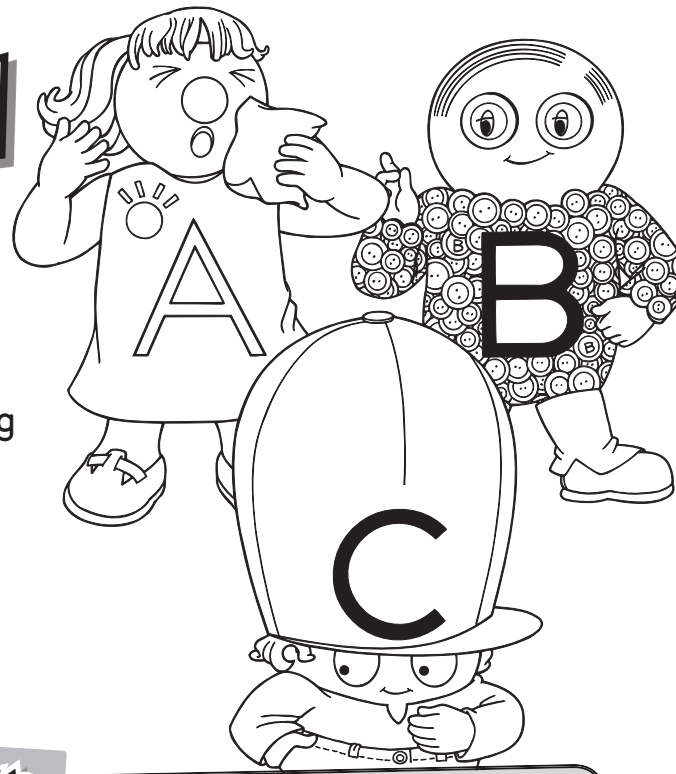


Family Fun Letter 1



Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about all the things that happen at school. We are sorting objects and making patterns. We are also meeting the Letter People from Ms. A to Mr. I. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!

Social Studies

Focus Question *What happens at school?*

Have your child draw a picture of something that happens at school. Talk to your child about his or her drawing and label the picture with the activity name.

Math

Sort the junk drawer! Have your child help sort the objects in a junk drawer. As he or she sorts, encourage your child to tell how the objects in each sorted group are alike. After sorting objects, make patterns with them, such as paper clip, pencil, paper clip, pencil.

Letters and Sounds

Have fun with names in your family by singing songs, chanting rhymes, and playing games. Include family names in the songs, rhymes, and games, such as "Felix Had a Little Lamb" or "Duck, Duck, Madeline."

Social and Emotional Development

Children are learning the rules of the classroom this week. Ask your child to tell you some of the classroom rules and together compare how they are the same and different to rules at home.

Tip

The first weeks of school may bring up some separation anxiety in your child. That's to be expected. A consistent good-bye routine can make this transition easier. Consider having a good-bye signal, such as sharing a funny face or giving a fun handshake or hug.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about reasons why it is important to keep things *tidy*.

Wow Words

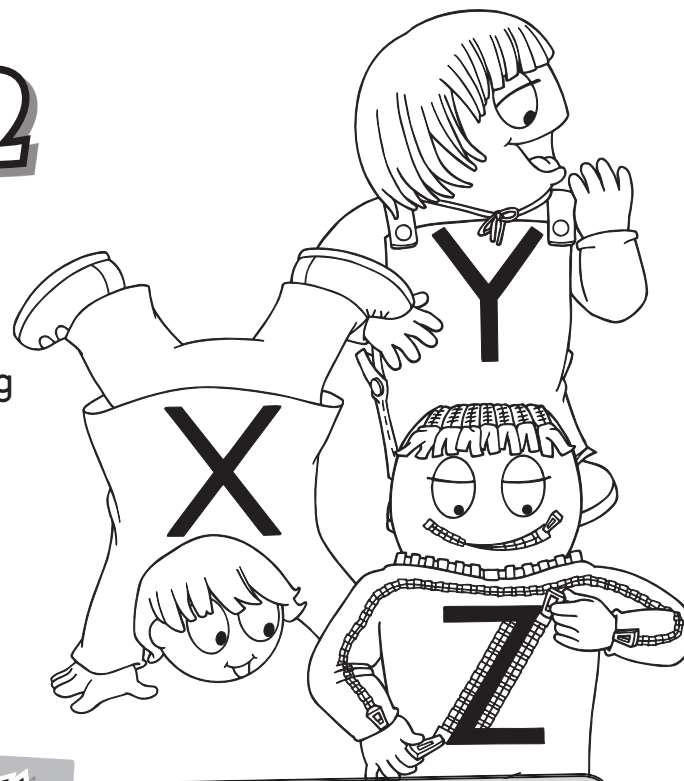
challenge
considerate
disturb
commotion
tidy

Family Fun Letter 2

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are exploring ways that we learn at school. We are making and describing patterns. We are also meeting the Letter People from Ms. J to Mr. Z. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *How do we learn at school?*

Talk to your child about what he or she is learning in school and the safety rules and routines that help the class learn. Ask: "What is one thing you do to learn at school?"

Math

Get up and move in patterns with your child by clapping, stomping, and patting. Start a clap/stomp/clap/stomp pattern and invite your child to join in. Then have your child create a pattern for you to follow along with.

Letters and Sounds

Your child is learning about things the Letter People enjoy doing, such as Ms. K likes to kick and Ms. L loves to laugh. Help your child name an activity that starts with the same letter as his or her name. Then ask: "Do you like to do that?"

Cognitive Development

Encourage your child to share with you the things he or she is most eager and curious about at school. Ask questions, such as: "What was the most exciting part of your day?" or "What do you want to learn more about?"

Research

Although it is important to praise children for their accomplishments, over-praising children can do more harm than good. Be specific with your praise. For example, say: "You put your toys away in just the right places."

This clean room looks fantastic!
(Myers, 2014)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when it is important to be *careful* at home.

Wow Words
explore
discover
responsible
alert
careful

Family Fun Letter 3

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about how to get along with others. We are copying patterns and creating our own patterns. We are also meeting Mr. N and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *How do we get along with others at school?*

Help your child practice ways to get along with others. Together, make paper bag puppets and act out different scenes, such as what to do when someone won't share a toy or how to act when someone says something unkind.

Math

Play "Copycat!" with your child. Using objects around the house, such as toothpicks and paper clips, create a simple pattern. Have your child copy your pattern. Then give your child an opportunity to create a pattern that you copy.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. N lives at 99 Nightingale Lane. Have your child think of other places that Mr. N might live, such as North Avenue or New York. For inspiration, look at a map or travel magazine and help your child find places that begin with the letter N.

Physical Development

Play a game of "Simon Says." As you give your child directions, make sure they include lots of movement. For example, say: "Simon says march in place." Give your child the opportunity to be Simon as well.

Tip

Talk to your child about what to do if he or she gets frustrated or upset. For example, when your child gets frustrated waiting to play with a toy, suggest an alternative or a coping strategy. You could say: "I know you're anxious to play with the truck. While you wait for your turn, let's build a ramp for the truck to drive on."

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Ask your child to name an *emotion* he or she has felt at school. Then encourage him or her to show the emotion or act it out.

Wow Words

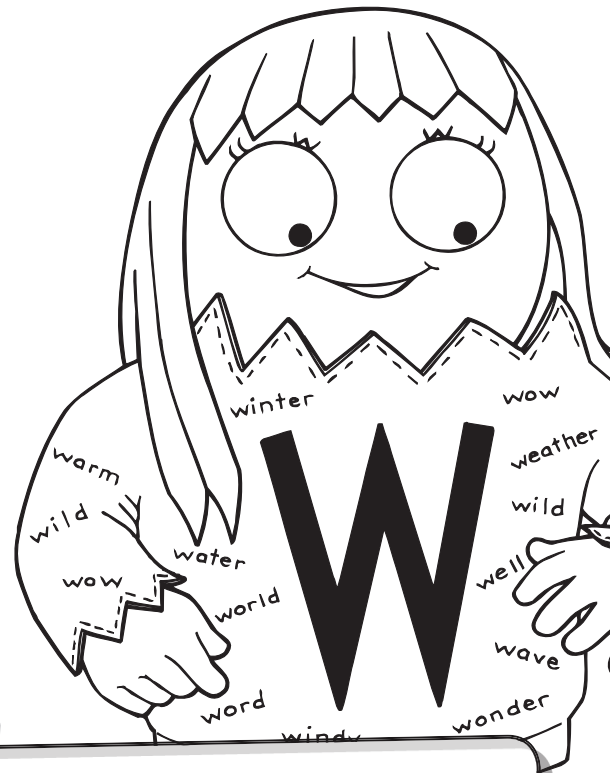
cooperate
share
fair
assist
emotion

Family Fun Letter 4

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning how to be a good friend. We are continuing to make patterns. We are also meeting Ms. W and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *What makes a good friend?*

Help your child trace his or her hand and tell five ways to be a good friend. Record those ways on each finger. After your child decorates the cut-out hand, post it on the refrigerator where he or she can give a high-five to the friendly hand each day.

Math

Ask your child to create a pattern while you do regular household activities such as setting the table (make a pattern with silverware, such as fork, spoon, fork, spoon) or putting clothes away (make a pattern with sock colors, such as black, white, black, white).

Letters and Sounds

Ms. W loves wonderful words! Play a word game with your child. Give clues about words that start with *W*. Have your child guess the word. For example: "We use this to clean ourselves in the bathtub." (water)

Social and Emotional Development

One characteristic of good friends is to show empathy and kindness. Talk with your child about ways he or she can show kindness to a friend. Role-play these ways, such as giving someone a gentle pat on the back when he or she needs a lift or writing someone a nice note.

Research

When children can talk about the positive and negative emotions they feel in different situations, they will learn how to better control behaviors that make it difficult to make friends. Parents or caregivers can help their child make friends by coaching the child in a sympathetic, problem-solving way.

(Dewar, 2013)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when your child has shown *courage*.

Wow Words

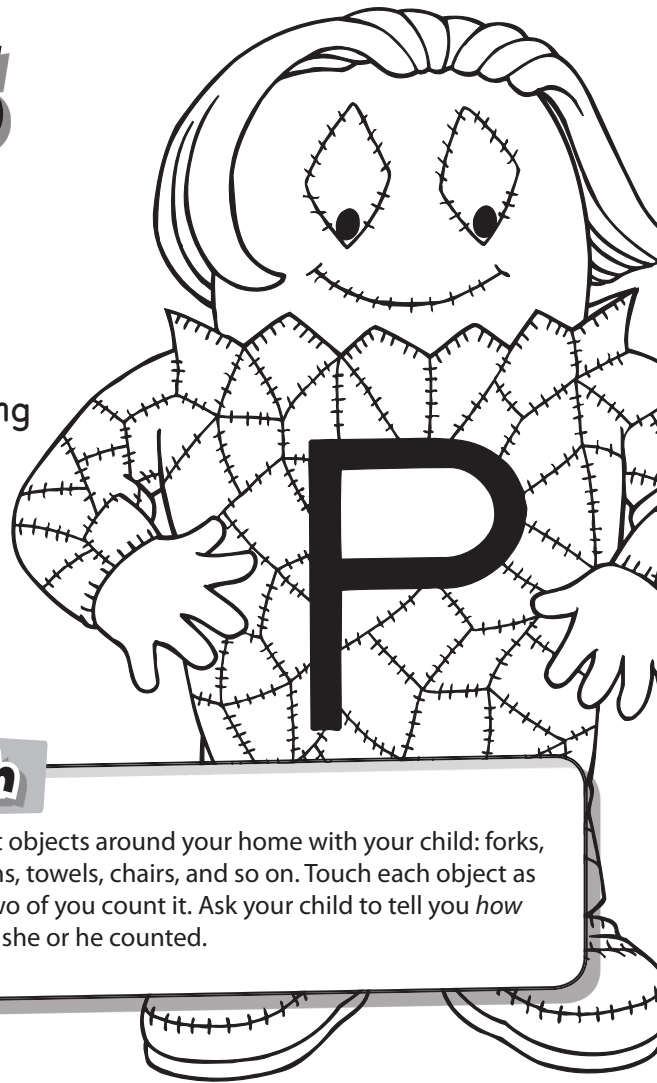
respect
kind
appropriate
patient
courage

Family Fun Letter 5

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about all the things that make us special. We are counting to 5 and learning a counting rhyme. We are also meeting Ms. P and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *What makes us special?*

Create a book about some ways your child is special. Your child can draw the pictures and tell you what to write. Read the book together each night before bed.

Math

Count objects around your home with your child: forks, spoons, towels, chairs, and so on. Touch each object as the two of you count it. Ask your child to tell you *how many* she or he counted.

Letters and Sounds

With your child, go on a scavenger hunt in your home or at the grocery store. Look for packages with the letter *P* on them, such as a container of pasta, a can of peas, or even a frozen pizza! You might take pictures of those packages and create a *P* collage with the pictures.

Physical Development

We are learning this song at school. Sing it with your child and have fun doing the motions together.

I Am Special (to the tune of "Good Night, Ladies")

I am special,	(point to self)
So, so special.	(march in place)
I am special.	(point to self)
There's no one	(march in place,
just like me!	then hug self)

Tip

Rhymes and songs help children learn the rhythms of spoken language. Sing or say favorite rhymes together when you are in the car, preparing dinner, or giving your child a bath.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when he or she is *persistent*.

Wow Words

unique
creative
athletic
appreciate
persistent

Family Fun Letter 6

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are exploring how different families are the same and different. We are matching objects one-to-one. We are also meeting Mr. H and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *How are families the same and different?*

Look at photos of your family and friends together. Talk about the people in the photos. Invite your child to tell how the people in the photos are the same and different.

Math

Help your child practice matching objects one-to-one while you set the table. Point out that at the dinner table you place one plate for each person, one fork for each person, one cup, and so on.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. H loves his hair. It makes him happy. Have your child name things that make him or her happy. Give an example of what makes you happy as you use a complete sentence, such as: "Horses make me happy."

Cognitive Development

Strengthen your child's ability to focus by encouraging routines at home. Provide a visual reminder of the routines to help your child focus. For example, display pictures of the steps to follow when getting ready for bed.

Research

Talking with your child is powerful! Research shows that talking to your child gets him or her off to a good start in school. As you read books together, take time to talk about the book. Ask questions to invite your child to think beyond what is written in the book. (Pappano, 2008)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Ask your child to share ways you can support him or her.

Wow Words

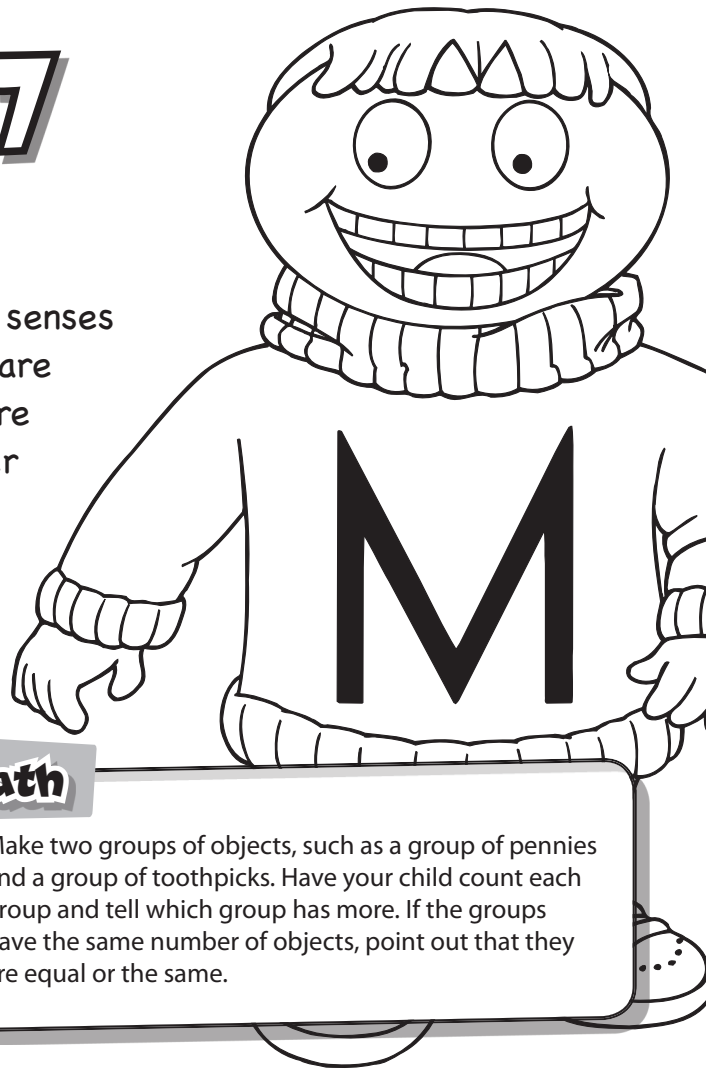
belong
calm
boisterous
comfort
support

Family Fun Letter 7

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about our senses and how they help us. We are learning to compare groups of objects to see which has more. We are also meeting Mr. M and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *How do our senses help us?*

Make muffins together. Point out how you use your senses by asking: "What do the muffins *look* like? What sounds do you *hear* as you mix the ingredients? How do the muffins *smell*? How do they *feel* after they are baked? How do the muffins *taste*?"

Math

Make two groups of objects, such as a group of pennies and a group of toothpicks. Have your child count each group and tell which group has more. If the groups have the same number of objects, point out that they are equal or the same.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. M loves to munch. Play a munching game with your child, naming things you each like to munch. When your child names something to munch that begins with an *m* sound, he or she gets a bonus turn.

Social and Emotional Development

By providing your child with healthy eating options, he or she can express feelings about what he or she likes and doesn't like while still choosing something healthy to eat. Encourage your child to identify his or her favorite healthy food offered at each mealtime.

Tip

Talk to your child about numbers as you go through the day. For example, say: "I cut this apple into four pieces. Let's count." This math talk will help your child develop an understanding of quantity, or how many in a group.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about different *textures* found around your house and how they feel.

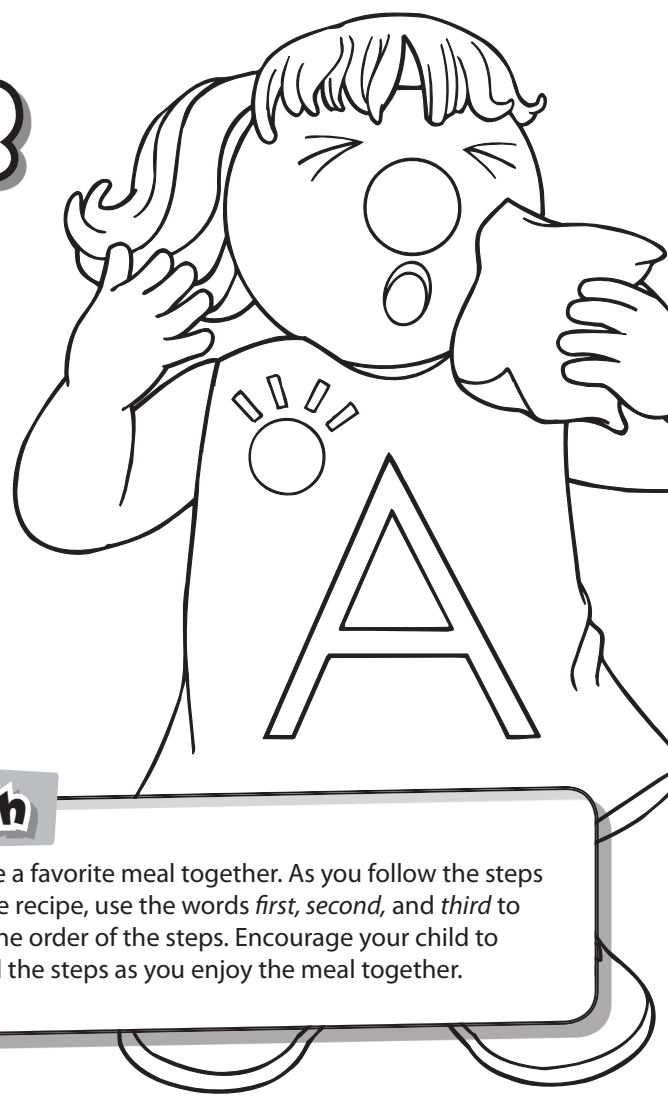
Wow Words

munch
observe
examine
aroma
texture

Family Fun Letter 8

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning how we can stay safe. We are learning number words that describe order, such as *first*, *second*, and *third*. We are also meeting Ms. A and learning about her letter and short *a* sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.



Happy learning!

Science and Health

Focus Question *How can we keep ourselves safe?*

Have a home fire drill with your family. Discuss what to do if there is a fire or if the smoke detector goes off. Practice leaving the house quickly and gathering at a safe location away from the house. Practice the drill several times and then once a month as a reminder.

Math

Make a favorite meal together. As you follow the steps in the recipe, use the words *first*, *second*, and *third* to tell the order of the steps. Encourage your child to retell the steps as you enjoy the meal together.

Letters and Sounds

Ms. A sneezes when she is happy: *a'choo!* Go on a letter hunt in the kitchen. Have your child find the letter *A* on packages, cans, and boxes of food. When your child finds the letter, sneeze "a'choo" together.

Social and Emotional Development

Help your child develop an awareness of others' feelings. Point out the signs people show when they feel happy, sad, frustrated, or angry. Talk to your child about ways to help a friend when he or she is sad.

Research

Research shows that good thinking skills can be taught through routines. As your child explores the world, ask routine questions that help him or her think about things in a deeper way. For example, ask: "What makes you think that? What do you see? What do you think? What do you wonder?"

(Salmon, 2010)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about the people that you *admire*. Ask your child to tell who he or she admires and why.

Wow Words

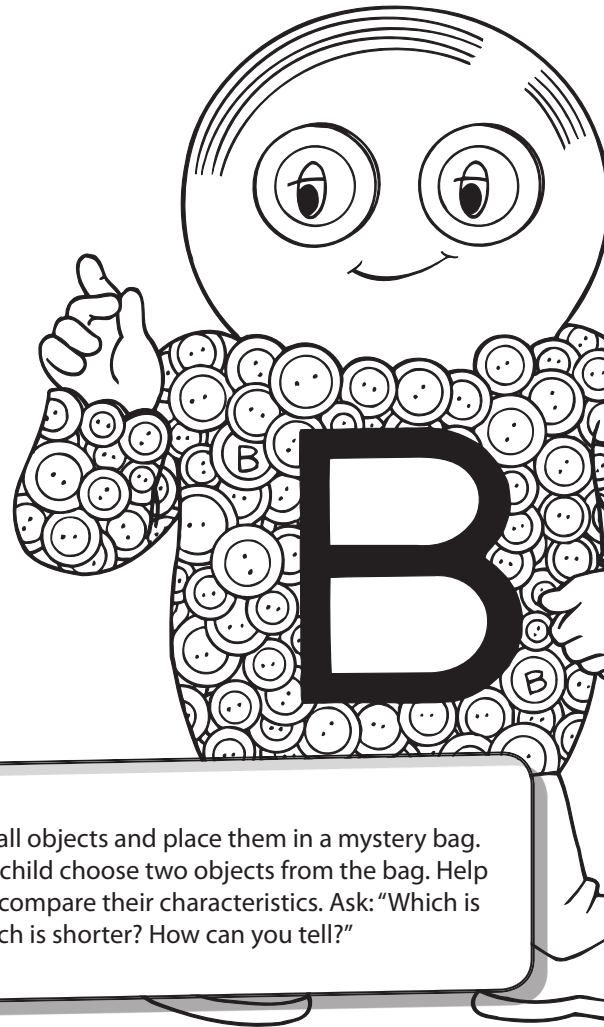
safety
equipment
cautious
distract
admire

Family Fun Letter 9

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about places in our community. We are comparing objects and their characteristics, such as short and tall. We are also meeting Mr. B and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *What are the places in our community?*

As you travel through your community, point out and name different places, such as the library, the post office, the fire department, and the grocery store. Ask your child to tell what is special about each place.

Math

Gather small objects and place them in a mystery bag. Have your child choose two objects from the bag. Help your child compare their characteristics. Ask: "Which is taller? Which is shorter? How can you tell?"

Letters and Sounds

Mr. B loves his buttons! Go on a family button hunt. As family members discover buttons in different colors, sizes, and shapes, talk about the buttons. Model using a complete sentence to describe the button, such as: "This button is big and red." Encourage your child to use complete sentences, too.

Physical Development

As you pick up and put things away at home, help your child learn the words that identify where things are located. Model using the words *up*, *down*, *on top of*, *under*, *in front of*, *to the side*, and *behind* or use the words to give your child directions, such as: "Please put the newspaper on top of the table."

Tip

It is important for your child to know his or her address and your phone number.

Help your child memorize these.

Try singing your address to the tune of "Do You Know the Muffin Man?" For example:

*1105 Wayside Dr., Wayside Dr., Wayside Dr.,
1105 Wayside Dr., Chicago, Illinois*

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. As you talk about the word *dash*, have your child show you that action.

Wow Words

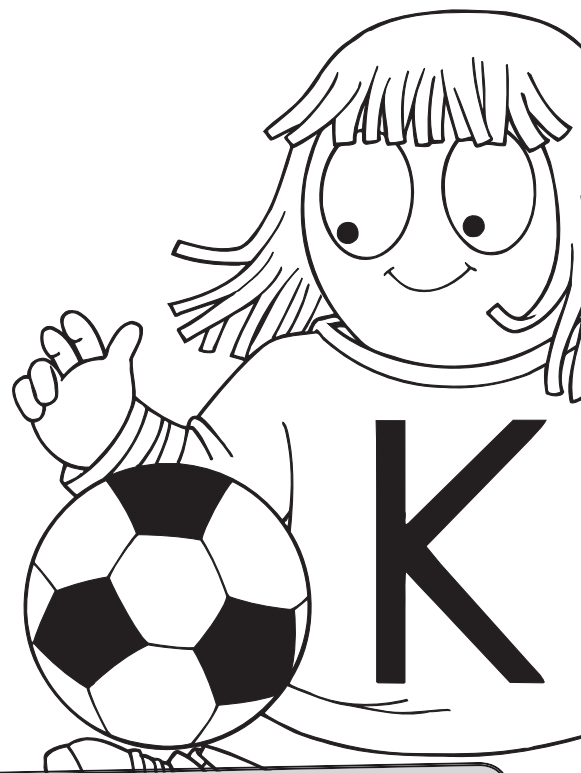
community
bustling
neighbor
interact
dash

Family Fun Letter 10

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about the people in our community. We are comparing objects and their characteristics, such as big/small and heavy/light. We are also meeting Ms. K and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *Who are the people in our community?*

As you shop or go to appointments, point out and name the people you meet in your community, such as the store clerk, the nurse and the doctor, the librarian, and the letter carrier. Ask your child to tell how each person helps your family and the community.

Math

As your child picks up his or her toys, help your child compare two items using the words *big* and *small* or *heavy* and *light*. Model using complete sentences, such as: "This truck is heavy, but this car is light." Encourage your child to use complete sentences, too.

Letters and Sounds

Ms. K is a soccer-kicking champion with a kaboom kick! Help develop your child's body coordination by taking a ball outside to kick. Say "Kaboom!" together when the ball is kicked.

Social and Emotional Development

Ms. K is proud of her kaboom kick, but she is proudest when someone says, "That's Ms. K. She is kind." Tell your child that one way to be kind is to use good manners by saying, "Please" and "Thank you." Encourage your child to be kind to others like Ms. K!

Tip

Explain that some of the people in our community, such as firefighters and paramedics, help us when we are very sick or hurt. Show your child how to get help in an emergency situation by calling 9-1-1 or the local rescue phone number. Have your child practice on a toy telephone.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when your child has been a *champion*, whether it be winning a game or learning to tie his or her shoes.

Wow Words

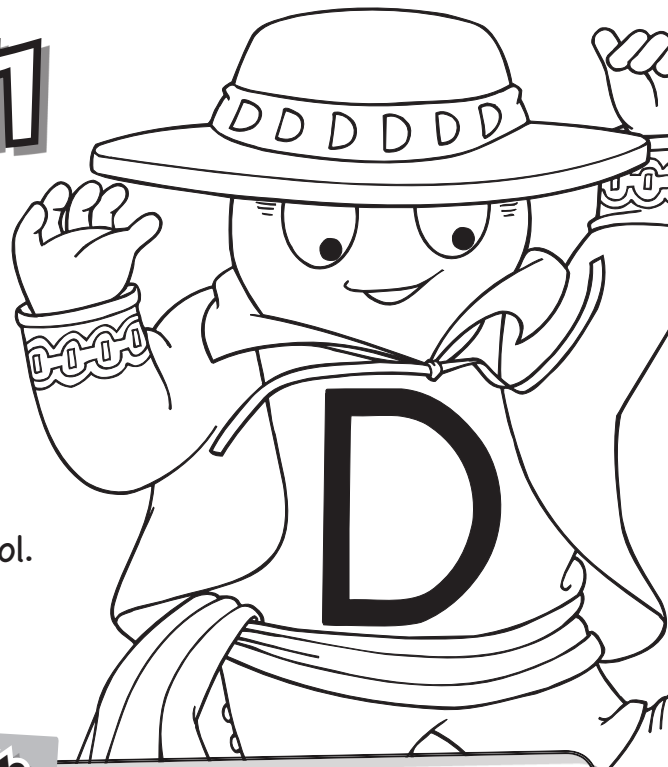
rescue
rely
serve
contribute
champion

Family Fun Letter 11

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about ways we can help our community. We are comparing the length and height of objects. We are also meeting Mr. D and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *How can we help our community?*

Point out simple ways you and your child can help your community by putting trash in garbage cans, holding a door for someone, recycling, and helping a neighbor.

Math

Help your child find things that are long (ex: couch, bathtub) and compare them to things that are short (ex: chair, sink). Do the same with things that are tall and short (ex: door and table). Encourage your child to use the words *long*, *short*, and *tall*.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. D has a dazzling dance! Put on some music and dance with your child. You might do the "Hokey Pokey" or another dazzling dance that you know. Encourage your child to say, "Mr. D and I can dance!"

Cognitive Development

Encourage your child to use logic by comparing two things with a new kind of measurement: temperature. At dinner, ask questions such as: "Is the rice hot or cold? Is it hotter than the milk?"

Tip

Show your child how to reuse something instead of throwing it out. For example, turn old socks into puppets, use paper towel tubes for craft projects, and line small trash cans with plastic grocery bags. Explain that reusing items such as these helps your community by reducing the amount of garbage that the community has to deal with.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when your family has *collaborated* on a project together.

Wow Words

volunteer
grateful
dazzling
prance
collaborate

Family Fun Letter 12

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about the world as a community. We are learning to measure using simple things like paper clips, straws, and pencils as our measuring tools. We are also meeting Ms. F and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!

Social Studies

Focus Question *What is the world community?*

Explore the world community with your child. Attend or watch a cultural program or event. Talk about these experiences with your child. Discuss how they compare with the traditions of your home culture.

Letters and Sounds

Ms. F is fond of her funny feet and encourages others to be proud of their differences. Have your child tell about the special features that he or she is fond of.

Research

At about two years old, children begin to notice diversity in both gender and race. You can help your child learn to appreciate diversity by talking about the different colors of skin or hair types seen in your community, on TV, or in books. Encourage your child to tell how they are the same or different from others in this way.
(Penn State Extension, 2013)

Math

Have your child use placemats or napkins to measure a table. Help your child line up the placemats or unfolded napkins along a side to be measured. Then count the placemats or napkins together.

Physical Development

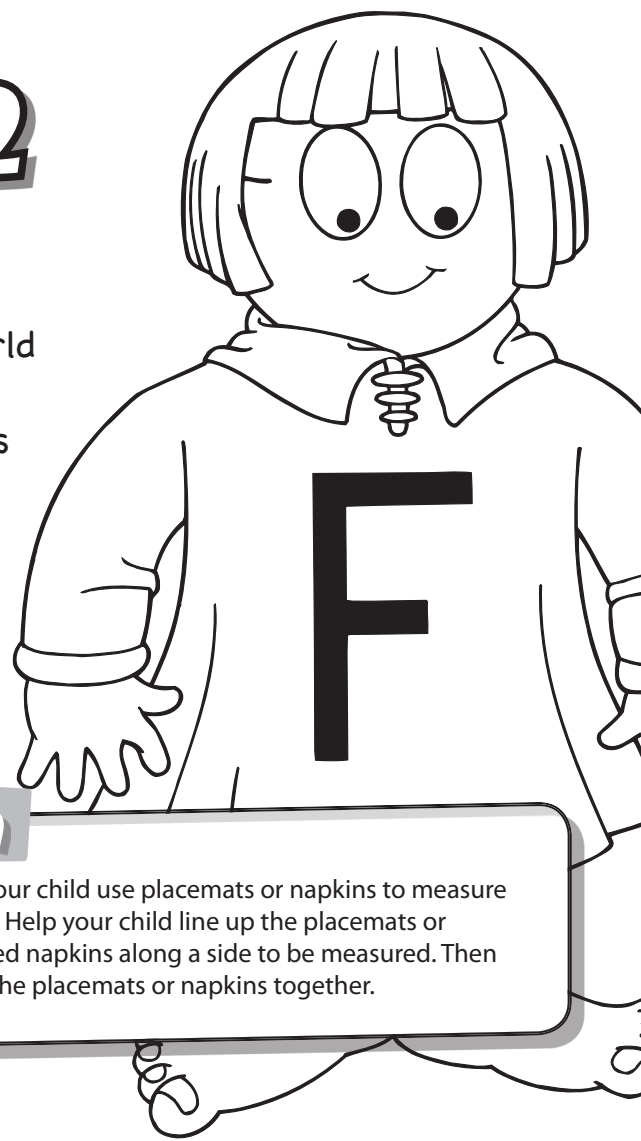
Help your child develop awareness of the space around him or her. Do simple exercises together that encourage your child to move forward, backward, up, and down.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about *diversity* and places you see diversity in both people and objects.

Wow Words

greet
global
fancy
fabulous
diversity

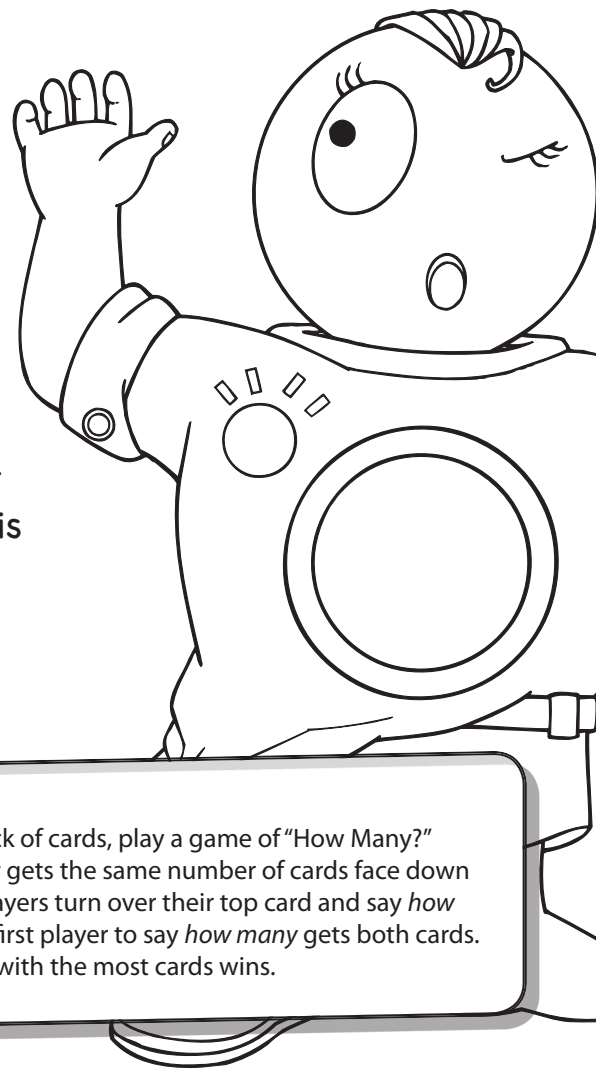


Family Fun Letter 13

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about the importance of staying healthy. We are learning to recognize quantities and numerals 0–5. We are also meeting Mr. O and learning about his letter and short o sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *Why is it important to stay healthy?*

Together make a list of ways your family stays healthy. As you make the list, have your child act out ways to stay healthy, such as brushing his or her teeth daily.

Math

Using a deck of cards, play a game of "How Many?" Each player gets the same number of cards face down in a pile. Players turn over their top card and say *how many*. The first player to say *how many* gets both cards. The player with the most cards wins.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. O does everything opposite. Play the game "Mr. O's Opposites" with your child. Say a word or action and then have your child say or do the opposite. For example, say: "Walk slow." Your child should then walk fast. Encourage your child to tell what he or she is doing, such as "I am doing the opposite. I am walking fast."

Cognitive Development

Help your child to develop his or her creativity and imagination. As your child completes a daily routine like picking up toys, ask him or her to think of a creative way to complete the task, such as picking up all the red toys first.

Research

Getting children to try new foods isn't always easy. It may take as many as 15 times before your child will give a new food a try. Encourage your child to explore the food by touching it, licking it, and tasting it. Then be a good role model as you try the food. (Lerner and Parklakian, 2006)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about the kinds of things that make you *shiver*.

Wow Words

cozy
soothe
smidgen
fret
shiver

Family Fun Letter 14

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about what foods are good for us. We are counting groups that have up to five objects. We are also meeting Mr. C and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!

Social Studies

Focus Question *What food is good for us?*

With your child, make a healthy snack, such as fruit and cheese sticks. Once you cut the fruit and cubes of cheese, your child can slide the pieces onto wooden skewers. Talk about why these foods are healthy to eat and good for us.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. C wears a colossal cap. Have your child draw a picture of a regular object in colossal size. Have your child tell what he or she would do with that colossal object. For example: "If I had a colossal cup, I could fill it with lemonade to drink for an entire week."

Tip

This week at school children are learning about *Go*, *Slow*, and *Whoa* foods. *Go* foods are healthy foods that we can eat lots of, such as fruit and vegetables. *Slow* foods are not as healthy, and we should "go slow" on them. *Whoa* foods are not healthy and we should say "whoa" to them. Encourage your child to tell whether a food is a *Go*, *Slow*, or *Whoa* food.

Math

Hold up one, two, three, four, or five fingers on your hand. Then have your child show that same amount using buttons, beads, or pennies. Switch roles and let your child tell you how many to show.

Cognitive Development

Help your child develop his or her reasoning skills. As you share meals during the week, ask questions to encourage your child to compare the meals and explain those comparisons. For example, ask: "Which meal do you think was healthier? Why do you think that?"

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about the kinds of foods your family likes to *gobble*.

Wow Words

tasty
colossal
nibble
energetic
gobble

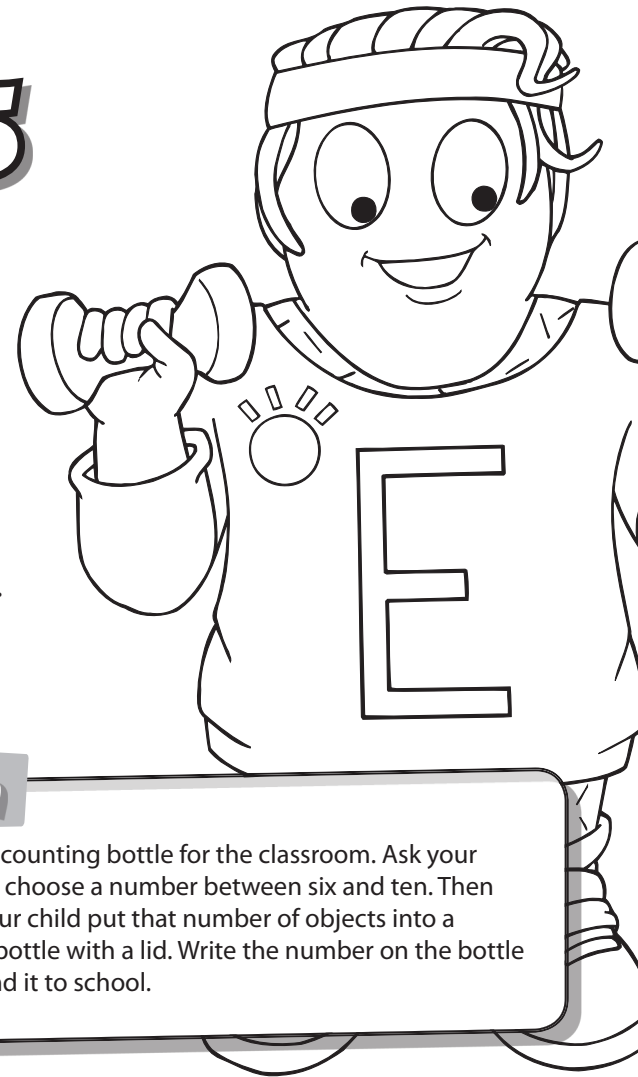


Family Fun Letter 15

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning why it is important to exercise. We are learning to recognize quantities and numerals 6–10. We are also meeting Ms. E and learning about her letter and short *e* sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *Why should we exercise?*

Try this exercise rhyme with your child.

I can reach up high. (reach up)
I can bend down low. (bend down)
Reach up high and touch the sky. (reach up)
Bend as low as you can go. (bend down)

Math

Make a counting bottle for the classroom. Ask your child to choose a number between six and ten. Then help your child put that number of objects into a plastic bottle with a lid. Write the number on the bottle and send it to school.

Letters and Sounds

Ms. E has exercise energy! She loves to exercise and the letter *E*. Look for the letter *E* in your house. Each time you or your child finds one do a jumping jack together.

Physical Development

Ask your child to demonstrate a favorite exercise. Exercise together as a family. Go for a walk or a bike ride together, or put on some music and dance!

Research

Math can be scary for some adults but not for young children. Make counting fun by playing guessing games. For example, ask your child to guess how many eggs are in the carton. Then count them. Ask your child to guess how many apples are in the bag. Then count them. (Florida Partnership in Education, 2009a)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Have your child show you how to *amble*. Ask your child to tell you when he or she likes to *amble*.

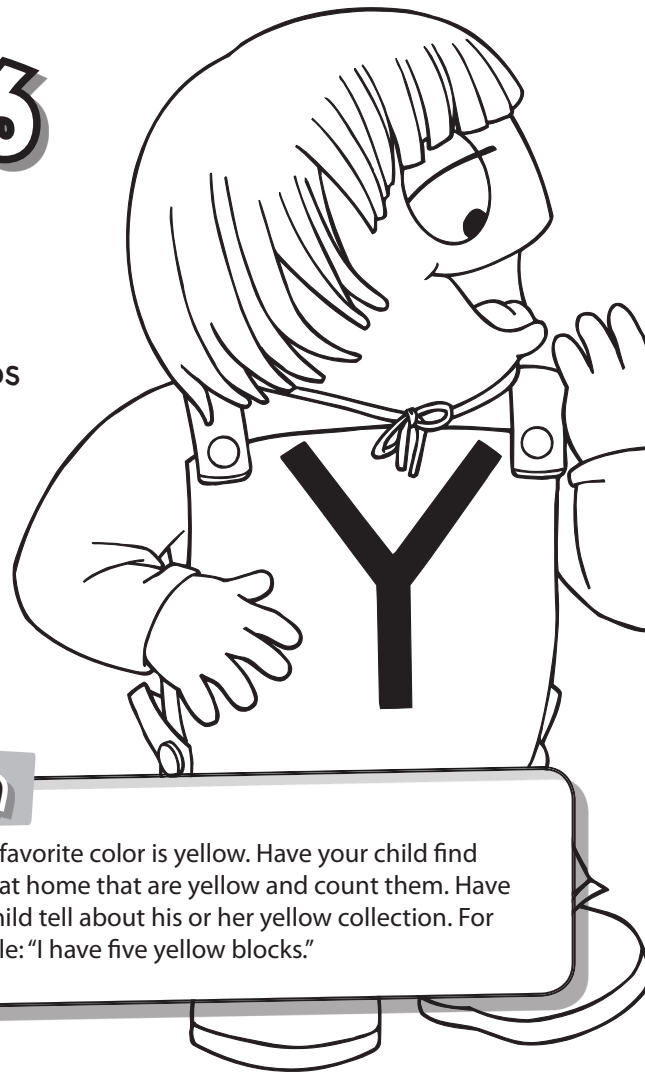
Wow Words
enthusiastic
vigorous
active
sprint
amble

Family Fun Letter 16

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about the importance of staying clean. We are counting groups that have up to ten objects. We are also meeting Ms. Y and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *Why should we stay clean?*

Talk to your child about how staying clean keeps us healthy. Then, together, count to 10 as you both wash your hands using soap and water.

Math

Ms. Y's favorite color is yellow. Have your child find things at home that are yellow and count them. Have your child tell about his or her yellow collection. For example: "I have five yellow blocks."

Letters and Sounds

Ms. Y has a yodeling yawn and loves the letter Y. Show your child how to make a Y with your body. Put your feet together and stretch your arms up at angles. Then ask your child to demonstrate a yodeling yawn.

Social and Emotional Development

Ask your child what Ms. Y's favorite word is. If need be, remind your child that her favorite word is yes. If your child is responding "no" to your requests, remind him or her to be more like Ms. Y and say "Yes!"

Tip

Ms. Y has a yodeling yawn and encourages everyone to get plenty of sleep. Play a pretend game and have your child lead *you* through a bedtime routine. Remind your child that you need to wash up, hear a story, and receive a hug and kiss before you're tucked into bed. Then practice a yodeling yawn together!

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when you act *gently* around someone or something.

Wow Words

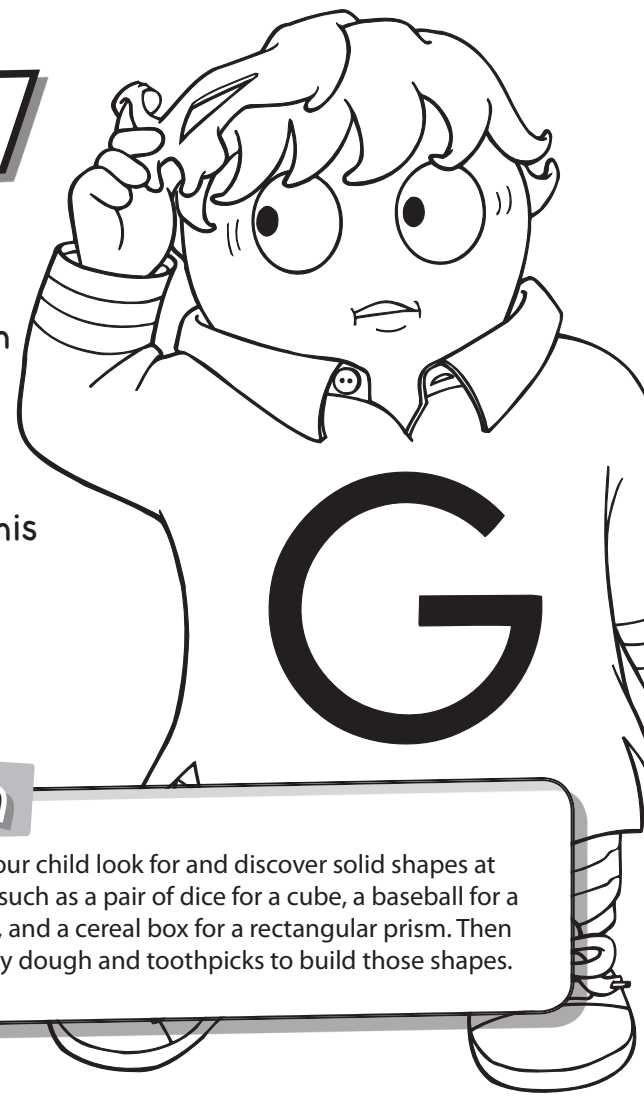
groom
sparkling
grubby
thrive
gently

Family Fun Letter 17

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning how the Earth is important to us. We are learning about cube, sphere, and rectangular prism shapes. We are also meeting Mr. G and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *How is the Earth important to us?*

Take an Earth walk with your child and explore the plants in the area and the animals you see. Talk about what Earth is like where you live.

Math

Help your child look for and discover solid shapes at home, such as a pair of dice for a cube, a baseball for a sphere, and a cereal box for a rectangular prism. Then use play dough and toothpicks to build those shapes.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. G loves chewing gooey gum. Have your child name other things that begin with the *g* sound that Mr. G might eat.

Physical Development

Engage your child in activities that build fine motor skills. Encourage your child to try these activities:

- Button, zip, snap, buckle, and fasten clothing when getting dressed
- Help prepare meals by stirring, shaking, and mixing
- Pour juice into a cup
- Wipe the table with a sponge
- Cut play dough with child-safety scissors
- Put puzzles together

Research

For young children hands-on play is critical. Activities such as pounding clay, building sand castles, and using scissors help build the fine motor skills needed to grasp crayons, pencils, and markers well enough to write. Without these skills children's hands tend to tire quickly, making it difficult to learn to write. (Colker, 2010)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about an area in the house that is a *disaster* and needs cleaning up.

Wow Words

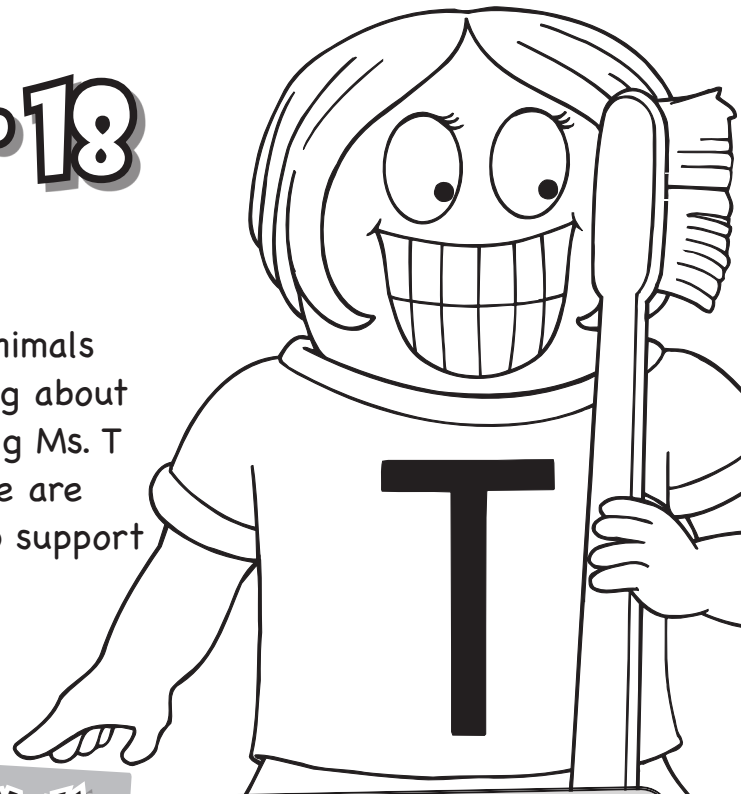
abundant
swirl
gooey
gloomy
disaster

Family Fun Letter 18

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about animals and where they live on Earth. We are learning about cone and cylinder shapes. We are also meeting Ms. T and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *Where on Earth do different animals live?*

Talk about your child's favorite animal and where it lives. Visit the library or go online to learn more about the animal. Have your child draw a picture of his or her favorite animal in its home and tell you about it.

Math

Go on a solid shape hunt! Help your child find examples of these solid shapes:

- cones (ice cream cones or party hats)
 - cylinders (soup cans or telephone poles)
- Talk about how they are the same and different.

Letters and Sounds

Have your child name animals or animal parts that begin with *T*, such as *tiger* and *tail*. Encourage your child to draw a picture or find photos of the animals he or she named.

Physical Development

Help your child develop fine motor control by doing some watercolor painting or "painting" the bathtub, shower walls, or the outside of the house with a paintbrush and clean water.

Research

It's important for children to build strength in their hands and fingers before they are asked to use a pencil on a regular basis. Build up your child's strength by having them roll play dough into tiny balls.

They may also tear newspaper into strips and crumple them into balls. (Buxamusa and Mahoney, 2014)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about animals that *soar* in the sky.

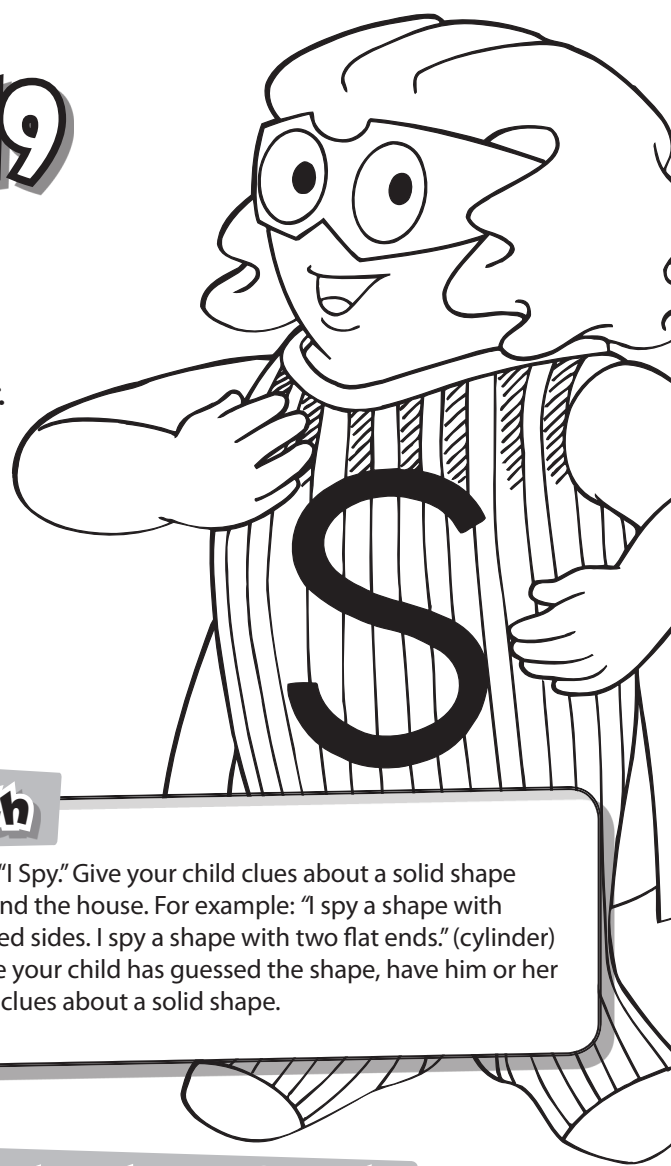
Wow Words

enormous
scorching
lush
scamper
soar

Family Fun Letter 19

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about the weather and how it changes throughout the year. We are comparing solid shapes to each other. We are also meeting Ms. S and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.



Happy learning!

Science and Health

Focus Question *How does the weather change through the year?*

Chart the weather for a week with your child. Create a simple weather graph and have your child draw a symbol to represent the weather each day. At week's end, count the number of sunny and rainy days.

Math

Play "I Spy." Give your child clues about a solid shape around the house. For example: "I spy a shape with curved sides. I spy a shape with two flat ends." (cylinder) Once your child has guessed the shape, have him or her give clues about a solid shape.

Letters and Sounds

The letter S is heard in lots of noise words, like *sizzling*, *slurp*, and *smash*. Have your child name noises that have the s sound. Encourage your child to put motions with the noises. For example, your child might act out smashing a bug when the word *smash* is said.

Social and Emotional Development

Ms. S wears super socks to help her feel less afraid. Help your child deal with fear or sadness by sharing what you do to help you feel better. Encourage your child to pick out super socks that he or she can put on the next time feelings of fear or sadness creep in.

Tip

Childhood fears change with age. Be sure to listen to your child's fears and help him or her get past the fears by talking about them. You might tell your child about fears you remember having as a child to help him or her realize that these fears will likely pass in time.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about things that make a *sizzling* sound.

Wow Words

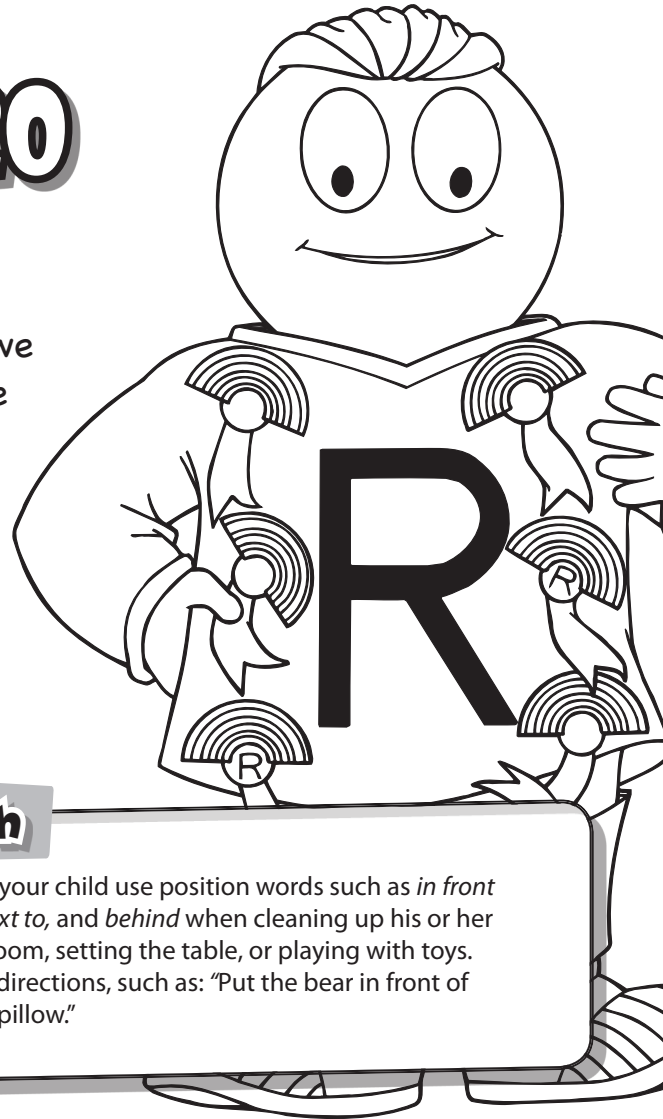
frosty
drench
glisten
blustery
sizzling

Family Fun Letter 20

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are exploring ways that we can take care of Earth. We are learning about the positions of objects, such as in front of, behind, and next to. We are also meeting Mr. R and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *How can we take care of the Earth?*

Talk about ways to help take care of the Earth, such as recycling and planting trees. Have your child draw a picture of one way to take care of the Earth.

Math

Help your child use position words such as *in front of*, *next to*, and *behind* when cleaning up his or her bedroom, setting the table, or playing with toys. Give directions, such as: "Put the bear in front of your pillow."

Letters and Sounds

Make a rainbow collage with the letter *R*. Using magazines or newspapers, have your child look for the letter *R* in different colors. Help your child cut out the *R* examples and glue them to a sheet of paper.

Cognitive Development

Persistence is a lifelong skill. Do an art project that has multiple steps, such as making a picture using macaroni glued to paper. First show your child the steps in order. Then have your child follow those steps. Talk about how he or she felt when the project was finished.

Research

Routine tasks or responsibilities, like chores, help children learn to be responsible, master a task, be persistent in completing the task, and be self-reliant.

Teach your child that chores are about being a helper in the family rather than being a punishment.

(Wallace, 2015)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about ways that your family can *protect* living things on Earth.

Wow Words

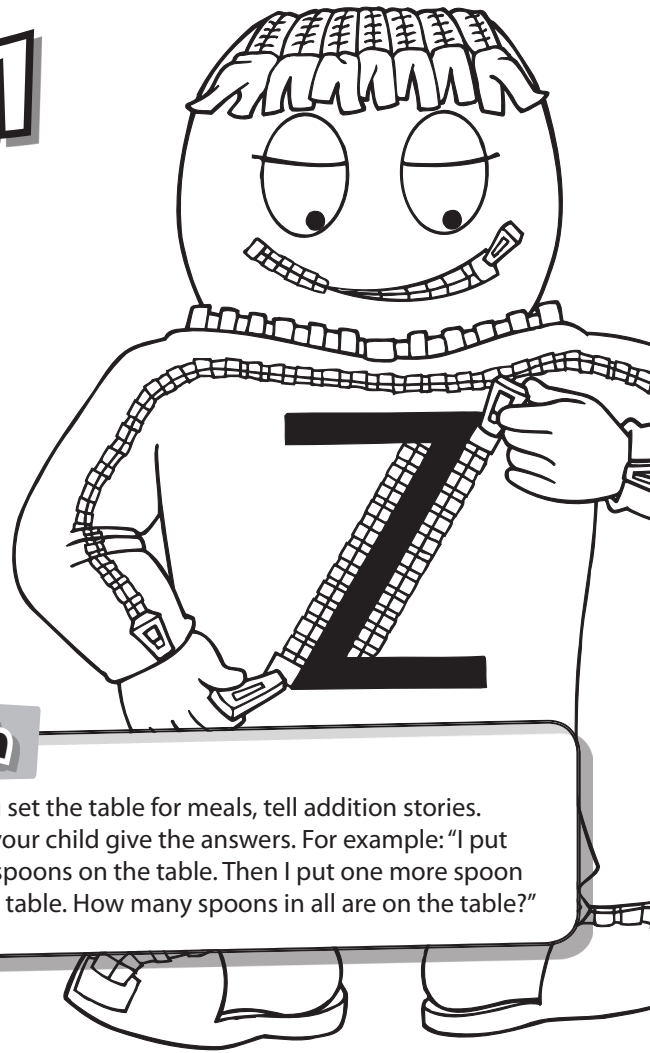
pollute
destroy
neglect
recycle
protect

Family Fun Letter Z

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about things that grow. We are learning how to combine or add two groups of objects. We are also meeting Mr. Z and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *What grows?*

Create a book with your child about how he or she has grown since being a baby. If you have photos at different ages, share these with your child and together, write a sentence about each photo. Point out how much more your child can do now!

Math

As you set the table for meals, tell addition stories. Have your child give the answers. For example: "I put three spoons on the table. Then I put one more spoon on the table. How many spoons in all are on the table?"

Letters and Sounds

Use sidewalk chalk or masking tape to make a large letter Z on the ground. Show your child how to walk the shape of the letter Z. Say "Zip!" as you walk across the top line. Say "Zap!" as you walk diagonally down the middle line. Say "Zoom!" as you walk across the bottom line. Encourage your child to do the same.

Physical Development

This week we are talking about things that grow. Have your child act out how different things grow. Encourage your child to act out a growing tree by stretching as high as possible. Invite your child to grow long like a pumpkin vine, stretching his or her arms and legs out as long as possible while lying on the floor.

Tip

As you travel around the community, point out to your child things that have grown. Help him or her understand what the person, animal, or thing began as and how it grew. For example, you might say: "Look at that tall tree. It was once just a seed."

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about a time when something *ridiculous* made you laugh.

Wow Words

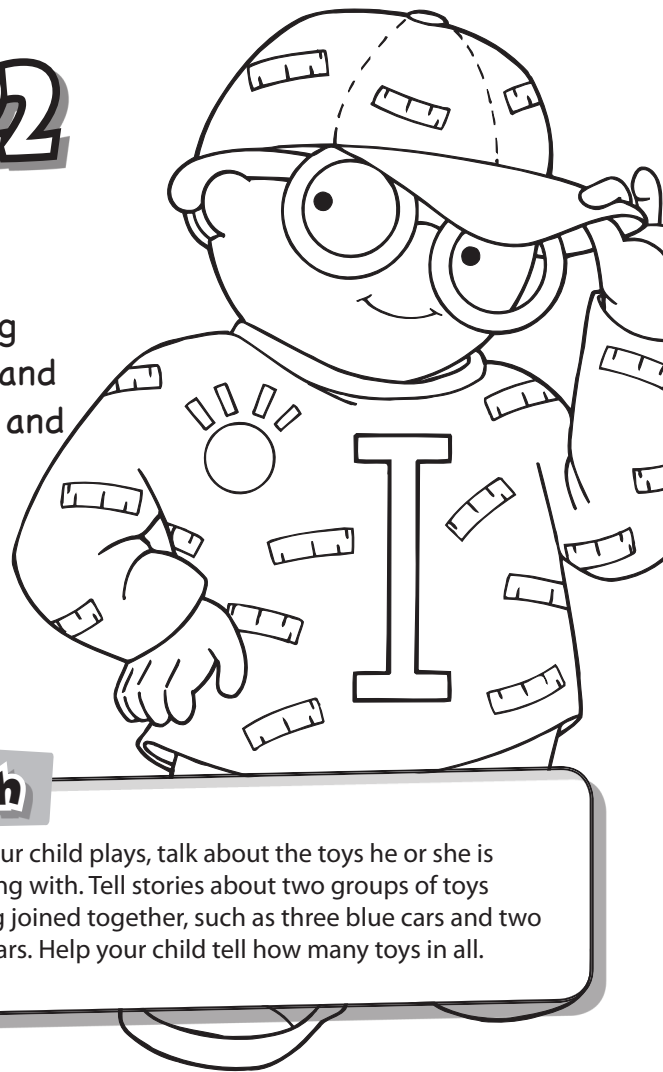
curious
transform
agree
disagree
ridiculous

Family Fun Letter 22

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are discovering what living things need. We are combining groups of objects and telling addition stories. We are also meeting Mr. I and learning about his letter and short *i* sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *What do living things need?*

Go on a walk around the community and find living and nonliving things. Have your child tell you what the living things need to live and grow.

Math

As your child plays, talk about the toys he or she is playing with. Tell stories about two groups of toys being joined together, such as three blue cars and two red cars. Help your child tell how many toys in all.

Letters and Sounds

Mr. I's capital letter by itself is also the Everyday Word *I*. Look through books and magazines and help your child find both capital and lowercase *Is*. Count how many times *I* is used as an Everyday Word.

Social and Emotional Development

Emphasize the concept of taking turns by playing board games as a family. Explain why it is important to take turns. For example: "There is only one spinner. By taking turns, we each can spin the spinner and know how many spaces to move our playing piece."

Research

Through conflicts, children learn that others may have different feelings about something that they do. When your child faces conflict, encourage everyone to talk calmly and make suggestions for a solution. When the problem is sorted out, praise your child for acting in a grown-up manner to solve the problem. (Raising Children Network, 2010)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about things that are *tiny* and *huge*.

Wow Words

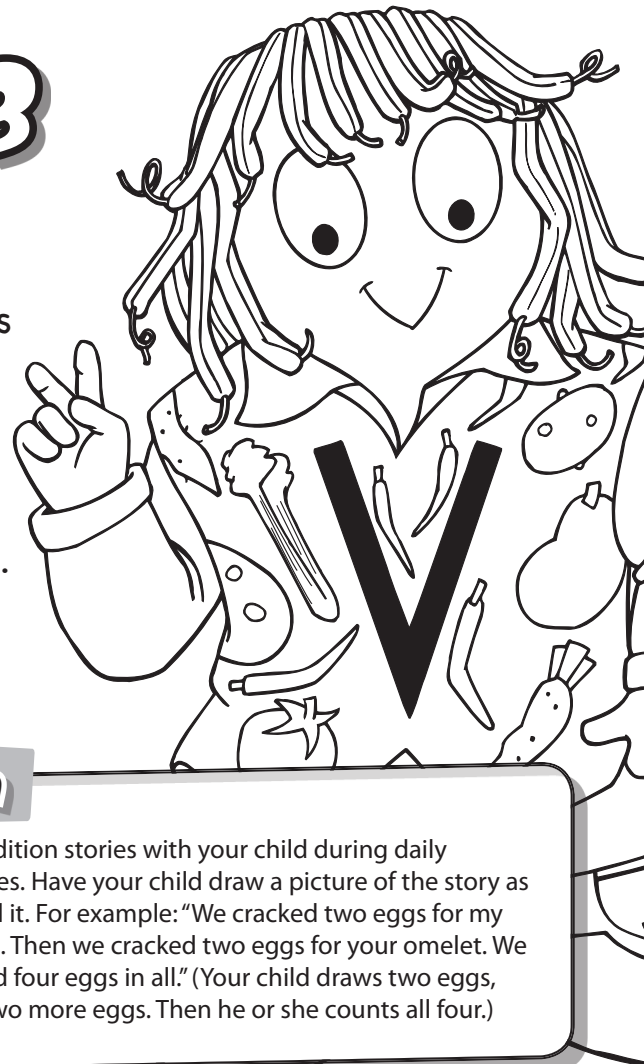
gasp
impossible
harm
tiny
huge

Family Fun Letter 23

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are discovering what plants need to grow. We are telling addition stories as we learn the meaning of the equal sign. We are also meeting Ms. V and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *What do plants need to grow?*

Plant a houseplant with your child. Talk about signs that tell when a plant needs sun or water. Invite your child to observe and help take care of the plant daily.

Math

Tell addition stories with your child during daily activities. Have your child draw a picture of the story as you tell it. For example: "We cracked two eggs for my omelet. Then we cracked two eggs for your omelet. We cracked four eggs in all." (Your child draws two eggs, then two more eggs. Then he or she counts all four.)

Letters and Sounds

Ms. V loves her vegetables! Have your child name his or her favorite vegetables. Encourage your child to use a complete sentence, such as: "My favorite vegetable is green beans."

Cognitive Development

As you read to your child, explain words from the book that he or she may not know the meanings of. Use these words in conversation to help your child make connections. For example: "Look at our plant. New leaves are sprouting. We read about Jack's beanstalk sprouting. It grew bigger and bigger, too."

Tip

Give your child opportunities to explore the natural world of plants. Gather pinecones, seeds of various kinds, and twigs. Have your child examine these natural items and talk about what he or she notices. Talk about the kinds of plants these items came from and what all plants need to grow.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about plants that grow to be *gigantic*.

Wow Words

mystery
sprout
brilliant
variety
gigantic

Family Fun Letter 24

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning how animals grow and change. We are telling more addition stories and talking about groups that are equal. We are also meeting Ms. L and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.



Happy learning!

Science and Health

Focus Question *How do animals grow and change?*

Make a matching game with your child. Find photos on the Internet of baby animals and their parents. Then glue the photos on index cards. Have your child match the baby with the grown-up. Talk about how baby animals grow and change into adults.

Math

Tell your child an addition story. Have your child show how many in all with objects, such as pennies, buttons, or beads. For example: "Two ducks are swimming. One more duck joins them. How many ducks are swimming?" (Your child counts out two pennies and then one penny to represent the three ducks.)

Letters and Sounds

Encourage your child to make up a tongue twister with words that begin with *L*. For example: "Lucy Lou licked lemon lollipops." Talk about the ones that make you laugh.

Physical Development

Do a silly dance! Ms. L loves to laugh and silly dancing is sure to get you all laughing. Dancing helps your child build his or her large motor muscle skills, too.

Research

Give your child small tasks to do that encourage using numbers in everyday life. For example, at snack time, ask your child to bring a banana for you and a banana for him or her. Your child will learn that he or she needs to bring two bananas. (Florida Partnership in Education, 2009d)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about ways animals and children act when they are *lively*.

Wow Words

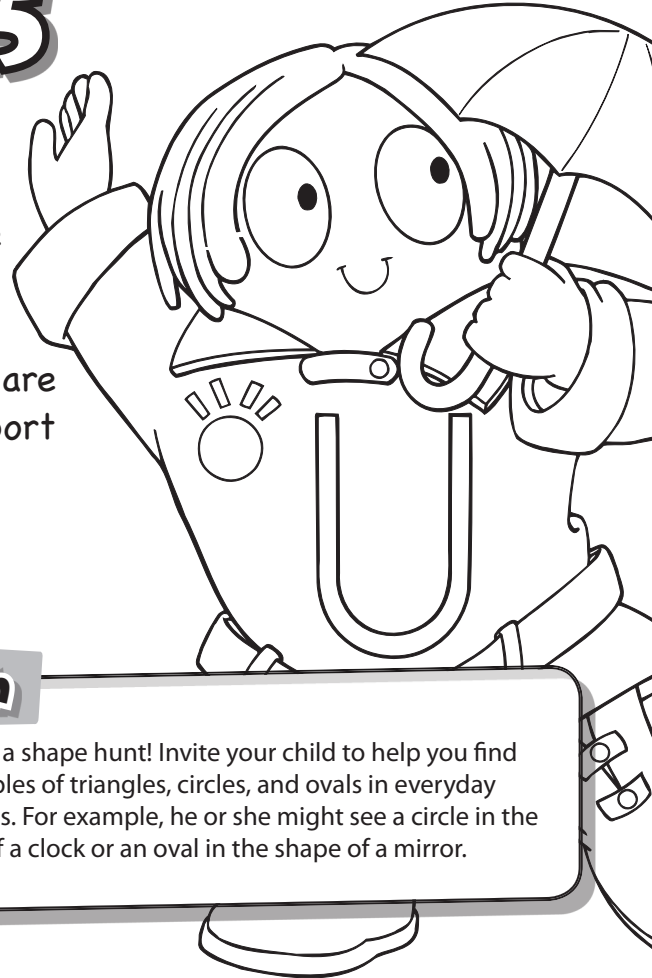
delicate
flutter
hilarious
giggle
lively

Family Fun Letter 25

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning about science and what it is. We are learning about triangles, circles, and ovals. We are also meeting Ms. U and learning about her letter and short *u* sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *What is science?*

Step outside with your child and look around. Ask: "What do you see? What would you like to learn more about?" Talk about things that scientists study, such as stars, plants, air, and weather. Together, think of a science idea to learn more about. Then visit the library or a museum, or search online to learn more.

Math

Go on a shape hunt! Invite your child to help you find examples of triangles, circles, and ovals in everyday objects. For example, he or she might see a circle in the face of a clock or an oval in the shape of a mirror.

Letters and Sounds

Ms. U has an unusual umbrella. Her umbrella takes her up in the air. Have your child finish this sentence with unusual things he or she might see up in the air: "Up, up, up I go to see an unusual _____."

Cognitive Development

Help your child use his or her own experiences to relate to others' experiences. For example, if you read about taking care of kittens, talk about the care your family gave to the family puppy. Making connections will help your child understand new situations or concepts.

Research

Children naturally like to explore, so encourage your child's curiosity by modeling questions about science. For example, ask: "Why does the moon change shape?" Then invite your child to ask questions. Together, try to find answers in books, online, or by asking community experts. (Florida Partnership in Education, 2009c)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk with your child about things that are *ancient* and interesting to you.

Wow Words

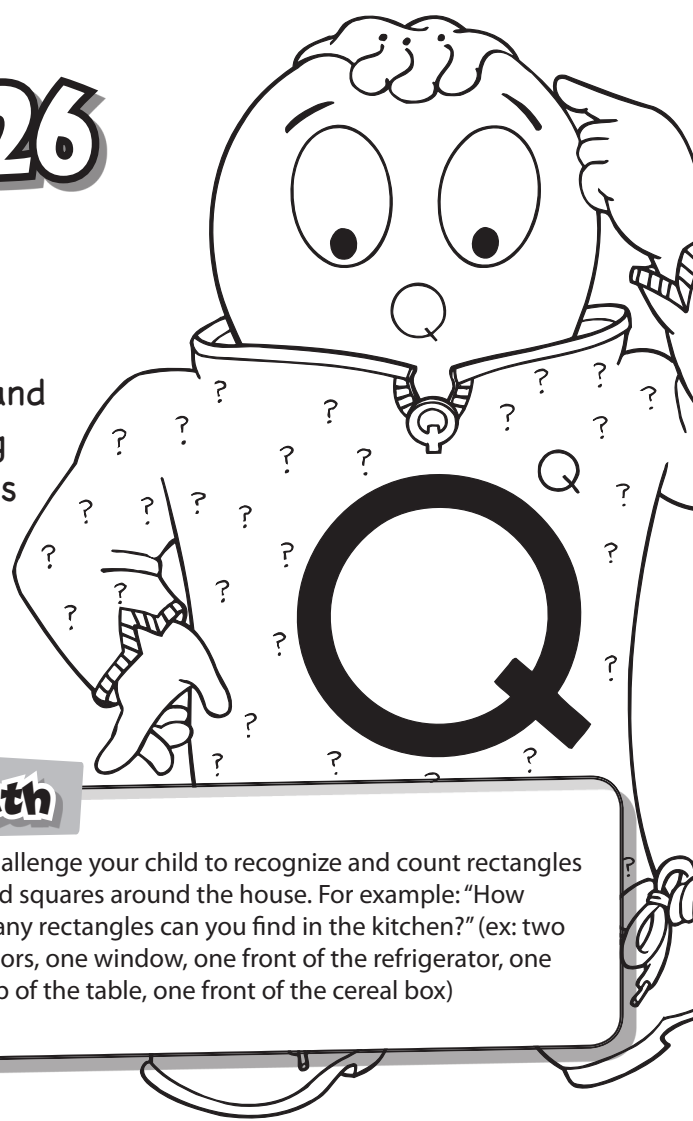
study
mighty
unusual
wonder
ancient

Family Fun Letter 26

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are discovering what scientists do. We are learning about rectangles and squares. We are also meeting Mr. Q and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *What do scientists do?*

It's time to be scientists together! Invite your child to observe something closely and see what happens. Together, you might observe a bird outside, a plant leaning toward the light, or food coloring added to a cup of water. Write about what you notice.

Math

Challenge your child to recognize and count rectangles and squares around the house. For example: "How many rectangles can you find in the kitchen?" (ex: two doors, one window, one front of the refrigerator, one top of the table, one front of the cereal box)

Letters and Sounds

Play "Mr. Q's Questions" with your child. Think of something in the room or car. Have your child ask questions to find out what it is. For example: "Is it red? Does it make noise?" Take turns asking questions and guessing.

Social and Emotional Development

Encourage your child to be like Mr. Q and ask questions politely using the word *please*. Praise your child when he or she is being polite.

Tip

As you and your child role-play being scientists and observing things, remind him or her of safety rules to follow, such as "Look carefully. Don't taste anything you are unsure of." Engage your child in conversations about the importance of following safety rules as a scientist.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about times when family members have *revealed* surprises and how others reacted.

Wow Words

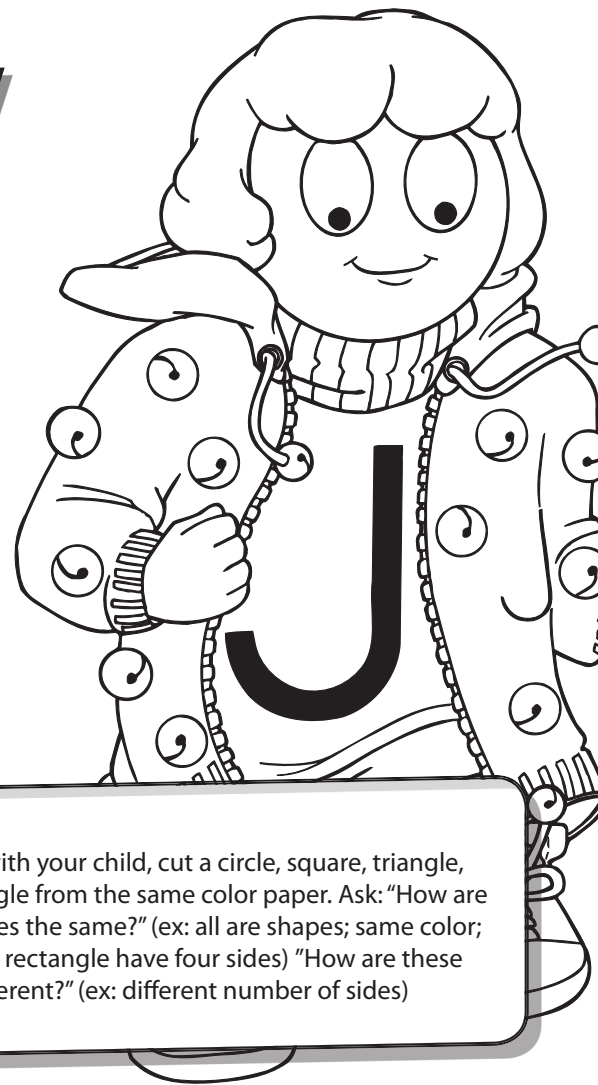
investigate
expedition
fascinating
inquire
reveal

Family Fun Letter 27

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are exploring how objects are the same and different. We are continuing to identify, sort, and describe shapes. We are also meeting Ms. J and learning about her letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *How are objects the same and different?*

During bath time, let your child experiment with a variety of safe objects to see which sink and which float. Encourage your child to make a prediction before testing each object to see if it sinks or floats.

Math

Together with your child, cut a circle, square, triangle, and rectangle from the same color paper. Ask: "How are these shapes the same?" (ex: all are shapes; same color; square and rectangle have four sides) "How are these shapes different?" (ex: different number of sides)

Letters and Sounds

Ms. J has a jingle jangle jacket and loves to listen to different sounds. She says, "Just listen!" Invite your child to listen quietly for a few minutes, and then discuss what makes the different sounds he or she heard.

Physical Development

With your child, draw large shapes with chalk outside on the ground. Give your child directions such as: "Hop inside the circle. Stand outside the square. Clap inside the triangle. Walk along the side of the rectangle."

Research

Sitting still and listening are essential social skills, but may be difficult for many preschool children. Practice these skills 5–10 minutes every day by reading interesting books or doing puzzles together. Praise your child for sitting still. (Florida Partnership in Education, 2009b)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Have your child *gather* things around the house and talk about what he or she has gathered.

Wow Words

record
predict
consider
evidence
gather

Family Fun Letter 28

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are exploring ways that objects change color, shape, and size. We are putting shapes together and taking them apart to make new shapes, designs, and pictures. We are also meeting Mr. X and learning about his letter and sound. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!

Science and Health

Focus Question *How can objects change?*

Help your child understand change by doing simple experiments. Heat water to show how it turns into steam. Freeze water to show how water turns into ice. Talk about how the three forms of water look and move.

Letters and Sounds

Sing about Mr. X with your child to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot."

I'm Mr. X. I'm different; it's true.
Here's something special I like to do.
Spread your arms and legs like mine.
Now you're an X, too, and that's just fine!

Tip

We are learning about changes. Leaves can change color. Candles can change size. Balloons can change shape. Water can change into ice or steam. People change too! Show your child his or her baby pictures. Talk about how your child has changed.

Math

Create a picture using only shapes! Cut out circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles from newspapers, magazines, or colored paper. Together, glue them on paper to make a shape picture. Ask your child to name the shapes as you work together.

Social and Emotional Development

Ask your child to tell you how Mr. X is different from the other Letter People. (He walks on his hands, lives in a houseboat, and his sound is at the end of words instead of the beginning.) Ask how Mr. X feels about being different. (He likes being different.) Discuss how everybody is different and to appreciate differences.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about *experiments* that you and your child might do at home together.

Wow Words
alter
inflate
extraordinary
combine
experiment

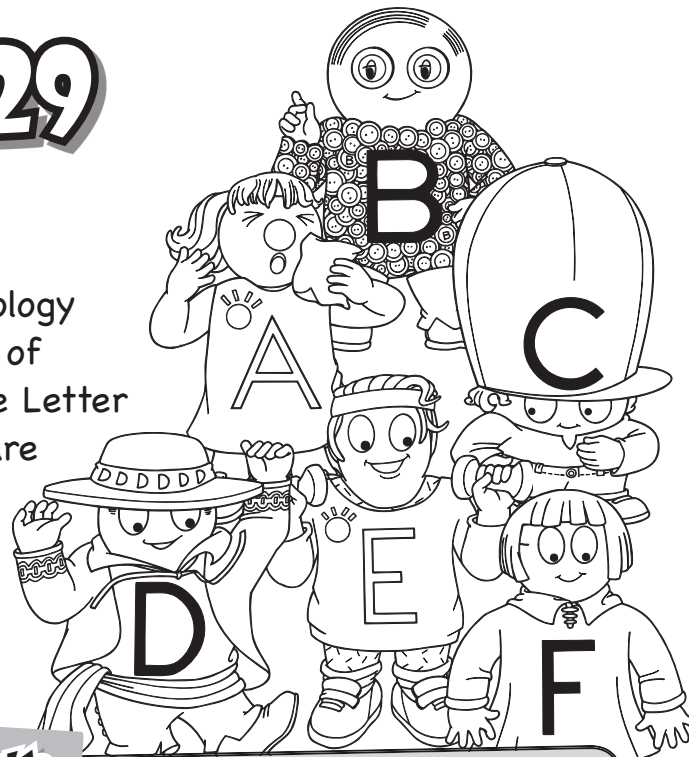


Family Fun Letter 29

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning how technology changes our lives. We are learning how the size of groups changes when we take objects away. The Letter People from Ms. A to Ms. F are visiting and we are reviewing their letters and sounds. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Science and Health

Focus Question *How does technology change our lives?*

With your child, take a survey of family members and friends about how technology affects their daily lives. Help your child record answers to questions, such as: "What types of technology do you use every day?" or "What would you do if you didn't have technology?"

Math

At meals, take turns telling subtraction, or take-away, stories with your child. Use the food on your plates as inspiration. For example: "I had five green beans. I ate three green beans. How many green beans do I have left?"

Letters and Sounds

Have fun making a letter collage with letters A to F. Provide your child with newspapers or magazines to find those letters, cut them out, and create a collage. Talk about different ways those letters look in print.

Cognitive Development

Help your child learn to set and meet goals. Together, decide on a goal, such as picking up toys, and set a realistic time frame in which to do it. When your child meets the goal, reward him or her with a simple high-five or spend quality time together.

Research

Identifying letters and their sounds is one of the best predictors of reading success. Besides reciting the alphabet song, children need to be able to identify letters written in different ways, uppercase and lowercase letters, and letters within words.
(Wren, 2001)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about things that have *startled* your child.

Wow Words

dim
huddle
frustrated
unexpected
startled

Family Fun Letter 30

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are learning what life was like 100 years ago. We are using objects to tell subtraction stories. The Letter People from Mr. G to Ms. L are visiting and we are reviewing their letters and sounds. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!



Social Studies

Focus Question *What was life like 100 years ago?*

Point out things around the house that people long ago did not have, such as indoor plumbing, televisions, cell phones, computers, refrigerators, and microwave ovens. Discuss how people lived differently long ago.

Math

Discuss simple take-away or subtraction stories as you and your child do household tasks. For example, if you have five dirty dishes to wash and you wash two of them, ask your child how many dirty dishes you have left to wash.

Letters and Sounds

Make a letter zoo with the letters G to L, using animals such as gorilla, hippo, iguana, jellyfish, kangaroo, and lion. Help your child find or draw pictures of these animals. Then label them together.

Physical Development

Remind children that people long ago did not have cars. Walk together to someplace close-by rather than driving. Talk the exercise you get from walking.

Tip

Help your child learn the difficult concept of time passing. Use time words, such as *first, next, last, before, after; yesterday, today, tomorrow*; days of the week, months of the year, and seasons, in everyday conversations to discuss what you do in the morning, in the afternoon, and at night.

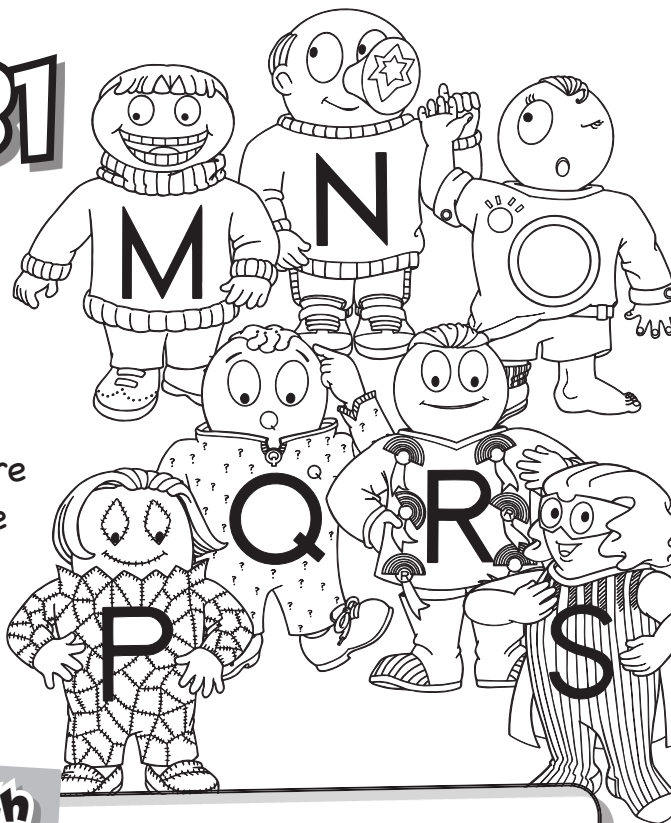
Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Create an *obstacle* course in your house or yard for your child to go through. Have your child tell you how he or she got around the obstacles.

Wow Words

machine
invent
progress
improve
obstacle

Family Fun Letter 31



Dear Family,

In school this week, we are exploring ways to travel from place to place. We are exploring how to make two groups of objects equal. The Letter People from Mr. M to Ms. S are visiting and we are reviewing their letters and sounds. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.

Happy learning!

Social Studies

Focus Question *How do we travel from place to place?*

Discuss the different ways family members travel from place to place. Point out if a parent flies on business or takes the train or subway to work, or if a sibling rides the bus to school.

Math

Have a "subtraction snack" with your child. Give each of you a different number of crackers or other food item. Before you eat, count how many each of you has. Encourage your child to tell you what needs to be added or taken away to make the two groups equal.

Letters and Sounds

Sing the alphabet song together. Make up motions to go with the song, such as using hand signs for each letter.

Social and Emotional Development

Do not feel that you need to solve every problem your child has. Encourage him or her to solve problems independently. You can help develop problem-solving skills by asking questions, such as: "What can you do to help open that box of cereal?"

Research

Make-believe play helps children develop self-regulation, which also increases achievements in literacy and math. Children should be encouraged to dress up, make props, and pretend to be knights on horses, pilots on an airplane, or astronauts on a rocket.
(Tools of the Mind, 2014)

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about places your child would like to go to on a *journey*.

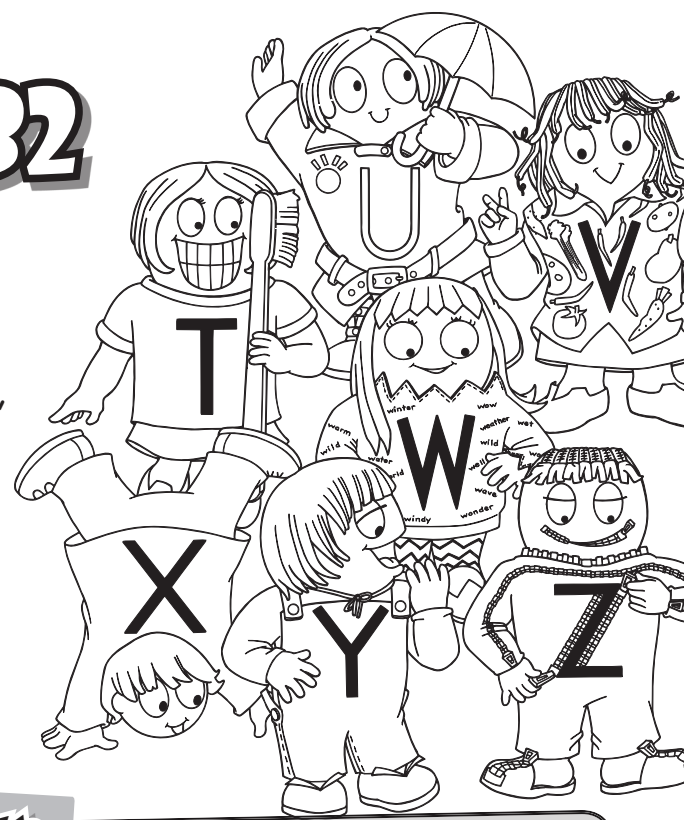
Wow Words

travel
vehicle
destination
room
journey

Family Fun Letter 32

Dear Family,

In school this week, we are discovering where our food comes from. We are reviewing numbers, shapes, and patterns. The Letter People from Ms. T to Mr. Z are visiting and we are reviewing their letters and sounds. Here are some things you can do at home this week to support your child's learning at school.



Happy learning!

Social Studies

Focus Question *Where does our food come from?*

While you shop for groceries, point out different types of food, such as dairy products and vegetables, and talk with your child about where they come from.

Math

Have your child make simple patterns with different kinds of pasta, such as shells, twists, and elbows. Encourage him or her to make patterns with two types (twist/shell/twist/shell) and three (elbow/shell/twist/elbow/shell/twist). Count the pieces in each pattern.

Letters and Sounds

Go on a scavenger hunt in your pantry to find foods that have the letters T to Z in their names, such as *tomato, buns, vegetable soup, wheat bread, cake mix, yogurt, and zucchini.*

Cognitive Development

Help your child focus attention appropriately and follow directions. Begin with one-step directions, such as: "Please bring me the dinosaur book." Move up to two-step directions, such as: "Please put this book away, and choose another book to read."

Tip

Let your child cut up the grocery ads and tape or glue pictures of food to a sheet of paper to make an illustrated shopping list. Discuss which foods on the list are healthy and where the foods come from.

Vocabulary

Find ways to use this week's Wow Words at home when you are talking with your child. Talk about things that *expand*.

Wow Words

product
deliver
provide
process
expand