

Supercharged Activities

Alphabet hunt

Materials

- ☀ Alphabet cards

How To

Recently, I hid our alphabet cards around the library and we had an *ABC hunt*. When most of the letters were found we alphabetized them and figured out which ones were still hidden.

Cookie sheets

Materials

- ☀ Magnetic letters
- ☀ Metallic cookie sheets

How To

I found magnetic letters. I was going through some of the tubs I inherited and found a cookie sheet and the letters. I grabbed an *R, A, I, N* in upper and lower case and took them to the preschool. I showed them the letters and the only one that was an issue was the upper case *I*. I asked questions like "*Raise your hand if your name starts with an R*". It was a lot of fun, and the cookie sheet was easy to transport.



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

Drum roll, please

How To

Try doing a guessing game using a *secret storytime box*. Put the *letter of the day* inside the box and after practicing singing the ABC song together give the children a word that starts with the *letter of the day* and then have them try to guess what the letter is. Make a really big deal about having the letter come out of the box (drum rolls, some days the letter is feeling shy and the kids need to help it feel brave enough to come out, etc.) and build the excitement and enthusiasm. Once the letter is revealed, bring out an oversized cardboard letter so everyone can see it better. Talk about the letter, what sound it makes, what shape it might look like, and then have them reach into their magic crayon box, pick out their favorite color and practice writing the letter in the air with you. Try to remember to write both the upper and lower case letter on a white board for them and point out the similarities/differences.

Glitter microphone

Materials

- ✨ Glitter microphone

How To

A great, low-cost investment! With a glitter microphone, you can pose a question to your storytime group and then walk around and let the children answer into the microphone. It's like magic! Even reluctant speakers seem to want to say something into it. Plus, it signals to the group to take turns speaking without having to admonish anyone.



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

Making cookies

Materials

- ☀ Crayons, markers
- ☀ Paper

How To

Another thing I typically do in a storytime is ask the kids a question and then write down their responses, e.g. I'll draw a cookie and ask, "*What should we put in the cookies?*" Answers can and are anything: Raisins! Gummy worms! Strawberries! Hair! Rocks! Vampires! I draw AND write the words next to their responses. They have the opportunity to watch me make letters for words they care about (their own words). They also can keep this picture and color, add to it, etc.

Masking tape trick

Materials

- ☀ The floor
- ☀ Masking tape

How To

Use masking tape to put big letters on the floor, then have kids trace them by walking on the tape.



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

Meet Fergus

Materials

- ☀ Creature/monster hand puppet
- ☀ Lunchbox
- ☀ Magnetic letters

How To

Every once in a while, bring a monster hand puppet to story time as your special guest. “Fergus” (or another suitable monster name) wears a name tag just like the kids and sits on the table to watch the stories being read when he isn't on your hand. About two books in, bring out Fergus' lunchbox (a plastic bin) which has two plastic magnet alphabet letters taped to the front (uppercase and lowercase). Tell the audience that today, Fergus is only eating things that begin with the letter ____ (whatever letter it is). Then have the children explore what the letter looks like, practice with them making its sound, and then ask who wants to help feed Fergus lunch. (Everyone will!)

Pillowcase of puppets

Materials

- ☀ Assortment of animal puppets
- ☀ Pillow case



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

How To

At our library we like to use a pillow case full of puppets during our storytimes. Usually I will use it to talk about habitats. I'll ask the kids to help me figure out which ones live on the farm, in the ocean, or whatever fits with our theme that day. They always think it's funny when I say it wrong and they get to correct me. *"What? Are you sure an elephant doesn't live on the farm?"* Now I think I want to try this with pulling out things and asking them if they start with the letter of the day.

Set up a fence

Materials

- ☀ Butcher paper (long roll)
- ☀ Clothesline
- ☀ Die cut objects beginning with letters to match "fence posts"
- ☀ Letter "signs" for fence posts

How To

We painted a fence on long paper and hang it up occasionally. Each fence post has a letter on it. At the end of storytime each child is given a die cut object that fits the theme and has a letter printed on. The children then put their object (apple, pumpkin, turkey, etc.) on the post that matches the letter. For the little kids I only use uppercase letters but the older children get a mix of lower and upper case to make the game more challenging.



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

Shape of the day

Materials

- ☀ Flashcards

How To

Try having a shape of the day. Use a flashcard set that includes both colors and shapes in different sizes (i.e., small, medium, and large). If you can, find a set that includes some great vocabulary words like *lavender* and *aqua*. Have the children identify the colors and then ask them which color shape is the biggest, the smallest, or is in-between.

Upper and lower case

Materials

- ☀ Laminator
- ☀ Paper
- ☀ Pictures cut from magazines, coloring books, newspapers, or whatever else you have

How To

Need to explain upper case vs. lower case? Try laminating a sheet of paper with upper case on one side and lower case on another, putting a picture of a big lion with the uppercase and lion cub with the lower so the kids can understand the difference between the two.



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

Quick Tips

Ask prediction questions, e.g., "What do you think will happen?" Have kids "write" their own story, e.g., "If you had a pet dinosaur, what would you want to do with it?"

Attention flagging? Ask a question!

Have a mailbox in the children's play area. Library staff have gotten some amazing mail from little kids.

Have children pretend to write a grocery list or take an order at a restaurant.

If you have a large group at storytime, try asking kids to whisper the answer to their caregiver.

Make a discovery bottle with sand or rice and alphabet beads; have kids search for different letters.

Pick the letter of the week, talk about the shapes that make it up, practice writing it, and then put it on a flannel board train. Have it go for a ride and talk about the sound it makes.

Stamp kids' hands with the letter of the week - it's a big hit!

Try "planting" some older kids from school as special guests at story time to give them some "older kid" modeling to younger children.



SUPERCHARGED STORYTIMES

Find Materials and Ideas

Artfelt puppet system

Available at: <http://www.artfelt.net/warehouse/front.htm>

Kinetic sand

Available at: https://www.spinmaster.com/product_detail.php?pid=p20400

Monster puppets

Available at: <http://www.manhattantoy.com>

Musical instruments, people color crayons, and tactile letters

Available at: <http://www.lakeshorelearning.com>

Squishy bags

Instructions for making your own available at: http://drjean.org/html/monthly_act/act_2008/10_Oct/pg02.html

Traceable letter worksheets

Available at: <http://www.kidslearningstation.com/preschool/teach-printing.asp>

Uncle Goose nursery rhyme blocks

Available at: <https://unclegoose.com/product/nursery-rhyme-9-block-set/>

Wikki Stix

Available at: <http://www.wikkistix.com/>



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