

Ins and Outs of Tops and Bottoms

Summary

Using nursery rhymes and a finger play, students will learn about spatial relationships and commonly used position words, such as on, under, above, and up.

Main Core Tie

Mathematics Kindergarten

[Strand: GEOMETRY \(K.G\) Standard K.G.1](#)

Materials

- *Each Peach Pear Plum*
Can for log
- *Rhythm Instruments*
- [Position Word Cards](#)
Magnetic Frogs
- [Wacky Word Game Board](#)
Lunch Sacks
Blue Foam for pond
Die
- [Frog Log](#)

Additional Resources

Books

- *Tops and Bottoms*
, by Janet Stevens; ISBN 0-15-292851-0
- *Jump Frog Jump*
, by Robert Kalan; ISBN 0688092411

Background for Teachers

These activities are designed using nursery rhymes and a finger play to teach simple spatial relationships and commonly used position words. The following are the commonly used position words that Kindergarten students should know; on, under, above, up, over, down, behind, below, top, bottom, in front of, next to, beside, far, near.

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.
5. Make mathematical connections.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Share the book *Each Peach Pear Plum*. Emphasize the position words.

In this book

With your little eye

Take a look

And play 'I spy'

Instructional Procedures

Introduce a different nursery rhyme from the book to your class each day. Be sure to emphasize

the position words. List the position words for each nursery rhyme on a chart.

Teach your class the nursery rhyme Jack and Jill by doing the following activity. Children will take turns producing a sound with a rhythm instrument for the following words:

Jack - lummi sticks	water - shake water in a jug or bottle
Jill - tambourine	down - xylophone backwards
up - xylophone	crow - a maraca
after - drum	

Repeat the nursery rhyme several times, or enough times that each child gets to play an instrument. Taking turns using the instruments provides a reason to repeat the nursery rhymes and assures that the children learn the rhythm and beat of the words.

Teach the finger play "Five Little Speckled Frogs" using your can log, your magnetic frogs, and your blue pond. In this nursery rhyme the following position words are taught; *up, down, on, and into*:

Five little speckled frogs,
Sitting on a speckled log,
Eating the most delicious bugs,
Yum, Yum.

One jumped into the pool,
Where it was nice and cool,
Now there are four green speckled frogs,
Glub, glub.

REPEAT.

Students will make a journal entry in their "[Frog Log](#)" of this song.

Each student will make a treasure box to put [position word cards](#) in. To make the treasure box you will need a lunch sack. Students could decorate the sacks.

- Cut down on all four corners until you come to the first creased line.
- Fold in the two sides and the front to reinforce the box.
- Fold the fourth side in half and use it for the lid.

Have the students cut apart their sheets of position word cards to put in their Treasure box.

Play a review game by letting each student pull a word out of the box and act it out for the class.

Play the [Wacky Word Game](#). Use the big game board and a die. Roll a number and move along the board acting out the position words.

Extensions

Curriculum Extensions / Adaptations / Integration

Have a Treasure Hunt set up before the students arrive at school. Make sure to write the clues using the position words. Some sample clues to use are:

You will find your 1st clue on top of the pencil sharpener.

Clue #2 will be found beside the teacher's desk, under the garbage can.

You will find your next clue in front of the playhouse.

Your next clue is next to the shelf at the back of the room.

The next clue will be found behind the door.

Use hula-hoops for children to demonstrate position words for a P.E. activity. Some sample prompts could be:

Stand inside the hoop.

Hold the hoop over your head.

Walk through the hoop.

Hop beside the hoop.

Use scarves for a movement activity in P.E. Let each child hold a scarf and move with the scarf

using position words.

English Language Learners may need additional practice using position words in everyday conversation.

Family Connections

Each student will take the Treasure Box of position words home. They can play the game with their families. Take turns drawing a position word out of Treasure box and acting it out.

Students take home Wacky Word game board to play with their families.

Assessment Plan

During the treasure box review game and Wacky Word Game do a performance assessment of student understanding of position words. Make a note of words they don't understand for re-teaching.

When the students are finished practicing their position words have them pick two words and draw a picture demonstrating their understanding of those words in their Frog Log.

Bibliography

Research Basis

Sutton, J. & Krueger, A. (Eds.). (2002). *ED Thoughts: What we know about Mathematics teaching and learning*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Mathematical learning in young children is strongly linked to sense perception and concrete experience. Children move toward an understanding of symbols, and eventually abstract concepts, only after they have first experienced ideas on a concrete level. The more avenues there are to receive data through the senses, the more connections the brain can make. The more connections that are made, the better a learner can understand a new idea.

When a school or district implements a well-designed and planned parent involvement effort, all students benefit, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income. Parent involvement means that the parents or guardians of a student are participating actively in a child's education. It ranges from volunteering in a student's classroom to reading with them before bedtime to assuming leadership through participation on school committees. Parent involvement is not effective if available only as an afterthought. Inclusion of parents requires a planned and well-coordinated effort, which takes time. The benefits of a well-coordinated parent involvement program include: higher grades; better attendance; consistent completion of homework; higher graduation rates; decreased alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior; and greater support and ratings of teachers by parents and community.

Susan B. Neuman, Ed. D. (Nov./Dec 2204). Learning From Poems & Rhymes. *Scholastic Parent & Child*, page 32.

Nursery rhymes are especially powerful, because they are so memorable. Research has found that children who are familiar with nursery rhymes when they enter kindergarten often have an easier time learning to read. This is probably because rhyming helps children discover many common word patterns (such as those in quick/stick or down/town). And the more familiar these patterns become in oral language, the more easily children will recognize them when they begin to encounter them in print.

Authors

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