



The Reading Room: Tips and Tricks Multisensory Centers for Reading and Writing September 2024

Welcome back to SCHOOL! We are back and ready to start the new school year off with another edition of *The Reading Room: Tips and Tricks*. This month's Reading Room Article focuses on how to do multisensory centers for reading and writing in the classroom.

Tips for centers - Keep this in mind...

- If you don't have a set routine, centers won't work.
- You must have "talkers" and listeners", so you must set guidelines for what that looks like in your classroom.
- Don't create center work that is at the students' frustration level. Behavior problems usually occur if the students feels that they cannot complete the task.
- You must adapt the center to fit the needs of your students. One size does NOT fit all, and it's ok to change.

Reading Centers

Read Aloud – Builds world knowledge and vocabulary knowledge

Choose a new story or one that you have already been reading and make sure the story or section of the story fits your time frame. The students will just LISTEN to the story. Later they can be asked questions about the story in a comprehension center.

Question and Answer Time – Builds Comprehension

This can be oral or written; however, you must give the students specific tasks. It can be anything from simple to complex questions about the story (either expository or narrative) that you have been reading. You MUST adapt this center to meet your objectives.

Round Reading – Builds fluency

This center can be as big or as small as you like. Divide students into two groups and choose the "student of the day" to keep time. Have the first group sit in chairs and the second group stand in front of them. Choose a story that you have already been reading or one that you feel your students can read independently. Have the students who are standing read to the students who are sitting for one minute. The students who are sitting must track in their books with their finger. As soon as the timer goes off, have the students move to the next person

seated and read for one minute. Do this until everyone standing has rotated around the seated students. Swap and have the seated student stand and read. Follow the same procedure.

Story Centers

Story Cubes / Blank Dice – Builds Problem Solving Skills and Literacy Development

- Draw simple pictures on each side of the cube. Roll the cubes. Pick a starting point (picture) for your story. Begin with “Once upon a time...,” and make up a story that somehow links together all the images.
- Think of a theme. (Example: The Beach) The students then roll the cubes and try to tell a story that relates back to the title or theme.
- Divide the cubes among players. Starting with one player and continuing in a circle, take turns rolling the cubes and adding to the story based on the face up images.

Story Retelling – Builds Memory and Comprehension

The teacher reads a story to the class and asks comprehension questions. The teacher then models the retelling of the story using the drawing from the board or story retelling cards. (Teachers can print pictures from internet or draw on index cards.) Students break into groups and use the story retelling cards as prompts for retelling the story. Each student takes a turn.

Grammar and Writing Centers

Grammar Dice

- Using blank dice, write different parts of speech such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, conjunctions, etc. on different sides of the dice and then have students identify the part of speech they roll.
- Write the actual word “noun”, “pronoun”, etc., on the dice and have students come up with a word that fits in the category he or she rolls.
- Write noun, verb, adjectives, articles on the dice (don’t forget an ending punctuation on one of the die). Then have students roll and see if they can create a sentence using the words they rolled. You can even use more dice and add subjects, predicates, and conjunctions to have students create compound sentences.

Putting sentences together

Choose a color for each part of speech. For example: Article/red, Noun/yellow, Verb/orange, Adjective/blue, Conjunction/brown, Adverb/purple. Give the students blank outlines of color-coded sentences patterns. Put the corresponding sentences (broken down into words) in

envelopes. Have the students match the word with the color and put the sentences together on the outline.

Spelling Centers

Trace and Copy

Trace and copy spelling words on different materials. Examples: Screens if you are safe (put paper over a screen and have students trace on the bumpy surface). Sand, salt, or paint if you are adventurous

Play-Doh or Pipe Cleaners

Again, for the adventurous! Have students mold the Play-Doh or bend pipe cleaners into the shapes of letters and spell words that they have been working with or words on a spelling list.

Grab-Bag Spelling

Put plastic letters into a grab-bag. Students pull a letter and without looking at it, puts it behind their back and tries to guess the letter by its shape. If students get it right, they keep the letter. The first person to spell a word or a spelling list word, depending on your objectives, wins.

Vocabulary Centers

Vocabulary Concentration

Select five to ten vocabulary words. Print each word and definition on separate index cards. Shuffle the cards and place them face down. Take turns turning up two cards at a time. If the word and definition match, the player keeps the pair. If they do not, the cards are replaced face down, and the next player takes a turn. At the end, the player with the most pairs wins.

Rhyming Go Fish

Select around 20 words, depending on your group size, shuffle, and deal 3-5 cards to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down. Players take turns asking each other for a card that rhymes with one that is held in their hand. If opponents have a matching card, they have to give it over, and the first player takes another turn. If the opponent does not have a match, he or she says, "Go Fish" and the player draws from the remaining deck of cards. The next player takes a turn. Each time a player has a match, he or she reads the words, and puts down the pair, face up. Continue the game until the cards are all used up. At the end, the player with the most pairs wins.

Note: This game can be adapted to use with older students or more advanced readers. Variations can include vocabulary practice, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms (cent/scent), or contractions (can't/cannot).

Vocabulary Headbanz©

Write vocabulary words on index cards. Deal out one card, facedown, to each participant. Player then sticks a card to their head (using double sided tape). Make sure the

students do not to look at the card. All other players must be able to see the card. Set a timer (teacher chooses an appropriate time) and have one student ask each of the players a question that will help him figure out the word. The teacher may provide question cards or a vocabulary sheet to help provide examples of the types of questions that can be asked.

For Example:

- Am I around someone or something? Do I encircle something?
- Do I copy over lines of something?
- Do I move in a continuous curve or motion?
- Am I a formal occasion like a birthday or an anniversary?
- Am I a deep valley with steep sides like a gorge?

If the student guesses the word before the timer runs out, the student gets a point, and the next player begins.

For questions, please contact:

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