Look for the Helpers, Listen for the Stories
Activity Guide

Supporting Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Students Post-Harvey

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“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’ To this day, especially in times of ‘disaster,’ I remember my mother’s words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in this world.”

– Fred Rogers
At School Literacy and Culture, we believe that we must meet children where they are, that we should embrace them and their needs if we are to best support them. This rings true for children's academic needs, but also for their socio-emotional needs. In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, we can and should expect that our young students will have experienced some sort of trauma as a result of the storm. There may be children who walk into the classroom Monday morning who had to leave their homes by boat, or in some cases, be airlifted away from everything they knew and loved. Some may have spent night after night in a shelter, with only their closest family members and none of their personal belongings. Some may have evacuated to the home of a family member or friend, where still all sense of familiarity was absent. Some may not have had their homes flood, but spent 48 hours going in and out of sheltering in place due to what felt like constant tornado warnings. And all children heard relentless rain on the roof day after day after day. It is safe to say that there is not a child in Houston or its surrounding areas who went through Harvey untouched. Every child was in some way impacted by this horrific storm.

We teach early childhood students to “look for the helpers” in dangerous situations and it is likely that Harvey has given many children the opportunity to see police officers, firemen and women, National Guard, and Coast Guard members and others in action as they worked to save countless lives. Children will also look to you, their trusted teacher, as a helper. You will be their helper in the coming days as they re-establish routines at school, you will be their helper as they miss their parents after weeks at home, you will be their helper as they work to process the emotional events of Harvey. Because of this, School Literacy and Culture has designed this activity guide to support young children as they re-enter classrooms across Houston.

Trauma research in young children shows us that children best process strong emotion through play, art, and the opportunity to speak with a trusted adult (who acts as a supportive listener) about the event and their feelings. As early childhood teachers, you already foster a classroom environment wherein play, art, and talking and listening are present. By modifying these opportunities in your classroom you can promote healing and recovery from the trauma Hurricane Harvey and its floods wrought.

The activities in this guide address a unified purpose: to create safe spaces where children can be comfortable sharing their experiences and fears through story. As teachers and as helpers, it will be our role to sit down beside children and listen to them as they play. We will invite children to tell us about their feelings, their artwork and work beside them as they make playdough creations. We will value the words of the children in our care and we will write these words down whether they are shared through story dictations or in less structured areas of the classroom. We will show children that their experiences, feelings, and words are important.
The ideas shared here are simple and straightforward. They have been created to utilize materials traditionally found in developmentally appropriate early childhood classrooms, but practical downloads have also been included when possible since we realize that many schools have lost materials. Quick suggestions for related activities are also provided. We hope the correlation of these activities to the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines and Kindergarten TEKS will simplify documentation needs you might have in relation to state academic and socio-emotional objectives. The list of standards included at the end of the activity guide is a sampling of the standards covered in these centers but is by no means all inclusive.

Before beginning on these activities, here are some important suggestions for establishing a safe place for children after traumatic events:

- Avoid retraumatizing the children by exposing them excessively to gruesome or traumatic stories and imaging relating to the event.
- Provide structure and consistency for children. This can be done by posting a daily schedule, using entry and exit routines and giving warnings to prepare students for transitions. When a student knows what to expect, it can help them to feel safe and stable in their environment.
- Let children have control and make decisions. This will allow them to feel a sense of control and comfort in their lives after the events of the hurricane.
- Play and art are the best ways for young children to express their feelings, re-enact their experiences, and recover from trauma. Incorporate this by having children engage in dramatic play, use blocks, paint/draw, sculpt with playdough, act, or use sand and water tables.
- Establish an “out plan” for children who may feel triggered or overwhelmed. Create a safe space for them to take a sensory break or regulate their emotions. Provide this area with some of the items that are included in your prop box.
- Focus on community helpers to allow children to understand what is happening in terms of community recovery. It is important to provide a reassuring outlook on the situation by stating the actions that are occurring to help the people affected.
- During all of this, don’t forget to listen to the children and their stories. When they share, reflect what you heard, validate their feelings and thank them for sharing. Don’t force children to talk about the event before they are ready. By creating a safe and welcoming classroom, their stories will come organically during the day.
CREATING A PROP BOX

Now, let’s get started by gathering a “prop box” of materials that you may or may not normally use at the beginning of a school year. You will be looking for traditional early childhood materials and items from home that invite children to talk about experiences they might have had in the past few weeks as they play.

A sampling of items is presented here to stimulate your thinking:

- Multicultural baby dolls, clothes, and feeding items that invite children into a caregiver role (Children will often soothe dolls with words they have heard themselves)
- Stuffed dogs, cats, or other “pets” that can be incorporated into the dramatic play center; anything that might serve as an impromptu pet carrier would also be great
- Wooden or plastic phones (or old cell phones) that children might pretend to use to call 911 or text friends or family members
- Construction tools such as hammers and saws
- Pretend food items
- Props or costumes related to applicable community helpers to be incorporated gradually over time or as needed (Be careful not to provide so many materials that children become overwhelmed.)
- Small wooden or plastic cars, boats, helicopters, police cars, fire engines, construction vehicles etc. and signs to be placed in a block center or tabletop building area (Printable images are provided in the final pages of the activity guide)
- Sets of block-sized wooden or plastic community helpers
- “Block people” created from full length photos of each child in your classroom
- Simple open-ended art supplies (Remember that your presence and conversation might be more important than the actual art activity itself)
- Sensory materials for sand and water tables (or simple plastic storage tubs) that might stimulate conversation
- Pictorial schedule cards to reassure children of routines
- Song or finger play cards to facilitate calm transitions
- Musical instruments, especially those that create comforting sounds
- Favorite children’s books about feelings, water or rain, building and construction, etc. (Be wary of books that address flooding directly as many of these may have photos or wording that actually frightens children rather than comforts them)

The activity guides that follow provide ideas about how you might disperse these items throughout your classroom to inspire conversation and the sharing of children’s stories.
DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER: BABIES & BEDTIME

MATERIALS / RESOURCES

- Baby dolls, baby clothing and diapers, materials for feeding and bathing babies, baby beds
- Books with simple text that highlight caring for babies, such as the Baby Faces series of board books by Roberta Grobel Intrater, particularly Eat!, Splash! and Sleep. (Also available in Spanish: ¡Qué rico!, ¡Al agua patos!, and Dulces sueños.)

CENTER DESCRIPTION

A home-based dramatic play center provides an ideal setting for children to reenact scenes from their daily lives as well as a context for revisiting moments they may have experienced during the flooding. Children's thoughts and fears can surface as they interact with each other in a dramatic play home center. Having babies in the center allows children to practice nurturing behaviors and the focus on a bedtime routine gives their play a reassuring structure and purpose. Play in this center can help restore children's faith "in the stability and safety of their world" that has been challenged by a traumatic experience. (Perry, 2014)

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

The center should include babies and the materials needed to care for them. In the Rice OWL Lab a small table for feeding the babies serves as the kitchen. A shelf with a baby bathtub is provided for bathing and dressing the babies. Another corner of the center becomes the bedroom. Board books encourage reading to the babies before bedtime. Multicultural babies and books allow children to see themselves and their families in the center. As time passes, photographs of children caring for the babies and following the bedtime routine are posted to inspire future play. Authentic student work samples from related activities are also displayed in the center.

INTRODUCING THE CENTER

Allow children time to use the babies and toys in the center freely before providing a structured routine. Ideally enough babies and toys should be available so all children in the center can find what they need to care for their own baby. Gather the whole group in the actual center to describe and name the different materials in the center.

TEACHING IN THE CENTER

Find out what children already know about caring for babies, and elicit suggestions from them for what can be done in the center. Record their words on an anchor chart that remains posted in the center. Create a pictorial routine for the children to follow based on their ideas. Model different things to do in the center as you follow the bedtime routine. Possible scenarios include: feeding the baby, giving the baby a bath, dressing the baby, reading a book to the baby, and putting the baby to bed. On another day choose children to follow the posted bedtime routine while the rest of the class is observing near the center.
SCAFFOLDING PLAY IN THE CENTER

Children should be encouraged to follow the bedtime routine during center time. Be available in the center whenever possible to guide children and engage in conversation with them. As children become comfortable following the posted routine, they will begin to explore other possible play scenarios with the babies, including those that may involve aspects of the recent hurricane experience. Children may decide to include pets, first responders, or other emergency personnel in their play as they recreate scenes from the floods. Listen carefully to what children say to the babies and to each other and look for opportunities to talk about their experiences, providing comfort and reassurance as their play evolves.

EXTENDING THE CENTER

- Read *Goodnight, Moon/Buenas noches, luna* by Margaret Wise Brown. The soothing rhythm and beautiful language of this bedtime classic can be appreciated even by very young children. It can also spark further conversation about children's own bedrooms and bedtime routines. Their words can be written down and combined with those of other children to create a free verse poem about bedtime.
- Introduce the book *Tuck Me In* by modeling the repetitive text and encouraging children to join in as the text becomes more familiar. Following the read aloud, children can share their own bedtime routines as they draw themselves or someone from their family under a folded scrapbook paper blanket. They can then complete the phrase from the book, “Good night, ____” by adding the person's name. Take children's dictation about bedtime at their house and who tucks them in at night.
- Read *All of Baby, Nose to Toes* and talk about the role of babies in the family. This book reinforces the concept that families love and care for each other. During the read aloud, encourage children to name each member of the family who loves the baby and make real-life connections to their own families.

ITEMS TO CONSIDER ADDING IN RESPONSE TO HURRICANE HARVEY

- Stuffed animals to represent family pets
- A tool box with assorted child-safe tools, plastic scrapers, gloves, sponges, flashlights, etc.
- Photos of families engaged in different activities, including photos of your own family
- Old cell phones, notepads, maps of the city

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

*Goodnight Moon* | Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd

While *Goodnight Moon* is very simple in concept, an overt message is clearly present. Many young readers are children who may have trouble or difficulties with the idea of going to bed. Whether it be not wanting to be alone as they fall asleep or they fear the dark, many children have difficulty with falling asleep. *Goodnight Moon* presents a method of falling asleep by saying goodnight to everything in the bedroom. This helps children feel like they are not alone in the room and establishes a sense of safety as they fall asleep. This idea is helped with the presence of an adult (in *Goodnight Moon*, the quiet old lady) in the room as the child says goodnight. *Goodnight Moon* exemplifies this ritual in a story that is very appropriate for bedtime reading. What starts as a story ends in a bedtime activity that eases the child to sleep comfortably. *(Excerpted from Children's Literature Book Reviews)*

*Tuck Me In!* | Dean Hacohen & Sherry Scharschmidt

Who needs to be tucked in? Turn each page until all baby animals—and little readers—are cozy and ready for sleep in this irresistible bedtime ritual. The stars are out. The moon is rising. All the baby animals, from peacocks to pigs to zebras, are ready for bed. Will you tuck them in and say good night? Just turn the pages and the big inviting flaps that serve as blankets cover each little creature up to its chin. This simple but endlessly satisfying novelty, with its array of goggle-eyed baby animals, bold patterns, and vibrant colors, is sure to be the book of choice for little ones everywhere, night after night. *(Excerpted from Goodreads)*
BLOCK CENTER / TABLE-TOP BUILDING AREA

MATERIALS / RESOURCES

- Unit blocks, foam blocks, Jenga blocks, sanded wood scraps from Hobby Lobby or Michaels, etc.
- Small wooden or plastic transportation vehicles and construction vehicles including emergency vehicles, helicopters and boats
- Small wooden or plastic street signs and other forms of environmental print
- “People blocks” featuring photos of individual children in the class (See below for directions)
- Children’s books about building and photos of interesting buildings downloaded from Google images or similar site
- “Blueprints” or architectural drawings
- Notepads, notecards and pencils for children to create construction plans or their own signs

CENTER DESCRIPTION

The block center or tabletop building center provides another opportunity for children to reenact scenes they may have experienced personally or witnessed on the news. It also provides an outlet in which children can have control over scenarios in which they often have no control. Vivian Paley shares a vivid example of this in A Child’s Work as preschoolers process the traumas of 9/11 by making monster noises as they crash small plastic planes into towers of wooden blocks.

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

Ideally the block center will provide enough space for four children to build on a floor or rug. When this is not possible portable building materials used on a tabletop will work as well. Enhance the environment by providing books about building, photographs of interesting structures, and notepads and pencils for creating building plans.

ADDING MATERIALS TO PROMOTE THE SHARING OF STORIES

Create easy-to-manipulate holders for street signs or environmental print by gluing clothespins to wooden blocks. Printable images are provided in the final pages of the activity guide.

Make “people blocks” by having children stand in groups of two or three with plenty of space in between. Take full length photos and print them in color on heavy cardstock. Cut around the children’s photos and Velcro the cut-outs onto wooden blocks, support the photo using a large binder clip, or use the clothespin method described above.

Place small wooden or plastic transportation vehicles along with emergency vehicles, helicopters and boats in the block center or adhere photos of vehicles onto blocks using the clothespin method. Children may choose to use these and incorporate them into their play as a means of processing the events of Hurricane Harvey. Printable images are provided in the final pages of the activity guide.

Extend the theme of construction and rebuilding by adding old-fashioned blueprints or architectural plans to the block center along with notepads or pencils for children to create their own plans. Materials to create a simple book for the block center are provided in the final pages of the activity guide. Simply print the pages on cardstock, cut in half, and bind with a metal ring.
SCAFFOLDING PLAY IN THE CENTER

Be available in the center to observe children’s play and listen carefully to the interactions among children that happen there. When provided with props children may decide to include rescue vehicles and first responders in their play scenarios. While the block center is not typically a place where teachers attempt to capture children’s words on paper, realize that it is perfectly fine to ask a child if he or she would like you to write down the words you hear in their story. Above all, as in pretend play, look for opportunities to talk about children’s experiences with them, providing comfort and reassurance as the play evolves.

EXTENDING THE CENTER

With older children or as the year progresses in prekindergarten, introduce “Stop, Drop, and Write.” Simply add a timer to the center and challenge children to build for a certain period of time before drawing or writing about their creations.

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

*Building with Dad | Carol Nevius Jones, illustrated by Bill Thomson*

Dad’s helping to build a new school, and he takes his son to watch its progress. They see lots of machines at work: a dump truck, a backhoe, an earthmover, a giant grader, a steamroller, a cement mixer, a crane, and more. Finally, the school is finished—just in time for the first day. Bill Thomson’s exquisite illustrations, rendered in acrylic paint and colored pencils, are delivered in a double-spread vertical format, which, when the book is turned sideways, bring this building experience to life with unprecedented dramatic perspective. (Two Lions Publishing)

*Scholastic Explora Tu Mundo: Vehículos de emergencia | Penelope Arlon*

This book is full of facts and engaging pictures of rescue vehicles hard at work. Big, annotated photos reveal exciting details of how fire trucks, ambulances, police cars, motorbikes, and helicopters really work. Alongside are explorations of more unusual vehicles that do spectacular jobs, from super-scoopers to fireboats. The book highlights how team work between vehicles and crews is vital. (Excerpted from Amazon website in lieu of publisher information)

*My Little Book of Rescue Vehicles | Claudia Martin*

Discover how ambulances, fire engines, police cars, bikes and helicopters work and what they do. Action-packed photographs and text reveal fascinating detail and facts. Simple, easy-to-understand text combines with spectacular photography to provide an exciting first introduction to emergency vehicles. (QEB Publishing)
BOOKS AS TEACHING TOOLS:
FEELINGS & ART-RELATED EXTENSIONS

MATERIALS / RESOURCES
- One or more children’s books about feelings/emotions:
  > *In My Heart*, by Jo Witek
  > *My Blue Is Happy*, by Jessica Young
  > *The Feelings Book*, by Todd Parr
- Paper and art materials such as crayons, oil pastels or paints

CENTER DESCRIPTION

“Anything that is human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they can become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people that we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone.”

– Fred Rogers

Young children are working to understand emotions as they feel them. As adults (parents and teachers), it is important for us to assist them in describing what they are feeling and then naming it. We have a responsibility to share with them that no feeling is “wrong” and that depending on the circumstances they will have many different feelings within a day, sometimes an hour. It is to be expected that children will have experienced a range of emotions through the hurricane and the aftermath of flooding. We rely on the understanding that “Children learn best when they can relate new knowledge to what they have already encountered, to what is already important to them,” (Copple & Bredekamp, p. 17) when teaching young children how to identify their emotions. By reading children's books that describe feelings and name them, we can help children relate these new words to experiences they had. Not only does this help them develop emotionally, but talking through their feelings will help them process the events that occurred.

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

We suggest pulling a small group of students (as you would for academic small group instruction) together for this activity. By limiting each group to 4 or 5 students you will increase the level of true conversational give-and-take around the book you are reading. Be intentional about your small group choices by grouping children based on their Harvey experience if it is known ahead of time. If you do not have this information, grouping a couple of students who are on the quieter side with a couple of children who are not as reserved may help to spark conversation.

TEACHING IN THE CENTER

Once you have your small group, select a text to read aloud to the children. There are many children's books that teach about emotions and we have selected a few of our favorites as suggestions in the materials section. Read the book slowly and animatedly, bringing the emotions to life for students. Monitor your facial expressions, body language and voice in an effort to model each of the emotions for students. As you read, allow students to chime in with observations or connections.

When the book is finished, you may consider sharing a personal example with students that may or may not be related to the hurricane. For instance, after reading *In My Heart* the teacher may share, “When Hurricane Harvey came the wind was blowing really hard outside my house and the rain was coming down quickly and making puddles that grew so big they came all the way up in my yard! I was wondering what I was going to do if water came in my house. My heart felt worried.”
SCAFFOLDING PLAY IN THE CENTER

Next, invite children to share about a time when they felt a certain emotion. The emotions they share may or may not be related to Harvey. Regardless, affirm what they share and if they struggle to name the emotion, suggest some feeling words to help them name it. Listen first and then engage the group in a conversation about their emotions by asking about other times they may have felt one way or another. Be sure to reflect what you heard and validate each child's emotions.

It is important not to push or lead students towards a particular “answer” in a setting like this. We must also recognize that children may relate emotions we may not first consider with Hurricane Harvey. For example, a young child may relate feelings of excitement. If they had several family members staying at their home, they may only recognize the play time and fun, not necessarily the tragedy of what created the opportunity for the extended play time. This experience is about providing a provocation for students to discuss their feelings about the storm and its impact on their family, but if they choose not to engage with that content we honor that.

EXTENDING THE CENTER

This small group could end with the quality conversation about feelings, but you may choose to extend it. Some of these texts, particularly My Blue Is Happy and My Many Colored Days, lend themselves well to art extensions. These texts associate colors with feelings. The teacher may ask students to think about the feeling they named and decide on a color to represent it. Allow children to use crayons, paint or another medium to create a picture about their feeling. Ask children to write about their drawing. If they are not yet able to write independently, write down their words as they say them. These art extensions can later be bound into a class book or simply sent home with the children at the end of the day.

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

In My Heart | Jo Witek, illustrations by Christine Roussey
This picture book exploration of feelings takes a list-and-describe approach that works, especially when the feelings evoked have such child-friendly imagery (“My heart is yelling, hot and loud,” the child narrator explains). The book pairs brief verbal explorations of emotions with evocative imagery, popping with bright colors against the effectively used white background. Throughout the representative illustrations—a bright yellow star to represent happiness, an elephant to represent sadness, a silhouette of the Big Bad Wolf to represent fear—a series of heart cutouts, ever decreasing in size, appears on the pages, until the heroine is able to find her feelings everywhere. (Excerpted from School Library Journal)

My Blue Is Happy | Jessica Young, illustrations by Catia Chien
In this engaging story, a little girl realizes that not everyone feels the same about colors. Her sister sees blue as sad and associates it with lonely songs. But the protagonist sees it as happy because it reminds her of her favorite jeans and the pool on a hot day. Dad says brown is ordinary like a paper bag but chocolate syrup is the association that the child makes. Chien's illustrations are appropriately vibrant and allow for the different interpretations that the text suggests. Having children compare their notions of the same colors would make for some great conversations. This child knows her own mind and feelings and isn't about to have someone else's associations color her world. (Excerpted from School Library Journal)

The Feelings Book | Todd Parr
Parr shows that feelings are always changing. “Sometimes I feel like standing on my head” and “Sometimes I feel like celebrating my birthday even though it’s not today” mix with “Sometimes I feel lonely” and “Sometimes I feel cranky.” On the last page, the author encourages readers to share their feelings with “someone you love.” (Excerpted from School Library Journal)
BOOKS AS TEACHING TOOLS: STORYBASKET RETELLINGS

MATERIALS / RESOURCES

- One or more children's books that encourage story retelling while also providing opportunities for children to process emotions
  > *It's Mine* by Leo Lionni
  > *Owl Babies or Las lechucitas* by Martin Waddell
- Small stuffed animals, plastic figurines, or paper cut-outs fashioned into puppets on popsicle sticks or as story retelling manipulatives with Velcro backs for flannelboard retelling or magnetic strips for magnet board retellings

CENTER DESCRIPTION

Storybaskets are simply collections of manipulatives that make it possible for a child to retell a familiar story. While these retelling sets are available commercially, we have found that children often prefer to use items that have been made by parent volunteers or collected from toy chests or resale shops. Children's books with simple, repetitive language are great places to start. Every teacher will go home with one storybasket at the end of the day.

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

Begin by reading the children's book to the class using expressive voices and even pantomiming the actions of the various characters as appropriate. Have the children join in with these actions during the large or small group read aloud as it makes sense to do so.

During storybook read aloud on a subsequent day, introduce the storybasket characters to the children then use them to express dialogs and action as you read the book aloud a second time. Explain that the book and storybasket characters will be available for children to use in the library center, on a flannelboard wall, or at another story retelling space in the room.

TEACHING IN THE CENTER

Once children have been dismissed to centers, encourage them to work in pairs with one child retelling the story as the second manipulates the characters and adds dialogue if they are comfortable doing so. Your presence during this teaching phase is essential if children are to grow into independent story retellers. Once the first child has finished retelling the story, encourage them to change roles so that each has an opportunity to manage the storybasket characters. Once you have introduced the storybasket routine to several children they are often proud to introduce the process to others in the class. Once children are familiar with the process they will become comfortable in combining the story retelling and prop manipulation roles into a single, independent activity.

SCAFFOLDING PLAY IN THE CENTER

Story retelling provides an excellent opportunity to scaffold children's language as they move from the use of single words to sentences to expanded narratives to complex descriptive language. For our purposes in this guide, however, they also allow teachers to “double dip” by listening to and scaffolding children's socio-emotional development. As children use props to retell *It's Mine*, for example, you might begin by simply listening to children as they recount the narrative, providing open-ended questions or more direct prompts as needed for children to successfully complete the story.
As you listen, however, you will notice teachable moments that allow you to engage in conversational give-and-take with children. As the three quarrelsome frogs huddle together in the midst of a rainstorm, you might ask if the child has ever huddled close to someone when they have been afraid. The beauty of this particular text lies in its deep socio-emotional content on two levels: not only does it provide a perfect allegory for the fear and relief associated with the hurricane, it can also spark discussions around cooperation and sharing.

Owl Babies, or Las lechucitas, provides a slightly different form of socio-emotional support by providing a beautiful context for taking with children who are experiencing separation anxiety. In this classic children's book, baby owls become frightened when they discover that their mother has gone off in search of food. They support each until mama owl once again returns. Voicing baby owl Bill’s repetitive line “I want my momma!” allows children to not only express, but sometimes have control over, feelings of anxiety they may be experiencing. Again, your careful listening will help you identify when children might be comforted by open-ended conversations with you.

**RECOMMENDED CHILDREN’S BOOKS**

*It’s Mine* | Leo Lionni  
Three selfish frogs live together on an island in the middle of Rainbow Pond. All day long they bicker: It’s mine! It’s mine! It’s mine! But a bad storm and a big brown toad help them realize that sharing is much more fun. With characteristic clarity, simplicity and exuberance, Leo Lionni makes it possible for kids to see themselves through the antics of others who share our world. (*Dragonfly Books*)

*Owl Babies or Las lechucitas (Spanish version)* | Martin Waddell, illustrations by Patrick Benson  
When three baby owls awake one night to find their mother gone, they can’t help but wonder where she is. Stunning illustrations capture the owls as they worry about their mother: What is she doing? When will she be back? Not surprisingly, a joyous flapping and dancing and bouncing greets her return, lending a celebratory tone to the ending of this comforting tale. Never has the plight of young ones who miss their mother been so simply told or so beautifully rendered. (*Candlewick Press*)
OPEN-ENDED ART & SENSORY EXPERIENCES

OPEN-ENDED ART

MATERIALS / RESOURCES

- Different types and sizes of paper, cardboard, etc.
- Variety of art media
  - chalk
  - gel pens
  - water colors or washable tempera
  - collage and sculpture materials

CENTER DESCRIPTION

"Art is our one true global language. It knows no nation, it favors no race, and it acknowledges no class. It speaks to our need to reveal, heal, and transform. It transcends our ordinary lives and lets us imagine what is possible."

—Richard Kamler

Providing children with opportunities to experiment with open-ended art materials gives them an outlet to express emotions, thoughts, and ideas that they may not have the language to express verbally, don't feel comfortable expressing verbally, or simply don’t know how to express verbally. Open-ended art allows children to transform their perceptions of themselves, their experiences, and the world around them into one-of-a-kind tangible creations to share with others. To facilitate free expression, children should have the autonomy to use as many or as few materials and colors for their creation as they choose. The open-ended art center is a place to embrace each child's uniqueness and where children can be free of artistic and instructional parameters.

USING OPEN-ENDED ART TO LISTEN & TALK

Open-ended art also serves as an avenue for having meaningful conversations with children. Teachers should use children's art as a way to talk about and listen to children's thoughts by asking open-ended questions such as, “What would you like to tell me about your [sculpture, drawing, painting, collage, etc.]?” We know that every child's perception and experience regarding Hurricane Harvey is varied. Therefore, every thought and emotion that comes to life through a child's artistic creation should be honored and validated.

While many children may be quick to share, not all children will be ready or willing to discuss their artistic creations, most especially if it is a reflection of trauma and the child-teacher relationship is still being established. It is important to respect the wishes of all children and validate their artistic efforts by making an intentional statement about their art piece such as, “That’s okay, you don’t have to share with me. I see you worked really hard to [mix colors, use lines/curves/shapes to... etc.]” In doing so, the children will not only know that their artistic expressions are valued and honored, but that they can continue to express themselves freely in a safe environment.
RECORDING CHILDREN’S RESPONSES

If you wish to record children’s responses, sticky notes or index cards can be used to record the children’s words exactly as they are spoken. By using sticky notes or index cards to record the children’s words, the artwork itself is not altered in any way and remains as the child intended it to be. The dictated words can then be taped to the back of the artwork if it is being taken home, or placed below the artwork if it is being displayed on the wall.

TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

• Organize materials in an aesthetically pleasing way to draw children in to using them.
• Keep a manageable amount of materials out at one time, but ensure that children have a variety of art media to choose from.
• Make sure materials are easily accessible to the children.
• Replenish materials as needed.
• Setup a drying station or rack for children to put their finished products on to dry.
• Don’t forget to pull out your easels! Easels don’t always have to be used for painting. Allow children to use other art media on the easel as well, such as markers, crayons and oil pastels.
• Play calming music while children are creating.
• Remember that there is no right or wrong way for children to be artists—allow them to create as they please.
• Give children the autonomy to decide whether their art will be taken home or displayed in the classroom.
• Give the children enough time to complete their masterpieces. If you must transition to recess, lunch or another activity, give them an opportunity to complete their artwork later in the day.
• Things will get a little messy—let it go. Remember that the open-ended art center should be a happy, stress-free place for children to explore and create.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR OPEN-ENDED ART

• Collage with glue, feathers, mosaic squares, sequins, etc.
• Shape collage to create vehicles, houses, etc.
• Chalk dipped in water and used on black paper
• Squeeze bottle painting
• Eye dropper painting

RECOMMENDED TEACHER RESOURCES

Preschool Art: It’s the Process, Not the Product, First Art Experiences for Toddlers and Twos & other resource books | Mary Ann Kohl

These books teach children to explore and understand their world through open-ended art experiences that emphasize the process of art, not the product. Activities are included for painting, drawing, collage, sculpture and construction. (Gryphon House)
OPEN-ENDED ART & SENSORY EXPERIENCES

CENTER DESCRIPTION

Most young children love sensory experiences whether they take place in a sand, water or light table or as art activities such as playdough sculpture. For the purposes of this guide, it is important to note that sensory experiences provide children with another way to express their emotions, thoughts and ideas. Playing with and pounding on playdough, for example, can offer all children a healthy and safe outlet for releasing extra energy and expressing their feelings (Swartz 2005).

HOMEMADE PLAYDOUGH RECIPE

- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup salt
- 3 tsp. cream of tartar
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 cup boiling water
- Food coloring, essential oils, extracts or cinnamon, optional

Mix the water and vegetable oil in a bowl along with any food coloring, essential oils or extracts (if desired). Add the boiling water to the dry ingredients and stir until the dough forms. Knead on a lightly floured surface until smooth; dough will be tacky at first. Makes enough for 2 children.

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

My Colors, My World/ Mi colores, mi mundo | Maya Christina Gonzalez
Maya longs to find brilliant, beautiful color in her world. But when the wind blows, desert sand covers everything, and turns her whole neighborhood the color of dust. With the help of a feathered friend, Maya searches high and low to find the colors in her world. And she does—in the vibrant purple of her Mama’s flowers, the juicy green of a prickly cactus, the hot pink clouds at sunset, and the shiny black of her Papi’s hair. As they follow Maya’s search for all the colors of the rainbow, little readers will be inspired to look around and ask themselves, where can I find the colors in my world? (Children’s Book Press, an imprint of Lee and Low Books)

To Be an Artist | Maya Ajmera and John D. Ivanko
Children around the world express themselves through art, be it music, dance, visual arts, or theater. Beautiful photographs and lyrical text highlight the many ways art can bring us together. (Charlesbridge Publishing)
SAND & WATER TABLES

MATERIALS / RESOURCES

- Water table or shallow plastic storage tub
  - Water
  - Containers of different sizes for pouring, some with holes punched in the bottom
  - Plastic tubing of varying diameters cut into different lengths
  - Small boats or materials to create boats
- Sand table
  - Sand or dirt
  - Kinetic moon sand (many homemade recipes are available online)
  - Digging tools and small water pitchers for creating rivulets
  - Small construction vehicles or other items from your prop box as appropriate

CENTER DESCRIPTION

Although sand and water tables were once considered quintessential early childhood materials, we have noticed a decline in their use in recent years. The calming nature of this type of play alone, however, would warrant its presence in preschool classrooms and playgrounds after traumatic events. As noted above, shallow plastic storage tubs make excellent substitutes for formal water tables when budgets are tight. An outdoor sandbox can also be used to expand the scale of sand and water play when teachers embrace the messiness of free exploration!

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

Sand and water tables have potential to function as highly interactive, exploratory science centers in early childhood classrooms. For this reason it is important to use large group time to introduce materials that will be available to children so that expectations for their use are clear. Quality children's books (both narrative and informational text) can be read in advance to generate questions and invite children's exploration. Displaying books in proximity to the sand and water table might invite wonder and experimentation as long as their strategic placement does not invite reading when hands are wet or sandy.

SCAFFOLDING IN THE CENTER

As teachers we must realize that sensory play and sensory exploration are often nonverbal in nature, yet they allow children to process emotions in comforting and non-threatening ways. Some children may gravitate immediately toward water play after a flood, for example, while others shy away. Regardless, open-ended STEM play creates opportunities for teachers to introduce scientific information in ways that invite children to ask questions and clarify information. Exposing children to books about rain and the water cycle, for example, allows them to see that water sustains life even though an overabundance of it can be very frightening. Several books on rain and water are provided at the conclusion of this section.
 TEACHERS are sometimes hesitant to embrace true experimental sand and water play until children exhibit appropriate levels of self-regulation. For this reason, several ideas are presented here, moving from straightforward pretend play to more open-ended exploration. Teachers are highly encouraged, however, to move sand and water tables outdoors if necessary to evoke a sense of wonder and to maximize the therapeutic benefits of this type of play. (Several ideas below are described in more depth in the teacher resource guide Wonder Science by Wendy and Kimberly Nichols.)

- **Construction Play:** Use simple materials from your prop box such as wooden construction vehicles that encourage children to dig in the sand or dirt as they create simple dramatic play scenarios.

- **Kinetic Sand:** Encourage children to use kinetic sand in the sand table in the same way that they would mold, roll and pound playdough at an art table. Several homemade recipes for kinetic or moon sand are available online.

- **Transporting Water:** Provide opportunities for children to move water from place to place by pouring from container to container (especially if some have different patterns of holes punched in the bottom) or by combining containers of various sizes with plastic tubing of different diameters and lengths. This type of play is often best introduced outside in the grass where children are less likely to slip on a water spill.

- **Sandbox Plumbing:** Provide a water source, funnels, buckets, random lengths of plastic pipes and plastic elbows from the hardware store as you challenge children to create “sandbox plumbing”.

- **Ice Cavern Sculptures:** Let children use eyedroppers or icing bags to create ice caverns as they drip or squirt warm, colored salt water onto a large piece of ice that has been frozen in advance. (Ratio: ¼ cup warm water and 15 drops food coloring to ¾ cup of salt).

- **Rivers and Canals:** Bring the sand table outside (or better yet, expand the scale by using the sandbox) and provide a bucket of water and small pitchers or other containers that allow children to create and explore rivulets and gullies as they pour. Plastic dropcloths, held in place by the weight of sand, will allow water to collect and form rivers rather than absorbing into the sand. Construction vehicles and small boats might be added to combine sensory play with more open-ended exploration. An O-W-L (observe, wait, and listen) technique may be fruitful in observing children at play then stepping in to ask supportive, open-ended questions as children create dramatic play scenarios.

- **Boat Building:** Move beyond simple sink and float exploration to encourage children to create boats that actually float. Styrofoam trays and egg cartons, small plastic storage containers, popsicle sticks or straws, tiny cardboard boxes, fabric and paper scraps, clay for connecting and other “loose parts” such as bottle caps and corks make this activity a favorite.

Children also enjoy using colored water to create calming jars. Invite them to fill an empty clear plastic squeezable bottle with colored water then add glitter or other small items that will gently move when the bottle is squeezed or turned upside-down. Be sure to hot glue the bottle caps in place before use.
SUGGESTED CHILDREN’S BOOKS ABOUT WATER

Raindrops Roll | April Pulley Sayre

“Raindrops drop. They plop. They patter. They spatter. And in the process, they make the whole world feel fresh and new and clean.”

In this gorgeously photo-illustrated nonfiction picture book, celebrated author April Pulley Sayre sheds new light on the wonders of rain, from the beauty of a raindrop balanced on a leaf to the amazing, never-ending water cycle that keeps our planet in perfect ecological balance. (Beach Lane Books)

Water Can Be… | Laura Purdie Salas, illustrations by Violeta Dabija

Laura Purdie Salas’s lyrical, rhyming text and Violeta Dabija’s glowing illustrations make simple yet profound observations about seemingly ordinary objects and encourage readers to suggest “what else it can be!” Water can be a . . . • Thirst quencher • Kid drencher • Cloud fluffer • Fire snuffer. Find out about the many roles water plays in this poetic exploration of water throughout the year. (Millbrook Press)

Rain | Linda Ashman, illustrations by Christian Robinson

One rainy day in the city, an eager little boy exclaims, “Rain!” Across town a grumpy man grumbles, “Rain.” In this endearing picture book, a rainy-day cityscape comes to life in vibrant, cut-paper-style artwork. The boy in his green frog hat splashes in puddles—“Hoppy, hoppy, hoppy!”—while the old man curses the “dang puddles.” Can the boy’s natural exuberance (and perhaps a cookie) cheer up the grouchy gentleman and turn the day around? An intergenerational story of how a good attitude can chase away the blues at any age. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

Wonderscience: A Developmentally Appropriate Guide to Hands-On Science for Young Children | Wendy Nichols and Kimberly Nichols

This teacher resource “is not another bean sprouts and bird feeder science book! We’ve put together projects designed to give you a new angle on science. Each project is formulated to allow the child to hypothesize, experiment, observe and verify. Our hands-on science emphasizes learning as an interactive process. (Learning Expo Publishing, description from the book’s introduction)
PK GUIDELINES

- I.B.1.C. Child regulates his own behavior with occasional reminders or assistance from teacher.
- I.B.2.B. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.
- I.B.3.A. Child sustains attention to personally chosen or routine (teacher directed) tasks until completed.
- I.C.4. Child increasingly interacts and communicates with peers to initiate pretend play scenarios that share a common plan and goal.
- I.C.7. Child interacts with a variety of playmates and may have preferred friends.
- I.D.1. Child demonstrates an understanding that others have perspectives and feelings that are different from her own.
- II.B.1. Child is able to use language for different purposes.
- II.D.6. Child increases listening vocabulary and begins to develop vocabulary of object names and common phrases in English. (ELL)
- II.E.7. Child uses single words and simple phrases to communicate meaning in social situations.
- II.E.8. Child attempts to use new vocabulary and grammar in speech.
- VII.A.2. Child identifies similarities and differences in characteristics of families.
- VII.A.3. Child connects their life to events, time, and routines.
- VIII.C.1. Child creates or recreates stories, moods, or experiences through dramatic representations.

KINDERGARTEN TEKS

- 110.11. B (21) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings.
- 113.11. B (12) Culture. The student understands the importance of family customs and traditions.
- 115.2. B (8) Personal/interpersonal skills. The student understands ways to communicate consideration and respect for self, family, friends, and others.
- 117.104. B (2) Creative expression: performance. The student interprets characters using the voice and body expressively and creates dramatizations.

BLOCK CENTER / TABLETOP BUILDING AREA

PK GUIDELINES

- I.B.1.C. Child regulates his own behavior with occasional reminders or assistance from teacher.
- I.B.2.B. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.
• I.B.1.C. Child regulates his own behavior with occasional reminders or assistance from teacher.
• I.B.2.B. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.
• I.B.3.A. Child sustains attention to personally chosen or routine (teacher directed) tasks until completed.
• I.C.3. Child shows competence in initiating social interactions.
• I.C.4. Child increasingly interacts and communicates with peers to initiate pretend play scenarios that share a common plan and goal.
• I.C.6. Child demonstrates empathy and caring for others.
• I.C.7. Child interacts with a variety of playmates and may have preferred friends.
• I.D.1. Child demonstrates an understanding that others have perspectives and feelings that are different from her own.
• II.B.1. Child is able to use language for different purposes.
• II.E.7. Child uses single words and simple phrases to communicate meaning in social situations.
• II.E.8. Child attempts to use new vocabulary and grammar in speech.
• III.A.2. Child self-selects books and other written materials to engage in pre-reading behaviors.
• VII.A.2. Child identifies similarities and differences in characteristics of families.
• VII.A.3. Child connects their life to events, time, and routines.
• VIII.C.1. Child creates or recreates stories, moods, or experiences through dramatic representations

KINDERGARTEN TEKS

• 110.11. B (21) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings.
• 111.2. B (1A) Mathematics. The student applies mathematics to problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace.
• 111.2. B (1D) Mathematics. The student communicates mathematical ideas, reasoning, and their implications using multiple representations including symbols, diagrams, graphs, and language as appropriate.
• 113.11. B (11) Culture. The student understands similarities and differences among people.
• 113.11. B (12) Culture. The student understands the importance of family customs and traditions.
• 115.2. B (8) Personal/interpersonal skills. The student understands ways to communicate consideration and respect for self, family, friends, and others.
• 112.11. B (2A) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student asks questions about organisms, objects, and events observed in the natural world.
• 112.11. B (2D) The student records and organizes data and observations using pictures, numbers, and words.
• 112.11B. B (5A) The student observes and records properties of objects, including relative size and mass, such as bigger or smaller and heavier or lighter, shape, color, and texture.

BOOKS AS TEACHING TOOLS

PK GUIDELINES

• I.B.2.A. Child begins to understand difference and connection between emotions/feelings and behaviors.
• I.B.2.B. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.
• I.C.1. Child uses effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills to build relationships with teachers/adults.
• I.D.1. Child demonstrates an understanding that others have perspectives and feelings that are different from her own.
• II.D.1. Child uses a wide variety of words to label and describe people, places, things, and actions.
PK GUIDELINES [continued]

- IV.A.1. Child intentionally uses marks, letters, or symbols to record language and verbally shares meaning.

KINDERGARTEN TEKS

- 110.11. B (21) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:
  > (A) listen attentively by facing speakers and asking questions to clarify information
- 110.11. B (22) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language… Students are expected to share information and ideas by speaking audibly and clearly using the conventions of language.
- 110.11. B Reading/Comprehension Skills. Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author's message… The student is expected to:
  > (B) ask and respond to questions about text;
  > (C) monitor and adjust comprehension (e.g., using background knowledge, creating sensory images, rereading a portion aloud);
  > (F) make connections to own experiences, to ideas in other texts, and to the larger community and discuss textual evidence.
- 117.102. B (2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artworks using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively… The student is expected to:
  > (A) create artworks using a variety of lines, shapes, colors, textures, and forms;
  > (C) use a variety of materials to develop manipulative skills while engaging in opportunities for exploration through drawing, painting, printmaking, constructing artworks, and sculpting, including modeled forms.

OPEN-ENDED ART & SENSORY EXPERIENCES

PK GUIDELINES

- I.B.2.A. Child begins to understand different and connection between emotions/feelings and behaviors.
- I.B.2.B. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.
- I.B.3.A. Child sustains attention to personally chosen or routine tasks until completed.
- I.C.1. Child uses effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to build relationships with teachers/adults.
- I.D.1. Child demonstrates an understanding that others have perspectives and feelings that are different from her own.
- II.A.1. Child shows understanding by responding appropriately.
- II.B.2. Child engages in conversations in appropriate ways.
- II.B.5. Child demonstrates knowledge of nonverbal conversation rules.
- VII.A.3. Child connects their life to events, time and routines.
- VIII.A.1. Child uses a variety of art materials and activities for sensory experience and exploration.
- VIII.A.3. Child demonstrates interest in and shows appreciation for the creative work of others.
- IX.B.1. Child shows control of tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.
- IX.B.2. Child shows increasing control of tasks that require eye-hand coordination.
KINDERGARTEN TEKS

- 110.11. B (16) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:
  > (A) understand and use the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing and speaking (with adult assistance)
    (i) past and future tenses when speaking
    (ii) nouns (singular/plural)
    (iii) descriptive words
    (iv) prepositions and simple prepositional phrases when speaking or writing
    (e.g., in, on, under, over); and
    (v) pronouns (e.g., I, me);
  > (B) speak in complete sentences to communicate; and
  > (C) use complete simple sentences

- 113.11. B (3) History. The student understands the concept of chronology. The student is expected to:
  > (B) use vocabulary related to time and chronology, including before, after, next, first, last, yesterday, today, and tomorrow

- 113.11 B (15) Social studies skills. The student communicates in oral and visual forms. The student is expected to:
  > (A) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences; and (15)(A) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences.

- 117.102. B (2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artworks using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills.
  > (A) create artworks using a variety of lines, shapes, colors, textures, and forms;
  > (B) arrange components intuitively to create artworks; and
  > (C) use a variety of materials to develop manipulative skills while engaging in opportunities for exploration through drawing, painting, printmaking, constructing artworks, and sculpting, including modeled forms.

- 117.102. B (3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student develops global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. The student is expected to:
  > (B) share ideas about personal experiences such as family and friends and develop awareness and sensitivity to differing experiences and opinions through artwork

SAND & WATER TABLES

PK GUIDELINES

- I.A.4 Child shows initiative in independent situations and persists in attempting to solve problems.
- I.B.1.c. Child regulates his own behavior with occasional reminders or assistance from teacher.
- I.B.2.a. Child begins to understand difference and connection between emotions/feelings and behaviors.
- I.B.2.B. Child can communicate basic emotions/feelings.
- I.B.2.c. Child is able to increase or decrease intensity of emotions more consistently, although adult guidance is sometimes necessary.
- I.B.3.a. Child sustains attention to personally chosen or routine (teacher-directed) tasks until completed.
- I.C.2. Child assumes various roles and responsibilities as part of a classroom community.
- I.C.5 Child initiates problem-solving strategies and seeks adult help when necessary.
I.D.1. Child demonstrates an understanding that others have perspectives and feelings that are different from her own.
II.A.2. Child shows understanding by following two-step oral directions and usually follows three-step directions.
II.B.2. Child engages in conversations in appropriate ways.
II.D.1. Child uses a wide variety of words to label and describe people, places, things, and actions.
V.C.3. Child demonstrates use of location words
V.D.2. Child recognizes how much can be placed within an object.
VI.A.1. Child observes, investigates, describes, and discusses properties and characteristics of common objects.
VI.A.2. Child observes, investigates, and discusses position and motion of objects.
VI.A.3. Child uses simple measuring devices to learn about objects.

KINDERGARTEN TEKS

110.11. B (21) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings.
112.11. B (1) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student conducts classroom and outdoor investigations following home and school safety procedures and uses environmentally appropriate and responsible practices. The student is expected to:
   > (A) Identify and demonstrate safe practices as described in the Texas Safety Standards during classroom and outdoor investigations, including wearing safety goggles, washing hands, and using materials appropriately
112.11. B (2) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student develops abilities to ask questions and seek answers in classroom and outdoor investigations. The student is expected to:
   > (A) ask questions about organisms, objects, and events observed in the natural world
   > (B) plan and conduct simple descriptive investigations such as ways objects move
   > (C) collect data and make observations using simple equipment such as hand lenses, primary balances, and non-standard measuring tools
   > (D) record and organize data and observations using pictures, numbers, and words
   > (E) communicate observations with others about simple descriptive investigations
112.11. B (3) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student uses age-appropriate tools and models to investigate the natural world. The student is expected to:
   > (A) collect information using tools including computers, hand lenses, primary balances, cups, bowls, magnets, collecting nets, and notebooks; timing devices, including clocks and timers; non-standard measuring items such as paper clips and clothespins; weather instruments such as demonstration thermometers and wind socks; and materials to support observations of habits of organisms such as terrariums and aquariums
   > (B) use senses as a tool of observation to identify properties and patterns of organisms, objects, and events in the environment
112.11. B (4) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student uses age-appropriate tools and models to investigate the natural world. The student is expected to:
   > (A) collect information using tools including computers, hand lenses, primary balances, cups, bowls, magnets, collecting nets, and notebooks; timing devices, including clocks and timers; non-standard measuring items such as paper clips and clothespins; weather instruments such as demonstration thermometers and wind socks; and materials to support observations of habits of organisms such as terrariums and aquariums
   > (B) use senses as a tool of observation to identify properties and patterns of organisms, objects, and events in the environment
• 112.11. B (5) Matter and energy. The student knows that objects have properties and patterns. The student is expected to:
  > (A) observe and record properties of objects, including relative size and mass, such as bigger or smaller and heavier or lighter, shape, color, and texture
• 112.11. B (7) Earth and space. The student knows that the natural world includes earth materials. The student is expected to:
  > (B) observe and describe physical properties of natural sources of water, including color and clarity
• 112.11. B (8) Earth and space. The student knows that there are recognizable patterns in the natural world and among objects in the sky. The student is expected to:
  > (A) observe and describe weather changes from day to day and over seasons
  > (B) identify events that have repeating patterns, including the season of the year and day and night