



Let's Go to the Zoo

ZZZOOOOOOO.....

Roar... Squeak... Chirp... Bleat.... Glop...
What do all these sounds have in common?
You can hear them all at the ZOO!

Take turns finding words that rhyme with:

CAT	(bat, fat, hat)
ZOO	(boo, who, moo)
BEAR	(care, dare, dear)
HUNT	(bunt, runt, stunt)

Conversation Starters: Ask your child one of these questions to begin a conversation about the theme?

1. Where do the animals who live in the zoo come from?
2. Can a zebra live in a cold place like Green Land?
3. Can a polar bear live on the beach in Hawaii?

Book Topic & Internet Search

Don't forget that you can help your child create their own books by stapling or taping paper together in the form of a book.

Animal habitats

Animals that can be petted

What sounds do animals make?

Animals that eat plants

Animals that hunt

Water animals at the zoo

Where are the animals from?

ZOO GAMES

Can be played in any atmosphere like while in the car, bus, or outdoors.

Take turns naming zoo animals in alphabetical order.

For example: Mom's turn - Ape, Child's turn - Bear.

Continue until you reach the letter Z!

GROSS MOTOR LIKE AN ANIMAL!

Materials Needed: Open space and imagination.

- o Begin by explaining the rules of the game(s), keeping the instructions short and simple and making sure safety measures are included.
- o Call out a zoo animal. Encourage your child to pretend to be the animal and move like the animal. (Hints: walk and stomp like an elephant, gallop like a zebra, waddle like a penguin, dance like a monkey, roar like a lion, run like a cheetah, slither like a snake, jump like a kangaroo, etc).
- o Variation to the game is you describe the animal without giving the name and having your child guess the animal and move like it.
- o Further variation to the game is the parent pretend to act like a specific animal and your child has to guess what it is. Once they get the animal they can join in with imitating the animal.

It is normal and acceptable for children to develop at different ages. Giving many opportunities to develop gross motor development can be very fun! When is the last time you climbed a pillow mountain like a goat, or sang like a bird? Young children usually love animals. Play charades or imitate and allow for self-expression through movement and awareness of different animals.

Making connections with art!

Art is known to be brain food! It stimulates emotions, special awareness, and much more. During the early childhood years, it is an important means for self-expression. Through art your child may demonstrate new capacities and or even emotions. Providing means to self-express through art will benefit your young learner's intellectual capacity. It's a small world! By exposing your child to basic geography, he will begin to develop the understanding that he belongs to this planet, continent, country, state, city, town and family. Belongingness is an essential part of developing self-awareness and self-esteem.

Science allows our young learners to understand the world around them. You will see their natural curiosity and engagement.

Digging up new animal words

Materials needed: Sand, plastic tubs, sand pit or individual plastic trays, smaller zoo animal figures.

- Read a story about zoo animals.
- Discuss the zoo animals and engage in conversation on your child's imagination.
- Share with your child some simple and easy to remember facts and characteristics about each animal.
- Follow on by inviting your child to play with the sandpit and zoo animals.
- Encourage your child to dig around and find zoo animals as well as hiding them.
- Follow on to encourage your child to name the animals as well as recall the facts and characteristics discussed previously.

African Savanna

Materials needed: Large scale map, paints, easel, large art paper, brushes, and zoo animal stamps.

Suggested reading: Any lion hunt story or watching a video on the internet.

Allow enough time to enjoy the illustrations or discuss the video.

Explain and demonstrate using a child orientated map the location of the Savanna in Africa. Explain the special characteristics of the incredible African Savanna and bring up other animals and explain their habitats.

Following the story, encourage your child to illustrate their interpretation of the Savanna.

Allow opportunity to use different colors and even textures by adding sand.

Display their creations proudly.

I am Special!

Creating an environment of self-awareness directly benefits the development of confidence and self-esteem. Combining skills such as phonics, reading comprehension, and numeracy will make learning purposeful and create a connection with your child while promoting the learning process.

ABC Zoo Books

Materials Needed: Large scale alphabet, zip lock baggies, flashcards, animal stickers or cut out animal, and glue.

Suggested Reading/Video: *ABC's at the Zoo* search provides many resources on the internet.

Begin by reciting the alphabet together, pointing out each letter on a large-scale alphabet.

Talk about some common zoo animals and their beginning sounds such as: zoo, giraffe, bear, and lion.

Guide as necessary for your child to place their sticker or glue their picture onto the back of the word card.

Place each flashcard into a zip lock bag.

Have your child make a cover page for their zoo word book and help them gather all bags to staple together.

Refer back to your child's "ABC Book" reading their zoo words as needed.

Activity: Concentrate

Materials Needed: Premade animal flashcards – 2 of each.

Explain to your child you'll be playing an animal memory game together.

Demonstrate how to play by asking your child to play one or two practice rounds with you.

Turn all cards with matches upside down.

Mix up the cards – make sure no one can see the pictures.

Take turns picking up two cards to find a match.

If a match is found the player keeps the cards.

Whoever has more cards when they are all gone – that is the winner.

Allow plenty of time to play. Memory gets better with practice.

Number sense is a learned skill. There are numerous activities to teach about numbers and counting. Make it a natural part of the day to count. Count your steps going up stairs, count cheerios, count cookies, etc. Make it fun yet facilitate your child to connect numbers to his real-life experiences.

Increasing concentration skills is important to your child's upward development. This can be accomplished through a variety of concentration games. Young learners can recognize familiar illustrations and memorize what they see. The objective of the game is for your child to practice their concentration and memory skills by remembering what they see and figuring out what is missing.

Numbers, numbers, everywhere!

Materials Needed: Open space and animal counters.

Suggested Reading: *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* by Eileen Christelow.

Begin by reading *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. Repeat and have your child follow your lead as you read out loud.

Follow on by telling each other a number from 1-20 with the other pulling out that number of animal counters,

Switch roles and play the game several times. Counting together regardless of who has what role.

The love of reading and the love of books will most likely last a lifetime if started early. Reading with your young child promotes feelings of love and security. Reading to your child develops reading comprehension. Reading purposefully and engaging your child efficiently is the key to developing excellent reading comprehension skills. Adding pretend play with reading a story will help your child learn by doing - and create a lot of fun and memories with your child.

Community Helpers

Materials Needed: Pretend play supplies/dress up clothing, play zoo animals, and stuffed animals.

Suggested Reading: *Who Works at the Zoo?* By Alyse Sweeney or *If I Ran the Zoo* by Dr. Seuss

- Take the time to read and engage the book(s). Discuss while you are reading. If needed, stop at every page to discuss and ask pertinent questions that will enable reading comprehension as well as develop understanding of the facts and information presented.
- Following the discussion and reading of each of the books, allow your child to pretend play and role play the different careers discussed in the books.

Keep it Shapely!

Identifying and recognizing common shapes and their attributes will help your child's spatial development. Geometry during early childhood is beneficial in the development of problem-solving skills, deductive reasoning, understanding transformations, symmetry and spatial reasoning. Applying geometry to a specific theme is another excellent way to bring the concept of how the world works well together

Materials Needed: Pictures of different bear types, different size circles and semi circles, white cardstock, googly eyes, yarn and glue.

Suggested Reading: *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Helen Oxenbury.

Begin by reading *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Discuss with your child the types of bears and their preferred habitats. Discuss what bears like to eat and do.

Using online resources look at some pictures of real bears and their cubs.

Have your child work to create a bear using different shapes and other materials available to them, guiding as necessary with the objective to ultimately encourage them to be independent.