

# Unit Two: My Five Senses

Interdisciplinary Unit of Study  
NYC DOE

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# I. Unit Snapshot

## Unit Topic:

My Five Senses

## Essential Question

How do we use our senses to explore, investigate and understand the world around us?

## Focus Questions

- How do we use our sense of sight?
- How do we use our sense of hearing?
- How do we use our sense of taste?\*
- How do we use our sense of smell?\*
- How do we use our sense of touch?

\*Can be combined into one week if children are ready.

## Student Outcomes

Enduring understandings that the student should have by the end of the unit:

- There are five senses. They are smell, taste, touch, sight and hearing.
- We use our senses to understand our bodies, learn what they need, and keep us safe.
- We use our senses to learn about the people, places, objects, and environment around us.
- We experience and interact with the world differently when our senses, such as vision or hearing, are impaired.

## Connected Academic Vocabulary

This list should be adapted to best fit the needs of individual programs and classrooms.

adventure	rain
autumn	raincoat
blind	rough
Braille	safe
crunch	savory
dark	see
deaf	senses
dry	sign language
ears	skin
eyes	smell
eyesight	smooth
fall	soft
feel	sound
fingers	sour
flavor	sprinkling
foliage	surface
hard	sweet
hear	taste
hearing aid	taste buds
instruments	texture
listen	tongue
loud	touch
mouth	umbrella
nose	view
noise	vision
notice	volume
observe	water
pouring	wet
prediction	window
quiet	

## Focus Standards

### From the New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards (NYSPLS)

#### Domain 1: Approaches to Learning

PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences

#### Domain 2: Physical Development and Health

PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning

PK.PDH.9. Demonstrates awareness and understanding of safety rules

#### Domain 3: Social and Emotional Development

PK.SEL.6. Understands and follows routines and rules

#### Domain 4: Communication, Language and Literacy

Reading Foundations

PK.ELAL.4. [PKRF.4.] Displays emergent reading behaviors with purpose and understanding

Reading

PK.ELAL.11 [PKR.7] Describes the relationship between illustrations and the text (e.g., what person, place, thing or idea in the text an illustration depicts)

Writing Standards

PK.ELAL.13 [PKW.1] Uses a combination of drawing, dictating, oral expression, and/or emergent writing to state an opinion about a familiar topic in child-centered, authentic, play-based learning

#### Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World

Math

PK.MATH.13. [NY-PK.G.2.] Names shapes regardless of size

Science

PK.SCI.5. [P-LS1-2.] Participates in investigations to determine how familiar plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive in the environment

Social Studies

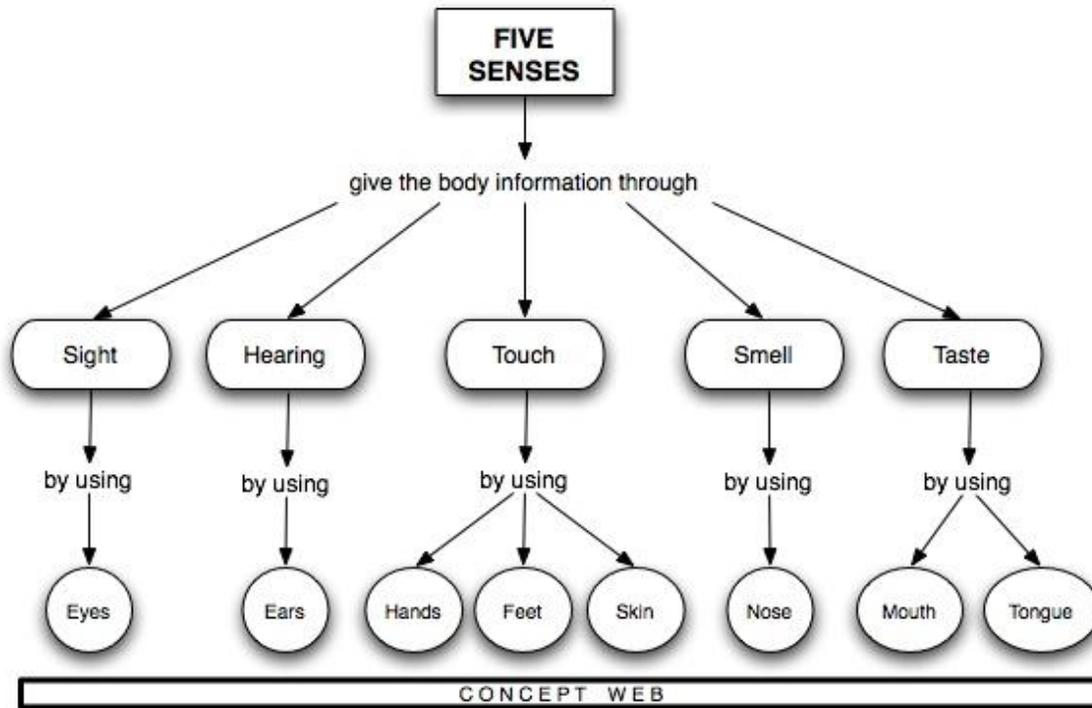
PK.SOC.1. Develops a basic awareness of self as an individual, self within the context of group, and self within the context of community

Arts

PK.ARTS.16. [VA:Cr1-3.PK] Creates Visual Arts

## II. Introduction

Welcome to the Pre-K for All second Interdisciplinary Unit of Study: My Five Senses. Now that you have introduced children and families to your program with the first unit, Welcome to Pre-K!, you will continue your journey of exploration and learning with an exciting topic focused on how we use our five senses to explore, investigate, and understand ourselves and our world. Children naturally explore the world around them through their senses. In this unit we support cognitive and language development by encouraging children to observe things in their immediate environment and begin to describe them in detail. These foundational inquiry and science skills will spark the curiosity and interest of pre-K children as they start to use those observations to make predictions, ask questions and draw conclusions: key higher-level science skills that they will use in upcoming pre-K units and in kindergarten. For your reference, there is a graphic representation on the right side of this page depicting how we use our senses to gather information about the world.



In this Unit, there is a focus on developing the Physical Development and Health Skills described in Domain 2 of the NYSPLS. Throughout the unit, children will use their senses to assist and guide learning (PK.PDH.1). Children will demonstrate increasing awareness and understanding of safety rules (PK.PDH.9) through discussions about how we use each sense to make judgments about safe situations or objects. For example, before going on a

neighborhood walk to listen to the sounds or notice interesting objects in the environment, engage children in conversations about how to stay safe outside and what they might see or hear that will give them information about safety. Likewise, there are opportunities to discuss safety when addressing healthy eating habits and allergies (PK.PDH. 8).

Throughout the unit, there are activities and discussions about how life might be different for

people who have disabilities that affect their senses. There are children's books that introduce different disabilities and explain how people with disabilities might interact with the world differently. For example, a book might describe how some people are blind and introduce the concept of Braille, or how some people are deaf and use sign language. These activities and discussions are meant to help children develop an awareness of people who have disabilities that affect their senses.

The change in seasons, from summer to fall, provides a timely opportunity to understand our natural environment through our senses. Leaves change color and fall on the ground, the air is crisper and there are new sounds and smells throughout the city. Interesting fruits and vegetables like apples and pumpkins are ripe for exploration! Through an apple taste-test in week three, children have the opportunity to smell, touch, see, and taste different kinds of apples and compare favorites. This truly interdisciplinary activity will develop children's science skills as well as their sense of self and express personal preferences.

As we engage the children in observing the world around them, remember to be respectful of each family's culture as it relates to the senses. Families have specific ways of encouraging their children to interact with their environment and the people around them: talk to families and learn about these customs. Families also may have various rules or strategies for safety. It is imperative to continue to build your relationship with families as you collaborate with them in support of each child's education.

Throughout this unit, you will see references to the [Early Childhood Framework for Quality](#) (EFQ), which describes NYC DOE Division of Early Childhood Education's vision for high-quality early childhood programming. For example in Section IV: Ideas for Learning Centers, EFQ Three: Advancing play-based learning and responsive instruction is referenced. This standard highlights the necessary balance between adult and child-initiated learning experiences as well as some ways that teachers can enhance children's learning during play in centers.

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*As we engage the children in observing the world around them, remember to be respectful of each family's culture as it relates to the senses. Families have specific ways of encouraging their children to interact with their environment and the people around them: talk to families and learn about these customs.*

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An additional note: Children in their pre-K year are increasingly interested in reading and writing and ready to begin learning the emergent reading and writing skills outlined in the NYSPLS. Throughout the Pre-K for All Interdisciplinary Units of Study, there are opportunities for working on skills such as letter recognition, letter-sound relationships and emergent writing skills, embedded within the learning centers and lessons. These opportunities should arise naturally and build on each child's level of interest and skill. Many teachers choose to start learning about letters with a name study and focusing on the first letter of each child's name, as children are inherently interested in themselves and their peers. Explore the shapes and sounds of letters that the children are interested in, for example during the morning sign-in, throughout the learning centers, or when reading books.

Children's ability to draw letters will vary greatly; encourage any attempt at drawing or writing as their fine motor and visual motor skills develop. Provide plenty of opportunities for painting, using playdough and all kinds of physical play to assist their developing writing skills. As you embark on

these early literacy explorations, observe each child in order to determine their skill level and how to encourage their development in this area.

Enjoy the activities in this unit on the five senses! Please email [deceinstruction@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:deceinstruction@schools.nyc.gov) with any questions or feedback.

## III. Unit Framework

### Essential Question

This is a child-friendly question that connects the knowledge and skills that children will likely develop throughout the unit.

### Focus Questions

These represent the major inquiries of the unit. They build over time and require children to make connections across all content areas. Each focus question is designed to take about one week to explore.

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*These are key components of each Pre-K for All Unit of Study.*

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### Foundational Learning Experiences

These are experiences (e.g., whole group, small group lessons, field trips, observations, center activities) for each subtopic that provide ample opportunities to deepen children’s understanding of the Focus Questions.

### Foundational Texts

*PK.ELAL.9 [PKR.5] Interacts with a variety of genres (e.g., storybooks, poems, songs)*

These are a combination of literary and informational texts that can be read throughout the unit. See Section XI for text-based critical thinking questions to support the read aloud experience.

Engaging, informative, and literary texts provide opportunities for exploring content, expressing ideas using one’s imagination, and critical thinking that are enhanced through multiple readings of the same book. Reading books multiple times helps all children build a deeper understanding of content, make meaningful connections between content and other concepts or experiences and builds their confidence as learners and as future readers.

### Key Vocabulary

These are academic vocabulary words that help children understand the unit focus questions and access complex texts. These words can be supplemented by vocabulary in read alouds.

### Family and Community Engagement

These are ideas for inviting families to share their experience and knowledge with the class, or for extending learning outside of the classroom. They are aligned to the [NYC DOE Division of Early Childhood Education Early Childhood Framework for Quality \(EFQ\)](#).

See Section IX: Supporting Resources for more information about Family Engagement Practices.

### Culminating Celebration

This is an opportunity to reflect on the unit with the children, as well as to note and celebrate the growth and learning that has occurred.

## Unit Two: My Five Senses

### Essential Question: How do our senses help us explore, investigate and understand the world around us?

	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four
Focus Questions	How do we use our sense of sight?	How do we use our sense of hearing?	How do we use our sense of taste?  How do we use our sense of smell?	How do we use our sense of touch?
Foundational Learning Experiences	<p><b>Large Group</b></p> <p>Sight Walk: Take the class on a walk outside; draw children’s attention to things they can see.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.</i></p> <p>See page 42 for lesson plan</p>	<p><b>Small Group</b></p> <p>Listening Walk: Take the class on a walk outside; help children focus on listening and draw their attention to things they can hear.</p> <p><i>PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences</i></p> <p>See page 47 for lesson plan.</p>	<p><b>Small Group</b></p> <p>Apple Tasting: Invite children to taste different types of apples. Help them record their favorite.</p> <p>Note, provide alternative food for children/classrooms with apple allergies. Highlight how being aware of allergies helps us stay safe.</p> <p><i>PK.ELAL.13 [PKW.1] Uses a combination of drawing, dictating, oral expression, and/or emergent writing to state an opinion about a familiar topic in child-centered, authentic, play-based learning</i></p> <p>See page 51 for lesson plan.</p>	<p><b>Small Group</b></p> <p>Touch Scavenger Hunt: In the classroom invite children to find something hard, soft, rough, smooth, etc.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.</i></p> <p>See page 55 for lesson plan.</p>
Foundational Texts	<i>Windows</i> by Julia Denos	<i>Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!</i> by Wynton Marsalis	<i>Thank you, Omu!</i> by Oge Mora	<i>Singing in the Rain</i> by Tim Hopgood (Illustrator)

	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four
Focus Questions	How do we use our sense of sight?	How do we use our sense of hearing?	How do we use our sense of taste?  How do we use our sense of smell?	How do we use our sense of touch?
Key Vocabulary	autumn, blind, Braille, dark, eyes, eyesight, fall, foliage, notice, observe, see, senses, view, vision, window	adventure, crunch, deaf, ears, hear, hearing aid, instruments, listen, loud, noise, predictions, quiet, sign language, sound, volume	flavor, mouth, nose, savory, smell, sour, sweet, taste, taste buds, tongue	dry, feel, fingers, hard, pouring, raincoat, rough, skin, smooth, soft, sprinkling, texture, touch, umbrella, water, wet
Family and Community Engagement  <i>EFQ 4: High quality programs promote families' role as primary caregivers, teachers, and advocates</i>	Invite families to look out of a window (store, bus, subway, bedroom, etc.) and discuss what they see at various times throughout the day. What do they see in the morning? In the evening? Right before bed? What is different each time they look? What is the same? Why?	Encourage families to take a sensory walk together. Ask families to pay attention to what they hear, see, feel and smell. Additionally, encourage them to discuss how they can use their senses to stay safe when walking outside. How do our eyes help keep us safe? For example, looking for cars before crossing the street or identifying unsafe items to touch such as garbage or sharp items. How about our ears? Can our sense of smell help keep us safe? How? This can occur anywhere at any time families and their children are walking together.	Ask families to invite their children to smell or taste a new food or something they would not usually eat. Provide prompts to encourage discussion, how does it look? What do you see? How does the food feel before you try it? How does it feel in your mouth? How does it taste? How does it smell? Would you try it again? Why or why not?  Note: Help families stay safe when trying new foods by providing information about allergic reactions and what to do in case of an emergency.	Send home a brown paper bag with each child to have a Brown Bag Scavenger Hunt. Ask families to find items of various textures at home or natural objects collected from outside, that are clean and <b>safe</b> for small children to handle such as pinecones, acorns or leaves. Talk about why certain items might be safe or not safe. Put them in the bag for children to bring to school and share with a partner. Be sure to remind families that the items they send in should not be valuable and may get lost.

	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four
Focus Questions	How do we use our sense of sight?	How do we use our sense of hearing?	How do we use our sense of taste?  How do we use our sense of smell?	How do we use our sense of touch?
Culminating Celebration	<p>Make Applesauce: Prepare applesauce together with the class. As you cook with the children, reflect with them on what they see, how the apples feel, and what they smell, hear, and taste. See Appendix A for sample formats of child friendly recipes and Appendix B for tips on cooking safety.</p> <p>Tell families each child will bring home a cup of applesauce. Send home a blank label and invite them to create an applesauce label together. Apply each child's label to a small container or cup of applesauce and let the children bring it home to share with their families. Children who do not create a label with their families can create their own labels in the writing center.</p> <p><i>PK.SOC.1. Develops a basic awareness of self as an individual, self within the context of group, and self within the context of community</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p>Explore a Pumpkin. After a sensory exploration of the outside of the pumpkin, cut it open and explore the inside. Collect the seeds, bake them, and enjoy as a class snack. Additionally, consider cooking other parts of the pumpkin as well. You could make pumpkin bread or pumpkin pasta sauce. See Appendix C for recipes.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.9. Demonstrates awareness and understanding of safety rules</i></p>			

## IV. Ideas for Learning Centers

Learning centers should be used to advance the unit’s essential and focus questions as well as the enduring understandings. The following suggestions supplement the standard materials you have in each center such as blocks in the Blocks/Construction Area, paper and a variety of writing utensils in the Writing Center, etc. As you plan your learning centers, consider how you will provide multiple entry points into the materials for all children in your classroom. The suggested materials and activities are intended to be relatable and fun! This is not an exhaustive list of materials and can be supplemented by other materials that pique the interest and reflect the diversity of your class.

As you plan for this unit, reflect on your expectations and systems for center use. Is there a limit to the number of children who can be in one center at a time? How will children know the limit? What do they do if a center is full? Behavior problems arise when crowding occurs. You can prevent crowding by limiting the number of children allowed in a center at a time, setting up materials to support a specific number of children in a space (e.g. four chairs at the table means four children can participate) as well as by making sure you have arranged the furniture and materials appropriately. Some centers clearly require more space than others (Blocks, Dramatic Play) but this too warrants reflection. For example, in a class where many children are interested in writing, the Writing Center should be big enough to support a group of children.

Reflect a bit further and consider the materials you have provided for children thus far and how they use them. If children are not using some of the materials they might need you to model how to use them, more time, or a different level of challenge. Are there enough materials? Do you need to add materials that are more culturally relevant to your student population? Do you need to add more open-ended materials that allow children to create their own meaning? The list of materials and strategies below are intended to be added gradually. For this unit there are recommended materials that lend themselves well to the study of each sense as well as suggestions that highlight how the senses work together.

While the materials you select for centers are extremely important, learning is richer when children and adults have high quality interactions as they play. When teachers interact with children in centers they can model language through initiating, joining and extending conversations, using self and parallel talk, and asking open-ended questions that deepen engagement and inquiry while developing problem solving and critical thinking skills.

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*Rather than detracting from academic learning, purposeful play supports the abilities that underlie such learning.*

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Play is an important vehicle for developing a variety of skills outlined in the NYSPLS and EFQ standards. Rather than detracting from academic learning, purposeful play supports the abilities that underlie such learning. When children have a sufficient amount of time to play and can access learning centers and the materials in them, they have some of the essential supports necessary for their play to continue developing in complexity. The play-based learning that happens in learning centers addresses standard PK.AL.1 (Actively and confidently engages in play as a means of exploration and learning). For these reasons, teachers should ensure that children have access to and can choose from a variety of learning center materials for one-third of the pre-K day, and support children’s engagement in play during center time, adjusting the daily schedule to weave in small and whole group activities without infringing on that time. NYSPLS standards are included for all of the activity suggestions here and opportunities for assessment are embedded. Text suggestions that compliment these materials and activities are also included.

## Blocks/Construction

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

Tell me about your work.  
I notice that you \_\_\_\_.  
What are some other things you could add?  
I wonder what would happen if \_\_\_\_.  
How do you know?  
How could you build \_\_\_\_?  
What is your conclusion?

### Suggested Text:

*Listen to the City* by Rachel Isadora.

If children are interested in building a city or buildings that might be in a city, encourage them to think about, and make some of the noises they might hear in or near the city or building.

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning*

### *Tree Blocks:*

Add tree-shaped blocks to the center (if you have them). Invite children to explore how these blocks feel and look compared to the other blocks in the construction area. Also, consider covering blocks with green and/or brown paper to make them look like tree parts (e.g., branches, trunks, leaves).

*PK.ELAL.2.4. [PKSL.6] Expresses thoughts, feelings, and ideas (e.g., role-playing, music, drawing, art work, building, writing)*

### *Leaves:*

Cut out the leaf rubbings the children made in the art center. Add these leaves, as well as tape, to the center. Invite children to use these leaves, and the blocks in the center to create trees. Be sure to include pictures of trees for the children to reference and if possible, invite children to study the trees they see outside. Natural materials children collect such as leaves, acorns, pinecones, etc. can be used in this activity as well.

*PK.SCI.4. [P-LS1-1.] Observes familiar plants and animals (including humans) and describes what they need to survive*

## Dramatic Play

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

Who are you going to be today?  
 I wonder what would happen if \_\_\_?  
 What will you do next?  
 What do you think about \_\_\_?  
 What does that remind you of?

### Suggested Text:

*\*What's Cooking at 10 Garden Street? by Felicita Sala*

Use this book as an opportunity for children to share some of the foods they may eat or make with their family, or invite them to pretend to make some of the recipes in the book. They might want to talk about what they notice about how the food looks, smells, tastes, feels, or even sounds.

*PK.SELSOC.1 Develops a basic awareness of self as an individual, self within the context of a group, and self within the context of a community.*

### Dress Up:

Add lengths of fabric in various textures (silky, burlap, terry cloth, etc.) large enough for children to use to create dress up costumes. Discuss with the children the way the fabrics feel as they select which pieces they would like to use.

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.*

### Apple Orchard:

Create an apple orchard for children to explore. Include orchard related items such as an apple picking sign, apple trees, baskets of apples (real or imitation), and a tablecloth. Children who are interested or familiar with apple orchards may want to participate in creating the orchard. Additionally, invite children to create a menu to sell items such as apple cider, apple donuts, apple pie and different types of apples. Children could make these items with playdough or clay. If possible, include books about apples and add real apples to the center. Talk with the children about the apples, and invite them to explore apples with all of their senses. They can see different color apples, touch how they feel, hear the crunchy sound when they take a bite and taste how sweet or sour each apple is. Encourage children to consider where and how apples grow, why apple skins are different colors and why they are healthy to eat. Additionally, they can consider who else eats apples besides people, what else apples are used for (apple juice, apple donuts, apple pie, apple bread) and when apples ready to be picked.

*PK.CKW.6 (Science): Acquires knowledge about the physical properties of the world.*

### Diner:

Turn the dramatic play center into a diner. Set up tables and chairs; include various empty and clean condiment bottles such as ketchup, hot sauce, pepper and salt to enhance children's play. Children can talk about how foods taste using words such as salty, sweet, spicy, bitter, etc. Make menus with removable pictures of food, which children can use to sort by taste preference, flavors, etc. Facilitate discussions around what to order and why. Which foods are healthy? Why do we need to eat healthy foods? How do we know if something is healthy? What if we want to eat foods that are not healthy? Children can be servers and use small pads of paper and take orders. Also, create the diner kitchen and invite children to be cooks in the kitchen. Add aprons and hats as well as pots and pans for children to use when preparing customers' meals.

*PK.SCI.4. [P-LS1-1.] Observes familiar plants and animals (including humans) and describes what they need to survive*

## Art

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

Tell me about your art.

What did you notice about \_\_\_\_?

I notice that you \_\_\_\_\_. How did you do that?

What will you try next? Why?

How does this picture, painting, drawing, etc. make you feel? Why?

### Suggested Text:

*Rainbow Joe and Me* by Maria Diaz Strom.

The girl in this story paints with her eyes closed to try to imagine what it is like for Rainbow Joe to paint. Invite the children to try this too.

*PK.ELAL.11 [PKR.7] Describes the relationship between illustrations and the text (e.g., what person, place, thing or idea in the text an illustration depicts)*

### Note:

Children have varying levels of sensitivity to sensory experiences. Do not force children to touch materials. Invite children to participate and observe their behavior carefully. Respond to the cues they give you about their readiness to participate.

### Leaf Rubbings:

Provide, or ask families to bring in, various leaves from trees in the neighborhood or near their homes. Place a piece of paper over a leaf and rub the side of a crayon over the paper. Watch as the leaf appears and invite the children to consider why this happens.

*PK.SCI.5. [P-LS1-2.] Participates in investigations to determine how familiar plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive in the environment*

### Finger Paint:

Invite children to finger-paint and talk with them about how the paint feels (e.g., slippery, cold) as they paint. Consider adding spices to the paints (be sure to be mindful of allergies) and encourage children to smell the paints as they work.

*PK.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences*

### Texture Paint:

Provide tools that produce interesting prints (potato mashers, textured rolling pins, forks) for children to use as painting tools instead of using paintbrushes. Talk with the children about the print each tool makes.

*PK.ARTS.16. [VA:Cr1-3.PK] Creates Visual Arts*

### Vehicle Painting:

Invite children to roll the wheels of small toy vehicles in paint then on to paper. Explore and compare the tracks created by the textures of the tires.

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

### Glue:

Add food coloring to glue bottles or place marker inserts into the bottles (this is a great way to reuse markers with missing tops). Invite children to use the colored glue to create pictures and encourage them to observe the bottles as the colors intensify over the course of the week. Ask children to predict how long it will take for the glue they used to dry and explore the way the glue feels when it is dry.

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

### Texture Collage:

Invite children to use a variety of textured materials to create a collage. Encourage them to explore the texture of the materials they select and reflect on what they see when finished.

*PK.ARTS.16. [VA:Cr1-3.PK] Creates Visual Arts*

### ***Michelangelo:***

Invite children to view some of Michelangelo's work and then discuss it together. Tape paper to the bottom of tables and then encourage children to lie on the floor and paint on the paper or color with crayons or markers to prevent drips.

*PK.ARTS.18. [VA:Re7-9.PK] Responds to Visual Arts*

**√ Opportunity for Assessment:** As children examine Michelangelo's art, monitor how they respond and react. Ask questions such as, "What do you think about this picture/painting?" Note what they children are able to express to you.

### ***Instruments:***

Invite children to make various instruments such as shakers or string instruments. To make shakers, provide empty tubes, containers, plastic eggs, etc. as well as materials to put inside such as rice, beans or beads. Secure the containers and have children decorate if desired. To make string instruments provide various boxes and containers as well as rubber bands, string, and tape. As children create, invite them to think about how the instruments will make sounds, and encourage them to start thinking about the relationship between movement and sound. As children are ready, help them explore how vibrations make sound.

*PK.SCI.3. [P-PS4-1.] Plans and conducts investigations to provide evidence that sound is produced by vibrating materials*

## Science/Discovery

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

What did you observe here/when \_\_\_\_?

What did your sense of \_\_\_\_ tell you about \_\_\_\_?

What will you try next?

I wonder what would happen if \_\_\_\_?

How do you know? How could we find out?

### Suggested Text:

*Touching* by Helen Frost.

Use this book as an opportunity to explore the sense of touch. Provide an assortment of objects for children to touch.

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

Note: Children have varying levels of sensitivity to sensory experiences. Do not force children to touch materials. Invite children to participate and observe their behavior carefully. Respond to the cues they give you about their readiness to participate

### Feely Box:

Cut holes in the sides of a shoebox or other small box. Place an item inside the box and invite children to put their hands in the holes and identify the object using only their sense of touch.

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

### Herb Garden:

Provide or grow an herb garden (using edible, fragrant herbs such as rosemary or mint, or other herbs that are more relevant to the class community) with the class. Invite children to use their senses to explore the sight, feel, smell and taste of each.

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning*

### Science Journals:

Provide each child with their own journal in which to record the predictions, observations and conclusions they make in the science area or related to science content. Journal pages should be blank, rather than lined. Be sure to introduce these journals to children and provide clear directions for use. Highlight the sounds and shapes of letters for children as they are ready, to help them record their observations.

*PK.ELAL.14. [PKW.2] Uses a combination of drawing, dictating, oral expression, and/or emergent writing to name a familiar topic and supply information in child-centered, authentic, play-based learning*

✓ **Opportunity for Assessment:** How does the child combine drawing, dictating or writing to compose text? Which format do they use most frequently? Are they able to name what they are writing about?

### Sorting:

Provide artifacts from the environment (e.g., leaves, acorns, pinecones, etc.) or ask children to collect these materials from your outdoor space, as well as containers for sorting. Children can investigate these materials as well as sort them.

*PK.SCI.5. [P-LS1-2.] Participates in investigations to determine how familiar plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive in the environment*

### Magnifying Glasses:

Add magnifying glasses to the science area; invite children to use their sense of sight and investigate various materials (e.g., found materials from outside).

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

### Matching Sounds:

Provide small closed containers with various materials inside that make noise when children shake them. There should be two containers for each material. Invite children to shake the containers and listen to find the matching sounds.

*PK.ELAL.2. [PKRF.2.] Demonstrates an emerging understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes)*

### ***Light:***

If you have access to a light table or overhead projector, make it available for children. Provide a variety of both opaque and translucent materials for children to explore with the table and/or projector.

*PK.AL.1 Actively engages in play as a means of exploration and learning*

### ***Mirrors***

Invite children to use mirrors to look at their faces to examine their features and explore the connections between their features and their five senses.

*PK.SOC.1. Develops a basic awareness of self as an individual, self within the context of group, and self within the context of community.*

## Toys and Games / Math Manipulatives

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

I notice that you \_\_\_\_\_. What do you notice?

What happened when you \_\_\_\_\_?

Why do you think that happened?

If I want to \_\_\_\_\_, what should I do? Why?

Tell me about \_\_\_\_\_.

How do you know?

Tell me why \_\_\_\_\_.

### Explore:

See your Building Blocks Teacher's Edition for Hands on Math Center activities. Have these activities available for children during Center Time.

### Suggested Text:

#### ***The Cow That Went Oink*** by Bernard Most

Add small farm animal manipulatives to the materials in this center. Invite children to use them to retell this story. Weave in opportunities for children to count the animals as well.

*PK.MATH.3a. [NY-PK.CC.3a.] When counting objects, says the number names in the standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object. (1:1 correspondence)*

### ***Textures:***

Add materials of various textures to the manipulatives area (i.e. felt pom-poms, small rocks, twigs, two sided chips) for children to use with the existing manipulatives in this area.

*PK.PDH.5. Demonstrates eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills*

### ***Texture Dominoes:***

Glue samples of various textures (fabrics, wrapping paper, etc.) to small rectangular pieces of cardboard, one on each end, to create a set of texture dominoes. The game is played the same way as traditional dominoes; however, children match textures rather than number of dots.

*PK.AL.1 Actively engages in play as a means of exploration and learning*

### ***Mr. Potato Head:***

Invite children to add eyes, ears, nose, mouth, etc. to the body. As children are assembling Mr. Potato Head, talk with them about how his senses can help keep him safe.

*PK.SCI.5. [P-LS1-2.] Participates in investigations to determine how familiar plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive in the environment*

### ***Sorting:***

Provide containers for sorting and invite children to determine their own systems for categorization such as sorting manipulatives by color, size, shape or texture.

*PK.MATH.11. [NY-PK.MD.2.] Sorts objects and shapes into categories; counts the objects in each category.*

✓ **Opportunity for Assessment:** Use questions such as, "where does this piece belong and why?" Or, "Why did you put this here?" to assess children's understanding of sorting and classifying. What categorizations are they using? Can they sort by multiple characteristics? Are they able to count the number of objects in each category? How high do they count?

## Sand and Water / Sensory

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

What happens when \_\_\_? Why?  
 How do you think that works? Why?  
 How could you change that?  
 What does that remind you of? Why?  
 What would happen if \_\_\_? Tell me more.

### Suggested Text:

*What's Your Favorite Food?* by Eric Carle.

Add some tools and/or dishes to the pourable materials in the sensory table. Invite children to create their favorite foods. As they play, they can talk about how their favorite foods, smell, taste, look, feel, etc.

*PK.AL.1 Actively engages in play as a means of exploration and learning*

### Note:

Children have varying levels of sensitivity to sensory experiences. Do not force children to touch materials. Invite children to participate and observe their behavior carefully. Respond to the cues they give you about their readiness to participate.

### Additional Sensory Experiences:

Consider adding a playdough table or additional sensory table or adding trays to an existing table to create workspaces outside of the traditional sensory table. This provides an opportunity for sensory experiences that work better on a flat surface than in the sensory table.

### Texture:

In addition to pourable materials such as sand or water, add an assortment of textured materials (i.e. sandpaper, cotton balls, fabric samples, seashells, wax paper, etc.) to the sensory table. Invite children to explore the way the materials feel, and compare and contrast the various textures.

*PK.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences*

### Gems:

Add colored gems or aquarium stones to the sensory table. Talk with the children about the colors and look for other items in the room that are the same color.

*PK.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences*

### Colors:

Provide tools and toys that are all the same color (blue cups, funnels, bottle tops, bowls, etc.) for children to use with the pourable materials in the sensory table.

*PK.AL.1 Actively engages in play as a means of exploration and learning*

### Frozen:

Freeze colored water; put the colored ice in the sensory table and invite the children to explore.

*PK.SCI.1. [P-PS1-1.] Asks questions and uses observations to test the claim that different kinds of matter exist as either solid or liquid*

### Glitter:

Add glitter to the sand in the sensory table and invite the children to explore.

*PK.AL.1 Actively engages in play as a means of exploration and learning*

### Playdough:

Provide or make playdough. Add a scent (coffee, spice, essential oils, or another scent that is more relevant to the classroom community) a visual element (glitter), or a texture (sand). Talk about the playdough and encourage children to describe the smell/feel/look of the playdough.

*PK.AC.1. Demonstrates motivation to communicate*

***Smell Swatches:***

Fill plastic bags with various spices, add a picture label and invite children to open the bag and smell the contents. Discuss the various smells with the children. Invite them to share their thoughts and opinions Use spices that are relevant to the classroom community. Be mindful of children's allergies.

*PK.SEL.2. Recognizes self as an individual having unique abilities, characteristics, feelings and interests*

***Sensory Feet:***

Fill large plastic zipper bags with various materials such as hair gel, rice, cotton balls, etc. and allow children to touch them with their feet. Talk with the children about how their feet help keep them safe.

*PK.SCI.5. [P-LS1-2.] Participates in investigations to determine how familiar plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive in the environment*

## Library

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

Tell me about this book.  
 What do you like about this book?  
 What is your favorite part of this book? Why?  
 What do you notice?  
 What do you think is happening?  
 What will happen next?  
 Does that remind you of anything? What?  
 Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?

### **Artists:**

Add books about art and artists (specifically Michelangelo if implementing the Michelangelo painting activity in the Art Area as well as other artists that may be relevant to the classroom community) and invite children to look at the books with another child and discuss what they see. Ask them to tell their partners what they see in the book and discuss what they like and dislike about the artwork.

*PK.ELAL.4 [PKRF.4] Displays emergent reading behaviors with purpose and understanding*

### **Felt Board Stories:**

Provide felt pieces from favorite classroom books and stories and invite children to use the pieces to retell the stories.

*PK.ELAL.6. [PKR.2] Retells stories or share information from a text*

✓ **Opportunity for Assessment:** How does the child retell a familiar story? What story elements and/or details do they include?

### **Paper Texture:**

Add board books as well as a newspaper and/or child friendly magazines to the library. Invite children to explore the differences in the way each material feels and compare to the pages in the other books in this area

*PK.PDH.2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements*

## Cooking and Mixing

*(as needed)*

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

Why do you think we are adding \_\_\_\_?  
 What would happen if \_\_\_\_?  
 What do you notice as we do this?  
 How does it smell/feel/look/sound/taste?  
 What does this remind you of?

### Suggested Text:

Create child friendly recipes that children can reference as you cook and mix. See Section XI for an example. Add these recipes to your classroom cookbook.

*PK.AC.4. Demonstrates a growing receptive vocabulary*

### Note:

Be mindful of children's food intolerances and allergies by connecting with families before you do cooking activities and explicitly teaching children how being aware of allergies keeps us safe.

Children must always wash hands before and after cooking experiences.

*PK.PDH.7. Demonstrates personal care and hygiene skills.* Snacks and meals must be of adequate nutritional value. When providing snacks and meals, supplement with other components of a healthy meal/snack according to appropriate meal guidelines in order to make sure children's nutritional needs are met.

### Playdough:

Make playdough (or any of the types of dough listed in the Sand and Water/Sensory area above): Encourage children to note the way the materials change as they are mixed together. Allow children to play with the dough at school or bring it home to use with their families.

*PK.SCI.1. [P-PS1-1.] Asks questions and uses observations to test the claim that different kinds of matter exist as either solid or liquid*

### Dough:

Make a dough that hardens, encourage children to note the way the materials change as they are mixed together and as the dough hardens over time. When the dough is made, allow children to explore it further in the art center. Write out a child friendly recipe card on a large piece of paper and invite the children to read it as you make the dough together. See Appendices for an example.

*PK.SCI.1. [P-PS1-1.] Asks questions and uses observations to test the claim that different kinds of matter exist as either solid or liquid*

### Ingredients:

When cooking with packaged ingredients, read the label to model literacy skills and healthy eating habits. Highlight the sounds and shapes of the first letters of words and any additional letters that children find interesting.

*PK.ELAL.4. [PKRF.4.] Displays emergent reading behaviors with purpose and understanding*

## Computer/Technology

Content should be free of product placement/advertising. Children are not to use computers or other devices with screens more than 15 minutes per day, with a maximum of 30 minutes per week. Exceptions to this limit may be made for children with disabilities who require assistive computer technology as outlined in their Individualized Education Program. Prescreen images and videos to make sure they are appropriate for children and not frightening or explicit. Do not use personal devices and ensure that you have signed permission before taking photographs of children.

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

How did you figure that out?

What will you do next?

What if you try \_\_\_\_?

I notice that you \_\_\_\_.

How could you?

### **Name That Sound:**

Use an internet search to find recordings of various sounds (without images). Possible sounds include different blends of musical instruments or animal sounds, or other sounds commonly heard in the community. Have children practice identifying the sound.

*PK.ELAL.2. [PKRF.2.] Demonstrates an emerging understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes)*

### **Sign Language:**

Use an internet search to find signs for common words such as more, help, please, and I love you. Invite children to practice these signs and use them in the classroom and at home.

*PK.ELAL.17. [PKW.6] Develops questions and participates in shared research and exploration to answer questions and to build and share knowledge*

### **I Spy:**

Use an internet image search for I Spy. Children can take turns with a partner saying, "I spy with my little eye something that is..." Model this activity for children to introduce it to them.

*PK.AL.5. Demonstrates persistence*

## Outdoors / Playground

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

I saw you \_\_\_\_.

What will you do next?

If you try \_\_\_\_, what do you notice?

How did you do \_\_\_\_?

How does it feel outside today?

What do you see?

### Suggested Text:

**Max Found Two Sticks** by Brian Pinkney.

Invite the children to look for sticks they could use to make music like Max. After they find sticks, invite them to use the sticks to create music.

*PK.ARTS.8. [MU:Cr1-3.PK] Creates Music*

### **Weather:**

Engage children in a conversation about the weather: How does it feel outside today? It is fall; how does the weather change in the fall? What are your senses telling you about the weather and how do we respond? What do we need to do to keep our bodies healthy and safe? Do we need to wear jackets? Mittens or a hat? Etc.

*PK.SCI.8. [P-ESS2-1.] Asks questions, makes observations, and collects and records data using simple instruments to recognize patterns about how local weather conditions change daily and seasonally.*

### **Leaf Stomp:**

Invite children to stomp on as many leaves as possible. Ask what they hear as they stomp. Do the leaves crunch and crackle? Why or why not?

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.*

### **I'm Thinking:**

Invite children to play a sensory game with you. Tell them you will give directions for them to follow. Suggest different items for children to find such as, "I'm thinking of something that is \_\_\_\_\_ (green, hard, smooth- make suggestions based on current focus question)." Or, "Look for something that is \_\_\_\_\_ (green, hard, smooth) and \_\_\_\_\_ (run/skip/hop) there."

*PK.PDH.2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements*

### **Slide Painting:**

Cover the slide with paper, dip a ball in paint and allow children to roll the ball down the slide. Be sure to put something at the end of the slide to catch the ball. As children engage in this activity, support observations and conversations about senses such as seeing the ball and the paint, noticing how the paint feels, and/or noting any sounds children hear throughout the experience.

*PK.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences*

### **Concert:**

Invite the children to bring the instruments they made in the art center outside and hold a concert. Talk with the children about the sounds they hear at the concert.

*PK.ARTS.9. [MU:Pr4-6.PK] Performs Music*

### **Fall Tree:**

Draw a tree trunk and branches on heavy paper and bring outside; provide children with squirt bottles filled with water the color of fall leaves. Invite children to spray the water on the tree branches to represent the leaves. Talk with them about what they see.

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

***Blow Bubbles:***

Bring bubbles and wands outside and invite children to explore the bubbles. They may want to pop bubbles, blow bubbles, or have another idea for exploration. Talk with them about what they see, hear, and how the bubbles feel as they explore.

*PK.CKW.6 (Science): Acquires knowledge about the physical properties of the world.*

***Masking Tape Bracelets:***

Create a bracelet from masking tape by wrapping it LOOSELY around the children's wrists sticky side OUT. Encourage children to find items of different textures and stick them onto their bracelets. Discuss with children how their sense of sight will help them determine if something is safe to pick up or not. Monitor children closely to be sure they follow the safety directions.

*PK.PDH.2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements*

## Writing

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

I notice that you \_\_\_\_.  
That reminds me of \_\_\_\_.  
What if you try \_\_\_\_?  
How could we find out \_\_\_\_?

### Suggested Text:

*The Black Book of Colors* by Menena Cottin.

This book includes Braille and tactile illustrations. Invite children to use their sense of touch to explore this book and the Braille alphabet.

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning*

### Note:

See Introduction for guidance on embedding early literacy activities throughout the day.

### **Bells:**

Affix bells to the ends of various writing/drawing utensils. Invite children to use their sense of hearing as they use these utensils.

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.*

### **Black and White:**

Invite children to use black and white crayons/pencils and write on black/white paper. Before writing or drawing encourage children to predict what happens when you use black crayons on black paper. What about white crayons on white paper? Why?

*PK.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences*

### **Scented Markers:**

If available, provide scented markers for writing/drawing (be mindful of potential allergies). Encourage children to use their sense of smell as they use these writing materials.

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.*

### **Sand Paper Rubbings:**

Cut a few letters (e.g., first letters of children's names) out of sandpaper. Invite children to place a piece of paper over a letter and rub a crayon on the paper over the letters. Discuss what happens and help the children consider why the letter emerges on the paper.

*PK.ELAL.1. [PKRF.1.] Demonstrates understanding of the organization and basic features of print*

✓ **Opportunity for Assessment:** Which letters is the child familiar with? Which ones can s/he identify?

### **Gel Writing:**

Fill plastic zipper bags with hair gel and securely close them with heavy tape. Invite children to use a finger to practice drawing and writing on the surface of the bags. As children are ready, have them explore the shapes and sounds of the letters in their first names.

*PK.ELAL.1. [PKRF.1.] Demonstrates understanding of the organization and basic features of print*

## Music and Movement

### Critical thinking questions/statements:

I see you moving like this.  
I heard you \_\_\_\_.  
I saw you \_\_\_\_.  
Tell me about that.  
Let's try playing the music loud (or soft, fast, slow).  
Can you try this?  
How does this music make you feel?  
Have you heard music like this before? Where?

### *Drum City* by Thea Guidone.

Invite the children to find materials around the classroom that can be used to make sounds or music. Invite them to explore the sounds the materials make.

*PK.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences*

### **Music by Me:**

Invite children to use different body parts to make music such as clapping hands, tapping feet, snapping fingers and using their mouths to make loud, soft, fast and slow songs and rhythms.

*PK.ARTS.8. [MU:Cr1-3.PK] Creates Music*

### **Practice:**

Invite children to play the instruments they created in the art area. Encourage them to pay close attention to the way the instrument sounds and consider ways to make it sound louder or softer.

*PK.CKW.2 (Science): Tests predictions through exploration and experimentation.*

### **Water Xylophone:**

Create a water xylophone by pouring varying amounts of water into empty, clean baby food jars (or similar type of jar). Demonstrate how to gently strike the jars and encourage children to listen to the sounds produced. Additionally, consider adding food color to the water in the jars calling attention to the water level in each.

*PK.SCI.3. [P-PS4-1.] Plans and conducts investigations to provide evidence that sound is produced by vibrating materials*

### **Rain:**

Invite children to make a rainstorm with bodies. For example, they might rub their hands together, tap their fingers, stomp their feet, clap loudly, etc. to represent the sounds heard in a rainstorm.

*PK.ARTS.1. [DA:Cr1-3.PK] Creates Dance*

✓ **Opportunity for Assessment:** How does the child use their body to create a rainstorm? Which elements of a rainstorm do they express? What actions do they use to express these elements?

### **Freeze Dance:**

Play different kinds of music and encourage the children to dance freely or copy movements. Pause the music at various points and encourage students to "FREEZE!" when they hear the music stop.

*PK.PDH.2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements*

### **Simon Says:**

Invite children to play Simon Says. Give directions for touching their noses, ears, mouth and eyes, but only if "Simon" says!

*PK.PDH.2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements*

## V. Foundational and Supporting Texts

Books are essential to a well-planned unit and ground the learning experiences for children. Engage children with books throughout the day. Read alouds can occur in large group and small group as well as in centers. Books can be incorporated throughout the room and enhance children’s learning through play. Some books are read repeatedly throughout the unit. Some books will be read only once or twice throughout the unit; these are supporting texts. Supporting texts compliment focus questions and areas of interest or may be related to the essential question or enduring understandings of the unit. Select the books that seem most relevant to your classroom community. Additionally, the following list is not exhaustive and can be supplemented by similar books. Not only can these books be read aloud both formally and informally, but children should also be able to access and read these books on their own. Allowing children access to classroom books encourages children to display emergent reading behaviors and address *PK.CLL.4 (Reading Standards: Foundational Skills): Displays emergent reading behaviors with purpose and understanding (e.g., pretend reading).*

*\*Books with an asterisk are also available in languages other than English*

### Foundational Texts

***Windows*** by Julia Denos: Walking his dog at dusk, a boy catches glimpses of the lives around him.

***Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!*** by Wynton Marsalis: A rollicking, clanging, clapping tour through the many sounds that fill a neighborhood.

***Thank you, Omu!*** by Oge Mora: Everyone in the neighborhood dreams of a taste of Omu’s delicious stew.

***Singing in the Rain***, by Tim Hopgood (Illustrator): I’m singing in the rain, just singing in the rain!

### How to Use Foundational Texts

When you have a text that draws the interest of the children in your class, consider one or more of the following techniques for reading the book multiple times to extend children's thinking:

- Take a "picture walk" through the book the first time you read it by just showing the pictures and asking the children what they see and what they think the book is about.
- Consider reading the book once without pausing so that children hear the cadence of the words and hear the story in its entirety.
- Model skills readers use to gain greater understanding of content by thinking aloud about the meaning of a word in context or drawing a conclusion based on prior knowledge.

- Write down and post children’s responses to questions with more than one possible answer.
- Ask children to make predictions based on what they know so far and ask them to explain their thinking.
- Pause throughout the book and ask children to share a new word or idea they heard and explain it using familiar words or contexts.
- Invite children to make connections between the book and their own life experiences.
- Brainstorm potential solutions to a problem a character might be facing.
- Ask children what the character could do differently or ask them what they might do if they were in the place of the main character.
- As the book becomes familiar to the children, ask for volunteers to "read" it to you or small groups of children, letting them describe the pictures and the story in their own words.
- Compare and contrast books with similar content, themes or structures.
- Preview or review texts or parts of texts (particularly vocabulary) for children who need additional language or learning support.
- As children become more familiar with the story or information, use this as the beginning of extension activities like acting out a story, painting or drawing something inspired by the text, or creating puppet shows.

## Supporting Texts

***Bilal Cooks Daal*** by Aisha Saeed: Bilal wants to introduce his friends to his favorite, tasty dish: daal!

***Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses*** by Jane Brocket: Explore the world using your senses through vibrant photography.

***Dinosaur Rap*** by John Foster: Go on a rhythmic romp through the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous eras.

***Drum City*** by Leah Guidone: What begins with one boy's beat on a kettle soon spreads to pots, and pans, and cartons, and cans all across the neighborhood.

***\*Drum Dream Girl*** by Margarita Engle: Girls cannot be drummers. Long ago on an island filled with music and rhythm, no one questioned that rule—until the drum dream girl.

***Don't Touch My Hair!*** By Sharee Miller: Even if it looks so soft, fluffy, and bouncy that you *really* want to touch it, it is always important to ask permission before touching someone's hair.

***Handa's Noisy Night*** by Eileen Browne: When Handa sleeps over at her friend Akeyo's house, she hears lots of strange sounds in the night.

***Hearing*** by Helen Frost: An introduction to the sense of hearing and how it works in the human body.

***How Do You Wokka-Wokka?*** by Elizabeth Bluemle: Some days you wake up and you just gotta wokka.

***Listen to the City*** by Rachel Isadora: Pop art and simple text describe a noisy day in the city.

***Max Found Two Sticks*** by Brian Pinkney: Max picks up two sticks and begins tapping out the rhythms of everything he sees and hears around him.

***Moses Goes to a Concert*** by Isaac Millman: Moses and his school friends are deaf, but like most children, they have a lot to say.

***Priya Dreams of Marigolds and Masala*** by Menena Cottin: Priya feels the magic of the place her family comes from through her Babi Ba's colorful descriptions of India— from the warm smell of spices to the swish-swish sound of a rusting sari.

***Rainbow Joe and Me*** by Maria Diaz Strom: Eloise shares her love of colors with her blind friend Rainbow Joe, who makes his own colors when he plays beautiful notes on his saxophone.

***Seeing*** by Helen Frost: An introduction to the sense of sight and how it works in the human body.

***\*Skip Through the Seasons*** by Stella Blackstone: Whirl through the year as the months fly by!

***Smelling*** by Helen Frost: An introduction to the sense of smell and how it works in the human body.

***Tap Tap Boom Boom*** by Elizabeth Bluemle: The clouds are gathering above a city street and soon—tap, tap, boom, boom!

***Tasting*** by Helen Frost: An introduction to the sense of taste and how it works in the human body.

***\*The Black Book of Colors*** by Menena Cottin: Raised black line drawings on black paper, which can be deciphered by touch, and Braille letters to accompany the text, give the sighted reader an opportunity to begin to imagine what it is like to use Braille to read.

***\*The Cow That Went Oink*** by Bernard Most: A cow that “oinks” teaches a pig to do the same.

***This Beach is Loud!*** by Samantha Cotterill: Going to the beach can be exciting. But it can also be busy. And *loud*. Sand can feel hot or itchy or sticky and it gets *everywhere!*

***Touching*** by Helen Frost: Explore the sense of touch.

***\*What's Cooking at 10 Garden Street?*** by Felicitia Sala: Something delicious is cooking in the old apartment building on Garden Street.

***What's Your Favorite Food?*** By Eric Carle and Friends: Everybody has a favorite food. Some enjoy sweet treats, other prefer savory.

## VI. Inquiry and Critical Thinking Questions for Foundational Texts

Critical thinking skills are foundational to learning and educational success.

These questions are based around Webb’s Depth of Knowledge Wheel<sup>1</sup>, which provides a vocabulary and critical thinking frame of reference when thinking about our children and how they engage with unit content.

Re-read foundational texts throughout the unit, starting with Level 1 questions, and adding more complex questions each time you read them.

### **Windows by Julia Denos**

*PK.ELAL.7 [PKR.3] Develops and answers questions about characters, major events, and pieces of information in a text.*

#### **Level 1: Recall**

What are some things the book says you might see if you take a neighborhood walk in the almost-night?

What does the book suggest you do if you see a dark, empty window when you’re out walking?

#### **Level 2: Skill/Concept**

What are some things you see when you take a walk near your home/pre-K?

What sense are you using when you use your eyes to look around for things on a walk?

#### **Level 3: Strategic Thinking**

What might people see in our classroom if they noticed our windows here?

If our classroom windows were dark and you couldn’t see inside, what story might you tell about it?

#### **Level 4: Extended Thinking**

How does our sense of sight help us learn about our world?

The boy in this story learns about his neighborhood by observing the windows in the homes near him.

What are some other ways he could learn about his neighborhood?

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<sup>1</sup> <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/522E69CC-02E3-4871-BC48-BB575AA49E27/o/WebbsDOK.pdf>

***Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!* by Wynton Marsalis**

*PK.AC.1. Demonstrates motivation to communicate*

**Level 1: Recall**

What are some of the things in this book that make noise?

What are some of the sounds you heard in this book?

**Level 2: Skill/Concept**

We often use our voices for talking. This is one way we can make sound. What are some other ways we can use our bodies to make sound?

What part of your body do you use to hear?

**Level 3: Strategic Thinking**

In this book, there are instruments that make noise, vehicles that make noise, and things at the boy’s home that make noise. What are some things in our classroom that make noise?

The boy in this book has an alarm clock. His alarm clock ticks and makes a “tlick-tlock” sound. Do you use know anyone who uses an alarm clock? Who? How can alarm clocks be helpful?

**Level 4: Extended Thinking**

Sounds can make us feel different ways. Some sounds might make us feel happy. A sound that makes me feel happy is \_\_\_\_\_. What are some things that make you feel happy? Sad? Excited?

This book is called Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!: A Sonic Adventure. What is an adventure? Why do you think the author of this book called it an “adventure?”

***Thank you, Omu!* by Oge Mora**

*PK.ELAL.5. [PKR.1.] Participates in discussions about a text*

**Level 1: Recall**

What did Omu make for dinner?

Who did Omu share her stew with?

**Level 2: Skill/Concept**

How did everyone know Omu was making something delicious?

What part of your body do you use to smell?

**Level 3: Strategic Thinking**

Why do you think Omu shared her stew with everyone?

How do you think Omu felt when she was ready to eat dinner and discovered the stew was all gone?

**Level 4: Extended Thinking**

Why do you think everyone who had some of Omu’s stew came back to her apartment with food to share with her for dinner?

Why did Omu think the dinner she had at the end of the book was the best dinner ever?

## ***Singing in the Rain!* Illustrated by Tim Hopgood**

*PK.AC.2. Demonstrates they are building background knowledge*

### **Level 1: Recall**

What are the people in this book doing in the rain?

What are the people in this book wearing while they are out in the rain?

### **Level 2: Skill/Concept**

What sense do you use when you feel water?

What would happen if you stood outside in the rain with no raincoat or umbrella?

### **Level 3: Strategic Thinking**

How do the people in this book feel about being out in the rain? How do you know?

How do you feel about going outside in the rain and getting wet? Why?

### **Level 4: Extended Thinking**

How might it feel on your skin if you are outside and it is raining just a little bit- if it is *sprinkling*?

How might it feel on your skin if you are outside and it is raining very hard- if it is *pouring rain*?

## VII. Sample Weekly Plan

On the following pages you will find a sample weekly lesson plan. Use the additional information included in the unit to create detailed weekly plans for each focus question in the unit. Plans will reflect individual schedules, students’ and families’ needs, school context, etc. Please note, for this unit we are introducing the daily schedule and rules development in Week Two. You may want to address one or both of these activities in Week One, depending on your children’s needs.

### Quick Tips for Small Group:

1. Use exciting language and affect to describe the small group activity.
2. Use hands-on materials that children are encouraged to explore.
3. Preview small group activities in whole group.
4. Link the activity to children’s previous experiences

If children decline to participate...

Have a private conversation with the child as they play to understand why they did not want to join. Take that into consideration and adjust the small group materials to reflect the needs of the child.

Modify the small group activity so that you can do it with the materials that the child is using in the center of their choice.

Facilitate a conversation between the child and a friend who enjoyed the small group activity to generate excitement about the activity.

### WEEK FOUR

#### Essential Question: How do we use our senses to explore, investigate and understand the world around us?

Focus Question: How do we use our sense of touch?

Focus Vocabulary: *dry, feel, fingers, hard, pouring, raincoat, rough, skin, smooth, soft, sprinkling, texture, touch, umbrella, water, wet*

Week 4	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Greeting Routine	Continue to supply a table with child-sized pencils, crayons or other writing tools, half sheets of paper or large chart paper, and the basket of name/picture cards for each child (laminated cards with each child’s picture and first name, with the first letter in red). Some children may still need you to model how to “sign in,” (if family members or caregivers are present, they can help) while others may be ready to start exploring the first sound in their names. Continue to <b>encourage any mark</b> children make according to each child’s needs but be prepared to help children who are ready for an additional challenge by adding the first letter of their last name or encouraging them to look closely at the model letters on their name card to improve accuracy. This activity can be done as children arrive or later in the day. As you encourage and help children, emphasize the initial sound of the children’s names and other letters that children are				

interested in.					
<p><b>Large Group Meeting</b></p> <p><i>In order to reduce the amount of time that children spend in large group and ensure that children have enough time to engage in meaningful play, teachers should think strategically about other large group activities and whether they are essential to the day.</i></p>	<p>Read, <b><i>Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses</i></b> by Jane Brocket, then sing the following song:</p> <p>My eyes can see, My ears can hear, My skin can touch... So, so much, My tongue can taste, My nose can smell, My 5 senses work really well!</p> <p>Eyes? Sight! Ears? Hear! Skin? Touch! So-so much! Tongue? Taste Nose? Smell!</p> <p>I know the senses oh so well!</p> <p><i>PK.SEL.6. Understands and follows routines and rules</i></p>	<p>Introduction to TOUCH and the role of hands, feet and skin in touching.</p> <p>Review the song, "My Eyes Can See" which was introduced yesterday. Tell children you are going to learn more about the sense of touch for the next couple of days.</p> <p>Give each child an object (any small manipulative or object is fine). Ask them to touch it with their fingers and describe what they feel. Next, ask them to move the object across the back of their hand (demonstrate). Do they feel anything? Describe what they feel. Ask them to move the object across their forehead. Can they feel that? What do they feel? Depending on children's interest and attention span repeat on other parts of the body (i.e. arms, ankle, etc.). Summarize by pointing out that we</p>	<p>Introduction to TEXTURES/FEEL</p> <p>Ask children to put their hands on their heads. What do they feel? Repeat with other surfaces children can easily reach while in group (floor, elbow, shirt, etc.). Compare and contrast the way the different surfaces feel.</p> <p>Categorize and chart answers, modeling writing each child's name next to their response to encourage name recognition.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements</i></p>	<p>Sing or chant:</p> <p>My skin gives me My sense of touch, Hot or cold, Smooth and rough... Hard or soft, Hand or heel, It's my skin, That lets me feel <u>(something hard, soft, smooth, rough, etc.)</u></p> <p>Fill in the blanks with textures children can find in the classroom. Invite them to find something in the room that is hard, soft, smooth, rough, etc.</p> <p><i>PK.AL.5. Demonstrates persistence</i></p>	<p>Sing the clean hands song:</p> <p>Tops and bottoms Tops and bottoms In between In between All around my hands All around my hands Make them clean Make them clean</p> <p>Discuss with children why we need to keep our hands (and our skin in general) clean. Remind children that when we use our sense of touch, especially when we touch with our fingers, we can get germs on our hands that could make us sick.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.7. Demonstrates personal care and hygiene skills</i></p>

<p><b>Large Group Meeting</b></p>		<p>use our hands to touch things but that our skin all over our body helps us feel things.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning</i></p>								
<p><b>BB Whole Group</b> See your Building Blocks Teacher's Edition for Whole Group Activities</p>										
<p><b>Foundational Text</b> <i>Singing in the Rain</i> by Tim Hopgood (Illustrator):</p>										
<p><b>Supporting Text</b></p> <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width:16.6%;"><i>Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses</i> by Jane Brocket</td> <td style="width:16.6%;"><i>Touching</i> by Helen Frost</td> <td style="width:16.6%;"><i>Don't Touch My Hair!</i> By Sharee Miller</td> <td style="width:16.6%;"><i>This Beach is Loud!</i> by Samantha Cotterill</td> <td style="width:16.6%;"><i>Tap Tap Boom Boom</i> by Elizabeth Bluemle:</td> </tr> </table>						<i>Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses</i> by Jane Brocket	<i>Touching</i> by Helen Frost	<i>Don't Touch My Hair!</i> By Sharee Miller	<i>This Beach is Loud!</i> by Samantha Cotterill	<i>Tap Tap Boom Boom</i> by Elizabeth Bluemle:
<i>Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses</i> by Jane Brocket	<i>Touching</i> by Helen Frost	<i>Don't Touch My Hair!</i> By Sharee Miller	<i>This Beach is Loud!</i> by Samantha Cotterill	<i>Tap Tap Boom Boom</i> by Elizabeth Bluemle:						
<p><b>Small Groups</b> Implement at least one of the two weekly Building Blocks small group activities and at least one of the other activities listed here.</p>	<p>LITERACY SMALL GROUP</p> <p>Read <i>Cold, Crunchy, Colorful: Using Our Senses</i> by Jane Brocket. Look at the pictures with the children. Ask them which item pictured they would most like to touch, taste, see, etc. and ask them to think of other things they like to touch, see, hear, etc. and why.</p> <p>Model writing each child's name on a page, emphasizing the first letter of their first name and the sound that it makes. Have the</p>	<p>MATH SMALL GROUP</p> <p>See your Building Blocks Teacher's Edition for the weekly Small Group Activity.</p> <p>Write children's initials below:</p> <p>Group 1:</p> <p>Group 2:</p> <p>Group 3:</p>	<p>SMALL GROUP #3</p> <p>Invite children to go on a scavenger hunt in the classroom to find something hard, soft, rough, smooth, etc.</p> <p><i>PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning</i></p> <p>See page 55 for lesson plan</p> <p>Write children's initials below:</p> <p>Group 1:</p> <p>Group 2:</p>	<p>See your Building Blocks Teacher's Edition for the weekly Small Group Activity.</p> <p>Write children's initials below:</p> <p>Group 1:</p> <p>Group 2:</p> <p>Group 3:</p>	<p>CATCH-UP DAY</p> <p>Use this as an opportunity to complete small groups with children you may have missed throughout the week.</p> <p>Children to work with today (initials):</p>					

<p><b>Small Groups</b></p> <p><i>Small groups can be implemented during center time or at another time during the day. Invite 2-4 children to participate at a time. Although children are typically excited about the opportunity to work closely with a teacher, children may decline the opportunity to participate. Each small group should not exceed 10 minutes in length. Work with a couple of groups per day and spend the remainder of the time engaging with children in the interest areas.</i></p>	<p>children draw some of the items they would like to touch, taste, see, etc. on their page.</p> <p><i>PK.ELAL.14. [PKW.2] Uses a combination of drawing, dictating, oral expression, and/or emergent writing to name a familiar topic and supply information in child-centered, authentic, play-based learning</i></p> <p>Write children’s initials below:</p> <p>Group 1:</p> <p>Group 2:</p> <p>Group 3:</p> <p>Group 4:</p> <p>Group 5:</p>	<p>Group 4:</p> <p>Group 5:</p>	<p>Group 3:</p> <p>Group 4:</p> <p>Group 5:</p>	<p>Group 4:</p> <p>Group 5:</p>	
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<b>Outdoors</b>	See Section IV, Ideas for Learning Centers.				
<b>Lunch</b>	As you eat with the children, discuss the foods they are eating. Which ones are hard? Soft? Mushy? Crunchy? Etc.				
<b>Centers</b>	See Section IV, Ideas for Learning Centers.				
<b>Opportunities for differentiation and integration of goals for children with IEPs</b>	To be completed as needed by teachers.				
<b>Differentiation for children whose home language is a language other than English.</b>	To be completed as needed by teachers.				

## VIII. Student Work Samples

Below are examples of student work from activities in this unit. Note the alignment to standards and the relationship to the focus question and NYSPLS standard. Some examples may fit under more than one standard and/or focus question.

### Example 1: Leaf Rubbing

Activity Type: Small Group

NYSPLS Standard: *PK.SCI.4. [P-LS1-1.] Observes familiar plants and animals (including humans) and describes what they need to survive*



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*"I used three leaves. I made the big one green, the little one is red and the other one is orange!"*

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## Example 2: Collections of Found Materials

Activity Type: Small Group

NYSPLS Standard: PK.SCI.5. [P-LS1-2.] *Participates in investigations to determine how familiar plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive in the environment*



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*I found a whole bunch of things outside! I found some sticks, some rocks and some leaves. The big rock is really bumpy. I put all the leaves together. They are all different colors but they are all leaves.*

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*"Now I decided to sort my leaves. I put the brown leaves over there. The yellow leaves here and the green leaves right here."*

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## IX. Family Engagement

### Early Childhood Framework for Quality

*EFO 4: High quality programs promote families' role as primary caregivers, teachers, and advocates*

### Sample Family Letter

Dear Room 4 Pre-K for All Families,

We hope you enjoyed our second unit of study, My Five Senses. Pre-K children naturally use their senses to explore the world around them. In this Unit, your child had the opportunity to develop a wide variety of skills by using his/her senses in hands on learning and play. Together we worked on developing children's abilities to take in information about the world through sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. We took walks around the neighborhood, went on scavenger hunts and engaged in many other activities where children used their senses. Children are active learners; they have been exploring their environment through their senses since birth. We encourage the children to see themselves as scientists and to make observations and predictions using the information that they take in through their senses.

We also used our senses to stay safe and talked about this throughout the study. We learned about being careful and remembering not to touch sharp objects, things that are hot or things that are very dirty and might make us sick. You can help with this! Ask your child about some of the things outside of school or at home that are too dangerous to touch. How do we use our senses of sight, smell and hearing to stay safe?

In addition to staying safe, we talked about how to keep our hands, feet and skin clean and healthy. One way we do that in our pre-K program is by washing our hands before eating, after playing outside or after touching things that are dirty. We learned a new song to help remind us how to wash hands. You might want to sing it with your child:

*Tops and bottoms, tops and bottoms, in between, in between,  
All around my hands, all around my hands, make them clean, make them clean!*

We also talked to the children about how life might be different for people who do not see or hear well. We talked about Braille, for example, and introduced a few words in sign language.

Here is a list of some of the key vocabulary words that we learned in this unit of study. We encourage you to use these words with your children as appropriate: •Braille •blind •deaf •ears •eyes •hear •listen •mouth •nose •predict •quiet •safe •see •senses •smell •taste •touch

We hope you have a wonderful weekend and look forward to seeing you again on Monday!

Ms. J and Mr. P

## X. Supporting Resources

### Teacher Texts

- The Ooey Gooley Handbook* by Lisa Murphey
- Ooey Gooley Tooley* by Lisa Murphey
- The Cooking Book: Fostering Young Children's Learning and Delight* by Laura J. Colker

### Teacher Websites

- American Museum of Natural History: [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org)
- Children's Museum of Manhattan: [www.cmom.org](http://www.cmom.org)
- New York City Parks Department: [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org)
- Metropolitan Museum of Art: <http://www.metmuseum.org/>

### Music: Songs with Lyrics

These are common preschool songs sung by teachers throughout New York City and the world. Where possible, tunes and lyrics are included. If you don't know the tune, you can make one up that works for you or chant the words to a beat. Disclaimer: the lyrics provided are only for use by classroom teachers and are provided for the specific, non-profit educational purpose of supporting interdisciplinary learning in your classroom.

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#### Here Are My Eyes

Here are my eyes, one and two.  
 I give a wink and so can you.  
 When they're open, I see the light  
 When they're closed, it's dark as night.  
 I have a little body that belongs to me,  
 I have two ears (tap them) to hear with and two eyes to see.  
 I have a nose (tap) for smelling, and a mouth (tap) to eat.  
 I have two hands (wave) to wave at everyone I meet!

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#### My Senses are a Part of Me

My senses are a part of me  
 A nose (point) to smell and eyes (point) to see. Ears (point) to hear and hands (wiggle fingers) to touch,  
 A tongue (point) to taste good food and such.  
 My senses are a part of me  
 Working all in harmony (hug body).

---

#### I Like My Senses

My eyes (point) can see the big bright sun  
 My nose (point) can smell hot cinnamon buns  
 My ears (point) can hear the big loud drum  
 My tongue (stick out) can taste good things, yum!  
 Yum!  
 My feet (stomp feet) can feel the sand, what fun!  
 I like my senses every one!

---

#### It's Time to Clean Up

It is time to clean up now.  
 Clean up, clean up, we know how.  
 We can clean up; you will see  
 Just how clean our room can be.

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### We Are Cleaning

We are cleaning, cleaning, cleaning  
Cleaning, cleaning, cleaning.

We are cleaning, cleaning, cleaning  
Cleaning up our room.

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### We Welcome You to School Today

We welcome you to school today,  
school today, school today.

We welcome you to school today,  
Please come in and play.

We're glad to have you here today,  
Here today, here today.

We're glad to have you here today.  
Yes, it's a special day!

---

### Time to Put The Toys Away

It's time to put the (toys) away.

It's time to put the (toys) away.

It's time to put the (toys) away.

So we can go (outside).

*\*Consider using other items such as a rain stick, bell or  
playing music to alert children to clean up time.*

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### Good Morning to You

Good morning to you, good morning to you.

Good morning everybody, good morning to you.

*Sung to the tune of "Happy Birthday."*

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### Additional Song Titles

*Willaby Wallaby Woo*

*Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*

*Mi Cuerpo Hace Música*

*Little Miss Muffet*

*Baa, Baa, Black Sheep*

*Down, Down Baby*

## XI. Foundational Learning Experiences: Lesson Plans

**Documentation:** Based on the Focus Question, Objective, and Focus Standard as well as the Authentic Assessment items, teaching teams will determine what they hope to see children do in an activity. They should take notes as children are working to record the skills and growth children demonstrate. For the lesson plans included in this unit, a note-taking form is included.

### Lesson: Sight Walk

**Type: Large Group Activity**

<b>Unit of Study: My Five Senses</b>	<b>Focus Question: How do we use our sense of sight?</b>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Children will be to describe what they see, using as much descriptive language as possible. Children will be able to describe how they stay safe on neighborhood walks.</p>	
<p><b>NYSPLS Focus Standard:</b> <i>PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning.</i></p> <p><b>Additional NYSPLS Standards:</b> <i>PK.PDH.9. Demonstrates awareness and understanding of safety rules</i> <i>PK.AC.4. Demonstrates a growing receptive vocabulary</i></p>	<p><b>Link to Authentic Assessment Systems</b></p> <p>WWS: IV.D.1: Observes the sky and the natural and human-made objects in it</p> <p>TSG: 27: Demonstrates knowledge of Earth’s environment</p> <p>COR: DD: Natural and physical world</p>
<p><b>Materials:</b> Paper, crayons and other drawing tools</p> <p><i>Seeing</i> by Helen Frost</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary:</b> eyes, eyesight, safe, see, view, vision</p>
<p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p><b>Hook:</b> Show the children the cover of the book, <i>Seeing</i> by Helen Frost. Highlight how the children on the cover are using their eyes.</p> <p><b>Beginning:</b> Introduce that today we will go on a walk and use OUR eyes to see and note what we find. Ask children for 2-3 ideas of things they might see (buildings, cars, trees, etc.). Remind the children that they need to be safe on the walk. Gather 3-5 ideas about how to be safe, such as holding hands with an adult and/or your partner,</p>	

staying on the sidewalk, staying with the group, listening for directions by the teacher, or stopping at the crosswalk. Write these safety rules on chart paper as the children generate the ideas.

**Middle:**

Transition to outside, making sure that you have enough adults with you and reminding children of safety rules, as needed.

Ask children to describe what they see, highlighting words that describe color, shape, size, etc.

**End:**

As you return to the classroom, name, or ask children to name, ways that they stayed safe outside.

Ask children to name a few things that they saw on their walk, using descriptive words as much as possible.

Provide crayons and other drawing tools and paper, and encourage children to draw one thing they saw on their walk.

Later, bind the drawings into a book and place in the library area.

**Assessment:** What is the child able to see and describe? What types of descriptive language does the child use to describe what they see?

**Differentiation:** Consider multiple entry points for all children to be successful. How do I/we plan to meet individual student needs? For example, repeat directions, extend time, adapt materials, preview questions, and provide 1:1 support.

**For children who need additional support:** Take pictures on the walk to provide visual cues for children who may not be able to recall what they saw.

**For children who are ready for a challenge:** On the walk, challenge children by introducing the "I spy" game, using only one descriptor. For example, "I spy with my little eye, something red" and have them guess what it is.

**Children with IEPs:** How will I incorporate individual children's IEP goals into this lesson? What specific accommodations or modifications will I make? How will I collaborate with SEIT and/or related service providers?

**Children whose home language is a language other than English:** What language is needed to understand the lesson and activity instructions and to participate in the activity and discussion?

Scaffold language for comprehension by preparing visuals in advance (either photos or drawings) of items children might see on the walk. Include items that represent the season (for example leaves, trees, acorns) and safety (crosswalk, stop sign, holding hands). Show the visuals before the walk and ask questions to check for understanding and promote language development.

**Teacher Tip:** The last part of this lesson can be done later in the day, depending on your schedule and the needs of your children.

**Teacher Reflection:** What went well? Why? What will I do differently given what I have learned from observing children during this activity? Which children needed differentiation during this activity and how will I meet their needs moving forward?

## Assessment Opportunity

Large Group Experience: Sight Walk

NYSPLS Focus Standard:

*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning*

Authentic Assessment Alignment:

WSS: IV.D.1: Observes the sky and the natural and human-made objects in it

TSG: 27: Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment

COR: DD: Natural and physical world

Child's name	Sees and describes	Descriptive language used	Notes

Child's name	Sees and describes	Descriptive language used	Notes

# Lesson: Listening Walk

Type: Small Group Activity

<p><b>Unit of Study:</b> My Five Senses</p>	<p><b>Focus Question:</b> How do we use our sense of hearing?</p>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Children will be able to describe sounds that they hear.</p>	
<p><b>NYSPLS Focus Standard:</b>  <i>PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences</i></p> <p><b>Additional NYSPLS Standards:</b>  <i>PK ELAL 24 [PKSL.6] Expresses thoughts, feelings and ideas</i>  <i>PK.CKW.4 (Science): Observes and describes characteristics of earth and space</i></p>	<p><b>Link to Authentic Assessment Systems:</b>  WSS: IV.D.1: Observes the sky and the natural and human-made objects in it  TSG: 27: Demonstrates knowledge of Earth’s environment  COR: DD: Natural and physical world</p>
<p><b>Materials:</b>  Dry Leaves</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary:</b>  crunch, ears, foliage, hear, listen, loud, predictions, quiet, sound  Additional vocab word children may enjoy: crackle</p>
<p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p><b>Hook:</b> Tell the children to close their eyes and listen for a special sound. Crunch dry leaves and ask them to guess what the sound is. Ask them to open their eyes, show the leaves and ask if their predictions were correct.</p> <p><b>Beginning:</b>  Ask the children when and where they might find dry leaves. Tell them this is a sound we often hear outside in the fall.  Let them know that you will go on a listening walk together. Ask for a few predictions about what else they might hear outside.  Remind the children that they need to be safe on the walk. Gather 3-5 ideas about how to be safe, such as hold hands with an adult and/or your partner, stay on the sidewalk, stay with the group, listen for directions by the teacher, stop at the crosswalk.</p> <p><b>Middle:</b>  Transition to outside, making sure that you have enough adults with you and reminding children of safety rules, as needed.</p>	

Ask children to describe what they hear along the way, stopping to listen at 2-3 points.

**End:**

As you return to the classroom, name, or ask children to name, ways that they stayed safe outside.

Ask children to name a few things that they heard on the walk, using descriptive words as much as possible.

**Assessment:** How does the child approach this walk? Are they interested, willing and/or able to focus on listening during this walk? How do they handle this experience?

**Differentiation:** Consider multiple entry points for all children to be successful. How do I/we plan to meet individual student needs? For example, repeat directions, extend time, adapt materials, preview questions, and provide 1:1 support.

**For children who need additional support:** Allow children who need extra support to walk with a teacher or other adult.

**For children who are ready for a challenge:** Encourage children who excel with this activity to keep count of sounds they hear (i.e. number of horns they heard).

**Children with IEPs:** How will I incorporate individual children’s IEP goals into this lesson? What specific accommodations or modifications will I make? How will I collaborate with SEIT and/or related service providers?

**Children whose home language is a language other than English:** What language is needed to understand the lesson and activity instructions and to participate in the activity and discussion?

Scaffold language for listening comprehension by practicing listening to additional sounds before the walk. Have the children close their eyes and practice identifying sounds such as a siren, a baby crying, a dog barking, etc. You can use a prerecorded CD or create the sounds yourself.

**Teacher Tip:** If you are unable to access the recommended book, use pictures from other books or the internet for this activity.

**Teacher Reflection:** What went well? Why? What will I do differently, given what I have learned from observing children during this activity? Which children needed differentiation during this activity and how will I meet their needs moving forward?

## Assessment Opportunity

Small Group Experience: Expressions

NYSPLS Focus Standard

*PK.AL.4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness to learn new things and have new experiences*

Authentic Assessment Alignment

WSS: IV.D.1: Observes the sky and the natural and human-made objects in it

TSG: 27: Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment

COR: DD: Natural and physical world

Child's name	Interested, willing and able to focus on listening	Handles this experience	Notes

Child's name	Interested, willing and able to focus on listening	Handles this experience	Notes

# Lesson: Apple Tasting

Type: Small Group Activity

<p><b>Unit of Study:</b> My Five Senses</p>	<p><b>Focus Question:</b> How do we use our sense of taste? How do we use our sense of smell?</p>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Children will be able to express and record their preferences about apples.</p>	
<p><b>NYSPLS Focus Standard:</b>  <i>PK.ELAL.13 [PKW.1] Uses a combination of drawing, dictating, oral expression, and/or emergent writing to state an opinion about a familiar topic in child-centered, authentic, play-based learning</i></p> <p><b>Additional NYSPLS Standard:</b>  <i>PK SEL 2 Recognizes self as an individual having unique abilities, characteristics, feelings and interests</i></p>	<p><b>Link to Authentic Assessment Systems:</b>          WSS: II.D.3: Understands purposes for writing          TSG: 14: Uses symbols and images to represent something not present          COR: R: Writing</p>
<p><b>Materials:</b>          Various types of apples cut into slices (2-5 varieties).          Paper          Writing utensils (crayons, markers, colored pencils)</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary:</b>          flavor, mouth, nose, smell, taste, tongue</p>
<p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <p><b>Hook:</b> Show the children an apple. Ask if they think you could taste an apple with your ear. Could you smell the apple with your ear? If you want to smell the apple, what should you use? If you want to taste it, what should you use?</p> <p><b>Beginning:</b>          Tell children they will have the chance to smell and taste a few different types of apples.          Explain that they should think about how the apples smell and taste so they can write down which ones they like best after they have tried them.</p> <p><b>Middle:</b>          Show the varieties of apples that you have, name them, and have the children describe how they look.          Let children smell and taste each kind of apple</p>	

Reflect with the children on which apple they thought smelled best and which one tasted best.

**End:**

Assist children in recording their answers:

I like the smell of...

I like the taste of...

Allow any combination of writing, drawing or dictating. Highlight the first letters of their first name, and letters the children are interested in as they come up in children's work.

**Assessment:** How does the child record their preferences in written format? Are they using pictures, letter like marks, individual letters, etc.?

**Differentiation:** Consider multiple entry points for all children to be successful. How do I/we plan to meet individual student needs? For example, repeat directions, extend time, adapt materials, preview questions, and provide 1:1 support.

**For children who need additional support:** Some children may be allergic to, or uncomfortable smelling and tasting, apples. Provide an alternative selection for those who are allergic and allow children who are uncomfortable smelling and tasting the apples to record which one they think looks the best.

**For children who are ready for a challenge:** If children are ready, encourage them to write their responses and to begin to identify some of the sounds in the words they are writing.

**Children with IEPs:** How will I incorporate individual children's IEP goals into this lesson? What specific accommodations or modifications will I make? How will I collaborate with SEIT and/or related service providers?

**Children whose home language is a language other than English:** What language is needed to understand the lesson and activity instructions and to participate in the activity and discussion?

Scaffold language comprehension and production by introducing the word, "apple," in children's home languages. Have all children practice saying the word in other languages. You can also include colors such as red, green and yellow.

To assist with understanding of the silly juxtaposition of the wrong sense/body part, act out additional examples, like trying to taste an apple with your nose. Children whose home language is not English will benefit from repeated examples in order to understand the humor.

**Teacher Tip:** Pre-cut the apples before inviting children to participate to avoid wait time. Keep sharp knives away from children.

## Assessment Opportunity

Small Group Experience: Apple Tasting

**NYSPLS Focus Standard**

*PK.ELAL.13 [PKW.1] Uses a combination of drawing, dictating, oral expression, and/or emergent writing to state an opinion about a familiar topic in child-centered, authentic, play-based learning*

**Authentic Assessment Alignment**

WSS: II.D.3: Understands purposes for writing

TSG: 14: Uses symbols and images to represent something not present; 14a: Thinks symbolically; 6: Plans and then uses drawings, constructions, movements, and dramatizations to represent ideas

Child's name	Expresses preferences	Records preferences	Notes

Child's name	Expresses preferences	Records preferences	Notes

## Lesson: Touch Scavenger Hunt

Type: Small Group Activity

<b>Unit of Study: My Five Senses</b>	<b>Focus Question: How do we use our sense of touch?</b>
<b>Objective:</b> Children will be able to identify various textures through touch.	
<b>NYSPLS Focus Standard:</b> <i>PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning</i>  <b>Additional NYSPLS Standard:</b> <i>PK.AC.2. Demonstrates they are building background knowledge</i>	<b>Link to Authentic Assessment Systems:</b> WWS: VII.A.2: Coordinates combined movement patterns to perform simple tasks TSG: 11: Demonstrates positive approaches to learning COR: BB: Observing and classifying
<b>Materials:</b> This lesson can be implemented in any classroom using the furniture, materials and surfaces located throughout the space. Paper and writing tools.	<b>Vocabulary:</b> dry, feel, fingers, hard, rough, smooth, soft, texture, touch
<b>Procedure:</b> <b>Hook:</b> Ask children to warm up their fingers. Invite them to wiggle them, stretch them and get them ready to go hunting for things in the classroom. <b>Beginning:</b> Provide two contrasting materials; ask children to close their eyes, touch the materials and describe how they feel. <b>Middle:</b> Tell children you would like their help finding things in the classroom. Tell them you are looking for things that feel a certain way. Explain that you will tell them what to look for; they may walk around the room and use their fingers to find something that matches the texture for which you are looking. Suggest various textures, one at a time (focusing on textures from the vocabulary list) and invite children to look for them in the room. <b>End:</b>	

Reflect with the children on the textures they found with questions such as, “What did you find that was smooth?” “How did you know \_\_\_\_\_ was smooth?” and, “What did you think about touching that surface?” “If you could not see well, would being able to touch help you figure out what things are? Why?”

**Assessment:** What textures is the child able to see and describe? What types of descriptive language does the child use to describe what they feel?

**Differentiation:** Consider multiple entry points for all children to be successful. How do I/we plan to meet individual student needs? For example, repeat directions, extend time, adapt materials, preview questions, and provide 1:1 support

**For children who need additional support:** Some children may be uncomfortable touching items of various textures. Pair them with someone who is comfortable. Have the other child touch the surfaces and explain how they feel. Other children may not be able to locate the suggested textures in the room. Place items of various textures in a feely box (see description in the Science/Discovery portion of Section IV: Ideas for Learning Centers) and let children explore textures this way.

**For children who are ready for a challenge:** Pair this child with a child who is struggling to find appropriate textures in the classroom or is uncomfortable touching items of various textures. Allow this child to be the teacher and suggest textures for you to find in the classroom.

**Children with IEPs:** How will I incorporate individual children’s IEP goals into this lesson? What specific accommodations or modifications will I make? How will I collaborate with SEIT and/or related service providers?

**Children whose home language is a language other than English:** What language is needed to understand the lesson and activity instructions, and to participate in the activity and discussion?

Scaffold language by using contrasting descriptors: hard and soft, for example. You can say, “This is hard” and have children feel a hard object. Model, “This is soft,” and have them feel a soft object. Have them feel objects in partners and practice saying the words “hard” and “soft.” Continue with other contrasting descriptors such as “smooth/bumpy,” etc.

**Teacher Tip:** Think about how you will ask children about their reasons for choosing objects. Will you walk around and see what they have selected or stay in a central location and have conversations with them from a distance?

**Teacher Reflection:** What went well? Why? What will I do differently given what I have learned from observing children during this activity? Which children needed differentiation during this activity and how will I meet their needs moving forward?

## Assessment Opportunity

Small Group Experience: Touch Scavenger Hunt

NYSPLS Focus Standard  
*PK.PDH.1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning*

Authentic Assessment Alignment

WSS: VII.A.2: Coordinates combined movement patterns to perform simple task  
 TSG: 11: Demonstrates positive approaches to learning  
 COR: BB: Observing and classifying

Child's name	Identifies Textures	Uses descriptive language to describe textures	Notes

Child's name	Identifies Textures	Uses descriptive language to describe textures	Notes

## XII. Appendices

### Appendix A: Child Friendly Recipe Samples

When cooking with children in the classroom, use recipes that children can follow. Use words, symbols and pictures to help develop children's emerging literacy skills. Read the recipe and point to each step with the children as you support the cooking experience.

PK.ELAL.1. [PKRF.1.] Demonstrates understanding of the organization and basic features of print



## Appendix B: Cooking Safely in the Pre-K Classroom

When cooking in the classroom be sure to:

- Prevent children's access to sharp tools.
- Prevent children's access to hot objects (i.e. open flame, hotplate, oven, hot water).
- Be sure all cooking surfaces have been thoroughly cleaned and sanitized both before and after a cooking experience.
- Be sure all participants (adults and children) properly wash their hands before and after cooking as well as before sampling the finished product.
- Be mindful of children's food intolerances and allergies by connecting with families before you do cooking activities and explicitly teaching children how being aware of allergies keeps us safe.

## Appendix C: Recipes for Teachers

### Pumpkin Bread

#### Ingredients:

2 cups flour  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
¼ teaspoon baking powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 ½ cups sugar  
¾ cup vegetable oil  
3 large eggs  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
3 cups shredded fresh pumpkin  
1 cup toasted pumpkin seeds

#### Directions:

Preheat oven to 325° F

In a medium bowl, sift flour, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder and salt together.

In a large bowl, mix the sugar, vegetable oil, eggs and vanilla. Pour the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients and fold in the shredded pumpkin and pumpkin seeds.

After all of the ingredients are mixed well, pour into a non-stick (or greased and floured) 9x5x3 inch loaf pan.

Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until a toothpick, if inserted into the middle of the bread, comes out clean.

Cool for 15 minutes in pan then remove from pan and place on a cooling rack until completely cool.

To make muffins bake at 325° F for 30 minutes.

## Pumpkin Pasta Sauce

### Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil  
3 cloves crushed garlic  
1 onion finely chopped  
1 lb. cooked fresh pumpkin (or 2 cans pumpkin)  
1 cup very strong vegetable stock  
½ cup heavy cream  
Dash nutmeg  
Dash salt

### Directions:

Heat olive oil in pan. Add garlic and onions and sauté until clear.  
Add pumpkin and vegetable broth. Bring to a boil.  
Boil for 5 minutes then add heavy cream, nutmeg and salt. Wisk until smooth.  
Serve over pasta.