

WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN™

Learning Through Play



WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN™

Dear Kindergarten Family,

Welcome to another issue of *Learning Through Play*!

As the leaves fall and the days grow cooler, your child is settling into new routines and learning many things at school. This is a great time to slow down, get cozy, and keep learning together.

You don't need special materials to support your child's growth. Just talking, reading, playing, and doing simple things together makes a big difference.

Here are some ideas to try at home:

- Share stories or songs from your own childhood.
- Go for a walk and talk about what you see and hear in nature.
- Try a simple recipe or play with dough or water.
- Sort socks, count snacks, or build with blocks.
- Celebrate your child's effort, not just the result.

Your time and attention make a big difference. Keep talking, reading, and playing—because learning happens everywhere!

Everyday activities help build skills - and warm connections, too.

With care, The WTK Team
info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca

You are
 your child's
 first and best
 teacher!

Follow your child's lead as
 you play and explore
 together

Talk and read with
 your child in your
 first language

Support
 sharing and
 taking turns

Celebrate every step of
 learning and growing

WHAT'S INSIDE

**Storytelling
 Card Sort**

Counting On

**Nature
 Detective
 Game**

**Paper Puppet
 Play**

**Feelings
 Charades**

**Pretend Play
 Parade**

STORYTELLING CARD SORT

The storytelling cards in your WTK kit help your child talk, think, and imagine. Using the cards to sort and tell stories builds early reading, vocabulary, creativity and storytelling skills.



Try This: Tell Me What Happens Next

- Lay out a few story cards in any order.
- Ask your child to look at the pictures and describe what they see.
- Say: “Can you add more ideas to the story?”
- Talk through the story together, using descriptive sentences.



Make It Even More Fun!

Take turns making up silly or surprising endings.

Use toys or drawings to act out the story.

Ask: “What might happen after the last card?” and create the next part! Record your child telling the story using your phone.

Tip: Tell stories in the language you use at home. Every language helps build strong thinking and communication skills!

Tip: Tell stories in the language you use at home. Every language helps build strong thinking and communication skills!

COUNTING ON

Learning to “count on” (starting at a number and continuing to count) helps children build number sense and prepare for addition.

Make It Even More Fun:

After counting, ask: “What comes next?” Help your child count on: “6... 7, 8!”

Take turns picking numbers and counting out objects.

Try using two numbers: “Let’s count out 3 blocks... now count on 2 more. How many do we have?”

Why it’s great for learning:

Builds number recognition and counting skills.

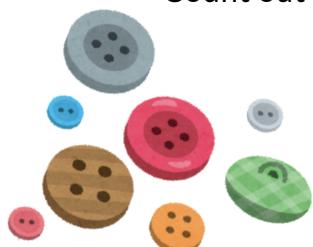
Introduces “counting on,” an early addition strategy.

Encourages hands-on, playful math.

Supports confidence in solving simple number problems.

Try This: Number Pick and Count Game

- Gather some small items like buttons, spoons, toy cars, blocks, or playdough balls.
- Place the magnetic numbers from your WTK kit in a small bag or container.
- Ask your child to pull out one number.
- Help them name the number: “That’s a 6!”
- Count out that many objects together: “1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.”



Tip: Use objects from around your home - whatever is available works! Count together in your home language to support strong math thinking in both languages.



NATURE DETECTIVE GAME

Playing detective helps children notice details, ask questions, and use their thinking skills. This outdoor activity encourages curiosity, problem-solving, and language development.



Try This: Go on a Nature Hunt with Clues

- Go outside together.
- Give your child one clue at a time. Start simple:
- “Can you find something rough?”
- “Can you find something small?”
- “Can you find two of the same thing?”
- Celebrate what they find! Talk about how it looks, feels, or smells.

Make It Even More Fun:

Use colour clues: “Find something green.”

Use shape or number clues: “Find three round things.”

Take turns being the detective - your child can give you a clue!

Bring a small bag or egg carton to collect and sort the items.



Why it's great for learning:

Helps your child notice and compare things in nature.

Builds language by using describing words.

Supports thinking and making decisions.

Connects outdoor play to early math and science ideas.

Tip: Follow your child's interests.

If they're excited about sticks, bugs, or rocks - that's great! Their curiosity leads to great learning.

PAPER PUPPET PLAY

Using art and storytelling helps children express ideas, grow confidence, and build early language skills. The scissors, crayons, and paper in your WTK kit are perfect for creating simple puppets and bringing characters to life!

Try This: Make a Puppet and Tell a Story

- Use crayons from your WTK kit to draw a person, animal, or creature.
- Help your child cut it out using their WTK scissors.
- Tape or glue it to a popsicle stick, straw, or rolled paper to make a handle.
- Ask: "What is your puppet's name? What do they like to do?"



Invite your child to act out a story using their puppet.

Make It Even More Fun:

Make a second puppet to be a friend or helper.
Use the edge of a table or a box as your puppet stage.
Add sound effects, music, or different voices!
Record the show to share with a family member or friend.



Why It's Great for Learning:

- Builds storytelling and imagination.
- Develops fine motor skills through drawing and cutting.
- Supports language development and self-expression.
- Encourages creative thinking and confidence.

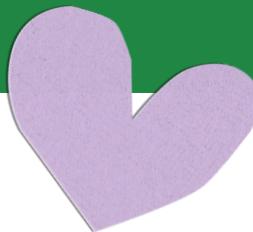
Tip: Take a photo of your child's puppet and write down what they say about it. This helps your child see their ideas as important - it builds early writing skills too!

FEELINGS CHARADES

Pretend play helps children explore emotions, understand others, and build empathy. This fun guessing game turns everyday feelings into a playful way to learn and connect.

Try This: Act It Out!

- Write or draw feelings on small pieces of scrap paper (happy, tired, excited, frustrated, shy, proud).
- Fold the papers and put them in a bowl or hat.
- Take turns picking one and acting it out - no words, just faces and movement!
- Ask: "What feeling do you think it is?" "When do you feel that way?"



Make It Even More Fun:

- Use props like hats, scarves, or toys to act it out.
- Make up funny ideas: "You're proud because you built a giant block tower!"
- After guessing, talk about what helps when you feel that way.

Let your child create a new feeling to add to the game.

Tip: Follow your child's lead. If they get silly or creative - that's great! Playful moments are full of learning.

Why it's great for learning:

Helps children name and understand feelings.

Builds empathy and confidence.

Encourages imagination and expression.

Teaches body language and social skills.

PRETEND PLAY PARADE

Young children love to pretend!

This game lets your child move, imagine, and play - all while pretending to be different characters.



Try This: Be in a Pretend Parade

- Ask: "What do you want to pretend to be today?"
- Ideas: animal, firefighter, superhero, robot, dancer
- Say: "Show me how that person or animal moves!"
- Put on music and march, stomp, crawl, or dance around together.

Take turns being the leader and picking the next character.

Make It Even More Fun:

Add scarves, hats, or dress-up clothes.

Freeze when the music stops—can you guess who each other is?

Make a fun sound for each pretend role ("Roar!" "Beep!" "Zoom!").

Finish the parade with a big pose or silly move!



Why it's great for learning:

Helps children use their imagination

Builds strength, balance, and body control

Supports sharing and turn-taking

Lets children show feelings through play

Tip: If your child likes quiet play, try gentle movements like floating, tiptoeing, or stretching. Every kind of movement helps learning.



MORE IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

We hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter.

You are receiving this newsletter because your child's school participates in the **Welcome to Kindergarten™** program.

You are your child's first and best teacher, so have fun talking, reading, creating and playing every day!

For more ideas, check out our future newsletters or our resource page at

<https://welcome-to-kindergarten.ca/resources/>



ABOUT WTK

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

Bienvenue à la maternelle®
ÉDUCA ENTREPÔT CANADA

Welcome to Kindergarten®
CANADIAN EDUCATION WAREHOUSE