

LITERACY CENTER

15 MUST HAVES IN YOUR CENTER

HANDS-ON

1. Magnetic Letters

Use a cookie tray and simple magnet letters for endless phonics practice in this early elementary literacy center.

2. Sight Word Typing

These cheap keyboards from Dollar Tree allow students to practice sight words and typing skills at the same time. They will love the tactile, grown-up element of typing on a keyboard, making the learning of sight words pure fun.

3. Building Blocks Sight Word Box

This low-prep center has students create the words using Legos. Perfect for your hands-on learners and those who are obsessed with Legos!

4. Compound Word Mini-Puzzles

This activity option has students put together tiny puzzles to join compound words. Laminate the puzzle pieces and you have a literacy center that will last for years to come.

5. CVC Word Roll

Students will have lots of fun at center time with this activity! Roll the die to form words. Color the CVC word that is formed.

6. IceCream Initial Sound MashUps

Ice cream makes everything a little bit easier to teach. Use this exercise for your emergent readers.

7. Snow Ball Sort

Build confident readers through routine sight word practice. This snowball sort adds a tactile element to the learning. It would be great for a winter-themed literacy center!

8. Listening Centers

Go old school for this listening center with personal CD players. Hearing fluent reading is so important for emerging readers. This will take some interactive modeling on how to use the CD player appropriately, but your students will rise to the challenge.

9. Sight Words in Sand

Write out common sight words on sticky notes and have students "write" the word in the sand. This tactile activity is great for earlier ability levels.

10. Dice Rolling Center

In different-ability partner groups, have students check on their comprehension of a story using this simple dice game. They can choose an answer to write a written response for at the end of this center time. Provide sentence stems to help your English learners with their responses for this activity.

11. Themed Dramatic Play Center

Themed dramatic play centers are a great way to teach key literacy skills within collaborative learning settings where students are asked to use their imagination. Math, science, and history can all be woven in as well. This center is weather-themed and has students play-acting like a weather reporter on TV. They will love getting to hold the mic.

12. Letter Beads

Students hunt for the right letter to add to their pipe cleaner bracelet in this independent literacy center activity.

13. Book Shopping Day

Possibly the easiest literacy center idea is to have one rotation be a book shopping day where a select group of students gets their chance to find a set of books for their book bags. The book shopping rule is that students can only use the library on their assigned day. This cuts out added traffic, brings appeal to the books, and helps students prioritize their current independent reading texts. Add a section where students can write a book recommendation after they finish reading. Providing many book choices will help develop students' love of reading and having a designated book station will make them excited for their turn at the book shopping center.

14. Tiles Alphabet Match

Help students practice their letter recognition of individual letters with this fun matching center. This is helpful as students are learning to distinguish between capital and lower case letters.

15. Syllable Puzzles

These simple syllable puzzles help students split words into their syllable parts and build sound knowledge. Laminate them for a reusable resource year after year! Students can work fairly independently in this center.