Overview

In this activity you will implement the plan you’ve been developing throughout this course. You will redesign your classroom to support your theme, begin introducing new words, carry out your read alouds, and infuse your centers with theme-related print and activities.

Objectives

- To implement your plan for introducing a new, vocabulary-rich theme to your classroom.
- To design your room in accordance with your chosen theme.
- To introduce your theme and new words through read alouds.
- To infuse your centers and your classroom with theme-based environmental print and activities.

Materials

The materials you will need will vary depending on the theme you’ve chosen and how you go about preparing your classroom.

Instructions

1. Prepare the Classroom
   - Set aside a time before or after school one day to prepare your classroom for the introduction of your new theme.
   - Bring in any new materials related to theme and hang new decorations and related environmental print.

2. Introduce the Theme with a Read Aloud
   - Carry out the introductory read aloud you planned in the previous Connect with the Classroom activity (Section 4).
   - Make sure to consult the “Planning a Read Aloud” activity sheet you completed.
   - Emphasize and introduce the new rare words you’ve chosen from the book.

3. Bring the Theme to the Centers
   - When you’ve finished your first read aloud and follow-up activities, have children go to centers. Teach them to use any new instruments, materials, or tools you may have introduced to the centers.
     (Note: When introducing a new theme, you may want to open the centers one at a time. Some teachers seal off newly designed centers with yellow construction tape and then open the center with a ribbon-
cutting ceremony. This practice builds children’s interest in the centers before they’re open and allows them to focus on each center, one at a time.)

• Try to balance center activities that require more teacher support with activities that children can do on their own so that you can circulate around the room.

4. Prepare to Share
Reflect on your experiences in this exercise and have your thoughts and notes ready to share with other teachers using the discussion area of this website. (Note: You will be prompted to discuss your thoughts in the next Share Ideas.)

• Describe any problems you encountered implementing your plan. Did you feel sufficiently prepared for the implementation process? How else could you have prepared?
• How did the children react to the new theme? Describe their responses.

CIRCLE Tip: Dramatic Play Center
Center time is also rich with opportunities for oral language and literacy development through peer interaction, teacher scaffolding, play, and exploration. Children who engage in lots of pretend play and pretend talk in preschool tend to have better vocabularies in kindergarten. The teacher:

- Selects the center idea based on the topic of study.
- Develops topics using related props and materials.
- Models play dialogue and scenarios by participating in children’s play.
- Observes and interacts with children to monitor their progress.
- Encourages child to child conversations.