



The Kindergarten Chronicles

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Center Time! Extensions and Management Tips

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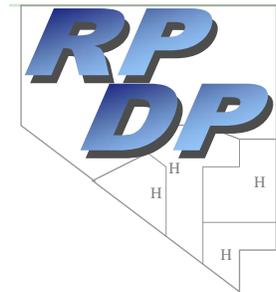
Don't you just love it when you get a cheer from your students when you announce center time? Kids get so much out of completing tasks on their own, working together, sharing experiences and confusions with peers, and having the opportunity to practice and demonstrate their knowledge. Like baking, successful centers give kids the chance to "dig in" and not just taste the cake when it's done, but to actually make it from scratch, try new recipes, and even lick the spoon! When feeling a sense of accomplishment, kids want to share what they've made or experienced with others. It is then your turn to celebrate their attempts, and encourage them to challenge themselves with new "ingredients."

Making centers work is definitely worth the effort, but you can expect dilemmas to arise.

Literacy Work Stations by Debbie Diller offers practical suggestions for over a dozen literacy work stations that link to instruction and make preparation and management easier for teachers.

 The "I Can" Can...

Debbie Diller describes the wonderful "I Can" task cards in her book. Because K-kids have such limited sight word vocabulary early in the year, it might be helpful to take photos of the completed activity and post them on a chart OR put them in a new paint can for kids to pick from. Go to www.imeacham.com for more ideas!

Bill Hanlon, Director

Writing Center

I ♥ these ideas!

1. Title of Center /Activity: Write!
2. Objective: Students will be motivated to write short, meaningful sentences or paragraphs.
3. Materials required: Lined paper, stickers made by printing computer labels, pocket chart.
4. Resources: This was adapted from the book *Creative Writing Booklets*, by Flora Joy.
5. Teacher Directions: Use a computer with a label program. (or make your own template if you know how) Choose graphics that can be matched with short slogans. Print, attach to colored lined paper, and insert in a pocket chart.
6. Student Directions: Choose a sheet of paper. Write!
7. Patterns: Graphics taken from *The Print Shop III*, Broderbund.



***Make words available.** If you don't have the space for a big word wall, try using seasonal writing pads with words on rings. You can create a set with your kids interactively as you introduce a theme. Hang them up and make them available to kids throughout the year for centers, journal writing, or other purposes.



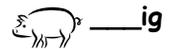
Picture Perfect!

Clean up! After students finish working, one of the hardest parts of centers is getting them to put things back. Try taking a photo of how the area should look when everything is put away. Challenge them to make the center "match" the picture.



Word Work Center

Metal rings work wonders for organization. As mentioned in the Literacy Stations RPDP class, you can use them for clipping and storing pocket chart sets together. Another idea is to use them for clipping sets of word families and hanging them on hooks. Students can choose two to three sets to sort. You can also make a word family book for students to write words on the matching page. Students will have fun stamping the words too.



Build-a-Sentence

With your students, interactively write simple sentences on sentence strip paper. You can write sentences related to stories you've read, or write sentences to reinforce sight words and word families. Cut them apart and put them in a zip-top bags. At the center, have students choose a bag, make the sentence, record it on paper, illustrate and share.

