

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Literacy Centers and the Five Components of Reading	6
Differentiation	9
Management	10
How to Use This Product	11
Standards	16
Centers	18
Bubblegum, Bubblegum: Beginning Sounds	18
Buggin' Around: Syllables	38
Butterflies in the Sky: Uppercase and Lowercase Letters	56
Final Shot: Ending Sounds	74
Give a Dog a Bone: Short-Vowel Words	90
I Spy: Vocabulary	104
Rhyme Time: Rhyming Words	118
Soccer Goals: Ending Sounds	130
Three in a Row: Beginning Sounds	146
Word Puzzles: Onset and Rime	166
References Cited	178
Recommended Literature	179
Assessment Data Sheet	181
Literacy Skills Matrix	182





Introduction

Purposeful practice is essential for improvement and mastery of literacy skills. When given proper instruction, materials, and opportunities to practice and apply what they learn, all students can experience literacy success.

Over the past two decades, scientific research has revealed how expert readers read and what goes wrong when students fail to read. One of the most important findings is how important early intervention is to avoiding problems for students at risk for reading difficulties (Torgenson, Wagner, and Rashotte 1994).

Children who fall behind in first-grade reading have a one-in-eight chance of ever catching up to grade level (Juel 1994). Seventy-five percent of children whose help is delayed to age nine or later continue to struggle throughout their school careers (Francis et. al. 1996). If help can be given at an earlier age, children may be more successful in their later years.

Allowing children opportunities with independent practice can give children the help needed to be successful. Whole-class lessons are most effective when the materials and activities involved are available to small groups or individuals for further application. Students need to practice what they have learned in order to assimilate the new information into their current knowledge base. Through literacy centers, students gain opportunities to manipulate, repeat, share, and expand upon the presented materials at their own pace. The literacy centers in this book provide the meaningful, independent practice that is a natural follow up to whole-class instruction.

Children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Classrooms that incorporate literacy centers into their daily routine become less teacher directed and more student driven. As students' knowledge grows, they learn to think critically, make decisions, and solve problems. Additionally, they demonstrate the personal characteristics of responsibility, self-esteem, self-management, and integrity needed to function in today's society.

What Is a Center?

Centers are effective teaching tools developed to support and reinforce whole-class instruction. They offer teachers a way to engage students of various abilities in active learning. Centers are designed to provide purposeful activities that encourage students to work independently, allowing the teacher to focus on differentiated instruction with students who may need extra support. Various learning tasks along with multiple degrees of teacher interaction are involved.

Centers provide a motivating and engaging learning environment. They are process oriented and offer opportunities for students to practice new skills and to problem solve at their own pace.

Introduction (cont.)

Why Are Literacy Centers Valuable?

An optimal literacy learning environment is created when whole-group instructional periods are combined with reinforcement and independent practice in literacy centers. Through independent practice with literacy centers, students drive their learning.

With *Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers*, students gain opportunities to manipulate, repeat, share, and expand upon the presented materials at their own pace. Students learn best when they are actively involved in their own learning process. *Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers* allows this process to happen naturally and effectively. The literacy centers in this book focus on the individual needs of each student.

Research shows that literacy centers have several instructional advantages:

- Literacy centers address different learning styles better than paper and pencil tasks; they also motivate students by providing varied stimulating activities (Wait and Stephens 1989).
- Literacy centers result in improved communication between home and school (Optiz 1995).
- Literacy centers play an important role in meeting the needs of each student (Huyett 1994).

Why Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers?

Research has made great strides in identifying critical skills that consistently relate to reading success. The National Reading Panel (2000) concluded that the need for systematic and explicit instruction in the following five components of reading is critical to reading success: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It is essential to understand each one of these five components in order to provide the best literacy center experiences for students.

Ready! Set! Go! Literacy Centers are rooted in the five components of reading and are also aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Each center is differentiated, providing students an optimal learning experience at their individual learning levels. Basing the development of the centers on these components ensures that with focused, purposeful instruction and practice, the needs of all students in all areas of literacy development will be met.

On the following pages, you will get an in-depth look at each of the five components of reading. These overviews provide a clear and concise analysis of the components to assist not only in your literacy center-design and implementation but also in planning your overall reading instruction.



Buggin' Around

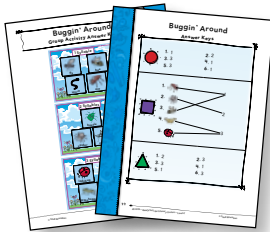
Syllables



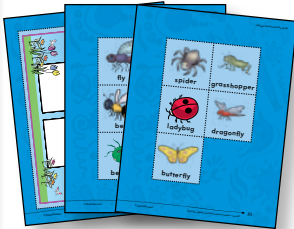
Group Activity



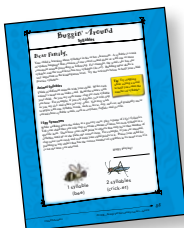
Differentiated Activity Sheets



Answer Keys



Activity Cards



Family Letter

With *Buggin' Around: Syllables*, students will identify syllable counts as they name various types of bugs.

Center Objectives:

- ⦿ Students will use pictures to understand meaning.
- ⦿ Students will practice reading multisyllabic words.

Center Standards:

- ⦿ **CCSS:** Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words
- ⦿ **Content:** Know that words are made up of syllables
- ⦿ **Language:** Communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of language arts

Materials:

- ⦿ Group Activity (page 39)
- ⦿ Differentiated Activity Sheets (pages 40–42)
- ⦿ Answer Keys (pages 43–44)
- ⦿ Activity Cards (pages 45–54)
- ⦿ Family Letter (page 55)
- ⦿ scissors

Recommended Literature:

- Davis, Katie. *Kindergarten Rocks*. New York: Harcourt, 2005.
- McGhee, Alison. *Countdown to Kindergarten*. Boston: Sandpiper, 2006.
- Schur, Maxine Rose. *There's a Babirusa in My Bathtub!* Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications, 2009.
- Slate, Joseph. *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten*. New York: Puffin, 2001.
- Wing, Natasha and Julie Durrell. *The Night Before Kindergarten*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 2001.

Buggin' Around

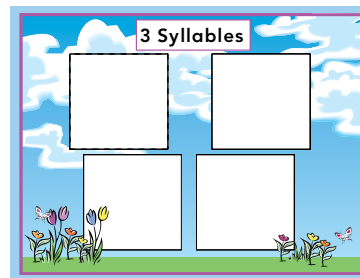
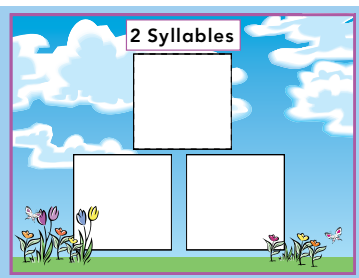
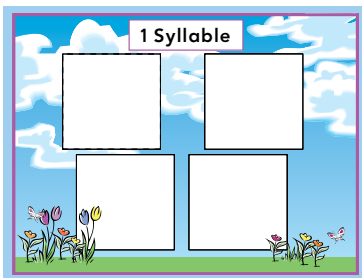
Group Activity



1. Lay out cards.



2. Get mats.

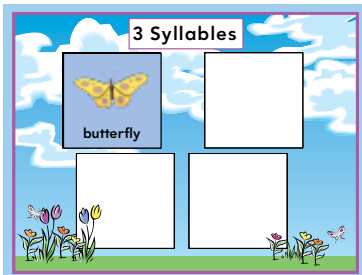


3. Name and clap. Count syllables.

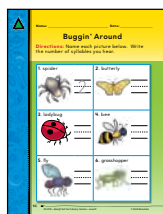
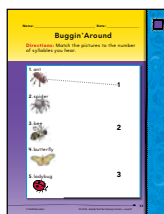
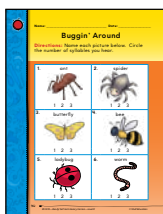


1 - 2 - 3

4. Put card on mat.



5. Practice.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Buggin' Around

Directions: Name each picture below. Circle the number of syllables you hear.

1.

ant



1 2 3

2.

spider



1 2 3

3.

butterfly



1 2 3

4.

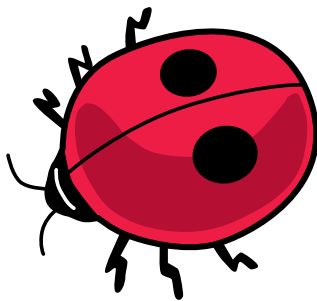
bee



1 2 3

5.

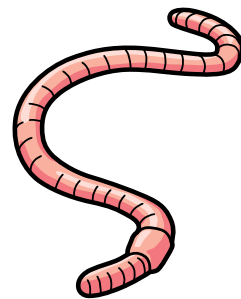
ladybug



1 2 3

6.

worm



1 2 3

Buggin' Around

Syllables

Dear Family,

Your child is learning about syllables in his or her classroom. A syllable is a unit of spoken language that consists of one vowel sound alone or with one or more consonant sounds preceding or following. For example, the word *cake* has one syllable, and the word *hotel* has two syllables (*ho-tel*). Building these skills is very important at the kindergarten level. Try the activities below to help your child practice syllables.

Animal Syllables

Think of different animals with your child. Write each animal's name on an index card. Read the names with your child. As you say each name, clap for each syllable you hear. For example, if you say *dolphin*, you will clap as you say *dol-* and when you say *-phin*. You may wish to begin with one-syllable words, such as *horse*, *dog*, and *cat*, and gradually move toward three-syllable words, such as *elephant*, *buffalo*, and *gorilla*.

Tip: Try clapping while saying a word to help you count the number of syllables.

I Spy Synonyms

While walking down the aisles at a grocery store, play a game of *I Spy Syllables*. Tell your child that you will clap a certain amount of times for each syllable in a specific item. Then have your child point to objects that only have that number of syllables until he or she picks the correct item. For example, if you see mustard, clap twice (*mus-tard*) and wait until your child points to it. Praise your child for pointing to any object that has the correct number of syllables in its name even if it is not the item you selected.

Happy Playing!



1 syllable
(bee)



2 syllables
(crick-et)