

BILINGUAL LANGUAGE ARTS IN ACTION ACTIVITY KITS

“PREPOSITIONS”

Children’s Literature Sources:

1. “Each Peach Pear Plum” by Janet and Allan Ahlberg
2. “Who’s Under That Hat” by David A. Carter
3. “Where’s Spot” by Eric Hill
4. “Who’s There, Spot” by Eric Hill
5. “Rosie’s Walk” by Pat Hutchins

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GENERAL TEACHING PRINCIPLES:

- The basic principle behind these activities is to use **children's literature** to teach the grammatical structures of written language (English).
- Children learn best when they **discover** the rule themselves, rather than being told the rule and then practicing it in meaningless drills.
- Our role as teachers is to make sure children have lots of **exposure** to the target structure in different contexts, and to **direct** their attention to how it is used.
- We also need to make sure students have lots of opportunities to try to **use the structure** in their own writing – this means **accepting approximations** and gradually **shaping** them into correct productions.
- **Repetition** is important for learning – reading and writing must be done over and over – but it is also important to keep it **fun** and **interesting**.
- It is not enough to simply read the books in this activity kit to children during story time – the books must be the focus of **extended and repeated study** and this difference should be emphasized and made clear to both teachers and students right from the outset.

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TEACHING “PREPOSITIONS”

1. The grammatical purpose of prepositions is to help nouns and pronouns fit into sentences.
2. Prepositions can be confused with “adverb particles”, for example, sit *down*, let’s go *on*, walked *out*, etc.
3. Prepositions should first be taught to indicate location or place (as an answer to “where?”)
4. Prepositions also indicate time, duration, and relationship.
5. Prepositions need to be taught in phrases (together with nouns) to show how they act as connectors in a sentence.
6. The rules for using prepositions are not specific, but generally,
 - “at” and “in” are used for position
 - “to” is used for movement

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR: **“EACH PEACH PAIR PLUM”** **(J & A AHLBERG)**

Vocabulary: spy, cellar, ditch, den

1. The book is much more effective if children have an understanding or familiarity with the nursery rhymes (so they know the characters) – you may need to teach these first.
2. Make the connection between the concept of “location” (where?) and the prepositions.
3. Go beyond text and look for other things hiding in the pictures and describe (or get the students to describe) these using prepositions.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR: “WHO’S UNDER THAT HAT?” (CARTER)

Vocabulary: sniffs, wags, polka dots, fierce, proud, tan, silver trail, buggy eyes, zapping, flop, wiggles

1. Make your own riddles – have the students give two or three clues about the animal, person, or object without naming it.
2. Have the children make their own versions of the book with an emphasis on other prepositions, i.e., “who’s in the box”, or “who’s behind the curtain”, etc.
3. This book provides lots of opportunities to take turns flipping the pages and seeing who’s under the hats.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR:

“WHERE’S SPOT?”

(HILL)

Vocabulary: piano, closet, rug, basket

1. Play hide-and-seek incorporating “Where” questions and prepositions. The children can hide objects, toys, or themselves.
2. Teach the written word “no” (make connections with the ASL sign and the fingerspelled word).
3. Incorporate both the hide-and-seek game and the written word “no”, by having the hiding children hold up cards that have “NO” written on them when they are found – the game continues until the right child (without a “NO” card) is found.
4. Make sure to give all children a turn to flip and look under the flaps in the book.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR:

“WHO’S THERE, SPOT?”

(HILL)

Vocabulary: sounds (knock knock, tweet tweet, ding ding, giggle giggle, croak croak, meow meow, squeak squeak, squawk squawk, splash splash)

1. Since this book involves lots of “sound” words, it is important to make these visual for deaf students and associate appropriate signs and gestures with each of the words.
2. Role play the story using visual, instead of auditory, attention getting strategies.
3. Compare and contrast the different places to be “in” that occur throughout the story.
4. Again, turn taking with lifting the flaps is important.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR: “ROSIE’S WALK” (HUTCHINS)

Vocabulary: very basic content words, so the emphasis can be on learning the prepositions

1. This is a very simple story and is excellent for beginning readers.
2. Much of the story is told through the pictures (i.e., the fox following the hen) – be sure to direct children’s attention to this.
3. Spend time acting out the story and allowing the children to take turns playing the different characters.
4. Create another version of “Someone’s” Walk (perhaps someone the children are familiar with) and be sure to use lots of prepositions.