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LEARNING THROUGH PLAY



Welcome to Kindergarten™
CANADIAN EDUCATION WAREHOUSE

Introduction

This fourth edition of the *Learning Through Play* newsletter is filled with easy and enjoyable ways to support your child's learning through everyday experiences. As children play, explore, move, create, and talk with others, they are developing important skills that help them learn about themselves and the world around them.

Many of the activities in this newsletter connect to the Welcome to Kindergarten™ materials that you and your child received from your school. These resources are designed to help families continue learning together at home in fun and meaningful ways.

You might try making a shopping list together and using it at the store, exploring measurement with everyday household objects, or creating and finding patterns around your home. Movement activities, such as walking along a "tight rope," help children develop balance and coordination, while simple breathing exercises can support self-regulation and a sense of calm.



These easy-to-do activities encourage conversation, curiosity, and learning through play while creating special moments together as a family.

We hope you enjoy exploring, learning, and playing together!

Warm wishes,
From the WTK Team

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Sensory Writing



This activity helps your child build early writing skills through a tactile experience.

What you will need:

- Shallow tray or baking sheet.
- Material such as flour, rice, paint, or sand.
- WTK magnetic letters *optional.









Spread the material evenly to cover the bottom of the tray.
Have your child make simple lines and shapes with their fingers. What can they create?

Display some of the WTK magnetic letters to encourage your child to create letters in the material. Can they create their name or other words (e.g., cat, dog, fish)?



Exploring Math Together



Learning to understand positional words and spatial sense is important for mathematical thinking, geometry, and problem-solving. Here are two games to engage your child in learning.

Simon Says...

This variation of Simon Says focuses on giving directions that involve different positions.



How to play:

1. Choose one person to be Simon, the leader.
2. Simon gives commands with specific positional language. For example:
   "Simon says touch the top of your toes."
   "Simon says stand behind a chair."
   "Simon says put your hands above your head."
3. The players must listen carefully to Simon's commands and follow the directions given.
4. The game continues with Simon giving more directions, and the players follow the commands only if "Simon says" is included.

Remember to keep the language simple and make the game interactive and engaging.

Hide and Seek

Hide a toy in a room, and give your child directions on how to find the toy using positional words.

- For example, you might say, "Look behind the chair." "Look beside your bed".
- Have your child hide an object and give you clues on how to find it (e.g., the book is under the bed, my shoes are behind the door, my coat is on top of the washing machine).



Building Hand-Eye Coordination





Balloon Keep Up!

Blow up a balloon and challenge your child (and yourself) to keep the balloon up in the air using any part of your body!

Target Throwing

Have a laundry basket set up a short distance away from your child. Have them toss items into the laundry basket. Challenge them by moving the basket further away from them as they get better at hitting the target. Change the size of the target by using a smaller wastebasket or bucket.



Pompom Pick Up Race

Each player should have a small pile of pompoms and a **tweezer***. Ready, set, go! Who will be the first to put all of the pompoms in the cup using your tweezers?

***Tweezers** - if tweezers are too tricky, you can use a clothespin or make a larger tweezer using a clothespin, two popsicle sticks, 2 plastic bottle lids.



Moving like a…



When you're outside, look around and see the movement in nature. Being in nature provides a sense of calm and promotes well-being.

- How does a butterfly move?
- How does a frog jump?
- What do leaves do in the wind?



Try using the WTK Pocket Dice and Animal Action cards to move like different animals.



Can you…

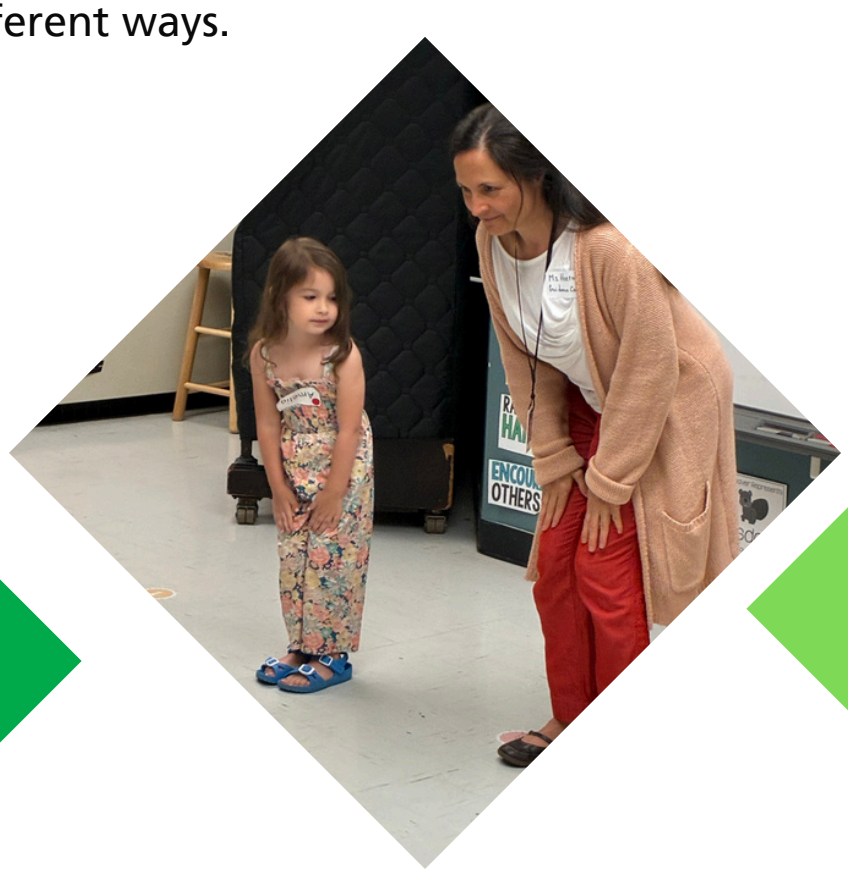
- Slink like a cougar.
- Swoop like a swallow.
- Stand still like a tree.
- Sway like the leaves in the wind.
- Wiggle like a puppy.



Here are some other ways to move:

- Stand on one leg. Bend the other knee and place the sole of your foot on your inner thigh.
- Start with your knees and hands on the ground. Next, slowly straighten your knees while you lift your hips in the air. Keep your head between your arms.
- Squat with your knees apart with your arms resting between your knees. Touch your hands to the ground. Jump like a frog.

Use your imagination to move in different ways.



Catapult Exploration



A catapult is a simple machine - try making your own for some science fun!

Place a serving spoon across a toilet paper or paper towel roll so that the larger end of the spoon rests on the ground. You can use tape or an elastic to help keep it steady. Put a cotton ball or another small, soft item on the scoop of the spoon. Invite your child to press down on the other end and watch what happens.

Does the cotton ball fly farther when they press harder? What happens if the item on the spoon is heavier? How might a catapult help people in real life?

*Before starting, take a moment to discuss safety and make sure the flying object has plenty of space so no one—and nothing—gets hit.



Outdoor Fun
Guess My Sorting Rule?



A playful activity like this is a family-friendly activity that can turn an ordinary walk outside into a little burst of curiosity and problem-solving.

Go on a tiny nature treasure hunt: pick up leaves, rocks, pinecones, sticks—whatever catches your child's eye.

- Sort by something obvious first: maybe all the leaves together, all the rocks together.
- Try new sorting ideas: size, colour, texture, weight, smooth vs. rough, round vs. pointy.
- Play the guessing game: you sort into two groups using a secret rule, and your child guesses the rule.
- Switch roles: kids love being the one who "tricks" the grown-up.



Why this works so well for families:

- Builds early math skills like classification and pattern recognition.
- Encourages observation and noticing details in nature.
- Supports language development as kids describe what they see.
- Creates a calm, playful moment you can do anywhere—yard, park, sidewalk.



Spiral Snake

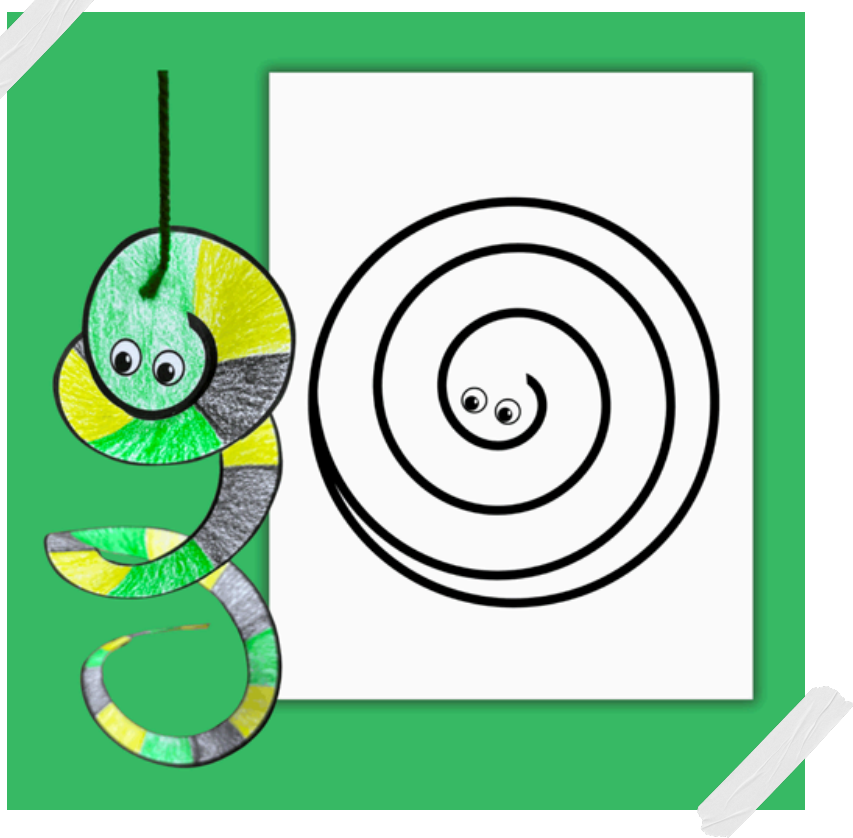


Encourage creativity and provide practice using the WTK scissors with this activity.



Materials:

- Paper plate (or any paper).
- Crayons, markers.
- WTK scissors.
- String or thread.
- Tape or glue.



How to make the snake:

1. Draw a spiral from outside to the center of a paper plate.
2. Decorate the paper plate with crayons or markers. Don’t forget the snake eyes and tongue!
3. Cut along the spiral line until you reach the center of the paper plate.
4. Poke a small hole at the base of the snake's head and thread a piece of string or ribbon through it. Tape or glue it on the underside.
5. Lift the string and see how your snake comes alive!



*if snakes aren’t your child’s favourite thing they could make a wind chime in the same way.

About us

Welcome to Kindergarten™

- Supports new Kindergarten children and families, in warmly welcoming them to school.
- Offers high quality early learning materials and family support.
- All *Welcome to Kindergarten™* activities and resources are based on current research and effective practice in early learning, transition to school, family engagement and community involvement.

WTK Contest



Send us a photo of you trying out one of these activities or playing with items from your **WTK kit**.

You could win one of our WTK books!
We will draw with every newsletter!

Send photos to
info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca

