

hands-on lessons that

Craft Stick Puzzles

What could be more fun than solving a puzzle? Creating your own! Promote fine motor skills and problem solving with fun puzzles that kids make themselves.

Grade Level: PK-2

Objectives

Students will identify parts of things that make them whole.
Students will compare real life experiences with those in fiction stories.
Students will create a craft stick puzzle.

Literature Selections

Parts by Tedd Arnold

Skills

fine motor skills, gluing, measurement, sequencing

Set up and Prepare

Content Overview

Begin the lesson by taking the students on a “book walk” of *Parts* by Tedd Arnold. Before reading it, engage them in a discussion about the book with questions. Share the cover and ask them students what kind of book they think it is. Read the blurb on the back cover and ask them if they think this is a true story or a silly story. Who wrote the book? Who illustrated the book? Who do they think the main character is?

Read the book aloud to the students. Be sure to share the bold, comical illustrations and let the students enjoy the humor of the story. Ask the students if they’ve had experiences similar to the main character like losing a tooth or peeling skin from a sunburn. After reading, discuss the difference between real stories based upon fact and fiction stories that are often silly like this one.



Refer back to the title of the story. Ask the students if they can think of other things that have parts like cars, toys, games, and puzzles. Explain to them that they will make their own puzzle that starts as a whole picture.

Materials

Elmer's® School Glue, 8 large craft sticks per student, 6" x 6" image from a coloring book or magazine, scissors, shallow bowl, X-ACTO® Craft Knife (adult use only)

Preparation

Cover the work surface and give each student a piece of wax paper. Instruct the students to find a picture from a magazine or coloring book that they want to use for their puzzles. Prepare a glue mixture of one part Elmer's School Glue and one part water.

Directions

Assist the students in measuring and drawing a 6" x 6" border on their pictures so that they can cut the pictures out on the pencil lines. Provide each student with 8 large craft sticks. Instruct the students to align the sticks in an even row and glue the image to the sticks. As the students complete this task, use an X-ACTO craft knife (adults only) to cut the paper between each craft stick to separate the image into 8 pieces. (Note: It's helpful to have a parent volunteer help you with this step.)

Next, students will use brushes or their fingers to apply the glue mixture to each stick (image side only). This will require several generous layers of the glue mixture. Make sure that all of the edges of the picture are covered with glue. Set the craft sticks aside to dry where they will not be disturbed.

When the glue is dry, apply a second layer of the glue mixture. Again, make sure that all of the edges of the picture are covered with glue. Let dry completely, then watch the students have fun assembling their puzzles by placing the sticks in the correct order. Be sure to allow time for them to swap with a buddy!

Provide resealable bags for students to use to store their puzzles.



Lesson Extensions

Reinforce counting and number recognition. Use a marker to number the craft sticks.

Host a puzzle competition. Instruct the students to exchange puzzles with a partner but don't open the bags. Explain that they will all begin to solve the puzzles at the same time to see who can finish first.

Challenge the students with more complex puzzles by using smaller craft sticks.

Standards

CCSS: ELA-Literacy: With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.

CCSS: ELA-Literacy: Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

CCSS: ELA-Literacy: Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.