share what they think they might learn about by reading the book. Once the children finish sharing, read the book...pausing after you read each page for the children to answer the riddles. For ELL/DLL children, be sure to read the names of the animals/creatures in both English and the children's home languages.
- Next, introduce the group game, "Who's in the Pond?" Spread out the blue blanket or sheet on the floor. Have all of the children sit around the blanket sheet and close their eyes. Then, chant the rhyme, "Who's the Pond?" (p. 31) and tap several children on the head to get "in the pond." When you finish chanting, the children should open their eyes and name who is in the pond.
- **EXTENSION:** To help the children build background knowledge about ponds, show a short video such as this one. It does not have any narration but some really nice images: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHdZb0LJZNQ>

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**pond**      **water**      **habitat**  
**plants**      **home**      **animals**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- Using words such as **pond, water, habitat, plants, home** and **animals** as children complete activities.
- Talking with children as they make ponds with sand, water and rocks/stones (p. 5).
- Engaging children in conversations as they look at books about ponds and pond life (p. 5).

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- What do you think this new book is going to be about?
- Why do you think that?
- What animals did you see in the book?
- What do you already know about ponds? What would you like to learn?
- Where might we find a pond in our town?
- Why do you think it is important to never go close to the edge of a pond unless a grown-up is with you?



## DAY 1 - Center/Small Group Activities



### Pond Building 101

(Toddlers–4 years, 🗣️ 😊 ❤️ 🧠 ? 🖐️)

#### Materials:

- ☐ Sand table, sand box or container of sand
- ☐ Water

- This experience will challenge children to make plans and then put them into action. In the process, the children will need to problem-solve as they work alongside others. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Can you make a pond? How would you do this with sand and water? These are the types of questions you will pose for children to answer as you introduce this experience. Set out the water and provide access to sand. Invite interested children to use these materials to build ponds. In addition to the provided sand and water, the children can add rocks/stones and even thick sticks.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: These children will probably just enjoy playing with the sand and water and will more than likely not have the dexterity to shape it into a pond. This is fine! Just be sure to engage these children in conversations about ponds as they play.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be able to use the sand and water (along with other nature items they find) to create ponds. As you talk with this group, encourage them to describe their plans to you. If the children run into problems, provide support but encourage them to try to solve them on their own. These children can also compare/contrast the results of their plans. This is an excellent way for them to practice making and testing predictions and then analyzing the results.

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- What did you do first to build your pond?
  - How much water do you think your pond can hold?
- 
- What type of animals live in, or around, a pond?
  - What should people do to make sure the water in ponds is clean and safe for the animals and plants that live there?

### Learning about Ponds

(Toddlers–4 years, 🖐️ 🗣️ ❤️ 📖 ? 🧠 😊)

#### Materials:

- ☐ Books about ponds and pond life (see the Book List on p. 31 for suggestions)
- ☐ **Blue blanket or sheet** (from p. 4, Exploring Together)

- Books open the door for children to make discoveries and build background knowledge about new topics. During this experience, the children will have the opportunity to explore books on their own. As they turn the pages and look at the pictures, be sure to ask verbal children open-ended questions to get them thinking.
- Spread out the blue blanket or sheet from p. 4 (Exploring Together) and add an assortment of books related to ponds and pond life. As children choose this experience, invite them to look at the books. As you observe and interact with the children, be sure to ask open-ended questions. This will help you gauge what the children already know as well as what they would like to learn. Even though nonverbal children will not answer your questions, they will learn by listening to their friends. Remember...toddlers and twos are like little sponges...absorbing everything they see and hear!
- Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be able to answer your questions. In addition, they may decide to assume a leadership role and “read” some of the books to younger children. If so, this is an excellent way for them to build literacy skills.

### A Pretty Pond

(Infants, 🗣️ 🧠 😊 🖐️ 🎨 ❤️)

#### Materials:

- ☐ **Fingerpaint paper cut into an oval shape**
- ☐ **Blue and green fingerpaint**, sponge, water
- ☐ Tape

- Fingerpainting is a wonderful sensory experience for infants and young children. Just be sure to supervise directly so the infant does not try to eat the paint.
- Tape a precut piece of fingerpaint paper to the infant's high chair tray and dampen with a wet sponge. Add a small amount of green paint and a small amount of blue. Watch to see what the infant does. Describe the paint as well as the infant's actions. Talk about how the colors mix together to create new colors. Be sure to dry completely before sending home.

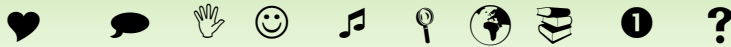
### Your Own Activities



## DAY 2

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: Plants Grow In, and By, the Pond  
Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

When the weather starts to warm, bees and wasps become more active. Keep an eye out for these flying insects and make sure children know how to respond if one comes near.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Make sure the expectations you set for each child are developmentally appropriate.

### Transition Time

Sing the song, "Please Help Keep the Water Clean" (p. 31) as the children pretend to pick up trash when moving from activity to activity today.

## Exploring Together: Pond Plants

(all ages, )

Materials:

- ☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book
  - ☐ **Blue blanket/sheet (or other color) from yesterday (p. 4)**
  - ☐ **A cattail** (real or artificial if you happen to have one)
  - ☐ Torn pieces of newspaper
- There are many different types of plants that are part of the pond habitat. One of the most interesting is the cattail. Depending on where you live, cattails may, or may not, grow in your part of the country. You will need to keep this in mind as you plan this experience. If you would like to purchase a real or artificial cattail for the children to explore, check out your local craft store or even online at Amazon.com. As the children participate in this experience, they will build language skills, practice using their senses to gain information and learn more about the importance of keeping water clean.
  - Sit on the floor with the cattail (if you were able to locate one) and as the children become curious, invite them to join you. Challenge the children to use their senses to explore the cattail. As they do, explain that cattails are just one of many plants that grow in, or around, ponds. Invite children who have had experiences with ponds to describe other plants they saw while visiting there. Then, share the riddle book, "Down by the Pond" and invite the children to keep their eyes peeled for the cattails.
  - Next, have the children help spread out the blue blanket or sheet as the "pond." Then, while the children watch, pretend you are throwing trash in the pond (use torn newspaper). The children will probably be horrified! Encourage more verbal children to share why this is not OK. Add to the discussion by noting how the plants, like cattails, and animals that live in the pond need clean water. Challenge the children to "clean" the pond (pick up paper) as you sing the song, "Please Help Keep the Water Clean" (p. 31). Repeat, if desired.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

<b>plants</b>	<b>aquatic</b>	<b>cattails</b>
<b>banks</b>	<b>clean</b>	<b>habitat</b>

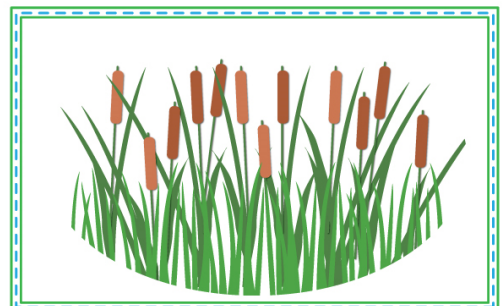


**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- *Using words, such as those listed above, while engaging children in conversations during the day's activities.*
- *Encouraging children to share their observations while "cleaning" water (p. 7).*
- *Talking with children as they create cattails as tall as they are (p. 7).*

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What type of pond plant do I have?*
- *Why do you think this type of plant is called a cattail?*
- *Where have you seen cattails growing?*
- *Why do you think it is important for ponds to have plenty of healthy plants in, and near, them?*
- *What would happen if people threw trash into ponds?*





## Clean the Water

(Toddlers–4 years, 🗨️ 😊 ❤️ 🧐 🌍 ? 🖐️)

### Materials:

- ☐ Water table or container of water
- ☐ **Kitchen strainers, tongs, large slotted spoons, bowls, etc.**
- ☐ **Plastic Easter grass** (put out of reach when done with the activity)

- This experience will help children see first-hand how difficult it can be to clean a pond that is filled with litter. As the children participate, they will need to practice problem-solving skills as they test their ideas. At the same time, they will need to demonstrate patience and persistence as they utilize their fine motor skills. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Set up the water table or a container of water and add a few handfuls of plastic Easter grass. Put the kitchen tools (listed above) nearby. As children become curious, explain that the water table or container of water is a pond that is full of litter! Can the children figure out how to clean it?
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: Chances are good this age group will simply want to use their hands to scoop out the Easter grass...which is fine. Just make sure that they do not put the grass in their mouths.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can try using different tools to "clean" the water. As they do, ask plenty of open-ended questions... including why it is important to never litter! Compare/contrast strategies.

## DAY 2 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What tool worked best for removing the "litter?"*
  - *How could litter in the water hurt the plants and animals that live in the pond?*
- 
- *How tall do you think your cattail is? How could you find out the actual height?*

## Tall, Tall Cattails

(Toddlers–4 years, 🖐️ 🗨️ ❤️ 🧐 ? ① 😊)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Old newspapers, soft, brown art materials** (e.g., fabric scraps, pom-poms, polyester fiberfill, cotton balls, felt, yarn, etc.)
- ☐ Glue in shallow dishes, old paintbrushes, tape
- ☐ **OPTIONAL: Yardstick or tape measure**

- Cattails can be very tall. In fact, the average cattail plant is between 3 and 10 feet tall! This experience challenges children to develop fine motor skills as they create cattails using newspaper and art materials that are as tall as they are. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: Ahead of time, roll sheets of newspaper to make long tubes. Make one for each child and cut to match his/her height. Then, have these children glue their choice of soft, brown materials to one end of the tube to transform it into a cattail. If the children choose to glue things randomly on the tube, that is OK as well.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can roll newspaper to create their own tubes. They will quickly discover that they will probably need to make two tubes, slide one inside the other slightly and tape to create a tube that is their height. You may need to provide assistance connecting the tubes with tape. Once created, the children can use assorted art/collage materials to create a cattail using brown materials on one end of the tube. Once complete and dry, have the children use a yardstick or measuring tape to find the actual height of their cattails.

## Shake It!

(Infants, 🗨️ 🧐 😊 🖐️ ❤️)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Pond sensory bottle** - Fill a clear plastic drink bottle about 3/4 full with water and tint with blue and green food coloring. Add some plastic Easter grass. Put glue in the lid and secure on the bottle. Wrap with duct tape to make the seal extra secure.
- Sensory bottles are fun for infants to explore. They not only enhance the senses of touch and sight, they build fine motor skills at the same time.
- Sit on the floor and hold the infant in your lap. Show the infant the pond sensory bottle. Tip the bottle back and forth and talk about what happens. Watch to see if the infant attempts to take the bottle in his/her hands. If so, describe the infant's actions as he/she explores the bottle. Talk about the color of the water and well as the "pond grass" inside. Remember...the more you talk to infants, the stronger their future language skills will be.

## Your Own Activities

## DAY 3

**Unit:** Pond Friends

**Today's Focus:** Rocks & Stones in, and Near, the Pond

**Developmental Areas Addressed Today:**



### Be Healthy & Safe!

Make sure to remind parents and caregivers to keep children's fingernails cut short. This reduces the amount of dirt and germs under them. Use a nail brush, too!

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Model kindness! The children are watching!!



### Transition Time

Have the children pretend to find rocks by a pond when moving from activity to activity today.

## Exploring Together: Rocks & Stones

(all ages, )

Materials:

- ☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book
- ☐ **Assorted rocks and stones in a bag or box** (just make sure all are large enough they would not be a choking hazard)
- Most ponds have rocks or stones around their banks and at their bottoms. These rocks and stones provide hiding places for frogs, crawfish, tadpoles, water striders, fish and more. This experience will invite children to use their senses as they explore rocks and stones. At the same time, they will build both receptive and expressive vocabulary as they compare and contrast.
- Sit on the floor with the box or bag of stones and rocks. Peek into the box or bag to get the children's attention. Then, as they gather, give the children clues about what is inside. Can they figure out that you have rocks/stones in the bag/box by listening to your clues? Once they do, invite the children to explore the rocks and stones. Where would they go if they wanted to find rocks or stones? Invite more verbal children to share and then explain that many times, you can find rocks or stones around the edge of ponds and at the bottom. Why do they think rocks and stones might be important to a pond habitat? Challenge more verbal children to share their ideas.
- Next, have the children compare and contrast the stones and rocks. Challenge the children to use different aspects when comparing such as size, texture, weight, etc. And of course, invite each child to share which rock/stone he/she likes best and why. If you want to add even more math, count the stones/rocks as well. Then, read the story, "Down by the Pond" and see if the children can spy any rocks in the pictures.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**rocks**

**ripples**

**stones**

**rough**

**smooth**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- *Using words, such as those above, as children participate in the daily experiences.*
- *Talking with children as they explore rocks and then use them to create ripples in water (p. 9).*
- *Describing children's ripple art (p. 9).*

### **Questions to Spur Thinking**

- *What do you think is inside my bag/box?*
- *How are the rocks the same? How are they different?*
- *Where might you find rocks in your neighborhood?*
- *Why do you think you might find rocks or stones around a pond?*
- *What types of animals that live in the pond might like having the rocks there?*





## Rocks and Ripples

(Toddlers–4 years, 😊 ♥ 🖐️ ① 🔍 ? 💬)



### Materials:

- ☐ **Rocks and stones** (from Exploring Together)
- ☐ Water table or container of water

- While this activity may just seem like a bunch of fun, it is actually an opportunity for children to explore the laws of physics. In the process, the children will build fine motor skills, explore cause and effect and also practice self-regulation skills.
- Set up the water table or fill a container of water and put the stones/rocks nearby. Chances are good, as soon as the children see the water, they will quickly come to see what is planned. Invite those children who gather to pretend that the water table (or container of water) is a pond. Then, pick up one of the smaller rocks or stones. Challenge more verbal children to predict what they think will happen when you drop the rock into the water. After the children finish predicting, drop the rock and challenge them to describe what happened. Did the rock float? Sink? Did it make ripples? Did it make a splash?
- Now provide the children with time to explore on their own. Step back, watch and listen. Continue to ask questions of your more verbal children. Your nonverbal children will learn by listening from the conversation.
- **Advanced Preschoolers:** These children can compare and contrast the ripples and splashes created by different sizes and kinds of rocks. At the same time, they can attempt to explain why the size of rock and height from the water seem to affect the size of the splash/ripples.

## DAY 3 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you think is going to happen when I drop this rock into our pond?*

---

- *Why do you think ripples are circles?*

## Ripple Art

(Toddlers–4 years, 🖐️ 💬 ♥ 🖍️ ① 🔍 ? 😊)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Assorted circular size jar lids, paper/plastic cups**
- ☐ White paper, crayons/markers OR paint and paintbrushes
- ☐ **Photo of ripples** (use Google Images to help you find a few picture to print and display)

- As adults, we know that ripples on a pond look like a series of concentric circles. This experience will invite children to create what looks like ripples by tracing circular objects. There will be quite a bit of problem-solving in this activity and we are providing options because different developmental levels need different options.
- To begin, show interested children the photo of ripples. Challenge more verbal children to describe what they see. Then, choose the option below that will work best for each child.
- **Toddlers/Twos/Threes:** These children can simply press circular jar lids in paint and then on paper. They may, or may not, create designs that look like ripples...which is OK. Focus instead on cause and effect (e.g., You press the lid in paint and then on paper...what happens? What do you see?)
- **Fours/Advanced Preschoolers:** These children can use jar lids or other items to create ripple art by tracing circles using markers or crayons. They will need to problem-solve to figure out that they will want to start with the circular object with the smallest diameter and then increase each time they trace. This is going to take quite a bit of problem-solving! This would also be a wonderful time to reinforce the circle shape.

## The Stone is...

(Infants - ♥ 🖐️ 😊 🔍 💬)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Large rock or stone that is SAFE to explore with infants**

- Even a common object, like a stone or rock, can be fascinating to infants. As they explore, infants build background knowledge about the natural world and develop fine motor control. At the same time, as you add descriptive language, the infant build critical receptive language skills and vocabulary.
- Sit on the floor with the infant in your lap or have him/her sit beside you if he/she is able to sit unassisted. Show the infant the stone. Touch the stone and describe how it feels. Invite the infant to explore the stone as well. Talk about what the stone looks like, where you found the stone, the colors you see on the stone, etc. All of this language will be absorbed by the infant. After all, they are little sponges just soaking up knowledge!

## Your Own Activities

## DAY 4

**Unit:** Pond Friends

**Today's Focus:** Water Striders Live in the Pond

**Developmental Areas Addressed Today:**



### Be Healthy & Safe!

Fruits, like watermelon, are juicy and have a high water content. Serve foods like these to help children stay hydrated.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Change one thing in the room and see how long it takes the children to notice.

### Transition Time

Have the children pretend to be water striders walking on water as they move from activity to activity today.

Get Moving!

### Exploring Together: Sliding Across the Water

(all ages, )

Materials:

□ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book

- Today you will introduce the children to a fascinating insect that calls the pond home...the water strider. Other names for this insect include water strider and pond skater. These insects are fascinating because they literally walk on water. This is because of the way their bodies are built as well as the tiny hairs all over their body that repel water. During this experience, the children will build language and vocabulary skills as they engage in dramatic play which builds gross motor skills.
- Pretend you are skating across the floor and, as children notice, invite them to join you. Explain that you are pretending to be an insect that lives on the pond. Do any of the children have any ideas about what insect you are pretending to be? Invite them to share. Then, introduce the water strider (pond skater). Have the children "skate" over to where you are going to read the riddle book, "Down by the Pond." As you read the riddles, challenge the children to participate. Encourage them to keep an eye out for the water strider. Can they find it?
- After sharing the riddle book, share a little information about water striders (see fact to the right). Then, sing the song, "I'm a Little Water Strider" (p. 31) and invite the children to pretend to be water striders "skipping" on the water in a pond. Vary the speed at which you sing the song and see if the children adjust their movements accordingly. Chances are good, you will need to sing the song several times because the children will enjoy pretending.
- **EXTENSION:** Because many children may not have direct experience with water striders, here is a short video you may want to share: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CU8gYYkwSw>

### Today's Vocabulary

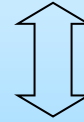
Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**water strider**

**skim**

**surface**

**insect**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

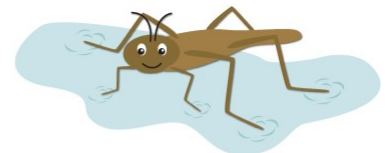
- Using words such as those listed above as children participate in today's activities.
- Describing children's actions as the experiment with sink and float (p. 11)
- Talking with children as they create oil and water art (p. 11).

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- What animal that lives on the pond is able to "walk" on water?
- Where have you seen a water strider?
- What would you like to learn about water striders?
- What would you do if you could walk on water like a water strider?
- How do you think a water strider's long legs help it "walk" on water?

### **Fun Fact:**

Did you know that water striders have hairs on their bodies that repel water? This enables them to "walk" on water!



## On the Water. In the Water.

(Toddlers–4 years,       )

### Materials:

- ☐ **Assorted items for exploring sink & float** (e.g., plastic bowls, plastic spoons, metal spoons, metal bowl, wooden spoon, tongue depressors, rocks, plastic block, small metal pot, etc.)
- ☐ Water table or container of water
- Experimentation is a wonderful, hands-on way for children to explore science. This experience will challenge children to explore sink and float. Water striders are unique animals that float on the water and certainly do not sink! As you engage the children in conversations during this experience, be sure to ask plenty of questions to get the children thinking.
- Set up the water table or container of water and put the items you gathered ahead of time nearby. As children show interest in this activity, invite them to experiment to see which items float (like a water strider) and which sink. As the children play, challenge more verbal children to share their discoveries with you.
- Advanced Preschoolers: As these children test different materials, challenge them to think about what the results. What is the same or similar about all of the items that float on the water? What is the same or similar about all of the items that sink? Then, have them note differences between the items in the groups. This is an excellent way to bring problem-solving and critical thinking into the activity.

## Floating on the Water

(Infants,     )

### Materials:








- ☐ **Tub or bowl of water, plastic lids (large enough not to be a choking hazard)**
- ☐ Small towel
- Infants love water play! This experience exposes them to the concept of “floating” through hands-on fun. As you describe what happens, you will help the infant build an awareness of what it means when an item floats on water.
- Spread out the towel on the infant’s high chair tray and put the tub of water with plastic lids on it. Invite the infant to explore. Describe the lids and what they are doing as the infant plays. Talk about how the lids float on the water. If the infant pushes a lid under the water, be sure to describe not only what he/she does, but also what happens to the lid when he/she lets go. Remember...the more you talk to the infant...the better!

## DAY 4 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- Which items do you think will sink? Which items do you think will float? Were your predictions correct?
- What happened when we put the colored oil on the water?

## Oil and Water Art

(Toddlers–4 years,       )

### Materials:

- ☐ **Baking pan with sides, eyedropper or medicine dropper**
- ☐ **Thick white paper, food coloring, water, cooking oil, small dish, cookie racks (or art drying rack), paper towels**
- While this experience is certainly messy, it is a wonderful way to expose children to chemistry in a very simple way. We, as adults, know that oil and water do not mix but most children do not. During the course of this activity, the children will make this discovery and create a beautiful work of art in the process. You will definitely need to adapt this experience for different developmental levels AND keep lots of paper towels on hand! Doing this experience outdoors is a great idea if the weather is nice.
- To begin, have the children choose a color to use for their art. You will want to try to come to a consensus because you will not want to keep changing out the colored water. Next, pour water into the bottom of the pan (about 1/2" deep) and add food coloring so the water is a deep color. Next, have the children use eyedroppers to drop oil onto the colored water. Talk about what happens. Next, help one child place a thick sheet of white paper on top of the oil/water and then carefully lift. Place on a cookie rack and encourage the children to share what they see. Allow to dry completely and then blot off excess oil with paper towels before sending home.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: This group will need a LOT of help with this activity. However, the important part for this group is watching, listening and learning.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: This group should be able to follow the steps above with assistance when needed.

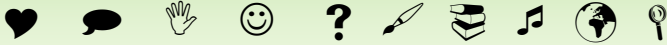
## Your Own Activities

## DAY 5

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: Tadpoles Live in the Pond

Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

Some children have very sensitive skin. Keep this in mind when purchasing soap or detergent.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Exercise is very important for growing bodies. Make sure the children have plenty of time for active play during the day.

### Transition Time

Sing the song, "The Tadpoles Are Swimming" (p. 32) as the children pretend to be tadpoles when moving from activity to activity today.



Get Moving!

### Exploring Together: Tiny Tadpoles

(all ages, ☺ 🖐️ ❤️ 🔑 📖 🎵 🌐 ? 🖋️ 💬)

Materials:

☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book

- Tadpoles are amazing creatures! They are one of the few creatures in this world that goes through the process of metamorphosis. This experience helps children learn more about tadpoles through the use of the riddle book and an action song. You will find a short video listed below you may want to share as well. During the course of this activity, the children will build background knowledge about the natural world, participate in dramatic play and utilize gross motor skills.
- It's story time! Invite interested children to join you and then show them the cover of the riddle book, "Down by the Pond." Can any of your more advanced children "read" the words with you? Before you begin reading the story, challenge the children to keep their eyes and ears open for a pond animal that changes a lot as it grows. Then, read the book and see if the children can figure out that the animal you were describing is the tadpole. If any of the children have experiences with tadpoles, encourage them to share with the group. Explain that tadpoles hatch from eggs laid by frogs and then, as they grow and change, they turn into frogs by growing legs and losing their tails. If you want to show a short video (below), now would be a great time to do so!
- Next, sing the song, "The Tadpoles Are Swimming" (p. 32) and invite the children to pretend to be tadpoles growing legs and turning into frogs as you sing.
- **EXTENSION:** To help the children learn more about how tadpoles turn into frogs, share this short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugJrj-cUJCE>

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**tadpole**      **frog**      **egg**

**swim**      **metamorphosis**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

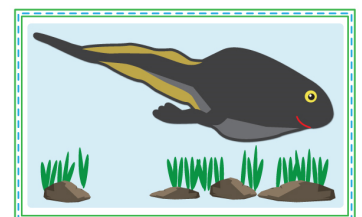
- *Saying the words listed above as children complete activities.*
- *Describing sequence while exploring how a tadpole changes into a frog (p. 13).*
- *Engaging children in conversations about tadpoles as they create fingerprint tadpole art (p. 13)*

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you already know about tadpoles?*
- *What would you like to learn?*
- *Which do you like better...tadpoles or frogs? Why did you make that choice?*
- *How long do you think it takes for tadpoles to turn into frogs?*
- *Where might we find tadpoles or frogs in our community?*

### Fun Fact:

Did you know that, on average, it takes 3-4 months for a tadpole to completely turn into a frog?





## Fingerprint Tadpole Art

(Toddlers–4 years, ♥ 🖐️ ? 😊 🧴 🖌️ 🗣️)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Brown or black paint-soaked sponges or folded paper towels in shallow dishes**
- ☐ Light blue construction paper, green art tissue OR construction paper
- ☐ Gluesticks or glue in shallow dishes and old paintbrushes
- The development of fine motor control is going to be a big part of this experience. In the process, the children will express their ideas through art. Because different developmental levels will approach this activity differently, we are providing options.
- Set out the materials above and invite interested children to use them to create fingerprint tadpole art. Choose the option below that you think will work best for each child.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: These children should be able to make fingerprints on the paper. As they do, talk about tadpoles. Once the fingerprints dry, have the children tear pieces of art tissue or construction paper to glue on their tadpole art for pond grasses.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can use the paint to make fingerprints and then use markers to add tails or even legs to their tadpoles once the paint dries. Then, they can cut or tear pieces of green art tissue or construction paper to glue on to their art for pond grasses. As these children work, talk with them about tadpoles. Encourage them to share what they like about these interesting creatures and why they think they call the pond their home.

## Touch the Tadpoles

(Infants, 🗣️ 🖐️ 😊 🧴 ♥)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Tadpole sensory bag** - To make, fill a gallon zipper-top freezer bag with clear hair gel and add some blue food coloring. Squeeze to mix. Then, add "tadpoles." To make, locate black beads and black yarn. Cut short lengths of black yarn, insert through the beads and knot both ends. Cut off the excess on one side of the bead. Put these in the gel, seal the bag (squeezing out all the air in the process) and cover the seal with duct tape.
- Sensory bags are extremely fun for infants, and toddlers, to explore. Just be sure to supervise carefully in case the bag gets a hole unexpectedly.
- Put the tadpole sensory bag on the floor or on the infant's high chair tray. Watch to see what the infant does with the bag. Describe his/her actions as well as the contents. In addition, be sure to talk about tadpoles as the infant explores.

## DAY 5 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- Tell me about your tadpole art.
- What comes out of the eggs laid by the frog? What happens next? What happens after that?

### What Happens Next?

(Toddlers–4 years, 🗣️ ♥ 🖐️ ① 🧴 ? 😊)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Frog Sequencing Cards** - Print a copy of p. 33, mount to heavyweight paper and cut apart.
- Sequencing, or putting events in chronological order, is an important skill. Because the metamorphosis of a frog occurs in a specific sequence, it is an excellent example to use to help children practice this skill. In the process, the children will build language and vocabulary as well as practice problem-solving.
- Spread out the Frog Sequencing Cards on the table and watch to see who chooses to join you. Challenge more verbal children to describe what they see in each picture. Nonverbal children can listen and learn from their peers.
- Next, mix up the cards and see if the children can point to the picture that shows what happens first. Then, see if they can find the picture that shows what happens next. Have the children put this card beside the first one. That will leave the one that happens last. As you do this with the children, be sure to use the terms *first*, *next* and *last*. After arranging the cards in the correct order, have the children close their eyes. Mix up the order of the cards and then have the children "fix" it. Repeat several times to help the children practice sequencing skills.
- Advanced Preschoolers: These children should quickly be able to sequence the cards in the correct order.

### Your Own Activities

## DAY 6

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: Frogs Live by the Pond

Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

Sodium can hide in many types of foods. Check food labels carefully and try to limit the amount of sodium in the foods served to children.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

From time to time, drop everything and read! Reading to children is a wonderful way to build key literacy skills.

### Transition Time

Sing the song, "The Frog is Hopping Up and Down" (p. 32) and have the children pretend to be frogs as they hop from activity to activity today.



### Exploring Together: Hippity Hop

(all ages, )

Get Moving!

#### Materials:

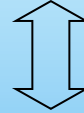
- ☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book
- ☐ **Plush, plastic or rubber toy frog** (if one is available)
- ☐ Frog Sequencing Cards (p. 13)

- Today you will scaffold off yesterday's experiences as you talk about frogs as another animal that calls the pond habitat home. During the course of this experience, the children will build literacy skills, practice cooperation and build gross motor control. If the weather is nice in your area, you may want to take the children outside to play the game so they have more room to run.
- If you were able to locate a toy frog, make it hop around on the floor. As the children notice, invite them to join you. As they do, encourage the children to share what they already know about frogs as well as what they would like to learn. See if the children can remember that frogs used to be tadpoles. Show the children the Frog Sequencing Cards (from yesterday) and see if they can put the cards in order without a lot of help. Encourage the children to describe the pictures as well.
- Next, read the riddle book, "Down by the Pond" and challenge the children to keep an eye out for the frog. When they find it, they should all ribbit like frogs.
- Now introduce the group game, "Tadpole, Tadpole, Frog." This game is similar to, "Duck, Duck, Goose." To play, have the children sit in a circle. Choose one child to be "It." This child walks around the outside of the circle and lightly taps each child on the head while saying, "Tadpole." Randomly, the child can tap someone on the head and say, "Frog!" At this point, both the child that was tapping and the child that was tapped start hopping around the circle. If the child that was tapping other children makes it back to the empty space, a new child becomes "It." If not, the child that was "It" remains so.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

<b>frog</b>	<b>legs</b>	<b>hop</b>
<b>first</b>	<b>next</b>	<b>last</b>



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- *Using the words above as the children complete the day's activities.*
- *Counting with children as they play, "Count the Croaks" (p. 15).*
- *Describing children's actions as they pretend to be frogs (p. 15).*

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you like about frogs?*
- *If you could turn into something else as you grew, what would you turn into?*
- *Why do you think frogs can hop so well?*
- *Where might we find a frog in our community?*
- *What do you think frogs eat? Why do you think that?*
- *Where would you live if you were a frog?*

### **Fun Fact:**

Did you know that frogs do not drink water like we do? Instead, they absorb water through their skin. How cool is that?!





## Hop! Hop! Hop! Then...Stop!

(Toddlers–4 years, ☺ ♥ 🖐 ? 🎵 🗣)

### Materials:

- ☐ Recorded music

- This experience not only helps the children build gross motor skills, it promotes listening skills as well. As the children pretend to be frogs while music plays, they will need to practice self-regulation and respecting personal space. If the weather is nice, be sure to do this experience outdoors so the children have plenty of room to move. This would also be a great activity to do before naptime...the children will be tired when it is over!
- Turn on recorded music and invite interested children to pretend to be frogs as they hop to the music. Keep in mind that younger children (e.g., Toddlers/Twos) may not yet be ready to hop with two feet. This is fine! They can still pretend to be frogs in their own way. Then, when you randomly stop the music, all the frogs must stop and freeze. Again, your younger children may, or may not, choose to stop. This is OK!
- **Advanced Preschoolers:** These children should be able to play the game in the proper way...stopping when the music stops and hopping when it is on. In addition, you may want to invite these children to take turns turning the music on and off. This provides them with a leadership opportunity in a simple and fun way.

Get Moving!

## See the Froggie

(Infants - ♥ 🖐 ☺ 🗣)

### Materials:

- ☐ Small blanket
- ☐ **Plush, plastic or rubber frog**

- Tummy time is very important for infants. It is also very hard work! Lifting your head when your upper body is still not fully developed is a chore. But, tummy time is important because it helps infants develop the muscles in these critical areas. Just make sure to keep tummy time short and watch for signs of frustration. Using a prop and a song is a great way to make tummy time a lot more fun!
- Spread out the blanket on the floor and put the infant on his/her tummy. Position yourself so you are sitting above the infant's head. Make the toy frog hop up and down as you sing the song, "The Frog is Hopping Up and Down" (p. 32). Vary the speed at which you sing the song and watch to see which version keeps the infant's attention better. Again, be sure to limit the amount of time the infant spends on his/her tummy to just a few minutes because it is very hard work.

## DAY 6 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- Which songs do you like better...faster ones or slower ones? Why did you make that choice?
- What was the best part about this game?

### Count the Croaks

(Toddlers–4 years, 🖐 ♥ 🖐 ? ① ☺ 🗣)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Numbered index cards (0-10)**

- This game is designed to make practicing counting a lot of fun! As the children play, they will pretend that they are frogs as they "croak" a specific number of times. During this game, the children will also practice recognizing numerals. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- **Ribbit! Ribbit! Ribbit!** Croak like a frog and invite children to join you. Have them croak like frogs as well. Then, introduce the counting game, "Count the Croaks." Show the children the numeral cards. Hold up each card and see if your more advanced children can identify the numerals. For ELL/DLL children, be sure to say the names of the numerals in both English and their home languages. Then, play the game with the children using the option you think will work best.
- **Toddlers/Twos/Threes:** This age group cannot yet identify numerals (more than likely). Instead, have a child pick a card, identify the numeral for them and then croak and count together. This will help these children build an awareness of the connection between written numerals and amounts.
- **Fours/Advanced Preschoolers:** This group can take turns choosing a numeral card and then the entire group croaks the matching number of times without saying the name of the numeral out loud. Count as the children croak.

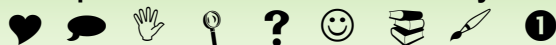
### Your Own Activities

## DAY 7

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: Fish Live in the Pond

Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

Make sure to have children wash their hands frequently throughout the day. It is the best way to prevent the spread of germs.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Give children positive feedback when you see them demonstrating persistence. It is not always about achieving the goal but more often, about the journey getting there.

### Transition Time

Have the children pretend to be fish as they swim from activity to activity today.



Get Moving!

### Exploring Together: Fish in the Pond

(all ages,

Materials:

- ☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book
- ☐ **Construction paper fish in a paper bag (1 fish for each color)** - Use the pattern on p. 32 to help you.

- Fish often live in ponds. This experience builds upon the children's existing knowledge of fish and then invites them to participate in an active group game that enhances visual discrimination skills and color recognition. As children participate in this experience, they will need to problem-solve, use their sense of sight and practice cooperation.
- Shake the bag that contains the construction paper fish. Explain that you have paper cutouts of something that lives in the pond in the bag. Give the children clues to help them figure out that you have fish in your bag. Then, have the children reach into the bag, one at a time, and pull out the cutouts. As the children look at the fish shapes, encourage them to share their experiences with real fish. Talk about how some types of fish live in ponds (and other bodies of fresh water) while others live in the ocean (saltwater habitats). Be sure to count the fish as well!
- Next, share the riddle book, "Down by the Pond" and invite the children to keep their eyes peeled for the fish. Can they find it? When finished, introduce the group game, "Fishing for Colors." To play, put all of the construction paper fish back in the bag. Have each child reach into the bag and pull out a fish. Then, have all of the children take their fish around the room to find something that is the same color. For instance, the child who pulled out the red fish might go and find a red plastic block. The child that pulled out the green fish, might find a green crayon. After each child finds something that matches his/her fish, have him/her share it with the group and then repeat the process for as long as the children show interest.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**fish**                      **swim**  
**gills**                      **scales**                      **underwater**

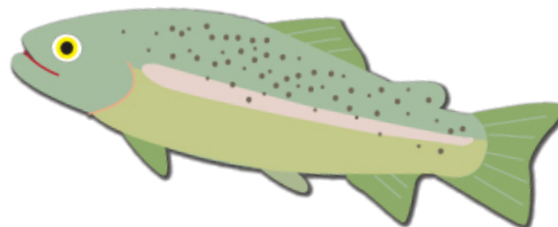


**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- *Using the words such as those listed above as during interactions and activities with children.*
- *Talking with children as they use stencils and watercolors to create underwater fish art (p. 17).*
- *Counting as children put fish in the pond and then take them out (p. 17).*

### **Questions to Spur Thinking**

- *What do you know about fish?*
- *Why do you think some types of fish like living in a pond?*
- *Where do you think the fish in the pond sleep?*
- *How many fish do you think live in a small pond? A big pond?*
- *What did you find that was the same color as your fish?*
- *Real fish that live in the pond are not blue or purple. What colors do you think they might be?*





## A "Fishy" Snack

(Toddlers–4 years, 🗨️ 😊 ❤️ ① 🔍 ? 🖐️)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Fish-shaped crackers\***
- ☐ Paper plate for each child

- Snack time can be a learning time! This experience combines a song with counting and, of course, eating! As the children participate, they will build fine motor control as they practice problem-solving. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Who is hungry? Chances are good...everyone! As children sit at the table, invite them to join you for a "fishy" snack. Give each child a paper plate and invite the children to pretend the plates are ponds. Then, have each child count out 10 fish-shaped crackers to put in his/her "pond." You will need to complete this step for younger children. Just be sure to count out loud as you do.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: This age group will probably just want to eat the crackers without playing the game...which is fine. Just describe the number of crackers as the children eat them (e.g., "You just ate 3 fish from the pond.")
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can be given specific directions to follow that involve eating the crackers. For instance, you might say, "Everyone...eat 2 fish from your pond. How many are left?" Repeat, until the pond is empty and then replenish the fish and play again.

\* As always, be sure to check with parents/caregivers before serving any foods.

## My Beautiful Fish

(Infants, 🗨️ 🔍 😊 🖋️ 🖐️ ❤️)

### Materials:

- ☐ **White paper cut in to a large fish shape** (one for each infant)
- ☐ Wide washable markers

- Infants need opportunities to develop fine motor control. Holding a marker is a great way to work on this skill. Just make sure the markers you use are thick enough for little hands to hold and keep the caps out of reach.
- Tape the white paper cut in a fish shape to the infant's high chair tray and provide him/her with 3 or 4 markers (different colors). Watch to see what the infant does and describe not only his/her actions but the colors he/she chooses to use. This is a simple way of exposing infants to color names in a meaningful way.

## DAY 7 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- How many fish are left in the pond?
  - How many fish do you think live in a real pond?
- 
- What do you think is going to happen when you brush over the fish with blue paint? Were your predictions correct?

## Fish Underwater

(Toddlers–4 years, 😊 ? 🔍 ❤️ 🖋️ 🖐️ 🗨️)

### Materials:

- ☐ **Fish stencils** - Use the pattern on p. 32 to create stencils the children can use for this activity. To make, trace the fish pattern on squares of posterboard or other heavyweight paper. Cut out the fish, leaving the square intact. The children will color inside the open fish shape.
- ☐ Large sheets of white paper, **thinned blue paint in shallow dishes (or blue watercolors)**, paintbrushes
- ☐ Blue painter's tape

- Working with stencils helps children build fine motor control and eye-hand coordination. This experience also incorporates an element of science as children make and test predictions. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: These children are just beginning to build fine motor control. For this reason, use loops of blue tape to attach the stencils to the white paper so they will not move when the children scribble inside them. Keep in mind that they will also, more than likely, scribble all over the stencils as well. This is OK! Because you are using painter's tape, you should be able to pick up the stencil and move it to a different part of the paper so the child can add another fish. Then, have each child paint over the fish with thinned blue paint.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be able to use the stencils by coloring inside them. In addition, these children can predict what is going to happen when the paint over the fish with thinned blue paint. Were their predictions correct?

### Your Own Activities

## DAY 8

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: Some Turtles Live Near Ponds

Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

State rules in a positive way so children know what to do (e.g., "Sticks stay on the ground" instead of "Don't pick up sticks.")

### Teaching Tip of the Day

High fives are a fun way to give children positive feedback and a way for children to show kindness towards one another.



### Transition Time

Sing the song, "Little Turtle" (p. 32) and have the children crawl slowly from activity to activity today.

Get Moving!

### Exploring Together: Who Lives in that Shell?

(all ages, )

Materials:

- ☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book
- ☐ **Metal or plastic mixing bowl (that you cannot see through) + small toys or items that fit under the bowl**

- Today the children will learn more about an animal that can sometimes be found near ponds and streams...turtles. Many children will probably already be somewhat familiar with turtles. Encourage them to share what they know during this experience. A story, action song and guessing game will all make this activity a lot of fun for everyone.
- It's story time once again. Invite interested children to join you as you get ready to read they riddle book, "Down by the Pond." At this point, the children should be able to answer all of the riddles in the book without too much help. After sharing the story, see if the children can figure out which pond animal is unique because it carries it's home with it wherever it goes. See if they can figure out that this animal is a turtle. Invite the children to share what they know about turtles as well as what they would like to learn.
- Next, introduce the game, "What's Under the Turtle's Shell?" To play, have the children cover their eyes while you place a small item under the mixing bowl (turtle shell). When the children open their eyes, give them clues to help them guess what is under the turtle's shell. Once more advanced children get the hang of the game, they can take turns putting items under the bowl and giving clues.
- Conclude the experience by singing the song, "Little Turtle" (p. 32) and inviting the children to crawl around the room as they pretend to be turtles.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**turtle**      **protection**  
**shell**      **hide**      **hard**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

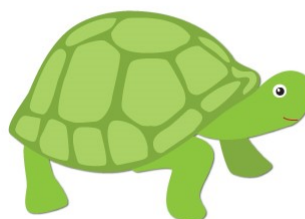
- Using the words, such as those listed above as children complete today's activities.
- Describing children's actions as they pretend to be turtles with shells on their backs (p. 19).
- Sharing the fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare" (p. 19).

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- What do you know about turtles? What would you like to learn?
- Where have you seen a turtle?
- What is special about turtles?
- Why do you think a turtle's shell is so hard?
- What do you think turtles eat?
- Why do you think turtles live near ponds and streams?

### Fun Fact:

Did you know that Western Pond Turtles can live as long as 50 years in the wild?



Get Moving!

## Turtle Fun

(Toddlers–4 years, 🗨️ 😊 🖐️ ? 🖋️ 🧡)

Materials:

☐ **Pillows** (1 per child)

- Role-play is a fun way for children to show what they know as they build language skills and express their ideas through actions. This experience will also challenge the children to problem-solve, practice persistence, patience and self-regulation as well.
- Set out the pillows and invite interested children to pretend that they are turtle shells. See if the children can put the pillows on their backs and then crawl around without them falling off. This is going to be a challenging task!
- As the children pretend, engage them in conversations. In addition, keep in mind that you will probably need to help younger children by putting the pillows on their backs once they are in a crawling position. As the children play, encourage more verbal children to share whether this task is easy or challenging.
- Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be able to problem-solve to figure out how to move their bodies in a balanced way to keep the pillows from falling. As these children test their ideas and try new techniques, encourage them to verbalize which work well and which do not. In addition, challenge the children to describe why they think the ideas that did not work were problematic.

## It's a Turtle!

(Infants, 🗨️ 🖐️ 😊 🖐️ 🧡)

Materials:

☐ **Plush or plastic turtle...safe for an infant**

- While exploring a toy may seem like a very simple activity, it is actually a great way for infants to learn about their world. As infants explore, they use their senses to gather information. In addition, as you describe the turtle and point to different parts, the infant begins to make connections between written and spoken language.
- Sit on the floor and hold the infant in your lap. Show the infant the toy turtle and name this animal for him/her. Watch to see what the infant does and then describe his/her actions. At the same time, name parts of the turtle as the infant touches them (e.g., "You just touched the turtle's shell.") Doing this will help the infant begin to connect what he/she is touching with what you are saying.

## DAY 8 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Was crawling with a pillow on your back easy or hard? Why do you think that?*
- *What did you learn from this story?*
- *What do you think the hare did wrong?*

Get Moving!

## "The Tortoise and the Hare"

(Toddlers–4 years, 🖐️ 🗨️ ? 😊 🧡 🖋️ 📺)

Materials:

☐ **Copy of the book, "The Tortoise and the Hare"** (or watch this recorded version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO1DJ6H8cVU> )

- The fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare," is a classic and the perfect tale to share during discussions about turtles. If you have a more advanced group, you may want to explain that tortoises, unlike turtles, spend all of their time on land while turtles spend some of their time in water. After sharing the story, be sure to give the children time to act it out by having their own "tortoise and hare" races.
- Invite interested children to join you for a story. Either show them the book or get the short video book ready to view. Do any of the children already know this story? If so, what characters are a part of the tale? What problem does one of the characters face? These types of questions help children build comprehension skills.
- After reading the story, invite the children to share why they believe the tortoise won the race even though he was very slow. Then, invite the children to have their own tortoise and hare races as they move around your outdoor play space.
- Advanced Preschoolers: These children may already be somewhat familiar with the classic fable. If so, see if they can apply the moral of the story to their own lives. When do they think it is important to be, "slow and steady?"

### Your Own Activities

## DAY 9

**Unit:** Pond Friends

**Today's Focus:** Dragonflies and Mosquitos Live Near the Pond

**Developmental Areas Addressed Today:**



### Be Healthy & Safe!

If a child seems to be "off," keep a close eye on him/her. Sometimes, this means he/she is coming down with something.

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Make sure to record anecdotal notes frequently. Our Observe & Reflect Grid (in the User's Guide) and Individualization Web can help you with this task.

### Transition Time

Have the children pretend to be dragonflies or mosquitos as they fly from activity to activity today.



**Get Moving!**

### **Exploring Together: What is Flying by the Pond?**

(all ages, )

**Materials:**

☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book

- The pond is home to mammals, reptiles and insects. Two of the insects often found near ponds are dragonflies and mosquitoes. This experience exposes children to both of these insects though the use of the riddle book as well as discussions. A very active game will then help the children build gross motor skills as they practice self-regulation and cooperation. You will want to take this part of the experience outdoors so the children have plenty of room to run.
- Make a high-pitched buzzing sound (like a mosquito) as you "fly" around the room. As children notice, see if they can figure out what insect you are pretending to be. Can any of them figure out that you are pretending to be a mosquito? Invite them to fly and buzz with you for a few minutes and then sit down.
- Next, invite the children to share what they know about mosquitoes as well as their experiences with these insects. Chances are good that probably at least one of the children has had a mosquito bite. Explain that mosquitoes love water that is not moving very much and that is why they like ponds. Get out the, "Down by the Pond" riddle book and challenge the children to keep an eye out for the mosquito and for another flying insect they might see at the pond. Can they spot the dragonfly as you read? After sharing the story, invite the children to share what they know about dragonflies as well as what they would like to learn. Talk about the colors the children see on the dragonflies wings and why they believe these insects are so colorful.
- Next, introduce the group game, "Mosquito Tag." Play this game as you would normal Tag but have the child who is it pretend to be a mosquito trying to sting people. When a child is "stung," he/she becomes It and the game continues.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**dragonfly**      **mosquito**

**iridescent**      **wings**      **bite**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- *Using words such as those above during daily activities.*
- *Talking with children as they seek out and dump standing water in your outdoor play space (p. 21).*
- *Engaging children in conversations as they create their own dragonfly wings (p. 21).*

### **Questions to Spur Thinking**

- *When have you seen or heard a mosquito?*
- *Why do people call mosquitoes pests?*
- *What do you like about dragonflies?*
- *What colors do you see on this dragonfly?*
- *Where might we find dragonflies or mosquitoes in our community?*

### **Fun Fact:**

Did you know that dragonflies only eat while in flight?





## Dump It Out!

(Toddlers–4 years,       )

### Materials:

☐ None needed

- This experience exposes children to the importance of dumping stagnant water in an effort to limited the mosquito population in your outdoor play space. Explain that mosquitoes are not only annoying insects, they can also carry diseases that make people sick. Dumping water is a great way to eliminate breeding grounds for mosquitoes and this is something that children can help you do. During this experience, the children will use their senses, problem-solve and work together toward a common goal.
- Take the children outdoors and explain that you have a task for them to do. Find some standing water and show it to the children. Encourage them to describe the water. Where do they think it came from? Share that mosquitoes like to lay their eggs in water like this and that if they do, there will be even more mosquitoes in the outdoor play space. Yikes! Challenge the children to help you seek out, and dump, any standing water they find. Even a very little bit of water (e.g., in a plastic lid) can be a breeding ground for mosquitoes. See how many different places the children can find to dump as they explore.
- Advanced Preschoolers - You might want to pair these children up with younger ones for this experience. Doing so will challenge more advanced preschoolers to use their verbal skills while enabling them to assume a leadership role.

## Learning about the Pond

(Infants,      )

### Materials:

- ☐ **Books about the pond** - See the Book List on p. 31 for suggestions.
- Looking at pictures in books is a wonderful way for you to help infants build visual discrimination skills. At the same time, talking about those pictures helps infants build important receptive language skills. If an infant is ready to help turn the pages, then he/she also develops fine motor control and book handling skills.
- Sit on the floor with a few books and hold the infant in your lap. Pick up the book that seems the most appealing to the infant. Look at the pictures and talk about what you see. Maybe, if you are lucky, you will spot a dragonfly! Be sure to point to, and name, the animals and insects that are featured in the book.

## DAY 9 - Center/Small Group Activities

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Where did you find some standing water?*
  - *Where else should we look?*
- 
- *Tell me about your dragonfly wings.*

## My Own Dragonfly Wings

(Toddlers–4 years,        )

### Materials:

- ☐ **Paper grocery bag for each child cut into a vest** (see p. 33 for diagram)
- ☐ Large sheets of white paper, crayons, markers, assorted art/collage materials, aluminum foil, colored art tissue, wrapping paper scraps, gluesticks and/or glue in shallow dishes and old paintbrushes
- Creating a dramatic play prop you can wear is a lot of fun and it builds fine motor control, engages the senses and so much more. As the children create their dragonfly wings, be sure to take time to incorporate discussions about colors and textures. Now would be a great time to record an anecdotal note! Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: Give these children two large sheets of white paper to decorate as desired using crayons or markers along with torn pieces of art tissue or aluminum foil. Once the glue dries, cut the decorate pieces of paper into 4 dragonfly wings and tape or staple to the back of the precut grocery bag vest. Have the children pretend to be dragonflies as they wear their wings.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be able to cut out four wing shapes (count) from white paper and then decorate them as desired using their choice of materials listed above. Then, once dry, have these children help attach the wings to the backs of the precut grocery bag vests. Once complete, the children can wear their vests as they pretend to be dragonflies.

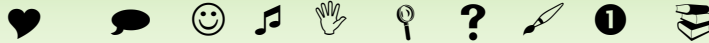
### Your Own Activities

## DAY 10

Unit: Pond Friends

Today's Focus: Pond Fun Day!

Developmental Areas Addressed Today:



### Be Healthy & Safe!

When children in your group are learning to pull up, do not keep tablecloths on tables. We all know what could happen!

### Teaching Tip of the Day

Challenge children to think by asking questions like, "What do you think will happen when...."

### Transition Time

Have children pretend to be their favorite pond animals or insects as they move from activity to activity today.

Get Moving!



### Exploring Together: Pond Fun Day!

(all ages, ☺ ☞ ♥ ✋ 🔑 📖 ✍️ ?)

Materials:

- ☐ Water table or container of water
- ☐ **Rocks (large enough not to be a choking hazard) + plastic frogs, turtles, fish, etc.** ... whatever you have on hand
- ☐ Books about the pond and pond animals (use the Book List, p. 31, to help you)
- ☐ Materials to play games chosen by children (see below)
- ☐ **Sprinkler, children's bathing suits, towels**

- Today is Pond Fun Day! All of the experiences today are planned to help you wrap up this unit. Below are a few suggestions for activities to offer during this Exploring Together time. Feel free to pick and choose the activities you believe the children would enjoy most as they wrap up this unit.
- Playing in the Pond - If the weather is warm enough today, set up the sprinkler and invite the children to pretend to be their favorite pond animals playing in the water.
- Reading about the Pond - Set out books about the pond and pond animals. As you engage with the children, talk about what they see in the illustrations or photos. Encourage the children to talk about what they learned about the pond during this unit as well as any additional questions they still have that they would like to answer about ponds. They can then make their own books, too.
- A Pretend Pond - Have the children pretend a water table or container of water is a pond. They can add rocks and plastic pond animals (see above) to enhance their play.
- Play That Again! - There were numerous fun games included in this unit. Invite the children to share the ones they would like to play again and then do just that.

### Today's Vocabulary

Use some of these words in conversations with children today!

**pond cattails turtle tadpole  
frog dragonfly water strider  
mosquito**



**As younger children participate in activities today, model language by...**

- *Saying the words listed above as children complete activities during the day.*
- *Listening and asking questions as the children retell the riddle book, "Down by the Pond" (p. 23).*
- *Engaging children in conversations as they pretend to be animals and insects in, and by, the pond (p. 23).*

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What did you learn about the pond from reading the books you chose?*
- *What else would you like to find out?*
- *What pond animal (or insect) are you pretending to be? Why did you choose that animals (or insect)?*
- *Tell me about the animals in your pond.*
- *Which game would you like to play again? Why do you like that game best?*



## DAY 10 - Center/Small Group Activities

### I Am Pretending to Be...

(Toddlers–4 years, ♥ 😊 🙌 ? 🗣️ 🎨 🗣️)

Get Moving!

Materials:

- ☐ **Large blue blanket or sheet** (from earlier in the unit p.4 ...any color will work as well)

- This culminating activity will allow you to sit back, listen and observe to see what the children learned from this unit. The children, on the other hand, will participate in dramatic play, build gross motor skills and demonstrate self-regulation and an awareness of personal space.
- Spread out the blanket or sheet and explain to curious children that it is a pond. Invite interested children to pretend to be their choice of pond animals or insects as they play in, and around, the pond.
- Toddlers/Twos: These children may, or may not, pretend to be pond animals or insects as they play on the blanket or sheet. This is OK! They will learn by watching and listening to the older, more verbal children in your group.
- Threes/Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be able to choose a pond animal or insect to pretend to be while playing in, and around, the blanket/sheet pond. As these children play, be sure to ask plenty of open-ended questions to engage them in back-and-forth conversation. This is not only a wonderful way for them to practice their verbal skills, it is also a great way for you to gain insight into their thought processes.

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Why did you choose to be that pond animal/insect?*
- *Which riddle from the book is your favorite? Why do you like that one best?*

### Can You Answer My Riddles?

(Toddlers–4 years, ♥ 😊 ? 🗣️ 🙌 🎨 🗣️)

Materials:

- ☐ "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book

- Because more advanced children are now very familiar with the riddle book, "Down by the Pond," they can attempt to retell it in their own words. This experience invites your more advanced children to assume a leadership role as they lead an experience. In the process, everyone will build key receptive and expressive language skills.
- Invite interested children to hold the riddle book, "Down by the Pond" and turn the pages as they share it with other children. As you participate with the children, be sure to ask questions and engage them in conversations. This is an excellent way for you to help the children build both language and vocabulary skills.
- Advanced Preschoolers: These children should be fairly accurate when retelling the story. In addition, they can be challenged to ask their "audience" questions and to take questions from them as well!

### All Together Now

(Infants, 🗣️ 🎵 😊 🗣️ ♥)

Materials:

- ☐ None needed

- Rhymes and songs are excellent tools for helping infants build language and vocabulary skills. Reciting rhymes and singing songs repeatedly helps build exposure to language in a fun way. Try to incorporate the songs and rhymes from this unit into your daily routines such as diapering or riding in a baby swing.
- Hold the infant in your lap and sing some of the song or recite some of the rhymes from this unit. These songs can be found in the back of this Teaching Guide.

### Your Own Activities

# School–Age Activities

If you have school-age children in your care, use these experiences with them as desired. Most require little preparation and can be implemented with just a few children. In addition, all of them can be extended to last more than one day.

## I Went to the Pond and I Saw...



### Pond Habitats

#### Materials:

- ☐ **Books about ponds and pond life** (see Book List, p. 31)

- Seeing books as a source of information is important for school-age children. During this experience, the children will read books to help them build background knowledge about pond habitats and then use this information to play a challenging memory game.
- Set out the books about the pond and pond animals for the children to read and explore. As they do so, engage the children in conversations about a pond habitat. Ask plenty of questions to help you gauge what the children know as well as what they want to find out.
- Next, see how many animals (or insects) that live in, or around, ponds the children can name. Print the names of these animals on a piece of paper. This is an excellent way to bring literacy into the experience. Then, use this list to introduce the memory game, "I Went to the Pond and I Saw..." This game is similar to the memory game, "I'm Going on a Trip and I'm Taking..." Have one child begin by completing the phrase, "I went to the pond and I saw a (name of animal or insect)." Then, the next child will repeat what the first person said and then add another phrase with his/her chosen animal. The task of remembering and repeating will get harder and harder as the game goes on. Continue until the group can no longer remember the sequence and then start again.
- **EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY:** Have the children play the game again and challenge them to use animals or insects they have not used previously.

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What type of animals live in, or around, a pond?*
- *Where have you seen a pond?*
- *If we went to a pond in our community, what types of living things do you think we might find there?*
- *What was the hardest part about this game?*
- *What types of animals, insects and plants did you see in the video that live near ponds?*
- *Why do you think it is important for the pond habitat to be healthy?*
- *What would happen if people put trash or dirty water in the pond?*

### Keeping the Pond Healthy

## A Healthy Pond



#### Materials:

- ☐ Access to a computer or tablet

- This experience invites children to use technology to learn more about ponds and pond life. In the process, the children will have the opportunity to build language and literacy skills, utilize their senses and use pictures and writing to share ideas with others.
- To begin, show the children this short video about the many different plants and animals that can be found in, or near, ponds: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8EMn\\_21T4o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8EMn_21T4o). After sharing the video, encourage the children to talk about what they saw. Which animals were they surprised to learn lived in, or near ponds?
- Next, talk with the children about why they think it is so important for the pond habitat to be healthy. What do the children think would happen if people put trash or dirty water in the pond? Encourage the children to share their ideas verbally and then have them write and draw to record those ideas. When finished, display the children's art and writing for all to enjoy.
- **EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY:** Have the children share their writing/drawing with younger children.

# School–Age Activities

## Exploring Surface Tension



### Materials:

- ☐ Pie plate or other shallow pan
- ☐ Water, dish soap, paper clip, black pepper

- Water striders (or water striders) are fascinating pond insects that appear to “walk” on water. In actuality, water striders use surface tension to appear to walk on the surface of the water. Their bodies are covered in tiny hairs that repel water. This activity introduces children to the concept of surface tension through a hands-on experiment. As the children participate, they will enhance their vocabulary, make and test predictions and then share results with others.
- Use the riddle book, “Down by the Pond” to talk with the children about water striders. If any of the children have had experience with these insects, invite them to share. Talk about how these insects appear to walk on water and use this to introduce the concept of surface tension.
- Next, conduct a simple surface tension experiment. Have the children put water in a pie plate or shallow pan. Then, have them sprinkle pepper on the water. Talk about what happens. Next, put a small amount of dish soap on a paper clip. Have the children predict what they think will happen when the paper clip touches the surface of the water. Then, slowly touch the end of the paper clip with the dish soap to the water. What happens? The pepper pulls away from the soap. Why? Because the soap changes the surface tension of the water.

**EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY:** Have the children suggest different materials to put on the water surface before adding the soap (e.g., flour, cornstarch...). Are the results the same?

### How Do Water Striders Walk on Water?

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- What do you know about water striders (or water striders)?
  - Where might we find water striders in our community?
  - What would you do if you could walk on water?
  - What do you think is going to happen when the soap hits the water?
- 
- What types of fish do you think might live in a pond?
  - What is the same about fish that live in a pond and fish that live in saltwater?
  - Why do you think saltwater fish are more colorful than freshwater fish?

### Freshwater Fish

## Freshwater vs. Saltwater



### Materials:

- ☐ Access to a computer or tablet

- Comparing and contrasting are important skills for children to develop. There are many types of freshwater fish that live in ponds, streams and rivers. There are very different types of fish that live in saltwater. During this experience, the children will use technology to compare fish from these very different habitats. In the process, the children will build language and vocabulary skills as they engage in conversations with one another and use their visual discrimination skills as they make comparisons.
- Start this experience by challenging the children to name animals that live in the pond. Chances are good that someone will suggest fish. Use Google Images to look at pictures of common pond fish. Then, do the same thing for saltwater fish. What do the children notice? More than likely, it will be very obvious that, in general, saltwater fish are much more colorful than fish that live in ponds. Why do the children think that is?

**EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY:** Have the children use technology to discover the answer to why saltwater fish are often more colorful than freshwater fish.



# School–Age Activities

## My Pond Diorama



### Life in the Pond

#### Materials:

- ☐ **Shoe box for each child**
- ☐ Assorted art/collage materials, string/yarn, crayons/markers, colored art tissue, construction paper, etc.
- ☐ Tape, glue in shallow dishes with old paintbrushes and/or gluesticks
- Creating a diorama involves a lot of planning! At the same time, when making the diorama, children develop fine motor control and use art and collage materials to create a 3-dimensional representation of their ideas.
- Set out the materials listed above as well as any others you believe the children might enjoy using and invite them to create their own, "In the Pond" dioramas. As the children create, be sure to ask plenty of open-ended questions. In addition, encourage them to describe their creations for you. Talk about the types of animals and plants the children choose to put in their dioramas as well. This is an excellent way for you to gauge each child's level of understanding about this topic.
- Once the dioramas are complete, plan a time for each child to share his/her with the group. During this time, encourage other children to ask the artist questions about his/her creation.

**EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY:** This is an activity that is definitely going to take more than one day to complete.

### Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What animals and plants did you choose to add to your pond diorama?*
- *Why did you choose those animals and plants?*
- *What is your favorite part of your diorama?*
- *What do you know about dragonflies?*
- *How are the colors on a dragonfly like a butterfly? How are they different?*
- *Why do you think dragonflies like to live near ponds?*
- *If you were a dragonfly and could fly anywhere in the world, where would you fly? Why did you choose that place?*

### Dragonflies Fly Around the Pond

## Colorful Dragonflies



#### Materials:

- ☐ **Pinch-type clothespin for each child, aluminum foil, construction paper, colored art tissue, sequins, chenille stems, plastic beads, etc.**
- Dragonflies are beautiful insects that often call the pond home. There are many, many different species of dragonflies and often they have iridescent colors on their bodies and wings. During this experience, the children will use their creativity to make their own dragonflies using art/collage materials. As the children create, they will problem-solve, build fine motor control and share their ideas with others through art.
- If the children in your group are not familiar with dragonflies, you may want to show them some images of dragonflies on the internet. What do the children know about these beautiful insects? What would they like to learn? Then, provide the children with the materials listed above and invite them to use them freely to create their own dragonflies. The pinch-type clothespins can be the bodies of their dragonflies and they can use any materials they would like to create wings. Once complete, hang the dragonflies from the ceiling for all to enjoy.

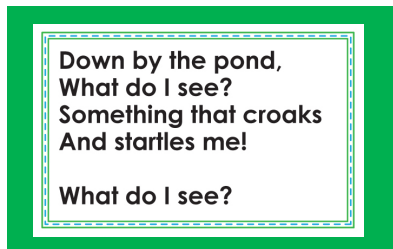
**EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY:** This experience will definitely take more than one day to complete.

# "Down by the Pond" Riddle Book

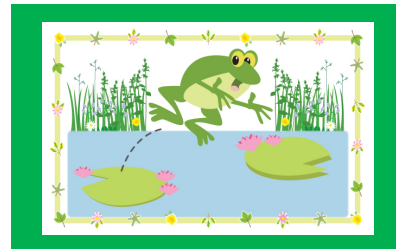
## Directions for Preparation & Use

### Preparation:

- First, print the sheets from the story prop file and cut apart where indicated.
- Next, cut several sheets of green or blue construction paper in half. Glue each riddle to the front of one precut piece of green or blue construction paper and then put the answer to the riddle (animal, plant or insect's picture) to the back.
- For the front cover, put the title page on the front of a precut piece of construction paper and leave the back blank. For the back cover, do the same thing.
- Finally stack the pages in order behind the cover and staple on the left-hand side.



Front of each riddle page



Back of each riddle page

### Extension Ideas

Use these extension ideas in addition to the activities included in the Teaching Guide to further expand upon this unit with the children.

**Adding to the Story** - Have your more advanced children think of other animals that might live near, or in, the pond. They can then create a riddle for each animal and draw a picture. Add these to the riddle book to expand it or use to create an entirely new book.

**How Fast Can You Name It?** - Use the pictures in the riddle book to play a game. Have the children close their eyes while you choose one of the pages featuring a plant, animal or insect. Then, count to 5 and have the children open their eyes. See how fast they can name the plant, animal or insect that is pictured.

**Read It Backwards** - Just for fun, read the story from the back to the front. Does it make sense in this order? Why or why not? Try doing this with other books about the pond as well. What happens when you start reading the book at the end instead of the beginning?

# Directions for Make It! Sheets

The Make It! sheets enhance the experiences presented in the lesson plans. Feel free to incorporate these activities where you feel they would fit best. Each one can be completed in different ways for children of different ages. The details below explain how each sheet COULD be used. Feel free to use them in other ways as well.

## Make It! Sheet #1 – What Colors Do You See? Available in English & Spanish

### You Will Need:

- Copy of the sheet for each child



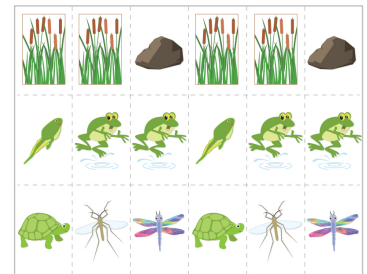
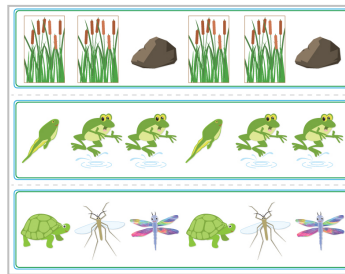
### What to Do:

- The purpose of this sheet is to help the children build color recognition skills and language at the same time.
- Print out a copy of the sheet for each child. Have the children look at the picture of the dragonfly. Then, encourage them to describe the colors they see on the dragonfly. What colors are their favorites? You can also name colors and have the children point to them on the dragonfly. This might be easier for younger children.

## Make It! Sheet #2 – Pond Life Patterning

### You Will Need:

- Copy of both sheets for each child
- Child-safe scissors
- Crayons/markers
- Zipper-top bag or envelope for each child

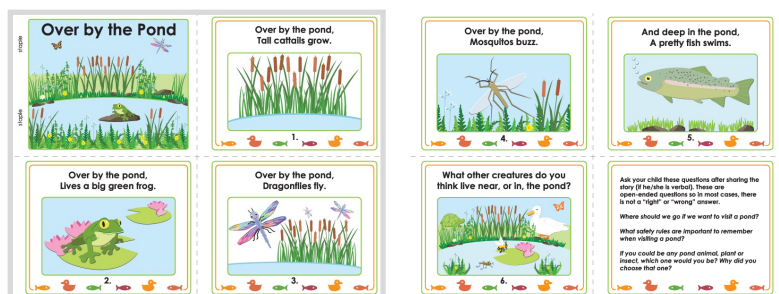


### What to Do:

- The purpose of these sheets is to help children create a manipulative material they can use to practice copying, extending and creating patterns.
- Give the children copies of both sheets and have them cut apart by following the dotted lines. Then, the children can use the strips and cards to practice copying, extending or even creating patterns. To copy the pattern, the children can place the cards on top of the matching pictures on the strips OR place them above or below. To extend, the children can keep the pattern going by placing cards at the end of the strip. To create patterns, the children can use the individual cards to make up their own patterns. When sending this material home, you may want to share with parents/caregivers the many ways it can be used.
- **HELPFUL HINT:** Have each child choose a different color of marker. Then, have the children make dots on the backs of their strips and cards. This will help you sort out the cards and strips if they happen to get mixed up as the children play with this material.

## Let's Read Together! Booklets Available in English & Spanish

Print out a copy of the booklet for each child (front-to-back or 2 pages). Cut apart, stack in order and staple on the left-hand side. Use in your program as desired and then send home to help families reinforce literacy skills.



## Experiences for Advanced Preschoolers: School Readiness

The following experiences are designed for advanced preschoolers that are ready to learn more about letters and sounds as well as numbers, mathematical operations (addition/subtraction), and spatial concepts. The following extension ideas blend well with the activities presented in this Teaching Guide. Incorporate them as you complete activities if they are appropriate for the advanced children in your care.

### Letter Recognition, Beginning Sounds and Creative Writing:

- ☐ **A Word Pond:** Making a word pond is a fun way for children to build vocabulary while exploring concepts about print, letter recognition and more. To begin, use blue construction paper to make a large “pond” shape on a wall. Then, provide blank index cards, crayons/markers and pencils. Invite the children to write words associated with a pond on the index cards. These words can be descriptive words like *wet*, *deep* or *cold* OR they can be words about the animals, plants and insects that call the pond home. As the children write, be sure to talk about letter names and sounds. The children may also choose to illustrate their cards before taping them in the “pond.” How many words can they add?
- ☐ **It Starts With...:** As you introduce each new vocabulary word, print it on paper and have children identify the beginning letter and sound. Can children list other words that begin with the same letter and sound?
- ☐ **Fishing for Letters:** This manipulative is one that may take a little bit of time to create but you will be able to use repeatedly to help children practice letter recognition skills. To prepare, use the fish pattern (p. 32) to trace 26 fish on assorted colors of construction paper. Cut out the fish and then print a letter on each one. Print the capital letter on one side of the fish and the lowercase letter on the other. Slide a paper clip on the nose of each fish and put in a paper grocery bag or box. Next, make several fishing poles by tying and/or taping a length of string or yarn to each unused pencil or chopstick. Tie a magnet (or piece of magnetic tape) to the end of each string. The children can then use the poles to go fishing in the bag or box. When the children catch a fish, they should identify the letter on it by saying it out loud. They can then continue to fish until the box is empty.

### Addition:

- ☐ **How Many Hops?:** This active game will not only help the children become more familiar with addition, it will also help them build gross motor skills at the same time! To prepare, make a set of numeral cards for 0-9 by printing numerals on index cards. Then, to play the game, have the children pretend to be frogs. Put the numeral cards face down on the floor. Choose a child to pick a card. Have the children identify the numeral and then hop the matching number of times. Then, have another child choose another card and have the children hop that number of times as well. Hold both cards up and have the children add the numerals together. For instance, if the first card chosen was 2 and the next card was 7, the children would add  $2 + 7 = 9$ . Then, they should hop 9 times. Return the cards to the pile and have the children take turns choosing new numerals. See how many different number combinations the children can come up with as they play.



# Learning Indicators Addressed By Activity

	Exploring Together	Small Group	Small Group	Infant
<b>DAY 1</b>	Pretty Pond LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, PD5, SS2	Pond Building 101 LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK6, PD5	Learning about Ponds LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LK1, LR1, PD5	A Pretty Pond LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, CA3, PD5
<b>DAY 2</b>	Pond Plants LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LK1, LR1, CA1, PD5, SS3	Clean the Water LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK6, PD5, SS3	Tall, Tall Cattails LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK5, PD5	Shake It! LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, PD5
<b>DAY 3</b>	Rocks and Stones LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, MK1, MK2, MK6, PD5	Rocks and Ripples LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, MK3, MK6, PD5	Ripple Art LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK3, MK6, CA3, PD5	The Stone is... LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, PD5
<b>DAY 4</b>	Sliding Across the Water LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LK1, LR1, CA4, PD4	On the Water. In the Water. LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK6, PD5	Oil and Water Art LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, CA3, PD5	Floating on the Water LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, PD5
<b>DAY 5</b>	Tiny Tadpoles LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, CA1, CA4, PD4, SS2	Fingerprint Tadpole Art LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LR1, CA3, PD5	What Happens Next? LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, MK2, PD5	Touch the Tadpoles LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, PD5
<b>DAY 6</b>	Hippity Hop LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, CA4, PD4	Hop! Hop! Hop! Then...Stop! LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LR1, CA1, CA2, CA4, PD4	Count the Croaks LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LR1, MK1, MK2, PD5	See the Froggie LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, PD4
<b>DAY 7</b>	Fish in the Pond LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, MK1, MK2, MK6,	A "Fishy" Snack LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LR1, MK1, MK2, PD2, PD5	Fish Underwater LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, CA3, PD5	My Beautiful Fish LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, CA3, PD5
<b>DAY 8</b>	Who Lives in That Shell? LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, CA1, CA4, PD4, PD5	Turtle Fun LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, CA4, PD4	"The Tortoise and the Hare" LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LK1, LR1, PD4	It's a Turtle! LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, PD5
<b>DAY 9</b>	What is Flying by the Pond? LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1,	Dump It Out! LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LR1, PD3, PD5, SS1, SS2	My Own Dragonfly Wings LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK1, MK2, CA3, CA4, PD5	Learning about the Pond LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, LK1, PD5
<b>DAY 10</b>	Pond Fun Day! LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, LK1, LK2, LK3, LK4, LK5, LR1, LR2, CA4, PD4,	I Am Pretending to Be... LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LR1, CA4, PD4	Can You Answer My Riddles? LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK1, LR1, PD5	All Together Now LD1, LD2, SE1, SE4, AL1, SK1, SK3, CA1

Please see the Gee Whiz User's Guide for a full list of Learning Indicators.



## School-Age Experiences

I Went to the Pond and I Saw... LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK3, LK1, LR1, PD5	Exploring Surface Tension LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, LR2, MK6, PD5	My Pond Diorama LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LR1, LR2, CA3, PD5
A Healthy Pond LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LK2, LK3, LK4, LK5,	Freshwater vs. Saltwater LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4, AL1, AL2, AL3, SK1, SK2, SK3, LR1, MK6, PD5	Colorful Dragonflies LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4, SE1, SE2, SE4, AL1, AL2, SK1, SK3, LR1, LR2, CA3, PD5

## Book List

Here is a list of books that complement our theme, "Pond Friends":

*Are You a Dragonfly?* by Judy Allen

*A Different Pond* by Bao Phi

*Fish is Fish* by Leo Lionni

*A Frog in a Bog* by Karma Wilson

*Frogs/Las Ranas* by Elizabeth Carney

*Frogs* by Gail Gibbons

*From Tadpole to Frog* by Wendy Pfeffer

*Good Night Little Turtle* by David Cunliffe

*In the Small, Small Pond* by Denise Fleming

*In My Pond* by Sara Gillingham

*Katie and the Water Lily Pond* by James Mayhew

*Life in the Pond* by Craig Hammersmith

*Look Out for Turtles!* by Melvin Berger

*The Mysterious Tadpole* by Steven Kellogg

*Plip-Plop, Pond!* by Kaaren Pixton

*Pond* by Donald Silver

*Pond* by Jim LaMarche

*Pond Circle* by Betsy Franco

*Turtles* by Laura Marsh

*Turtle Splash! Countdown at the Pond* by Cathryn Falwell

*The Wide-Mouthed Frog* by Keith Faulkner

*Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears/Porque Zumban los Mosquitos en los Oidos de la Gente* by Verna Aardema

*Would You Rather Be a Pollywog?* by Bonnie Worth

### WHO'S IN THE POND?

Who's in the pond?  
Who's in the pond?  
When you open up your eyes,  
Who is in the pond?.

### PLEASE HELP KEEP THE WATER CLEAN

(tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

Please help keep the water clean,  
In the pond and in the stream.  
Put your litter in the trash.  
Recycle bottles and the cans.  
Please help keep the water clean,  
In the pond and in the stream.

### I'M A LITTLE WATER STRIDER (tune: "I'm a Little Teapot")

I'm a little water strider...look at me.  
I can walk on water, you'll see.  
With my very long legs I can glide  
Front to back and side to side.

## **THE TADPOLES ARE SWIMMING**

(tune: "The Wheels on the Bus")

The tadpoles are swimming 'round &  
'round,  
'Round and 'round,  
'Round and 'round.  
The tadpoles are swimming 'round &  
'round,  
In the pond.

The tadpoles are starting to grow their legs,  
Grow their legs, grow their legs.  
The tadpoles are starting to grow their legs,  
In the pond.

Slowly they will turn into happy frogs,  
Happy frogs, happy frogs.  
Slowly they will turn into happy frogs,  
Hopping by the pond.

RIBBIT!

## **THE FROG IS HOPPING UP AND DOWN**

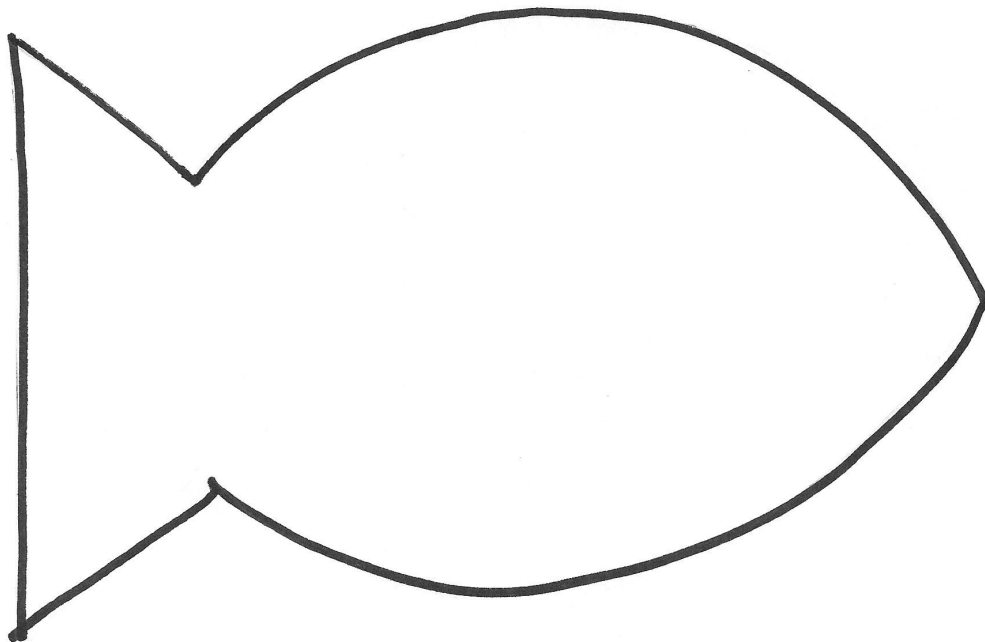
(tune: "The Wheels on the Bus")

The frog is hopping up and down,  
Up and down, up and down.  
The frog is hopping up and down,  
By the pond.

## **LITTLE TURTLE**

(tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

Little turtle, crawling 'round,  
By the pond on muddy ground.  
On you back you have a shell  
It's your home...this I can tell.  
Little turtle, crawling 'round,  
By the pond on muddy ground.



Paper bag vest cutting diagram

