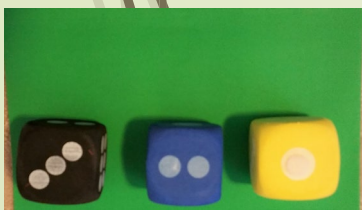


Play Games, Role-Play, Drama and Movement Activities to Build the Brain



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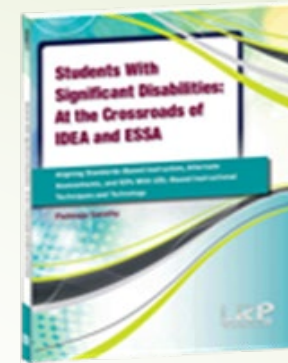
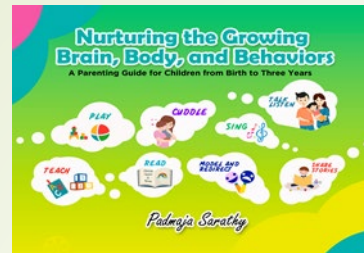
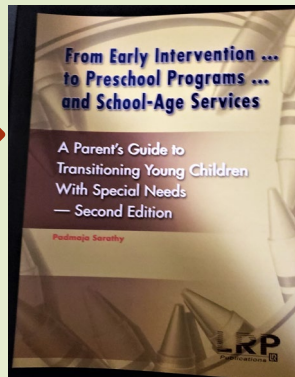


Learning Objectives



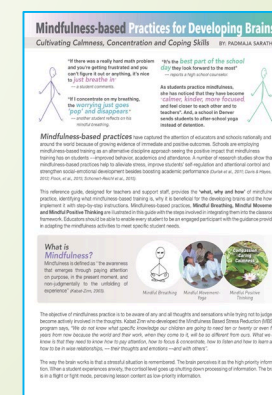
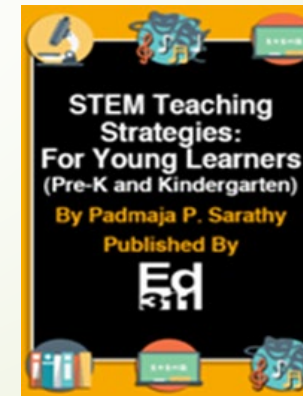
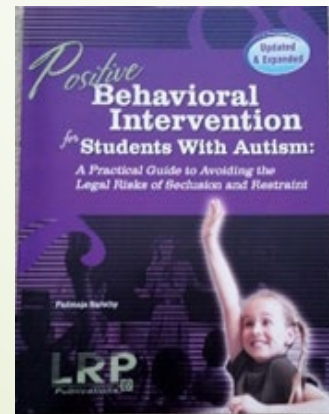
Engage, Enrich and Entertain

- This webinar session will discuss how to create a joyful learning environment and to hook young learners onto learning:
 - Gain skills in how to use a variety of games, role-play, music and movement activities into your daily routines in early childhood and early elementary settings
- Illustrate how to use the above activities help to build brains — strengthen attention, self-regulation and social skills of young learners.
 - How to link them with instructional content (language, math and science vocabulary and concepts.
 - And, exercise executive function skills — inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, and working memory.



➤ Sarathy's Publications: Books and Quick Reference Guides

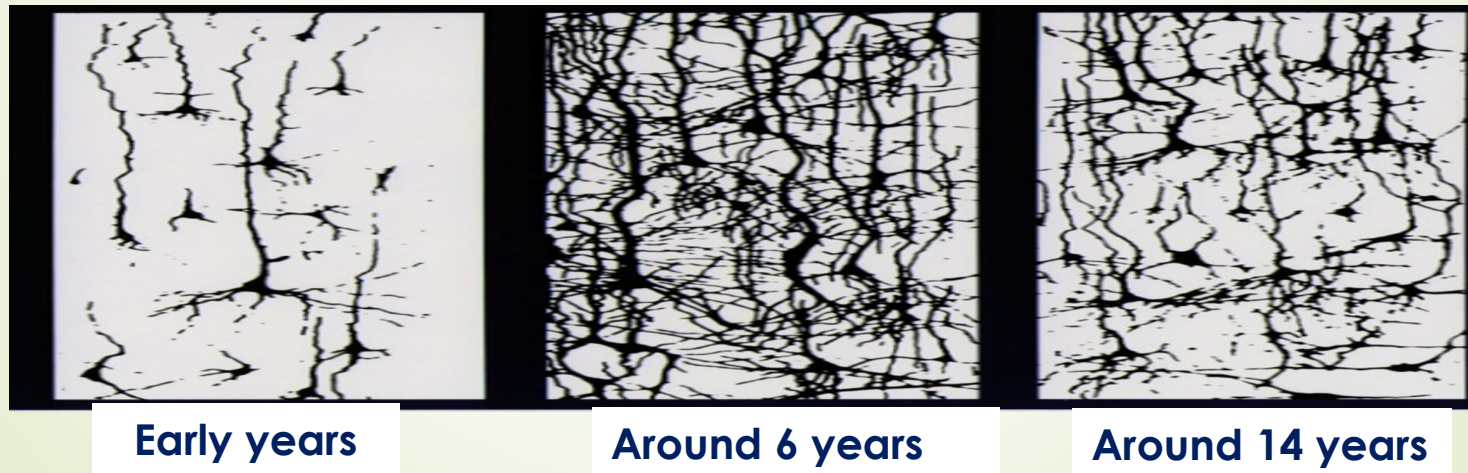
- Autism: Support Strategies & Interventions, Autism Seven Steps of Support; Music CD – Transitions
- Behavior Guide (Preventive and Positive Approaches), Mindfulness Guide
- Early Childhood: Transition; Parenting Guide; Executive Function - Early Years; and STEM Teaching Strategies
- Paraeducator Training Guide and DVD
- Severe and Multiple Disabilities; Significant Disabilities and ESSA



What Brain research tells us...

“Brain Architecture Is established early in life and supports lifelong learning, behavior, and health.”

- A child's brain develops at the fastest rate and in the most extraordinary ways in the first 2000 days ([www.http://www.first2000days.org/](http://www.first2000days.org/)). **1 million neural connections are formed per second in the early years.**
- The development of executive functions is an important area of growth during the preschool years along with the brain's rapid growth.
- Ensuring that young children have the right kinds of experiences can ensure that the neural connections that are growing are the ones they need to thrive.



Playing Games - How Does it Help?

I spy

- Games are highly motivating.
- Require children to pay attention
- Learn to wait to take turns
- Learn to adjust to changing rules
- Helps to reduce anxiety and stress levels (role-play, pretend games, movement activities, music); Movement releases endorphins and dopamine, lowers the level of stress hormones (cortisol and adrenaline) reducing stress level (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015)
- Study shows a positive relationship between physical activities and self-regulation (Piche et al, 2015)



♪ Musical Chairs ♪



?Guessing Games?

Executive Function – Strengthening Working Memory

Playing games exercises working memory - increases motivation for learning and to rehearse what they have learned.

- Mental math games, recalling and repeating a number or a word pattern, recalling a sequence in order, etc.
- Vocabulary games
- Card games and board games
 - Games that require monitoring and fast responses are great for challenging attention and quick decision-making in children.
- Strategy Games (e.g., Chess) and games involving physical movement

Games You Can Play

The Mystery Bag

- Place a number of items in a brown paper bag.
- Limit the number of items initially until the children get familiar with guessing/naming the items.
- Have children make a guess about what's in the bag.
- If a student guesses correctly, let the child hold the object.
- Continue until all the items have been named or stop if the students are showing signs of restlessness and losing interest.

The Purse Game

- Empty your purse (or a bag with a number of items). Name the items together.
 - Talk about ways you could group the items. Examples: By color, size, shape, & function.
 - Have children group the items by categories.

Games You Can Play (continued)

Guess how much, how long, how far, how many.

- Guess the number of steps from the classroom to the restroom, the play ground, to cafeteria, bus (or from your car to the store)
- Guess the number of M&Ms/Crackers in the bag (Cookies//French-fries).
- Guess the length and width of the table/carpet square/
- Verify guesses by counting/ measuring.

➤ I'm Thinking of a Word...

- that begins with /b/
- that rhymes with jar
- that's the opposite of cold
- that goes with peanut butter

Games You Can Play (continued)

Guess What It Is?

- Give clues to an object and have children guess what it is.
- Reverse roles- have children give you the clues

➤ Photographic Memory

- Have children look in one direction for 30 seconds and recall what she/he saw. The object is to remember as many details as possible

➤ I Remember When...

- Talk about events that have happened in the classroom/playground/child's life.
- Have them add details to the discussion.

- Play 'Simon Says' Game (Examples of when: between change of activities, transitions, waiting for therapist to arrive; few minute prior to dismissal before the bus arrives to pick up children)



Participant Poll (Description)

➤ Do you routinely...

- Tap into Prior Knowledge before introducing a new story or concept?
- Incorporate multi-sensory items and activities routinely?
- Play verbal, vocabulary, language-building games and math games to reinforce what has been taught?
- Incorporate novelty through role-play, movement and mystery boxes, etc.
- Facilitate peers to support students with needs?
- Embed problem-solving questions into math and science activities?

Cognitive Flexibility Issues

Transitions may present a big challenge.

Shifting focus on tasks/ topics/ activities/environments

Coping with unseen/unfamiliar events

Appreciating different perspectives in solving problems

Accepting mistakes and letting go of frustration

Difficulty with social interactions

What helps?

Group Games, Music, Role-Play and Movement Activities

- Play the opposite game (Go-no-go games.)
- Play Simon Says (Do the opposite of what Simon Says)





Musical Support To Assist Transitions



Use music to transform transition tantrums to calm-down (Magical Musical Transitions by Law and Sarathy, 2009):

- Designed with the application of principles of 'Music Therapy'.
- Songs (mini-songs) provide guidance and directions musically to assist children during transitions.
- These songlets are short, piggybacked songs with lyrics (key words) specific to different transitions.



Prep for Recess



Target child to go to lunch



- **Play a musical instrument** (e.g., may be a Stir-xylophone) to signal all the students to line up at the end of recess.

Adapted from Law & Sarathy, 2014)

Incorporate Role-play, Drama, Dance and Music



Use stories, drama and role play story characters to help with self-control, problem-solving, anger-management and to calm down.

- Dramatize the story. Help learner to use problem-solving strategies.
- Play the '**Charades**' game.
- Get children to take turns roleplaying emotions and their peers make a guess.
- Sing **songs featuring feeling words**.
 - Make up your own version of "If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands" substituting with other feelings words.
- Use movement activities
 - Do the **Freeze Dance**.
 - Play **Musical Chairs** with a twist



Movement and Mindfulness Activities



- Infuse physical activity as part of the daily routine.
 - Findings of a study indicate physical activities help children to have better self-control (van der Niet et al. 2014).
- Integrate **yoga exercise and mindfulness-based practices** into the routine.
 - Evidence emerging on the benefits of incorporating yoga exercises as part of your daily routine (Erwin et al. 2015)
- **Practice breathing exercises for calming down and to increase focus.**
 - Model for the children how to take deep mindful breaths - how to breathe in through the nose and breathe out through the mouth (Sarathy, 2017).



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Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

- ▶ Ensure environmental and instructional supports for literacy success.
 - ▶ Ensure preventive strategies in place to assist children experiencing challenging behaviors.
 - ▶ Facilitate Active Engagement of all learners. Assemble story props, visual supports, AT, etc. ahead of time.
 - ▶ Make sure learning objectives are clearly embedded into the various activities. Ignite prior knowledge.
- ▶ Read the story with animation and make it joyful. As you read, point out the repetitive pattern. Ask children to predict what letters will follow.
 - ▶ Ask higher and lower complexity questions (before and after reading story).
- ▶ End the session with a role-play-movement activity focusing on different letters.
 - ▶ Form two teams. Children pretend to be different letter characters. Provide each child with an alphabet stick to hold up. One team is competing with the other marching to the music/reading of the story to get to the top of the tree.

Games to Promote Literacy & Cognitive Flexibility

Play Guessing Game (A Letter/A Word/A Name).

- Describe an object, a person or make the initial sound for students to guess what it is.
 - “I am thinking of... (describe two features) What word is it?”
 - “I am thinking of... (describe two attributes) Who is it?”
 - “I am thinking of... (make the initial sound) What is the word?”



Play the ‘Letter Hunt’ musical game.



- Students hunt for the named letters singing ‘We are going on a Letter Hunt (to the tune of ‘We are going on a Bear Hunt’)

Construct, create and play letter/word Bingo game.

- Adaptation: Provide picture cues for children experiencing difficulty in naming the word/letter or can point to one of the pictures from 3 choices given.

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

By Bill Martin, Jr., &
John Archambault

Repeat the same book over several days focusing on different activities to extend the learning.

- Use musical instruments to liven up the story – Make sound effects.
- Play the 'Letter Hunt' game to the tune of 'Bear Hunt' with students marching and singing 'We are going on a Letter Hunt'. Hide letters in different locations. Limit the number of letters, initially. Option: Assign specific letters to find.
- Play the 'Mystery Alphabet Bag' Game.
- Play 'charades' with letter names. Children pretend to be different letters (making the shape of the letter with their bodies) and make sounds and have others guess 'the letter'.
- Use a Multi-sensory approach to write/create letters.
 - Make a letter collage. Make a wall mural with letters and corresponding pictures.
- Math & Science: Count letters in name; Grow your Name or a letter of the Alphabet.
- These engaging activities will train students to listen attentively and with concentration.

A Dozen Ways to Write and Build your Name

Make writing name, letters, and words fun and motivating with A Multi-sensory Approach!

Rainbow Name - Trace name with multiple colors to make it pretty.

Shine your Name - Trace name with a flash light

Touch and Feel Name – Make name with beans, rice or seeds

Scented Name - Write name with scented markers

Make a 'collage' Name - Write name and glue on fabric, felt, stickers, colored cotton balls, etc.

Grow Name - Write name in soil (make indentation in soil with a craft stick to write name) plant seeds and grow your name

Stamp Name – Use a stamp to make your name

Build Name – Write name and glue on buttons tracing the name

Highlighted Name - Write name with a crayon/pencil and trace it with a highlighter

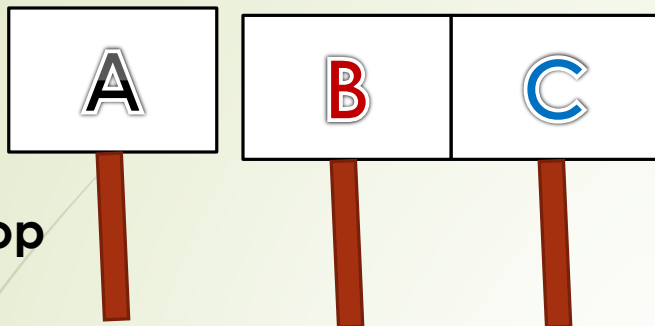
Painted name – Paint your name

Flowery Name - Write name with a crayon/pencil and glue on twisted tissue paper flowers to make name

Build a Name Book – Have the child make a book with the letters in her/his name.

Props and Personalized Supports

Alphabet cards



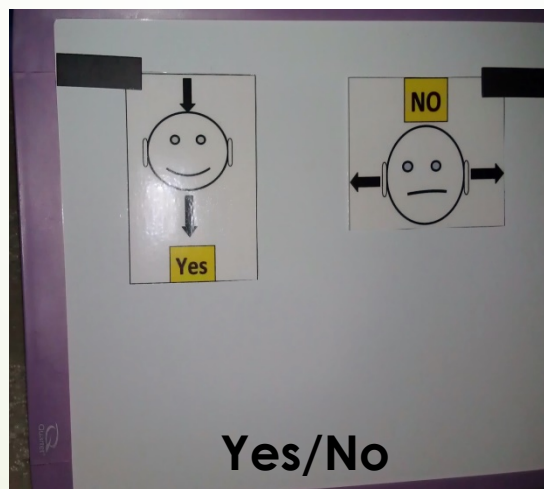
Story prop



Story prop



Counting objects
attached to slant board



Happy/sad

Adapted Tools and Personalized Supports



Motor Support



Motor Support



Motor Support

Assistive Technology - Personalized Supports



A Quick Talker can assist with supplying a bank of words (vocabulary) for writing activities.

iTalk2 with Levels



TalkingBrix



Environmental Control Unit



Step-by-Step



Super Talker can be used for group participation activities

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

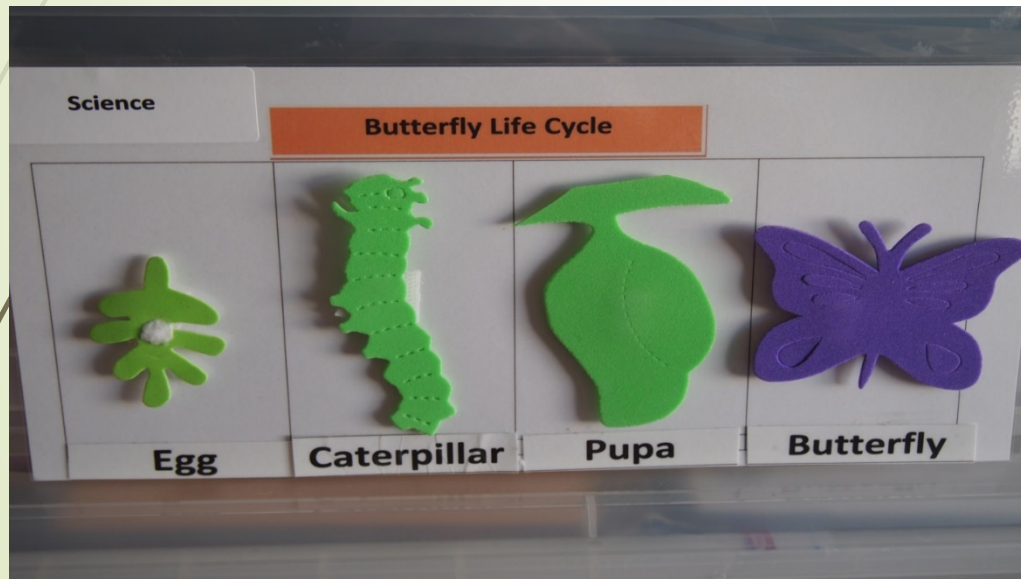
➤ Science and Math Concepts

- **Teach animal classification: Insects, mammals, reptiles**
 - Play Charades game pretending to be different animals.
- **Understand time concepts**
- **Recall a sequence of events (e.g., first, second, last)**
- **Learning about the Life Cycle: Frog, Butterfly, Sea Horse, etc.**
- **Increase awareness of cause and effect relationships**
- **Counting skills, addition**
- **Compare quantity, size and shape (more/less; shape: apple/pie;)**
- **Make a pattern using animal pictures/stamps (dog, frog, butterfly; dog, frog, butterfly; dog...)**

STEM- Science Knowledge-building

Teach 'Life-Cycle' stages: butterfly and frog.

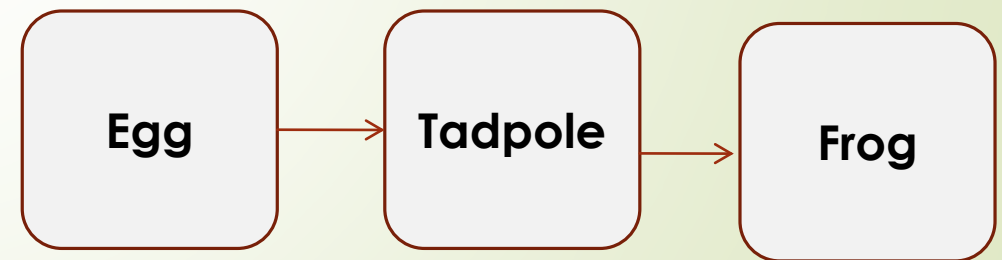
Post a pictorial chart of the life cycle of the animal on your science wall.
Involve students in sequencing the life cycle stages.



Butterfly Life Cycle



Frog Life Cycle

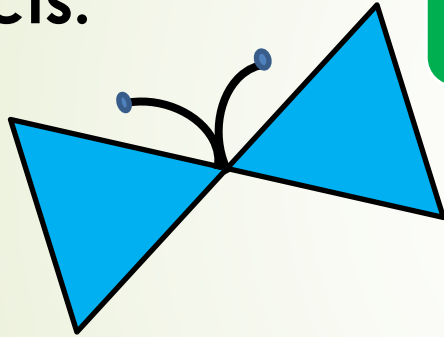


A Brain-Storming Activity to Foster Thinking, Recall and Categorization Skills

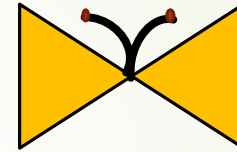
Use the concept map to brainstorm insect names.
Connect it with 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'

STEM

Teach Characteristics
of Insects.



Butterfly



Lady Bug

Insects

Mosquito

Beetle

Grasshopper

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Activities: **Movement & Role Play**

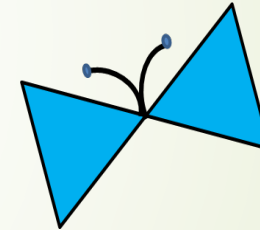
- Have children **pretend to be different animal characters** and move like the animals:

- Jump like a Frog.
- Swim like a fish.
- Stretch like a cat.
- Fly like a butterfly/bird.
- Crawl like a caterpillar.
- Gallop like a horse.
- Play Charades game.



Walk like an Elephant.

- The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Jump, Frog, Jump!
- Head to Toe
- Brown Bear, Brown Bear...



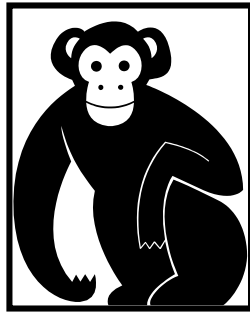
Fly like a butterfly.

Roar like a lion.



Writing – Students Create a Book

**At
the
Zoo**



**I saw a
Chimpanzee
at the
zoo.**



**I saw a
lion at the
zoo.**

**I had
fun
at the
zoo.**

25 Amazing Virtual Field Trips

<https://www.weareteachers.com/best-virtual-field-trips/>

- The Aquarium (Seattle Aquarium)
- The Zoo (San Diego Zoo)
<https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/animals/giraffe>
- The Farm (Canadian Farms)
- The Planetarium (Star Atlas)
- The Volcanoes (The US Geological
- Nature Works Everywhere
- Plus, Museums, Parks, and Places of Interest
- And the site offers free online resources to teach children virtually

Stimulating Tactile Activities for Young Children

➤ For Centers – A Sensory Table

- Set up a sensory table to touch and explore.
- Make Story boxes with objects related to stories.
- Make Feely-bags with sand, beans, pebbles, macaroni, etc. using gloves or nylon knee-highs.
- Fill shallow containers with ice, pudding, cold cooked pasta or raisins or mashed potatoes.
- Make texture boxes. Fill with sand, macaroni, oatmeal, rice, dried beans, cotton, dry leaves, etc.
- Hunt for treasures – search for small hidden objects in a ball of silly putty or play dough.

Resources

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Resources

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THANKS.

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The next webinar will be on May 12th:

Explore, Experiment and Enrich with Inquiry-based Science
Activities for Young Learners