The Kindergarten Chronicles

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Math and Literature Book Connections

Linking mathematics instruction to children's literature can spark excitement in your kindergarten classroom! Using literature during math lessons can provoke interest, help students connect mathematical ideas to personal experiences, accommodate learning styles, promote critical thinking, and provide a context for using mathematics to solve problems. Below are some benefits of combining literature with math activities.

Why use children's literature in teaching math?

1. To provide a context or model for an activity with mathematical content.
2. To introduce manipulatives that will be used in varied ways (not necessarily as in the story).
3. To inspire a creative mathematics experience for children.
4. To pose an interesting problem.
5. To prepare for a mathematics concept or skill.
6. To develop or explain a mathematics concept.
7. To review a mathematics concept or skill.

*Try to choose books that will provide a pleasurable and authentic literary experience.

Source: ERIC Clearinghouse for Science Mathematics and Environmental Education (Columbus, OH)

TIP: Teach math vocabulary with literature, poetry, and songs! The **language of math** is abundant in children's picture books, poems, and songs. The next time you choose books for your classroom, breeze through them and find opportunities to teach math vocabulary to your kindergarten students.

Math Topics and Books

Sorting

Noodles by Sarah Weeks

This pop up book introduces the children to familiar and unfamiliar types of pasta. It's a delightful book and can introduce students to sorting and counting activities.

Activities

Students can sort different types of pasta, make sets with different pasta, and use pasta to make numerals.

Counting

How Many Snails? by Paul Giganti, Jr.

The author asks students to wander along with him in the meadow. He asks questions on each page such as, "How many flowers are in the meadow?" and "How many flowers are yellow?" It is a wonderful way to count as well as look at different attributes.

Activities

Students can ask questions about the pictures on each page. You can make class books based on different themes such as How Many Shells?

Who Took the Cookies from the Cookie Jar? by Bonnie Lass

This delightful book can be a stepping stone to cookie counting activities.

Activities

Make a Kindergarten Cookie Factory center. Make cookies from different shapes and colors of salt dough. Place foam trays and task cards in the center and let students place the correct numbers of cookies on the trays.

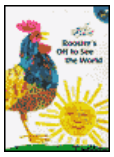
Addition/Subtraction

Mouse Count by Ellen Stoll Walsh

A hungry snake counts ten little warm and tasty mice into a jar for his dinner. However, the clever little mice create a plan to fool the greedy snake and manage to escape.

Activities

Make mice puppets from pomoms. Find a large clear jar and a stuffed snake. Tell the story using props. Stop several times during the story to count on and back.



Rooster's Off to See the World by Eric Carle

Take a trip with Rooster as he is joined by his friends; a wonderful way to introduce addition and graphing.

Activities

Play a graphing game with the class. Make a poster size graph with pictures of each animal in the story. Place Unifix cubes in a bag (several of each color to represent animals in the story, but only one black cube to represent Rooster). Have students pull out one cube at a time. Place a tiny sticky note on the graph. When the black is pulled, the class will chant, "Rooster's off to see the world! Who will go with Rooster?" Then read the graph.

Time

The Grouchy Ladybug by Eric Carle

The grouchy ladybug goes about her day picking on other animals bigger than she is. This book introduces children to the clock and telling time. On each page there is a clock and a picture of the sun as it rises in the morning until it sets in the evening.

Activities

Use a ladybug puppet to retell the story. Use a demonstrator clock and have students change the time as you read the story.