

Using Learning Centers to Enhance Economics and Personal Finance Instruction in the PreK-K Classroom

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An Orange in January

by Dianna Hutts Aston (ISBN-13: 978-0803731462)

Link to online lesson: https://www.stlouisfed.org/-/media/project/frbstl/stlouisfed/education/curriculum/pdf/kiddynamics-lesson-3-an-orange-in-january.pdf?sc_lang=en&hash=845C0BBCF-3FE74E72825E52B157507CB

Art

Instruct students to produce bookmarks and then use them to mark their place in a book so that they are both producers and consumers.

Supply halves and quarters of oranges, limes, and lemons at easels in your art center. Instruct students to paint with the fruit. Discuss colors, shapes, and scents of the fruit.

Dramatic Play

Set up a grocery store display with plastic fruit—including oranges—and a cash register with play money. Explain that some students will represent producers who stack shelves at the store and work as cashiers, and other students will represent consumers who purchase the goods in the store.

Mathematics

Design a game board where a producer (player) starts by planting and harvesting fruit, moves to transporting the fruit to the store, and ends with selling the fruit to a consumer—the goal being to sell the fruit to consumers to take home and eat. Students can roll a die or use a spinner and count the spaces to move from start to finish.

Science

Instruct students to squeeze the juice from oranges and freeze the juice in ice cube trays or small cups. Discuss the change from liquid to solid.

Little Critter: Just Saving My Money

by Mercer Mayer (ISBN-13: 978-0060835576)

Link to online lesson: <https://www.stlouisfed.org/-/media/project/frbstl/stlouisfed/files/pdfs/education/lessons/just-saving-my-money.pdf>

Art

Provide students with some pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters and distribute a coloring page that has a blank circle on it to each student. Tell them to look at what is shown on the front and back sides of the coins. Then instruct them to draw a picture of what they would choose to put on the front of a coin.

Instruct students to make coin rubbings by placing coins under a sheet of paper and using a crayon to rub over the paper.

Sensory Table

Put sand or corn meal in a sensory table and bury treasure (coins). Have piggy banks available. Tell students that as they discover the coins, they are to put them in the piggy banks.

Mathematics

Distribute the money from the piggy banks to students. Tell them to sort the money into categories (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters). Tell students to then stack the pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters to create a 3-D bar graph. Instruct them to describe the graph using math statements, such as the following: "There are more pennies than there are dimes." "There are fewer dimes than there are nickels."

Create pattern cards and tell students to place the appropriate coins in the circles to complete the pattern.

Science

Tell students to use a balance scale and place, for example, 10 quarters on one side and 10 pennies on the other. Instruct students to identify which side is heavier and then adjust the scale until it is balanced.

Monster Musical Chairs

by Stuart J. Murphy (ISBN-13: 978-0064467308)

Link to online lesson: <https://www.stlouisfed.org/-/media/project/frbstl/stlouisfed/education/lessons/pdf/monster-musical-chairs.pdf>

Art

Supply sponges, straws, glue, and paper in your art center. Instruct students to create monster pictures using the materials.

Blocks/Floor Area

Retell the *Monster Musical Chairs* story using painted blocks, monster pictures taped to blocks, or stuffed animals as monsters and blocks as chairs. Practice counting with students as you take away blocks and monsters. Remind students that the blocks represent goods and that there aren't enough for all of the monsters. Instruct students to describe what is happening using math statements, such as the following: "There are fewer goods than there are monsters." "There are three monsters but only two goods (chairs/blocks)."

Music

Play animal musical chairs. Provide cards with animal pictures on them in a bag and instruct each student to draw a card from the bag. Students will play musical chairs, but they must walk like/sound like the animal on the card. Each time you take away a chair, have students select a new animal card.

Sensory Table

Tape a copy of *Handout 3: Goods Cards* from the lesson (linked above) to a baking sheet. Cut apart another copy of Handout 3 and attach a magnet to each card. Find magnetic letters that are the first letter of each good on the handout. Place rice or beans in a sensory table. Hide the cards and the magnetic letters in the rice or beans. Instruct students to search for the goods cards and the letters and to match them/place them on the appropriate good on the baking sheet.

Mathematics

Design a game board like the one pictured on the following page of this activity. Each student will play as a monster. Tell students they will use a die or a spinner when it is their turn. They will then count the appropriate number of spaces forward. The first one to reach the good at the other end wins. Change the good pictured using cards from Handout 3 from the lesson.

