



Fun with Play K: 7 Ways to Use the Basic Kit

The main purpose of the basic kit is to supplement the circle time and storytime programming options for the various playscapes. However, these materials offer a wealth of possibilities for learning and exploration in your children's area!

1. Display the magnetic letters and/or numbers in your children's area. Add a couple of the magnetic whiteboards and markers to create a writing center. Add in a cookie sheet or two to give the parents ideas for "at home" application.
*Have the **Cruise into Kindergarten Activity cards** titled, **Numbers and Counting, Letters and Sounds, & More Letters and Sounds**, available for parents.
2. Use the sorting and patterning trays for sensory play with a variety of materials (colored pom-poms, unifix cubes, buttons, etc.). Make a little sign: *How many ways can you sort these objects? Can you make a pattern?* Add a brief handout for parents: *Sorting and patterning activities help young children develop early math skills. Have fun at home sorting household objects by color and size, such as socks, shoes, toys, etc. Help your child make a simple A-B pattern, such as sock, shoe, sock, shoe or big shoe, small shoe, big shoe, small shoe.*
*Have the **Cruise into Kindergarten Activity Cards** titled, **Sorting and Measuring & Shapes and Patterns**, available.
3. Use the drawing paper for having the children draw and label (with adult assistance) pictures related to your storytimes (favorite character, favorite book, favorite part of a story). As children become familiar with this activity, you may want to have paper and markers available in your writing center area. Add a brief handout for parents: *Free drawing helps young children develop the fine motor skills needed to write. Give your children*

blank paper on which to create. Ask them to tell you about their drawings to encourage expressive language. You can write down what they say and then "read" it together!

4. Place the tape measurer in your block area for your little builders to use as a new "tool" for their play!
5. The write and wipe boards can be added to any of your play areas. Consider modeling by using one in your storytime and then making them available after your program for parents and children to enjoy together. Add a brief handout for parents: *Young children need many opportunities to experiment with writing in order to develop the fine motor skills needed to form letters correctly. Begin showing your child how to form letters with the first letter in his or her name. Remember to praise all approximations, as writing skills take time to develop!*
6. The lapboard, storytelling pieces, and scarves can be used in your storytimes or programs, in a dramatic play area (perhaps with a few other props), and/or rotated in to your writing center, periodically. Again, consider modeling uses in a program and then making the items available after your program for parents and children to enjoy together. Add a brief handout for parents: *Retelling a familiar story is a fun activity for children to do at home. This simple activity is great for building language and comprehension skills. Consider providing a prop or two, and clap for your child's performance. Soon your child will want to retell favorites again and again!*
7. The hand magnifying glasses can be used in your storytimes or programs, as well as in a small "science center" in your children's area. Place a collection of objects for children to observe, together with a sign: *Play "I Spy" with these objects. Use the magnifying glass to look closely! Add a brief handout for parents: Observing and describing objects found in nature are fun activities to do at home. Great for both language development and awakening an interest in science; what could be better?*
*Have the **Cruise into Kindergarten Activity Card** titled, **Taking a Walk**, available for parents.