



Materials for the Enhancement of Classroom Centers



Materials can be borrowed for up to two weeks

Math and Numbers



Different types of materials for math/number help children to experience counting, measuring, comparing quantities, recognizing shapes, and to become familiar with written numbers. Examples of math/number materials are: small objects to count, balance scales, rulers, number puzzles, magnetic numbers, number games such as dominoes or number lotto, and geometric shapes such as parquetry blocks.

KODO - Balance



Includes:

- balance body
- balance arm with metal pegs
- 4 hanging cups
- 20 large washers
- 2 small washers

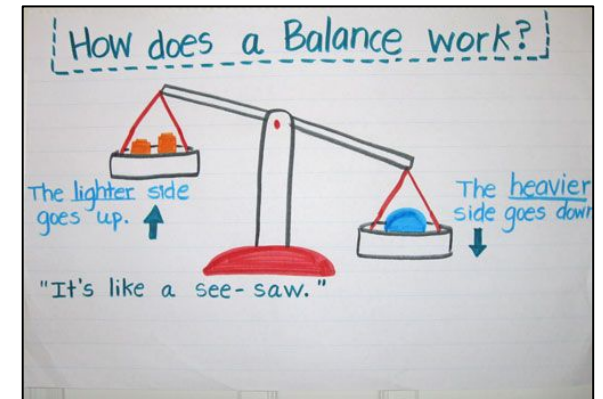


Invitations To Play:

Ask the children what it is and what it does and go from there...play off of their ideas and go through trial and error to discover what this is and how it works! Encourage children to work in pairs.

Another Suggested Area:

Science and Nature: Weighing natural materials and making predictions



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Interaction with Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation and showing empathy

Measurement

Standard 4.11 Children develop skills in using measurement instruments to explore and discover measurement relationships and characteristics, such as length, quantity, volume, distance, weight, area, and time.



Playmags



Includes:

- 100 pieces
- blue bag
- idea book
- info card

Invitations To Play:

- Small group activity that focuses on shapes. Compare and contrast as well as counting the sides.
- Open ended activity for one or multiple children. These tiles are popular and will promote sharing practices

Other Suggested Areas:

- Gross Motor** - Large open space with cars...see what they build (ramps, roads maybe a garage)
- Dramatic Play** - Add them to your existing space and see what they will become.

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Number Sense and Operations

Standard 4.10 Children develop the ability to think and work with numbers to understand their uses, and describe numerical relationships through structured and everyday experiences.

Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Standard 4.14 Children build the foundation for recognizing and describing shapes by manipulating, playing with, tracing, and making common shapes. Children learn spatial reasoning and directional words as they become aware of their bodies and personal space within the physical environment



Sea Animal Counters



Invitations To Play:

Set up a table with the sea animals, a plain grid, writing materials and clear containers. With little to no directions, see how they classify them.

Includes:

- Sea Animals

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Sand/Water Table** - Encourage the children to make a habitat for the animals with natural materials they find in the yard. Add water and sand and let the play unfold.
- **Library** - Set out the animals and some sea creature books. Ask the about the colors. Are sharks green? Can you find an orange turtle? The materials may not be realistic but they can still be used in a meaningful way that will inspire learning.

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Interactions With Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and showing empathy.

Data Analysis

Standard 4.12 Children apply mathematical skills in data analysis, such as counting, sorting, and comparing objects

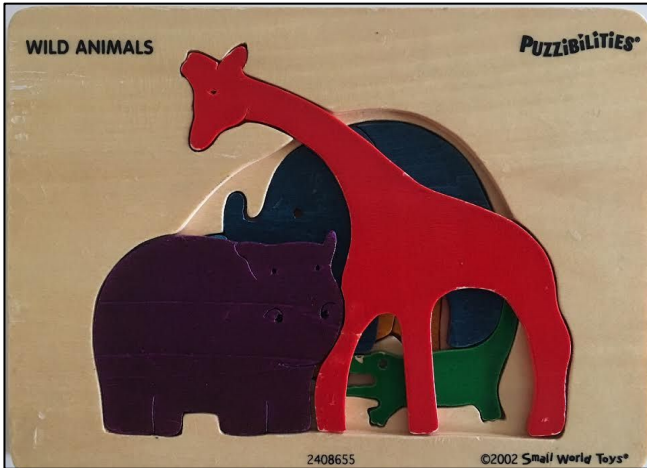


TIDE POOL

Science Experiment for Kids



Layering Puzzle



Invitations To Play:

Remove the pieces from the block and set out for children to explore. The next day have all the pieces together and let them disassemble and then encourage the child to reassemble.

Includes:

- 7 Puzzle Pieces
- Puzzle Block

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Block Area** - Set the wooden puzzle pieces out with wooden blocks. Encourage the children to build habitats for the wooden puzzle pieces.
- **Art** - Use the puzzle pieces as inspiration. Set them out on the table with paper and mark making materials.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Persistence and Attentiveness Standard

4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning.

Fine Motor Skills Standard

2.1 Children develop small muscle strength, coordination, and skills.



Wooden Puzzles



Includes:

- 1 Wooden Lion Puzzle
- 1 Wooden Elephant Puzzle



Invitations To Play:

Remove the pieces from the boards and set out for the children to explore. The next day have all the pieces together and let them disassemble and then encourage the child to reassemble.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Persistence and Attentiveness Standard

4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning.

Fine Motor Skills Standard

2.1 Children develop small muscle strength, coordination, and skills.

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Block Area** - Mix both pieces together and spread on the floor or table. Set out 2 trays and encourage the children to figure out which pieces belong together.
- **Library Table/Cozy Space** - Have on the shelf available for centers time. Children can access independently. Make sure you have already established material's expectations

Science and Nature



Nature/science materials include the following categories: collections of natural objects (e.g., rocks, insects, seed pods), living things to care for and observe (e.g., house plants, gardens, pets), nature/science books, games, or toys (e.g., nature matching cards, nature sequence cards), and nature/science activities such as cooking and simple experiments (e.g., with magnets, magnifying glasses, sink-and-float). The term collections of natural objects requires that there are groups of similar objects that can be classified together. For example, look for a collection of seashells, fall seeds, leaves, pinecones. Sufficient numbers of the objects in each collection must be present to allow children to explore similarities and/or differences. The collections must be of natural things; plastic collections (e.g., insects, zoo animals) are counted as science/nature toys. Collections must be accessible to the children if they are to count towards meeting indicator 5.2, requiring a substantial portion of the day

HABA - Pulley Kit



Includes:

- 2 pulleys with loose wheels
- 1 rope
- 1 band
- 1 info booklet

Invitations To Play:

- Before hanging the pulley have the pulley's parts and wheels on the table. Ask the children what it is and it does.
- Work with the children to assemble and hang the pulley. Let them help decide where it is needed most and have them come up with the safety agreements.

Other Suggested Areas:

- Outside** - Add a basket with natural materials or a bucket of sand
- Blocks** - Open ended with other supportive materials (containers, blocks, cars, people)

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Scientific Thinking and Use of the Scientific Method

Standard 4.15 As children seek to understand their environment and test new knowledge, they engage in scientific investigations using their senses to observe, manipulate objects, ask questions, make predictions, and develop conclusions and generalizations.

Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Standard 4.14 Children build the foundation for recognizing and describing shapes by manipulating, playing with, tracing, and making common shapes. Children learn spatial reasoning and directional words as they become aware of their bodies and personal space within the physical environment



Telescope



Includes:

- Telescope

Other Suggested Areas:

-Dramatic Play - Add to any dramatic play investigation...see what it becomes.

-Art - With paper rolls, encourage the children to make their own telescope. Offer a variety of materials without a specific end result.

Invitations To Play:

Set the telescope by the window and invite children to look through it. Ask them what they see, write it down and reflect at a gathering or meal.

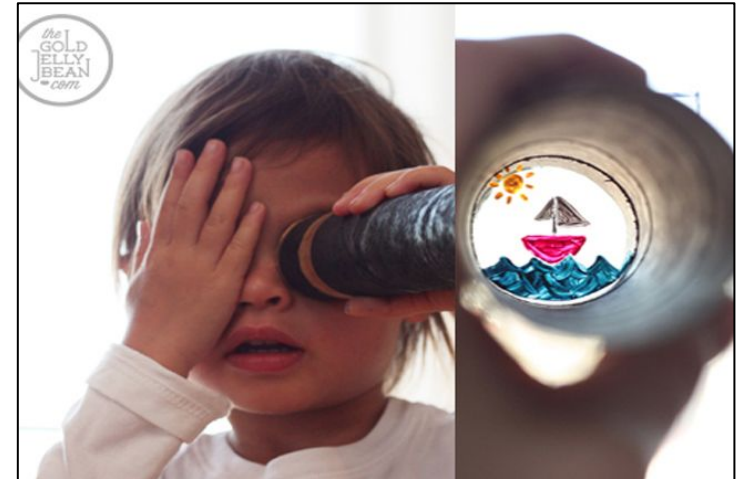
How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Reflection and Interpretation

Standard 4.4 Children develop skills in thinking about their learning in order to inform future decisions.

Engineering

Standard 4.19 Children develop the understanding of the process that assist people in designing and building.



Rainbow Cyclone Science

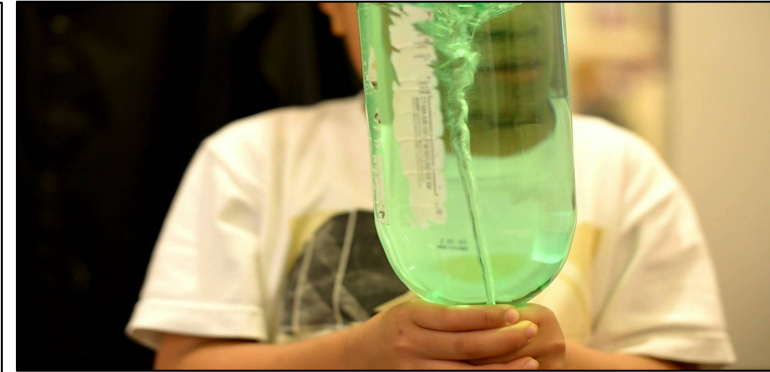


Includes:

- Tornado action adapter
- You will need 2 water bottles

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Cozy Space** - Have available as a calming device
- **Art** - Paint what you see with watercolor



Invitations To Play:

Attach the bottles and ask the children what they think will happen. Write down their predictions and their interpretations of the experience after.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Reasoning and Representational Thought

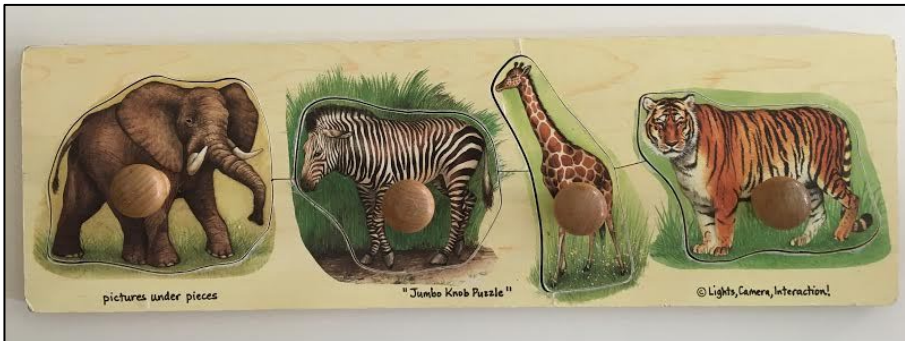
Standard 4.5 Children develop skills in causation, critical thinking and analytical thinking, problem solving, and representational thought.

Curiosity

Standard 4.1 Children develop imagination, inventiveness, originality, and interest as they explore and experience new things.



Jumbo Knob Puzzle



Includes:

- Puzzle with 4 pieces



Invitations To Play:

Set it out on a table with the pieces in the puzzle. Observe the children and note the ones who removed the pieces and walked away and the children that return the pieces to their spot. Offer the puzzle with the pieces out the following day. Then a few week later offer it again. Was there a change from the first time?

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Library** - add to a table top with a book featuring the same or similar animals
- **Math** - Counting the animals and comparing and contrasting their size and colors

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Fine Motor Skills

Standard 2.1 Children develop small muscle strength, coordination and skills.

Persistence and Attentiveness

Standard 4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning.



Magnification Station



Invitations To Play:

Set up a table activity with the Magnification Station and natural materials the children collected from a walk.

Includes:

- 1 Magnifier
- 3 Legs

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Math** - This is a great way to compare and contrast bigger and smaller. Use graphs and charts for the children to come up with their own ideas about magnification.
- **Art** - Encourage the children to make marks with various materials like charcoal, pastels, markers and crayons. Place the paper under the magnification station and look at the textures.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Reflection and Interpretation

Standard 4.4 Children develop skills in thinking about their learning in order to inform future decisions.

Visual Arts

Standard 4.9 Children demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation for the creative process as they use the visual arts to express personal interests, ideas, and feelings, and share opinions about artwork and artistic experiences.

Magnetic Field - Wonder Window



Includes:

- Wonder Window

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Cozy Space** - Offer as a calm down tool.
- **Art** - With paper and charcoal encourage the children to recreate the same design that they made with the magnets.

Invitations To Play:

Offer the Wonder Window with magnetic and nonmagnetic tools. Ask the child "What is happening and why?".

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Initiative and Self-Direction

Standard 4.2 Children develop an eagerness to engage in new tasks and to take risks in learning new skills and information.

Self-Regulation

Standard 1.6 Children manage their internal states, feeling, and behavior, and develop the ability to adapt to diverse situations and environments.



Magnifiers



Includes:

- 4 Magnifiers

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Sensory Table** - Offer the children trays and containers. They can take a closer look at materials in the sensory table.
- **Library**: Next to books and materials that relate to each other.

Invitations To Play:

Outside - Add magnifiers to a blanket with empty baskets. Encourage the children to collect natural materials and take a closer look with the magnifiers.

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Sensorimotor Development

Standard 2.3 Children use all the senses to explore the environment and develop skills through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.

Persistence and Attentiveness

Standard 4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning.



Root Viewer



Includes:

- 1 Stand
- 3 Viewing Tubes

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Math** - Measuring the growth of the plants

- **Cozy Space** - If your cozy space is not by a window, try putting something like this for a child to explore while needing space.

Invitations To Play:

Set out on a table (inside or outside) add containers of seeds, dirt and spray bottles. Ask the children what their ideas are with these materials.

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Life Science

Standard 4.16 Children develop understanding of and compassion for living things.

Physical Science

Standard 4.17 Children develop an understanding of the physical world (the nature and properties of energy, non-living matter, and the forces that give order to the natural world).



Tree Figure



Includes:

- Base
- Trunk
- Connector
- 3 Toppers
- 4 Rock/Wood Accessories
- Assembly Instructions

Invitations To Play:

Loose parts! Set this tree in the center of a table with random loose parts, such as natural materials, found materials and that coffee can filled with random puzzle pieces and lone animals. Watch the wonder unfold! Encourage children to work together and ask questions to support collaboration.

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Art** - (3D) Set up playdough, animals and natural materials like grass wood and rocks.

- **Blocks** - Add it to the block area with complimentary accessories

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Interactions With Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and showing empathy.

Sensorimotor Development

Standard 2.3 Children use all the senses to explore the environment and develop skills through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.



KODO - Deflector Kit



Invitations To Play:

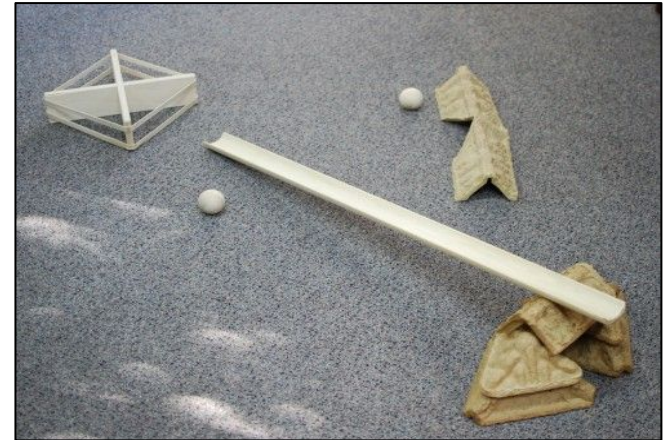
Set out the wooden planks first and encourage the children to explore them, later add the rubber bands and see how their play changes. Sit with them and once the play slows, add the directions and make the deflector!

Includes:

- 10 wooden pieces
- 15 large rubber bands
- 20 small rubber bands
- info card

Other Suggested Areas:

- Blocks** - Open ended activity exploring materials
- Math and Numbers** - Small group activity talking about shapes and construction
- Art** - Add found and recycled materials to construct something without adhesives



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Persistence and Attentiveness

Standard 4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning.

Engineering

Standard 4.19 Children develop the understanding of the process that assist people in designing and building.



Blocks



Blocks are materials suitable for building sizable structures. Types of blocks are unit blocks (wooden or plastic, including shapes such as rectangles, squares, triangles, and cylinders); large hollow blocks (wooden, plastic, or cardboard); homemade blocks (materials such as food boxes and plastic containers). Note that interlocking blocks (whether large or small, indoors or outdoors) are not considered blocks for this item, but are given credit under Item 19. Fine motor. Usually the block area will be found in the classroom being observed. However, in a center where there is a block area that is outside the observed classroom (such as in a multi-purpose room or outdoors), that is accessible to the children on a regular basis, this should be considered when scoring this item.



http://www.naeyc.org/yc/10_things_children_learn_block_play

Ten Things Children Learn From Block Play

Many early childhood educators, myself included, believe that every classroom should have a full set of unit blocks, assorted props tied to children's current interests and experiences, open storage shelves, and plenty of space and time to build and rebuild invented and familiar structures. I canvassed NAEYC staff and *Young Children* consulting editors to ask, "What do you think children learn through block play?" Here are some responses:

Problem solving. Sometimes it is intentional: "I want to build X. How do I do that?" Other times it is in-the-moment: "To go higher and add to one side, what can I use?"—Peter Pizzolongo

Imagination. Children can follow their own plan, or they can share a friend's vision and work together to create something they never dreamed of.—Karen Cairone

Self-expression. Blocks offer many ways for young dual language learners to explore, express themselves, and demonstrate what they are learning across languages.—Karen Nemeth

Mathematics. Important concepts and skills are practiced and strengthened through block play, including length, measurement, comparison, number, estimation, symmetry, balance.—Kristen Kemple

Continuity and permanence. Block play engages spatial sense and motor abilities; it can be a solo or a group effort; block creations can stand for an indefinite period of time.—Lawrence Balter

Creativity. Blocks and other loose parts can be moved freely by children, to be combined and recombined in countless ways.—Angela Eckhoff

Science. Blocks offer opportunities to test hypotheses and build scientific reasoning.—Gayle Mindes

Self-esteem. Children discover that they have ideas and that they can bring their ideas to life by creating, transforming, demolishing, and re-creating something unique.—Holly Bohart

Social and emotional growth. Blocks help children learn to take turns and share materials, develop new friendships, become self-reliant, increase attention span, cooperate with others, and develop self-esteem.—Kathleen Harris

Development in all areas. Block play requires fine and gross motor skills. Blocks enhance children's problem-solving abilities, mathematics skills, and language and literacy abilities. And constructing "creations" builds self-esteem and feelings of success. —Linda Taylor

The articles in the [March 2015 cluster](#) highlight the many benefits of block play, from infancy through the primary grades. The authors urge early childhood educators to introduce or reintroduce blocks because they are an ideal material for young children. Through examples and images, the authors demonstrate the teaching and learning possibilities that block play supports.

—Derry Koralek, Chief Publishing Officer and Editor in Chief

KODO - Table Towers



Includes:

- 25 wooden cubes
- 42 assorted rings, domes, spools and people
- 6 planks
- information card



Invitations To Play:

Setting up a table that encourages children to play together. Display the blocks on a child safe mirror. See what they build and ask thought provoking questions about the reflection

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Math and Numbers** - Activity trays
- **Science and Nature** - Combine with natural materials as an open ended project



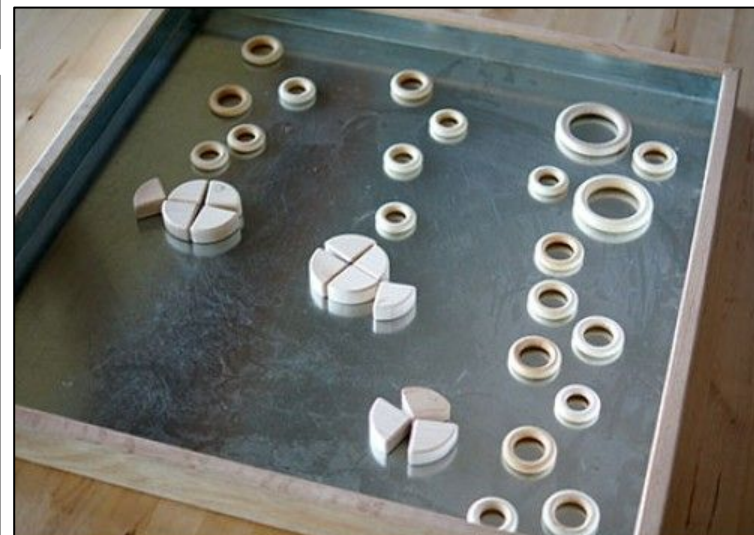
How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Self-Regulation

Standard 1.6 Children manage their internal states, feelings, and behavior, and develop the ability to adapt to diverse situations and environments.

Engineering

Standard 4.19 Children develop the understanding of the process that assist people in designing and building.



STEM - Block Play Kit



Invitations To Play:

Set out the plain wooden blocks first and slowly incorporate the ramps, balls, pendulum blocks and end with the idea cards. How do the new materials change the dynamic of their play? Encourage children to build together!

Includes:

- 4 cylinder blocks
- 2 pendulum blocks
- 2 ramps
- 6 medium rectangles
- 6 cubes
- 8 thick rectangles
- 10 large rectangles
- 20 plastic links
- 2 pendulum balls
- 2 balls
- 4 arches
- 8 activity cards
- card stand



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Numbers and Sense of Operations

Standard 4.10 Children develop the ability to think and work with numbers to understand their uses, and describe numerical relationships through structured and everyday experiences.

Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Standard 4.14

Children build the foundation for recognizing and describing shapes by manipulating, playing with, tracing, and making common shapes. Children learn spatial reasoning and directional words as they become aware of their bodies and personal space within the physical environment.



Leave out the small pieces and add people to the materials for the younger children.

Giant Floor Puzzle



Invitations To Play:

In the block area set up the puzzle pieces and box for a reference. After the children have completed the puzzle encourage them to use the blocks to make a frame. They can also use the blocks to protect their work!

Includes:

- 48 Large Pieces

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Library** - Offer on the floor with books that have similar content.
- **Science** - Research the animals and insects in the puzzle. Incorporate magnifying glasses and journals to list the animals of interest.

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Standard 4.14 Children build the foundation for recognizing and describing shapes by manipulating, playing with, tracing, and making common shapes. Children learn spatial reasoning and directional words as they become aware of their bodies and personal space within the physical environment.



Sand and Water



Materials that can easily be poured, such as rice, lentils, birdseed, and cornmeal may be substituted for sand. Sand or sand substitute must be available in sufficient quantity so children can dig in it, fill containers, and pour. Woodchips can be considered a substitute for sand if the material can be used in the same way as sand—that is, easily poured or dug in—and if children would not get splinters when using the material. Health or safety issues related to use of sand, water, or sand substitutes should be considered in Items 13 and 14.

Rainforest Animals



Includes:

- 39 Rainforest Animals

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Art** - (3D) Set up playdough, animals and natural materials (grass wood and rocks). Have the basket of animals in the center of the table. Document what the children do with the materials.
- **Blocks** - Add it to the block area with complimentary accessories.

Invitations To Play:

Add materials to a sensory table or bins. Include sand, rocks, water and sticks. This activity can be done inside or outside. Add water to extend the play.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Interactions With Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and showing empathy.

Sensorimotor Development

Standard 2.3 Children use all the senses to explore the environment and develop skills through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.



Seashells



Includes:

- A variety of shells of all shapes and sizes



Invitations To Play:

- Add to sensory table and water
- Add to a bin of sand and water for individual play and discovery

Other Suggested Areas:
Math and Numbers - Counting, comparing shape, size and color.
Science- Habitat, life cycle, ocean exploration, fossils
Art: Impressions in playdough, visual inspiration for watercolor
Dramatic Play - A "trip" to the beach (inside or outside), include other beach accessories.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Curiosity

Standard 4.1 Children develop imagination, inventiveness, originality, and interest as they explore and experience new things

Sensorimotor Development

Standard 2.3 Children use all the senses to explore the environment and develop skills through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.



Colorful Fish and Fishing Poles



Includes:

- 18 colorful fishies
- 6 fishing poles

Other Suggested Areas:

Math and Numbers - Counting, comparing shape, size and color, charting caught fish

Dramatic Play - Camping "Trip" (inside or outside), include other camping accessories

Invitations To Play:

- Add to sensory table with water (inside or outside)
- Fishing as a dramatic play inspiration

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Persistence and Attentiveness

Standard 4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning

Self-Efficacy

Standard 1.5 Children demonstrate a belief in their abilities



Music and Movement



Any music counted as a “type” for this indicator must be appropriate for use with children, in that the music contains no violent or sexually explicit material or language that is unacceptable according to typical societal standards. Any musical experiences offered to the children in this indicator must be appropriate for use with children, in that the music contains no violent or sexually explicit material or language that is unacceptable according to typical societal standards. Some traditional children’s songs such as Three Blind Mice contain frightening or offensive lyrics. If songs with such lyrics are used with the children, score this indicator “Yes.” Music with religious content is considered appropriate as long as it does not contain frightening, violent, or negative content. Be sure to listen to the lyrics in order to judge the appropriateness. For assessment purposes, evaluate the severity of the lyrics and the impact on the children.

Musical Animals - Shakers



Invitations To Play:

Pass a shaker to each child. Be silly, dance, and sing. Act out different things you can do with the shaker. Say, "Shake your shaker up high....shake your shaker down low" while doing it. What can they do with their shaker?

Includes:

- 5 Shakers

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Music and Movement** - Use in circle time or add as an accessory to your music shelf.
- **Dramatic Play** - Include a few other musical instruments, microphones, and flashlights for the audience. Get ready for your classroom to be the hottest venue in town.
- **Blocks** - Add as an accessory on the block shelf.

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Interactions With Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and showing empathy.

Creative Movement and Dance

Standard 4.6 Children produce rhythmic movements spontaneously and in imitation, with growing technical and artistic abilities.



Rainstick



Invitations To Play:

Use the rainstick at a gathering time. Ask the children what they see, hear and how the sound is being made. Extend their curiosities and see where the conversation goes.

Includes:

- Rainstick

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Transitions** - Use the rainstick as a tool to let the children know they have 5 more minutes to play before transitioning to the next activity on their visual schedule.
- **Music and Movement / Art** - Gather materials for the children to make their own rainstick. Incorporate their instruments into the music center!

How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Interactions With Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and showing empathy.

Creative Movement and Dance

Standard 4.6 Children produce rhythmic movements spontaneously and in imitation, with growing technical and artistic abilities.



Dramatic Play



Dramatic play is pretending or making believe. This type of play occurs when children act out roles themselves and when they manipulate figures such as small toy people in a dollhouse. Thus, activities used to teach children to follow specific sequences to properly complete household chores, such as table washing or silver polishing activities, are not counted to meet the requirements of this item. Children must be free to use the materials in their own way, as part of their own make-believe play, to get credit for this item. Dramatic play is enhanced by props that encourage a variety of themes including housekeeping (e.g., dolls, child-sized furniture, dress-up, kitchen utensils); different kinds of work (e.g., office, construction, farm, store, fire-fighting, transportation); fantasy (e.g., animals, dinosaurs, storybook characters); and leisure (e.g., camping, sports).

Crocodiles and Safari Dramatic Play



Invitations To Play:

Add natural materials to the sensory table. Place the crocodiles in it. Have the play clothes nearby to extend the play. Don't forget...This play can happen outside too!

Includes:

- 2 Crocodiles
- 2 Shirts
- Shorts
- Hat

Other Suggested Areas:

-Art - With paper bags and left over paper rolls, all if the children can dress up and join the play

-Math - Project an image of a crocodile on the wall. Ask the children questions about size, shape, length. This will also give you insight into their curiosities



Interaction Imagination



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Life Science

Standard 4.16 Children develop understanding of and compassion for living things.

Interactions With Peers

Standard 1.9 Children interact and build relationships with peers as they expand their world beyond the family and develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and showing empathy.



Forest Animal Puppets



Includes:

- Owl
- Elk
- 2 Raccoons
- Squirrel
- Fox

Total of 6 puppets

Invitations To Play:

Add these furry friends to the block area and encourage the children in the classroom to build them homes. Ask thought provoking questions about where the animals live to find out what the children already know.

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Library** - Add a basket of these little friends in with corresponding books.
- **Dramatic Play** - These puppets can enhance investigations into camping, nature, animals, and forests.



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Expressive Communication (Speaking and Signing)

Standard 3.2 Children develop skills in using sounds, facial expressions, gestures, and words for a variety of purposes, such as to help adults and others understand their needs, ask questions, express feelings and ideas, and solve problems.

The Physical World

Standard 4.22 Children become mindful of their environment and their interdependence on the natural world; they learn how to care for the environment and why it is important.



Parrot and Lizard Costumes



Includes:

- Lizard Costume
- Parrot Costume

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Dramatic Play** - From a vet to a zoo, let the children help you decide a new curriculum investigation.
- **Music and Movement** - Children's yoga and costumes.
- **Outdoor Environments** - Let the play extend outside. The costumes can be washed!

Invitations To Play:

Costumes are wonderful to incorporate into your curriculum. The play can go wherever the child feels inspired to take it. Set clear expectations and boundaries with the children before introducing the costumes.

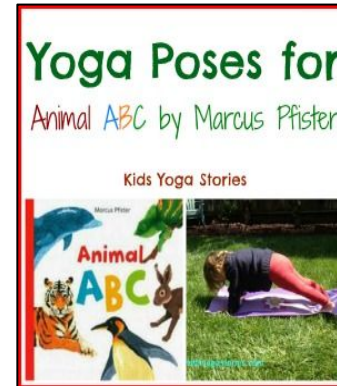
How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Drama

Standard 4.7 Children show appreciation and awareness of drama through observation and imitation, and by participating in simple dramatic plots, assuming roles related to their life experiences as well as their fantasies.

Gross Motor

Standard 2.2 Children develop muscle strength, coordination, and skills.



Art



Categories of art materials: drawing materials such as paper, crayons, nontoxic felt pens, thick pencils; paints; three-dimensional materials such as play dough, clay, wood gluing, or carpentry; collage materials; tools such as safe scissors, staplers, hole punches, tape dispensers. Dot markers (also called Bingo markers, or dot paints) are counted in the “tools” category of art materials. They do not allow the control provided by the materials in the drawing category, nor do they fit the paint category, in terms of how they can be used.

Tools & Containers



Includes:

- 10 Pipettes
- 3 Funnels
- 1 Magnifying glass
- 4 Containers
- 1 Tube

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Math** - Counting, measurement and estimation can be used in various ways.
- **Science** - Discovering the properties of water.
- **Sand and Water** - Never underestimate the power of dumping and pouring in appropriate ways.

Invitations To Play:

Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ of a container with water. Set the tools and small containers on the table. Add a few dishes of primary colored water colors and let the children explore.

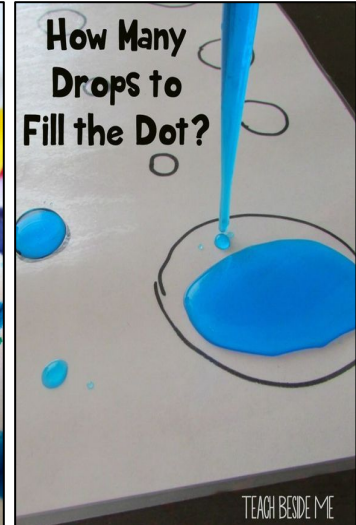
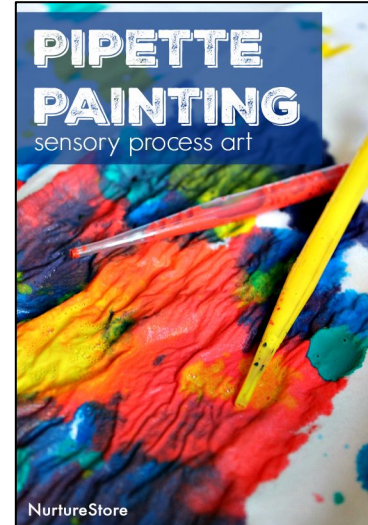
How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Visual Arts

Standard 4.9 Children demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation for the creative process as they use the visual arts to express personal interests, ideas, and feelings, and share opinions about artwork and artistic experiences.

Measurement

Standard 4.11 Children develop skills in using measurement instruments to explore and discover measurement relationships and characteristics, such as length, quantity, volume, distance, weight, area, and time.



Lace and Trace



Includes:

Sea Creatures

- 10 figures
- 9 strings

Land Animals

- 10 figures
- 8 Strings

People/Transportation

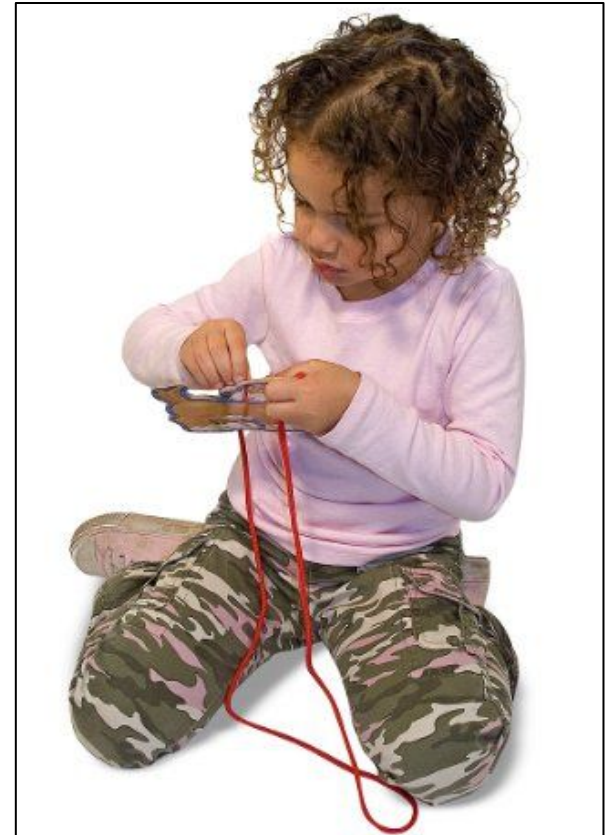
- 14 Figures
- 8 Stands
- 10 Strings

Invitations To Play:

This is a great activity to make available for children as they are being welcomed into the classroom. Have the laces out as well as mark making materials and observe what material they prefer.

Other Suggested Areas:

- **Library/Cozy Space** - Offer this material with only the laces for children to use in a quiet space
- **Art** - Display materials with laces and writing materials for the lace and trace experience!



How the M.E.L.S. is translated through this play:

Fine Motor Skills

Standard 2.1 Children develop small muscle strength, coordination, and skills.

Persistence and Attentiveness

Standard 4.3 Children develop the ability to focus their attention and concentrate to complete tasks and increase their learning.

