

Workstations/Centers for Primary Grades

When using workstations/centers, it works best if center teams are heterogeneously grouped. Activities used will vary according to grade level and time of year. These activities should be a reflection of work previously done in the classroom.

FLUENCY WORKSTATIONS

Reading the Room

Students use pointers to read materials posted around the room.

Poems and Songs

Students reread poems and songs that have been introduced during whole-group demonstrations.

Readers' Theater

Students read a script or play together during this time. These are available in books, on the Internet or teachers and students can adapt favorite stories or collaborative writing activities.

Big Book Center

Students reread familiar big books at this center. Wikki sticks and highlighting tape could be available for locating known words or word wall words.

VOCABULARY WORKSTATIONS

Pocket Chart

Pocket Charts can be used for a variety of word study activities such as matching names and pictures of students in kindergarten, putting words in alphabetical order, etc.

Word Wall Center

Students in kindergarten may use magnetic letters, magna doodles or rubber stamps to copy word wall words. In first or second grade, students may find words within a word (ex. "and" in "stand"), words with one or two syllables, etc.

Read the Room/Word Hunt

Students in kindergarten can use pointers to read words on the walls. In first and second grade, students can search the room (and then write) words with particular features such as

- Find a word for every letter of the alphabet.
- Find compound words.
- Find words that begin with a blend.
- Find words that have endings.
- Find words with particular vowel patterns (oo, ea, etc.).
- Find words that begin with a particular letter of the alphabet.

COMPREHENSION WORKSTATIONS

Story Sequencing

Students use a pocket chart to sequence sentences or pictures from a previously read story.

Listening Center

Students listen to taped stories and follow along with a text. After the reading, students may respond in the following ways:

- Drawing a picture of their favorite part
- Writing a beginning, middle and end to the story
- Creating a story map
- Sequencing pictures after they listen to the story
- Reflecting on the story through writing

Library Corner

The classroom library provides an inviting place for students to read alone or with a partner.

Puppet Center

Students can retell familiar stories or stories they have written using puppets.

PHONICS/PHONEMIC AWARENESS WORKSTATIONS
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Alphabet/Word Center

This center should be well-stocked with magnetic letters, alphabet books, white boards and alphabet charts. The following activities can be performed:

- Sort and match magnetic letters
- Make words with magnetic letters
- Trace an alphabet book
- Make an alphabet book
- Alphabetize words
- Make sentences with magnetic letters
- Sort words

Computer/iPad Center

Students may use the computer center to reinforce skills. They can also write stories during this time.

Writing Center

Most classrooms that teach through a Writing Workshop approach will have a writing center where materials are accessible to students. This center may also be used during center time if students choose to work on additional pieces of writing.

Picture Sorts

Students sort pictures according to a particular feature such as initial, medial, or final sounds, blends, etc.

Write the Room

Students use dry erase boards, magna doodles, or paper on clipboards to write words or letters they can read around the room.

CONTENT AREA CONNECTIONS

Social Studies, Science and Math

Materials at these centers should complement the unit of study currently being worked on in that area (i.e. observing and analyzing plants in Science). These centers should contain informational texts that support the focus.

OTHER CENTER IDEAS SPECIFIC FOR KINDERGARTEN

Many of the previous activities can be easily adapted for Kindergarten. Listed below are some specific to Kindergarten.

Picture-Word Match

Students match word cards with an object or a picture. This is great for matching names of students with photos.

Literacy Puzzles

Students work puzzles that reinforce alphabet knowledge, rhyming words, etc.

Mailbox/Post Office

Students write notes or draw pictures for their friends. The covers of used greeting cards may be used at this center for students to write or draw their own message.

Dramatic Play

There are many options for dramatic play centers, such as: restaurant, pizza shop, florist, beauty salon, vet's office. The dramatic play center could change periodically, based on student interests, seasons, or units of study.

Oral Retelling

After reading a picture book, copy the cover and laminate it. These book covers may be kept in an empty cereal box at the center. To play this game, one student chooses a book cover without the other child seeing it. Then the student describes the beginning, middle, and end of the story. The other student tries to guess the title of the story. For this to be successful, it should be modeled after the read aloud before the cover is placed in the center.

Story Sequencing

Cards for this center may be made by copying a few pages from books that you read aloud to your students. Laminate the pictures and put them in an envelope labeled with the title of the book. Students take the pictures and arrange them in the correct sequence. Upon completion, they should use the pictures to orally retell the story.