



# The Kindergarten Chronicles

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## The Importance of Practice - Literacy Centers

In Robert J. Marzano's book *Classroom Instruction that Works*, he focuses on the research from the McREL study which identifies the nine "categories of instructional strategies that have a high probability of enhancing student achievement."

One of those strategies involves the importance of "focused practice". In Kindergarten, one of the best ways to allow students the time to practice skills in the context of your thematic/integrated unit is the

implementation of centers in your classroom. By employing centers in your classroom, you will be offering the time and quality practice that will allow "students to adapt and shape what they have learned."

RPDP offers the course, Literacy Centers for K-1 Classrooms, on a monthly basis. The course is one graduate level credit through Southern Utah University. Please check Pathlore for specific dates, times, and locations.

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### "Casey's November Centers Ideas"

#### Thematic Unit: Pumpkins

Below are activities and skills I have emphasized in November during center time in my classroom. I used the trimester benchmarks and Power Standards as a guide. These centers lasted for a two week period.

**Art:** Students create different colored pumpkins using pastel chalk for a class made big book innovation from the book Some Dogs that will be titled Some Pumpkins. Example: "Some pumpkins have stripes. Some pumpkins don't. Some pumpkins have faces. Some pumpkins don't."

**Writing:** Using the structured sentence frame "A \_\_\_\_\_ can be orange.", brainstorm and chart a list of orange things. Be sure to use pictures and words. Students then use these ideas to write and illustrate a page for a class book.

**Drama:** Have students make stick puppets for the poem titled Pumpkin and use to them to recite the poem.

**Listening:** As you read Pumpkin, Pumpkin by Jeanne Titherington during a read aloud, tape record the story for use in the listening center. You can have students respond to the story by illustrating the pumpkin face that Jamie carved on his pumpkin.

**Poetry:** Create an 8 1/2 by 11 copy of the poem for students to insert into a Poetry Book. Have students illustrate each line of the poem with appropriate pumpkin faces. Students practice reading the poem as they track print and learn basic sight words such as is, see, you, and it.

**Pocket Chart:** Using sentence strips & pictures taken from the story, create a pocket chart for the book Pumpkin, Pumpkin, which is an excellent book for teaching the sequence of a story. Students practice sequencing and oral reading skills as they rebuild the story in the pocket chart.

**Word Study:** Using the Pumpkin poem or the nursery rhyme, Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater, create two copies of the text on sentence strips, one in black print and one in orange print. Place the black copy in a pocket chart and place the orange copy in a Ziploc bag. Student develop one-to-one correspondence and word sense by matching orange words to black words.

#### Informational Pumpkin Books:

It's a Fruit, It's a Vegetable, It's a Pumpkin by Allan Fowler

The Pumpkin Patch by Elizabeth King

From Seed to Pumpkin by Jan Kottke

Pumpkin Circle: The Story of a Garden by Samuel Thaler

#### Pumpkin

This pumpkin is happy.  
This pumpkin is sad.  
Now you see it sleepy.  
Now you see it mad.  
This pumpkin is in pieces small.  
But in a pie it's best of all.



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