

Topic of Study – Bears

Introduction

Bears are among the first animals children learn to recognize. Children hear stories about bears, they sing songs about bears, they see bears on television, and many children have stuffed bears they sleep with. Some children have seen bears in the zoo. Bears can be found in some parts of Arkansas. Bears as a topic of study is one that children will enjoy.

Teacher Notes about STEM

- *Early Childhood Educators are now linking together science, technology, engineering, and math into what is called STEM curriculum.*
- *This topic of study, Bears, focuses on the science component of STEM.*

Teacher Notes

Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements (Rev. 1.1.15) requires the following:

400 PROGRAM – 401 Program Requirements for all ages

5.a. The facility shall have an appropriate curriculum with weekly activity plans appropriate for the developmental needs of each group of children.

To assist your program in meeting this requirement, refer to Developing Weekly Activity plans for Adventures in Learning for information on how to develop your plans. Feel free to make copies of the plan sheet you select and use it each week. To help you in your planning, there are also 2 samples of completed plan sheets that you may use as guides when developing weekly activity plans for your group of children.

- ***Adventures in Learning** is an Arkansas approved curriculum.*
- *This curriculum guide is a collection of activities that support the Big Ideas listed below. Choose those activities that best meet the needs of the children in your group.*
- *Consider extending this topic of study beyond a one-week period of time. There is so much for children to learn about bears. Carry over activities from one week to another because children enjoy and learn best through repetition.*
- *If you do not have some of the featured books, refer to the Additional Books section for other books you can use.*
- *It is important to read the same book several times to children so that they can have a better understanding of theme, plot, characters and the sequence of events. In each of the readings presented here, there is a different focus on what is happening in the story.*

Big Ideas

Here are four big ideas about bears you can help children explore:

- Bears are wild animals
- Bears are different colors: brown, black and white
- Bears live in different places: woods, forest, areas with ice, and in zoos.
- Bears eat a variety of foods: nuts, acorns, berries, grasses, bulbs, roots, fruit, fish, seals (polar bears)

Materials to Collect and Make

- Pictures of “real” bears (not cartoon characters): brown, black and white (polar) bears
- Children’s books about bears:
 - Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey, author and illustrator
 - The Three Bears* retold and illustrated by Paul Galdone
 - Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack, author and illustrator
- Felt or Magnetic Board
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big Hungry Bear* (See Attachment: [The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big Hungry Bear](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *Corduroy* (See Attachment: [Corduroy](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *The Three Bears* (See Attachment: [The Three Bears](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *Ask Mr. Bear* (See Attachment: [Ask Mr. Bear](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt* (See Attachment: [We’re Going on a Bear Hunt](#))
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, *Blueberries for Sal* (See Attachment: [Characters to use for Blueberries for Sal](#))
- Three Bears prop box: 3 sizes of stuffed bears, 3 sizes of bowls, and 3 sizes of towels for beds

Resources

- Check with your local library for the availability of children’s books.
- Children’s books can be purchased online, from school supply catalogs or local bookstores.

Introducing and Concluding the Topic

Introduction: Finding Out What Children Know About Bears

Learning Goals:

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory (*short term and working memory and long-term memory*)

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

To introduce the topic of “Bears” you need to find out what children already know about the topic. This allows you to build on your children’s experiences. It also helps create an interest in the topic. Here’s how to begin.

- Gather the children in a group. Say, “For the next few days we’re going to be learning about bears. Bears are wild animals. What do you think we mean when we say ‘wild’ animals?”
- Guide discussion to help children understand that wild animals live in the woods and in the jungle. They are not pets, nor are they farm animals.
- Write on chart paper, chalk board or marker board the words “Bears.”
- Invite children to tell you things they already know about bears. They may talk about bears they have seen in books, movies, or at the zoo, or about their stuffed bear. If they live in areas of the state where bears are found, they may talk about this. You may have to ask questions to stimulate their thinking, questions such as, “What color was the bear you saw?” “Where do you think bears live?” “What do you think bears eat?”
- Make a list of all of the things children know about bears.
- Review the list with them and say, “You already know a lot of things about bears and we’ll find out even more.”
- Now ask children what they would like to know about bears.
- Make a list of the things children would like to know about bears.
- Keep the two lists until you have completed the topic of study.

What We Know about Bears	What We Would Like to Know about Bears	Things We Learned about Bears

Conclusion: Finding Out What Children Have Learned About Bears

- Gather the children in a group at the conclusion of the study about bears. Write on chart paper, chalkboard or marker board, “Things We Learned about Bears.”
- Invite children to tell you some things they have learned. You may have to ask prompt questions such as “What colors are bears?” “What are some things bears eat?”
- Make a list of all the things children learned about bears.
- Read the first two lists you made with the children. Then say, “Here are some new things you found out about bears” and read today’s list with the children.

Reading Books with Children

Learning Goals:

CD2.1 Focuses and sustains attention

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory (*short term and working memory*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences (*engagement in literacy experiences*)

EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*book knowledge*)

Book #1: *Blueberries for Sal*, by Robert McCloskey, author and illustrator

First Reading of *Blueberries for Sal*

- Bring a small tin pail/bucket to group time.
- Prepare to read the book.
- Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the book and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Show the children the small tin pail and ask them what it is and what you can do with it. If children call the pail a bucket, explain that the two words mean the same thing. If the children learned the Mother Goose rhyme "Jack and Jill" remind them that Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a **pail** of water.
- Show children the first two pages of the book (Little Sal and her mother are holding hands, each with a pail in the other hand).
- Ask children what they think Little Sal and her mother are going to do with the pails. Accept all answers.
- Say, "Let's read and find out."
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book
- Follow up with questions such as "Were your predictions right about what Little Sal and her mother were going to do with the pail?" "Have you ever eaten blueberries? Blueberry muffins? Blueberry pancakes? Blueberry jam?" "Do you think you would like to pick blueberries?"

Teacher Note: Consider "telling" some of the pages of the book if you think it may be too long to read to your children. Be sure to include "kuplink, kuplank, kuplunk."

Second Reading of *Blueberries for Sal*

- Show cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the second reading of the story by showing the pages and inviting children to tell the story by looking at the pictures. You may have to ask questions to prompt discussion such as, "What did Little Sal do with the berries she picked?" "Why did Little Bear sit down in a large clump of bushes?"
- Ask children to discuss the difference in the way Little Sal and Little Bear ate the blueberries.

Third Reading of *Blueberries for Sal*.

- Show cover, give title, author and illustrator. Invite children to tell you what the author does (writes the words) and what the illustrator does (draws the pictures)
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the third reading by asking questions such as, "How do you think Little Bear's mother felt when she turned around and saw Little Sal instead of Little Bear?" "How do you think Little Sal's mother felt when she turned around and saw Little Bear instead of Little Sal?" "How would you feel if you turned around and saw a bear?"

Additional Learning Goals:

SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions (*emotion expression*)

SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others (*emotion understanding*)

Fourth Reading of *Blueberries for Sal*

- Place some large blue stringing beads in a tin pail. Bring to group time, keeping out of children's sight.
- Show cover, give title, author and illustrator).
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Invite the children to make the noise of the blueberries dropping into the pail: kurlink, kurlank, kurlunk.
- Follow up the fourth reading by showing children the pail and the beads. Allow each child a turn to drop a bead in the bucket while children say, "kurlink, kurlank, kurlunk."
- Explain to children that the pail and beads will be in the Science/Discovery area. Suggest that they can drop beads into the pail, counting how many they drop.

Fifth Reading of *Blueberries for Sal* (Optional Reading) (Small Group)

- Gather a small group of children, four to six for this reading of the story.
- Show cover, invite children to say the title. Give author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the fifth reading by showing the illustrated pages inside the cover. Invite children to discuss what they see.
- Ask the children what Little Sal's mother is doing. Listen to determine if any of the children are familiar with canning foods.
- Invite children to name all of the things they see in the picture as you point to the many items.
- Answer questions they might have about things that are unfamiliar to them: cooking stove, jar lids and jar rings, for example.

Book #2: *The Three Bears*, retold and illustrated by Paul Galdone

First Reading of *The Three Bears*

- Prepare to read the book, *The Three Bears*.
- Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Ask children to look at the cover and predict what the story is about.
- Read story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Change your voice to match each of the bears.
- Follow up with questions such as, "What did you like best about the story? What was your favorite part? What surprised you?"

Second Reading of *The Three Bears*

- Show cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Invite children to recall something they remembered about the story.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the second reading with questions such as, "How do you think Goldilocks felt when the bottom of Baby Bear's chair fell out and she fell on the floor?" "How do you think the bears felt when they realized that someone had been in their house?" "How do you think Goldilocks felt when she woke up and saw the Three Bears staring at her?" (frightened)
- Invite children to share some things that have frightened them.

Additional Learning Goals:

SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions (*emotion regulation*)

SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others (*emotion understanding*)

Third Reading of *The Three Bears*

- Show cover and invite children to recall the title. Give author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the third reading by involving children in discussing things about bears that are real and things that are make believe.
- Suggest that children give a “thumbs up” for things that are real, or answer “yes” and a “thumbs down” for things that are make believe, or answer “No.”
- Ask questions such as:
 - “Do bears live in the woods?” (Thumbs up – Yes)
 - “Do bears live in houses?” (Thumbs down – No)
 - “Are bears different sizes?” (Thumbs up – Yes)
 - “Can there be a Papa Bear, Mama Bear and Baby Bear?” (Thumbs up – Yes)
 - “Do bears sit in chairs?” (Thumbs down – No)
 - “Do bears sleep in beds?” (Thumbs down – No)
 - “Do bears eat porridge for breakfast?” (Thumbs down – No)
 - “Do bears eat blueberries?” (Thumbs up – Yes)
 - “Do bears sometimes frighten people?” (Thumbs up – Yes)

Additional Learning Goal:

CD3.1 Uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems and reach goals (*problem solving*)

Book #3: *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack, author and illustrator

First Reading of *Ask Mr. Bear*

- Prepare to read the book, *Ask Mr. Bear*.
 - Show cover; give title, author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the book and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
 - Ask children to look at cover, name the animals they see, and predict what the story is about.
 - Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
 - Pause after Mr. Bear whispers a secret in Danny’s ear and ask, “What do you think Mr. Bear whispered in Danny’s ear?” Accept all answers.
 - Continue the story to the end.
 - Follow up with questions such as, “Were your predictions about the secret Mr. Bear whispered in Danny’s ear correct?” “Why do you think the animals didn’t want to go with Danny to meet Mr. Bear?” “How do you think Danny’s mother felt about her birthday gift from Danny?”
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Second Reading of *Ask Mr. Bear*

- Bring an unwrapped gift box to the group time area. Keep it hidden until the end of the story.
- Show cover, give title, author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the second reading by showing the pages and inviting children to name each animal, the gift that animal wanted to give to Danny’s mother, and Danny’s reply.
- Show the empty gift box to children and ask, “Do you think Danny’s gift to his mother can be put in this box?” Allow children to explain their answers.
- Ask children questions such as, “What do you think might fit in the box?” “If you received a birthday gift in this box, what would you like it to be?”

Additional Learning Goal:

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

Third Reading of *Ask Mr. Bear* (Small Group)

- Gather a small group of children, from three to five.
- Show cover, ask children to recall the title. Give author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures and the print in the book.
- Follow up the third reading by showing the next to last two pages. Read the words on the page on the left.
- Invite children to help you read the page on the right.
- Run your finger under the print as you read each line. After reading a line, return your hand to the beginning of the next line. (This is called “return sweep.”)
- Read, “Is it an egg?” and invite children to “read”, “No, it isn’t an egg,” said Danny.
- Continue to the end of the page.
- Thank the children for helping you “read” the page.

Additional Learning Goal:

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

Fourth Reading of *Ask Mr. Bear* (Small Group)

- Gather a small group of children, from three to five.
- Show cover, ask children to recall the title. Give author and illustrator.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Follow up the fourth reading by involving children in the same process of “reading” the next to last page as you did in the third reading.
- Put your finger under the word “egg” and ask a child to find a word on the next line that “looks just like this one.”
- Assist a child who needs help with this activity.
- Repeat the process with the other duplicate words: pillow, cheese, blanket, milk, and cream.
- Say, “This word is Danny,” as you run your finger under the word on the third line.
- Ask children to help you find and count how many times the word “Danny” appears on the page. (5 times)
- Run your finger under the word each time as you and the children count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Additional Learning Goal:

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (number names and number sequence)

Additional Books

A Pocket for Corduroy by Don Freeman

Bear Says Thanks (The Bear Books) by Karma Wilson, illustrated by Jane Chapman

The Biggest Bear by Lynn Ward

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr., illustrated by Eric Carle (available in many languages)

Corduroy by Don Freeman (also available in Spanish)

Jesse Bear, Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? by Nancy White Carlstrom, illustrated by Bruce Degen

Little Bear by Else H. Minarik, illustrated by Maurice Sendak

The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big Hungry Bear by Don and Audrey Wood

Moonbear's Shadow by Frank Asch

Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Bill Martin, Jr., illustrated by Eric Carle (also available in Spanish)

The Teddy Bear's Picnic by James Kennedy

We're Going on a Bear Hunt, by Michael Rosen, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury

Language and Literacy Materials and Activities

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language

CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating and moving to music (*exploration of music and movement*)

Teddy Bear Song or Chant (Make appropriate motions to go with the rhyme)	The Bear Went Over the Mountain (Song)
<p style="text-align: center;">Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around. Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Teddy bear, teddy bear, reach up high. Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the sky.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Teddy bear, teddy bear, bend down low. Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your toe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs. Teddy bear, teddy bear, say your prayers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light. Teddy bear, teddy bear, say goodnight.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The bear went over the mountain, (walk in place, then fingertips together) The bear went over the mountain, The bear went over the mountain, To see what he could see. (hands over eyes)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To see what he could see, To see what he could see.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The other side of the mountain, (walk in place, then fingertips together) The other side of the mountain, The other side of the mountain, Was all that he could see! (hands out, palms up)</p>

Learning Goal:**EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences**

Storytelling Figures: *Blueberries for Sal* (See Attachment: [Characters to use for Blueberries for Sal](#))

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the story, *Blueberries for Sal*
- Use the figures to tell the story.
- Explain to the children that the storytelling figures will be in the library/book area for them to use.
- Demonstrate and discuss with the children the correct way to use the storytelling figures.

Storytelling Figures:

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the following stories:
 - *The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big Hungry Bear* (See Attachment: [The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big Hungry Bear](#))
 - *Corduroy* (See Attachment: [Corduroy](#))
 - *The Three Bears* (See Attachment: [The Three Bears](#))
 - *Ask Mr. Bear* (See Attachment: [Ask Mr. Bear](#))
 - *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (See Attachment: [We're Going on a Bear Hunt](#))
- Read the selected book to the children.
- Use the matching storytelling figures to tell the story.
- Explain to the children that the storytelling figures will be in the library/book area for them to use.
- Demonstrate and discuss with the children the correct way to use the storytelling figures.

Clothesline Story: *Ask Mr. Bear*

- Tell the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*, as a clothesline story.
- Attach characters on the clothesline from children's left to right as they appear in the story.
- Tell the story and allow children to attach characters to the clothesline in order as they appear in the story.

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

LD2.1 Uses increasingly complex vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure (in child's home language) (*expressive vocabulary*)

Activity: Discussing Bear Pictures (Small Group Activity)

- Gather a variety of pictures of real bears (not cartoon pictures), as many as you can find. (Because the pictures are to be used in a small group, some may be small). Locate pictures of brown, black and white (polar) bears, if possible.
- Allow children to look at the bears for a few minutes. Listen to their comments.
- Lead children in discussing the pictures: size of bears, different colors of bears, features such as claws, and shape of ears (round), for example.
- Involve children in discussing what the brown and black bears eat. Brown and black bears eat berries, fruits, nuts, grasses, roots of plants, insects and fish. Polar bears eat fish, seals and young walrus.
- Involve children in discussing where bears live. Some live in the woods or forest. Polar bears live where there is ice. Some bears live in zoos.

We're Going On A Bear Hunt (Action Story)

Let's go on a bear hunt.
(Tap hands on thighs like walking)
All right, let's go.

Oh-oh, there's long, wavy grass.
Can't go over it,
Can't go under it.
Let's go through it.
Swishy swashy!
(Rub hands together like swishing through grass)
Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy!

Oh-oh, there's a deep, cold river.
Can't go over it,
Can't go under it.
Let's go through it.
Splash, splosh, splash splosh, splash splosh!
(Pretend to swim)

Oh-oh, there's thick, oozy mud.
Can't go over it.
Can't go under it.
Let's go through it.
Squelch, squerch!
(Move hands up and down as though walking through mud)
Squelch, squerch! Squelch, squerch!

Oh-oh, there's a big, dark forest.
Can't go over it.
Can't go under it.
Let's go through it.
Stumble trip! Stumble trip! Stumble trip!

Oh-oh, there's a swirling, whirling snowstorm.
Can't go over it.
Can't go under it.
Let's go through it.
Hooo wooo! (Pretend to shiver)
Hooo wooo!
Hooo wooo!

Oh-oh, there's a narrow, gloomy cave.
Can't go over it.
Can't go under it.
Let's go through it.
Tip toe! Tip toe! Tip toe! (Tip toe fingers)

Oh-oh, I feel a shiny wet nose!
I feel two furry ears!
I see two big, big eyes.
It's a bear!

(Retrace steps)
Whew! We made it.
Under the covers, safe in bed.

Science / Discovery and Math

Learning Goals:

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (*number names and count sequence, comparison of quantity*)

MT2.1 Uses classification and patterning skills (*classification*)

Activity: How Many Counting Bears Do I Have?

- Gather a small group of children together. (four children)
- Have an assortment of red, yellow, blue, and green counting bears. Make sure that there is a different number of bears in each color. For example, eight red, seven green, five yellow and four blue bears.
- Give each child a different color of construction paper (yellow, blue, green, red)
- Give each child an assortment of counting bears
- Allow children time to play with the bears.
- Ask the children to put the bears back into a pile.
- Invite each child to take from the pile the bears that match their sheet of paper.
- Involve each child in counting the number of bears on his or her paper.
- Ask the children to state, by color, which group has “the most” bears and which has “the least bears.”
- Involve them in comparing all four groups (sets) as to more or less.
- Assist children in counting the bears when necessary.
- Review by asking each child to state the number of bears they have.

Extension:

- Provide numeral cards that correspond to the number of counting bears each child has.
- Show the cards face up and ask each child to select the card that goes with the number of bears they have.
- Assist children who need help with numeral recognition.

Additional Learning Goal:

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (*connection of number, numeral and quantity*)

Learning Goal:

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (*connection of number, numeral and quantity*)

Activity: Find a Home for the Bears

- Gather a collection of counting bears and clean butter tubs.
- Label each tub with a numeral, from 1 to 5.
- Invite children to put the correct number of bears into each cave (tub)

Teacher Notes:

- *Put the corresponding number of dots on each tub if children do not yet recognize numerals.*
- *Add additional tubs with numerals from 6 to 10 when children are ready for this.*
- *Invite children to put the tubs in order from 1 to 5, or from 1 to 10.*

Additional Learning Goal:

MT3.1 Participates in exploratory measurement activities and compares objects (*seriation*)

Learning Goal:

MT3.1 Participates in exploratory measurement activities and compares objects (*measurement, comparison*)

Activity: How Much Do These Bears Weigh?

- Place a balance scale and an assortment of stuffed bears on the Science/Discovery Table.
- Invite children to weigh the bears to determine which is the heaviest and which is the lightest.

Teacher Note:

- Add counting bears and challenge children to find out how many counting bears weigh the same as one of the stuffed bears.
- Help children understand how the balance scale works.

Learning Goal:

MT3.1 Participates in exploratory measurement activities and compares objects (*measurement, comparison, seriation*)

Activity: Which Bear Is the Tallest?

- Provide rulers and an assortment of stuffed bears.
- Invite children to measure the bears to determine which is the tallest.
- Suggest that children line up the bears from shortest to tallest.

Learning Goals:

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

MT2.1 Uses classification and patterning skills (*classification*)

Activity: Bear Food Chart

- Divide a sheet of construction paper or a piece of card stock down the middle, vertically.
- Write at the top of the page: **Bear Food**
- At the top of the column on the left, write **"Yes"** and add a picture of a bear. At the top of the column on the right, write **"No"**.
- Provide pictures of things that bears might eat and pictures of food that only people eat. Bears eat grasses, fruits, berries, nuts, insects, and fish. Food that only people eat might be fried chicken, cheese, hamburgers, spaghetti, and cereal, for example.
- Explain to children that they are to put the things that bears eat in the **"Yes"** column with the picture of the bear and to put the things that bears don't eat in the **"No"** column.
- Invite them to name the food items and put them in the correct column and explain why they placed the items in each column. If children say that people also eat fruits, berries, nuts, and fish, agree with them.

Learning Goal:

MT1.1 Demonstrates number sense and an understanding of quantity (*connection of number, numeral and quantity*)

Activity: Counting Blueberries

- Place a small tin pail (bucket) and large blue stringing beads on the Science/Discovery table
- Invite children, one at a time, to drop the beads into the bucket, counting them as they do.
- Ask children how many beads are in the bucket.

Learning Goal:

ST1.1 Engages in the scientific process to collect, analyze, and communicate information (*observations, questions and predictions*)

Activity: Bear Fur

- Collect pieces of fake fur fabric and store in a basket.
- Place the pieces of fur on the Science/Discovery table.
- Invite children to touch the fabric and discuss how it feels.

Food/ Nutrition Experience

Learning Goals:

PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordinates movements to use tools (*utensils*)

PH3.1 Demonstrates interest in engaging in healthy eating habits and making nutritious food choices (*exploration of food experiences, food knowledge*)

Activity: Blueberry Delight

- Provide frozen vanilla yogurt, blueberries (washed) in a bowl, a small bowl and spoon for each child, a spoon for the blueberries, and a large spoon or scoop for the yogurt.
- Discuss with the children that they will be eating blueberries, which are a fruit, and recall with them that the bears in *Blueberries for Sal* were picking blueberries to eat.
- Guide each child to take two scoops of yogurt.
- Allow each child to add a spoonful of blueberries to the yogurt.
- Serve with animal crackers and enjoy.

Teacher Notes:

- *Allow the children to do as much of these food experiences as possible.*
- *Teachers and children should always wash hands before participating in food experiences.*

Blueberry Muffins

- Provide blueberry muffins for snack. Have pats of butter or margarine in a small bowl.
- Give each child a small plate, plastic knife, and a napkin.
- Allow each child to take a blueberry muffin from the serving plate.
- Ask children to use their knife and cut their muffin in half. Assist as needed.
- Pass the butter around the table and invite each child to take a pat and spread it on their muffin.
- Serve milk and enjoy the snack together.
- Invite children to discuss whether or not bears would like blueberry muffins.

Teacher Notes:

- *Allow the children to do as much of these food experiences as possible.*
- *Teachers and children should always wash hands before participating in a food experience.*

Movement / Physical Education

Learning Goals:

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*traveling, complex movement*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

Activity: Bears Moving Through the Forest

- Create an indoor or outdoor forest (obstacle course). Use cones or two-liter soda bottles weighted down with sand or gravel to represent trees. Tape the caps on the bottles to avoid spills.
- Explain to children that they are to be bears moving through the forest without touching the trees.
- Remind children that they are to stay away from their friends as they are walking
- Establish a stop and go signal such as clapping your hands or striking a drum. Children are to freeze when they hear the signal.
- Say, "Can you walk slowly through the woods?"
- Observe children to make sure they are able to walk without hitting barriers.
- Sound the stop signal.
- Say, "Can you walk faster?"
- Sound the stop signal.
- Say, "Can you walk on your tiptoes to your cave?" Children walk to carpet squares or to a designated place on the playground if this activity takes place outdoors.



Activity: Ask Mr. Bear Hop

- Recall with the children that in the book, *Ask Mr. Bear*, Danny, the hen and the goose all hopped along.
- Explain to children that they are going to practice hopping.
- Introduce hopping as follows:
 - "When you hop, you hold one leg off the floor and hop up and down on the other.
 - Can you hold one leg off the floor and hop up and down on the other? Now switch legs and hop on that one."
- Allow children to practice hopping frequently. Keep practice brief.
- Practice hopping in space, then hopping from one spot to another.



Teacher Notes:

- *Children may have difficulty hopping because they lack the strength and balance to hold one leg in the air while hopping on the other.*
- *If children are having a difficult time hopping, try this:*
- *Have them lean against a wall with one hand, lift one foot in the air and hop on the other foot.*
- *Children must be able to hop before they can begin skipping, which is the most difficult motor skill to develop.*

Learning Centers

Teacher Note: *As children are involved in the learning centers, they are engaging in activities that support all or most of the domains of child development and early learning:*

- *Social and Emotional Development*
- *Cognitive Development*
- *Physical Development and Health*
- *Language Development*
- *Emergent Literacy*
- *Mathematical Thinking*
- *Science and Technology*
- *Social Studies*
- *Creativity and Aesthetics*

However, there will also be activities included and these will have specific learning goals.

Learning Goal:

CA2.1 Explores, manipulates, creates, and responds to a variety of art media (*exploration of art, art concepts*)

Art

- Provide black, brown and white paint at the easel.

Activity: Bear Prints:

- Add bear cookie cutters to art center.
- Place black, brown and white tempera paint in three separate pans and invite children to use the cookie cutters to make bear prints.
- Discuss with children that it is hard to see the white prints on the white paper, just like it is hard to see the polar bears on the ice where they live.
- Add bear cookie cutters and play dough.

Activity: Bear Shape Rubbings:

- Cut out bear shapes from textured paper doilies, textured wallpaper, or sand paper.
- Tape these bears to the table.
- Invite the children to place a piece of thin white paper over the bears and to rub a crayon over the bears.
- Observe and listen to their comments as the bear shapes appear on their paper.

Block Center

- Add stuffed and vinyl bears to the block center.
- Add shoe boxes for caves

Library/Book Corner

- Add books about bears
- Place stuffed bears in the library area for children to read to.
- Add pictures that show bears (lamine or cover pictures with self stick adhesive)
- Place magnetic/felt and clothesline storytelling figures and a storyboard in the center.

Learning Goal:

CA3.1 Explores feelings, relationships, and concepts through imitation, pretend play, and sociodramatic play (*exploration of drama*)

Home Living/Dramatic Play

- Add the Three Bears prop box: 3 sizes of stuffed bears, 3 sizes of bowls, and 3 sizes of towels for beds.
- Add a tin pail and some blue beads.

Learning Goal:

PH2.1 Demonstrates fine-motor strength, control, and coordination (*hand-eye coordination, grasp and manipulation*)

PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordinates movements to use tools (*variety of tools*)

Manipulatives

- Add bear puzzles
- Add counting bears with tongs (ice) and containers for the children to transfer the bears from one container to another.

Water table or tub

- Add counting bears and aquarium nets.
- Invite children to catch bears of one color with the net.
- Invite children to count the bears they catch.

Sand table or tub

- Add counting bears to the sand table or tub.
- Provide sifters, containers, and large plastic tweezers.

Science/Discovery

- Bear Fur: add pieces of fake fur fabric

Learning Goal:

SE2.1 Experiences, expresses, and regulates a range of emotions (*emotion regulation*)

Quiet Corner

- Create a quiet corner in your classroom; a place where children can go to be alone and to get away from the stresses of group living.
- Place soft items in the quiet corner. Carpet on the floor, soft pillows, and soft and cuddly stuffed animals or dolls are examples.
- Discuss with children when they might want to go to the quiet corner. When they are angry and need to get away from the source of their anger? When they are sad and need to be alone? When the room gets too noisy and they need a quiet spot?
- Explain to children that the quiet corner is for one child at a time

Transition Activities

Learning Goal:

CD2.2 Shows flexibility in adjusting thinking and behavior to different contexts (*adjusting behavior to match context*)

Activity: Matching Bears

- Make multiple sets of bear cards using different colors or poses of bear stickers on cardstock and laminate or cover with clear adhesive to preserve.
- Hold one complete set of the cards, place the other sets in a basket and allow the children to draw a card.
- Show the children one card and allow all the children holding the same card to choose a center or get their personal belongings and get ready to go home.

Activity: Bear's Letters

- Place a set of magnetic letters in a basket or gift bag. Attach a picture of a bear with a label "Bear's Letters."
- Pull out one letter at a time and place on a magnet board or cookie sheet. Ask the children to stand if they have that letter in their name.
- Allow the children to tell the name of the letter and choose a center or get their personal belongings and get ready to go home.

Additional Learning Goal:

EL3.2 Shows knowledge of the shapes, names, and sounds of letters (*alphabet knowledge*)

Family Connection and Engagement

Send home a note to parents stating for the next few days, the children will be learning about bears. Suggest some ways families can be involved in the topic of study:

- Collect pictures of bears and bring to the center.
- Include the titles and authors of some of the children's books about bears. Suggest that they look for these books in the local library, check them out and read them with their child.
- Send home some of the songs and finger plays and suggest that the children and families say them together.