Special Ed

LETTER OF THE WEEK

ALSO INCLUDES GOOGLE SLIDES

These letter of the week units are something I created and started using in my classroom. I had students with significant challenges and most were non-readers. We spent one week per letter.

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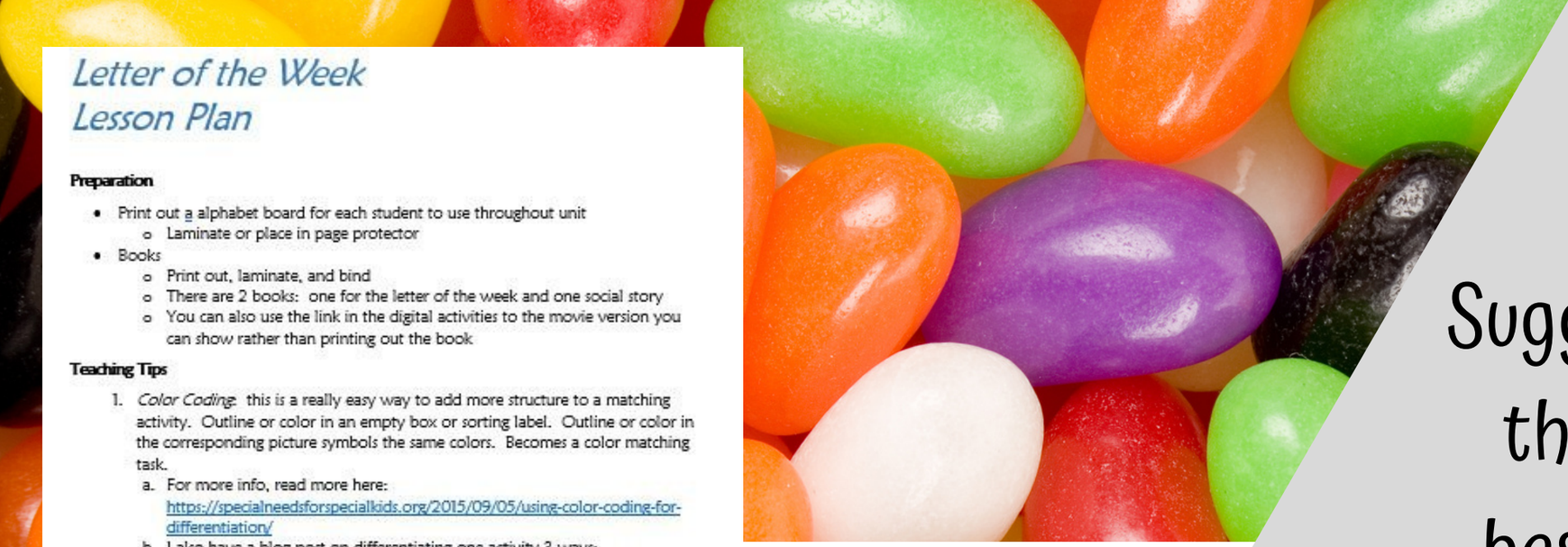
This unit has 5 group activities and 5 individual activities. They are in both a print and digital format.



Letter of the Week Lesson Plan

Preparation

- Print out a alphabet board for each student to use throughout unit
  - Laminate or place in page protector
- Books
  - Print out, laminate, and bind
  - There are 2 books: one for the letter of the week and one social story
  - You can also use the link in the digital activities to the movie version you can show rather than printing out the book

Teaching Tips

1. *Color Coding*: this is a really easy way to add more structure to a matching activity. Outline or color in an empty box or sorting label. Outline or color in the corresponding picture symbols the same colors. Becomes a color matching task.
   a. For more info, read more here: https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2015/09/05/using-color-coding-for-differentiation/
   b. I also have a blog post on differentiating one activity 3 ways: https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2018/10/22/differentiating-1-activity-3-ways-easily-and-effectively/
2. *Make you own copies of the activities*. Every day I review the activity we did yesterday. For that reason:
   a. I often complete the activity myself and often laminated it for easy review that I could use year after year.
   b. My copies were also helpful as either a model for students who needed more support or as a way for more advanced students to self-check their work.
3. *Options for Use*: Turn any activity into a reusable file folder activity by laminating and adding Velcro.
   a. For more info, watch this video here: https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Making-File-Folder-Activities-3474240

4. *Reteaching*
   a. Often, my students do not learn everything the first time around. I
      uncommon for me to re-teach the entire sequence of lessons belo
      week following the assessment.
   b. To add variety, I try to mix it up a little
      i. Use black and white copies rather than color (I also lik
         black and white copies home for "homework" or extra
         Mom and Dad.
      ii. Do the activities as a group activity rather than individual
         worksheets.
      iii. Switch the order of the activities
      iv. Try to add more videos, or find a related book to add more
         interest, engagement and hopefully access more prior knowledge
      v. There are a lot of things you can do with the vocabulary board, see
         this video:
         https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Storyboards-An-Easy-Tool-to-Add-to-Your-Lesson-1954805
   c. After going through the material twice, if needed, I usually opt to move on
      regardless of the performance on the assessment.
5. *YouTube and other videos*. I was a big proponent of adding as much visual media as I could to my lessons. I would encourage you to search YouTube or other video libraries your school uses for short movies to reinforce the main points of the lesson.
6. Check out this blog post I wrote for even more ideas and activities for using the alphabet board, vocabulary board or vocabulary cards:
   https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2019/01/14/awesome-activities-to-do-with-vocabulary-boards-and-cards/
7. If you have students who struggle with cutting, or scissors are not a safe option, then be sure to check out this blog post where I walk through how to complete different types of cut and paste worksheets without having to do any cutting at all.
   https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2020/04/27/no-scissors-allowed/

Remember, there is another pdf with directions and links to digital activities for this unit.

Suggestions on how I found these activities worked best in my classroom are provided. I typically had 6-8 students with one adult assistant in the room with me.

Color version

Letter J
Letter of the Week Unit

By

Christa Joy

Special Needs for Special Kids

In separate files, you will:

- Black and white version of this unit
- 5-day lesson plan
- Directions and links to digital activities

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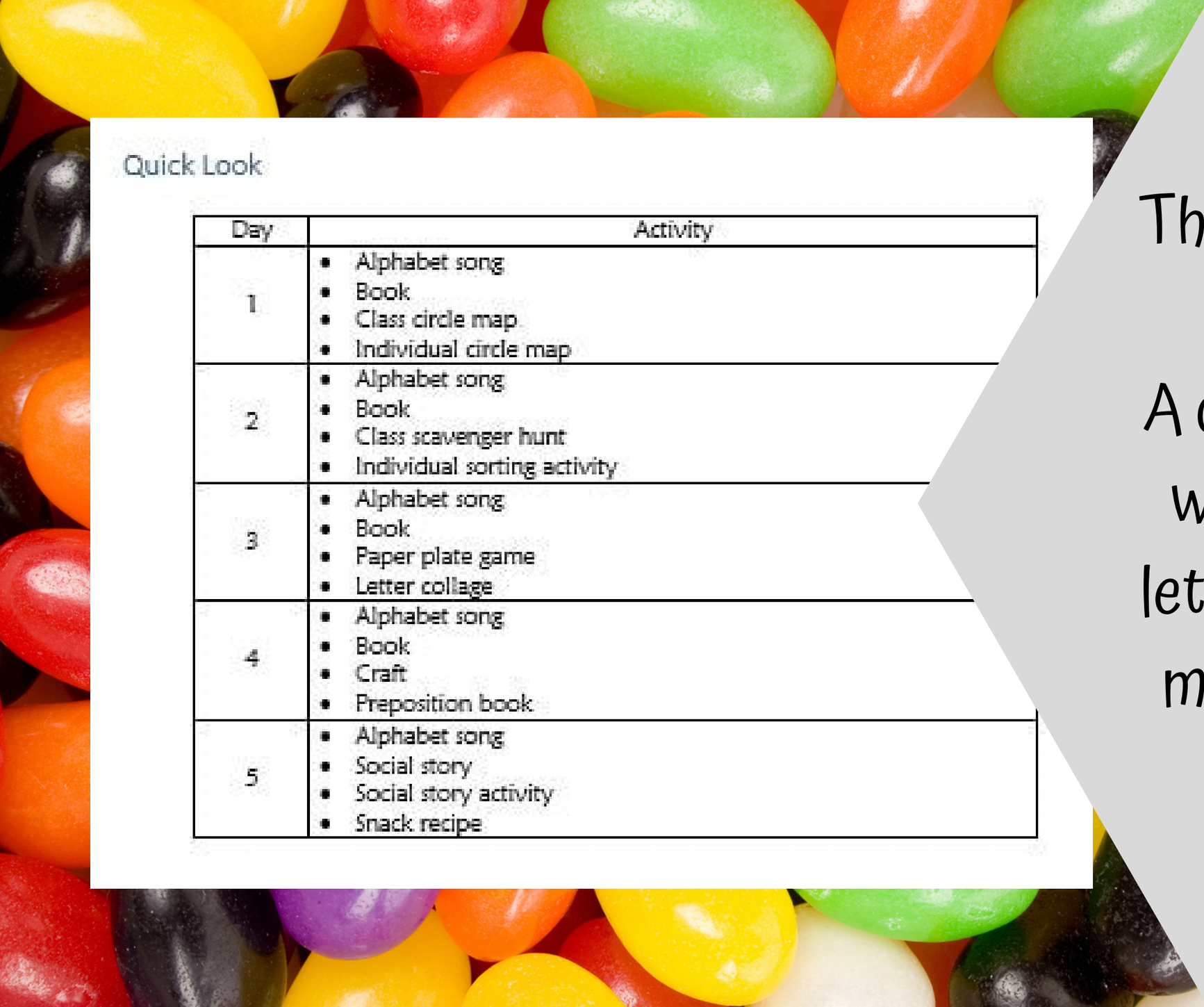
This entire unit comes in 2 separate files. One is completely in color and one is completely in black and white.



Quick Look

Day	Activity
1	• Alphabet song • Book • Class circle map • Individual circle map
2	• Alphabet song • Book • Class scavenger hunt • Individual sorting activity
3	• Alphabet song • Book • Paper plate game • Letter collage
4	• Alphabet song • Book • Craft • Preposition book
5	• Alphabet song • Social story • Social story activity • Snack recipe

The lesson plans contain:

A quick look at what you will do each day. Each letter of the week unit is meant to last 5 days of instruction.

Day 2

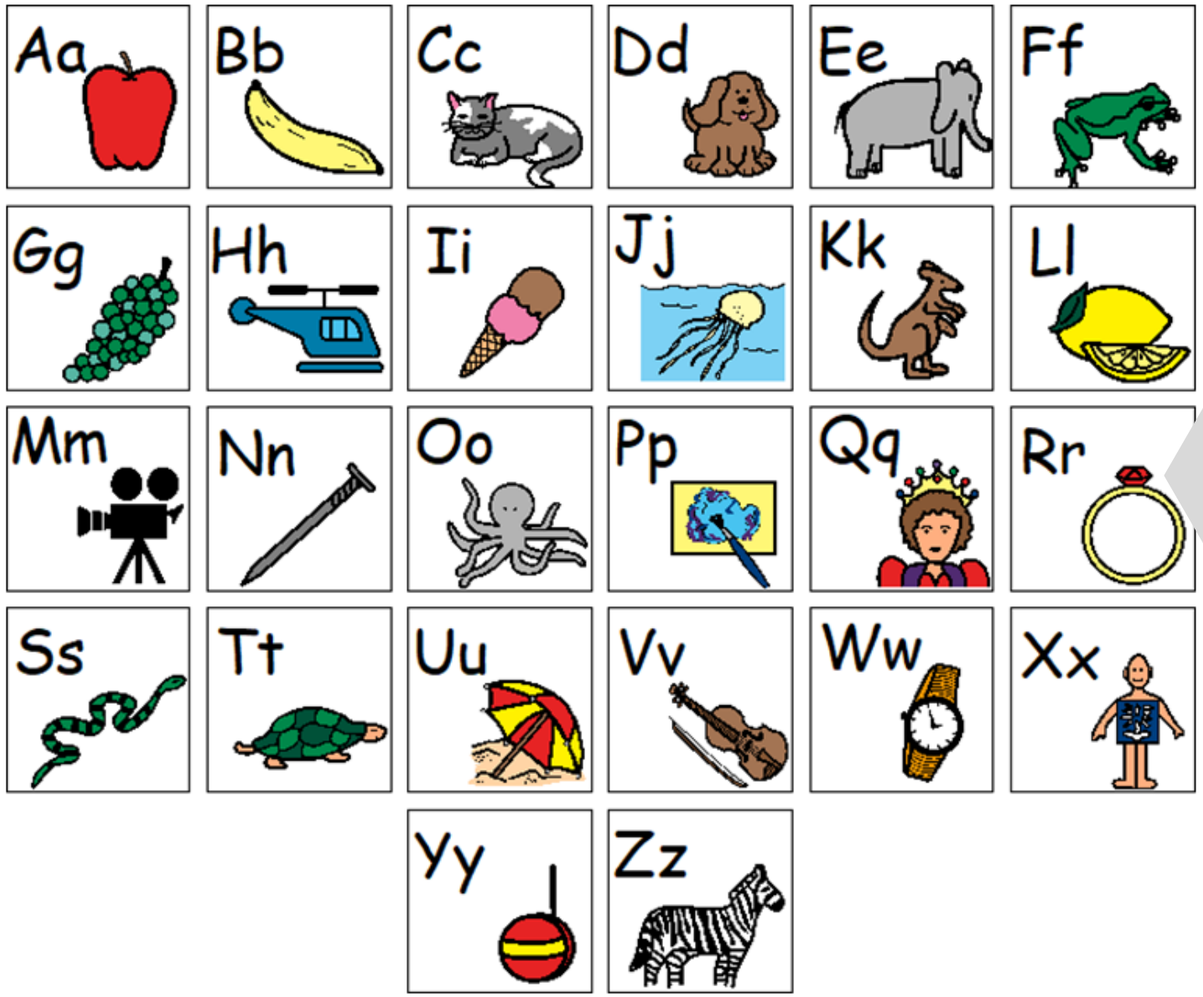
Activity	Notes	Materials
Sing alphabet song	• Using your favorite alphabet song, sing along using the alphabet board. o Students should point to each letter as they sing • Special attention is paid to finding the letter of the week as well as past letters learning	• Song • Alphabet board
Read the book: **Letter of the week** (5 minutes)	• Read through the story, asking lots of questions • Continue to make connections between book and alphabet board	• Book • Alphabet board
Group activity (10 minutes)	• Scavenger Hunt (See activity for detailed directions) o Students will go around the room looking for the letter of the week and objects that start with that letter	• Letter of the week cards
Circle map review (5 minutes)	• Review the circle map completed yesterday	• Circle map completed yesterday

Individual activity (10 minutes)	• Do the sorting activity
	  o Choose to use either picture symbols, actual letters in different fonts or BOTH!!
	  o Use color coding if needed for additional support (answer key included)
		• Sorting activity
		• Scissors
		• Glue

Sharing (10 minutes)	• Each student shares their finished sorting activity with the group using the communication method of their choice	• Completed activity • Communication devices

The lesson plans contain:

Detailed instructions on how that day's lesson should run including group and individual activities.



This unit comes with an alphabet board.

Vocabulary boards are great for ALL students to assist with participation and engagement in group discussions.

Tips on how to use in the unit!!

Jaguar starts with J.

Jumping rope starts with J.

This unit comes with a book for that letter. It has photos and simple, repeatable text.

Each daily lesson is started with this book.

Watch the movie on the Letter J

If you do not want to print the book out, there is a link to a movie version (mp4 file) that you can play in a google slide online or project. It is read aloud and has automatic page advancement.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

- CLASS CIRCLE MAP
- SCAVENGER HUNT
- PAPER PLATE GAME
- CRAFT
- PICTURE RECIPE

- EACH GROUP ACTIVITY COMES WITH DIRECTIONS AND A LIST OF MATERIALS NEEDED
- EVERY UNIT HAS THE SAME ACTIVITIES

Class Circle Map

- Preparation
  - Draw a large circle on a piece of poster board (I used a class trash can)
  - Either laminate or apply pieces of hook Velcro in random places within the circle
  - Cut out follow pictures, laminate and attach loop Velcro if using

- Directions
  - Place a post-it note in center of the letter of the week
  - Distribute prepared letter card symbols to the students.
  - Have them take turns bringing up cards and adding to circle
  - When complete, re-name all pictures in the circle
  - There are enough cards to use different cards throughout the week

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The class circle map comes with directions and suggestions for modifications. There are 30 large picture cards included.

Class Scavenger Hunt

- **Preparation**
  - Print out as many copies of the letter card as you think you will need. Laminate for durability.
  - Place the letter cards on various things around the room that start with the letter of the week
- **Directions**
  - Have students walk around looking for items that start with the letter of the week
  - Once students find the letter label, they should attempt to name the item they have found
- **Differentiation**
  - For students that need more structure, give them a piece of poster board with blank spaces to show them how many letter cards they should try to find
  - For students still struggling, have pictures of what items they are to find and see if they can match the object that starts with the letter to the picture
- For ***5 different ways to do a scavenger hunt***, check out this blog post with free hunts to download:
  https://specialneedsforspecialkids.org/2019/03/11/5-new-ways-to-use-a-scavenger-hunt-in-special-ed/

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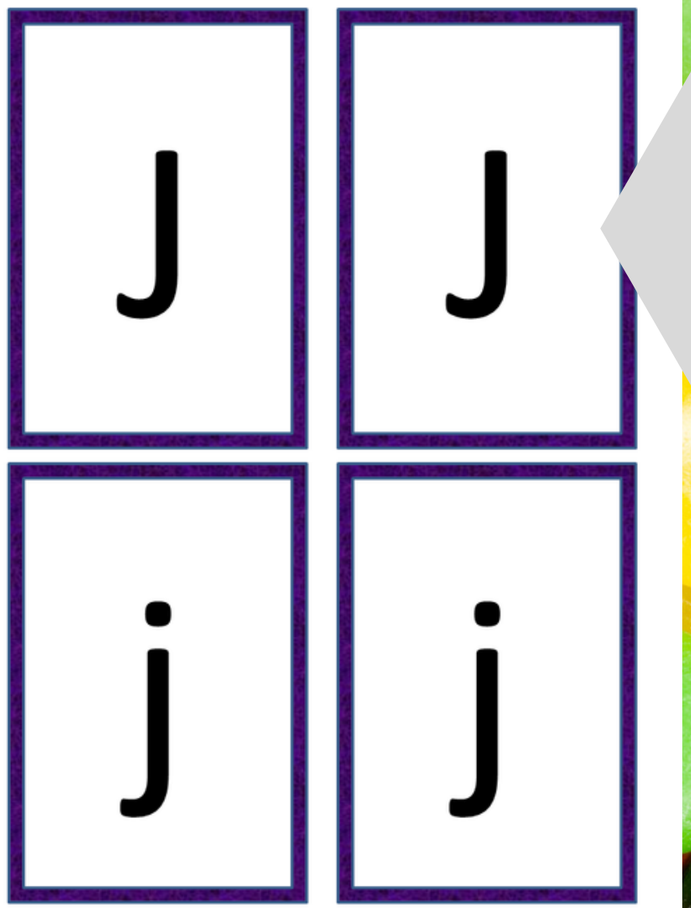
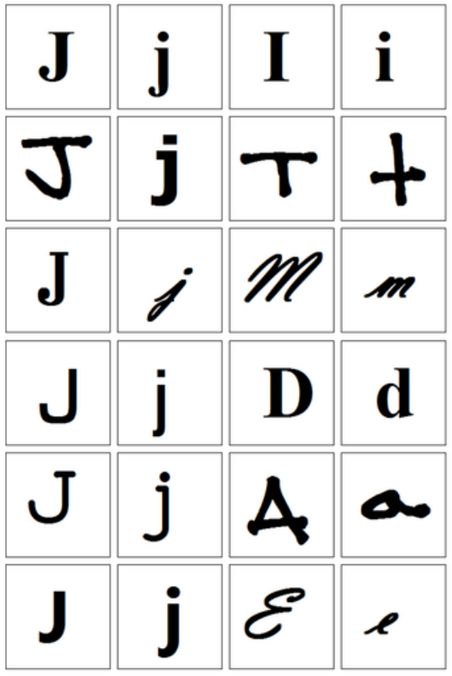


The scavenger hunt also comes with directions and modification options.

Pick up the Plates

- **Preparation**
  - Print out as many copies of the letter cards as you think you will need. Laminate for durability.
  - Print out letter of the week pictures and "distracters"
  - Attach letters and pictures to inexpensive paper plates
- **Directions**
  - Spread the paper plates around the classroom or work area on the floor
    - You can choose to either place them upside down for variation 1 or right side up for variation 2
  - Variation 1
    - Students take turn picking up a plate and bringing it back to their seat
    - The student gets to keep the plate if it is the letter of the week or a picture that begins with the letter of the week
    - Whoever has the most plates at the end of the games wins
  - Variation 2
    - Student looks at plates and tries to only pick up one that has the letter of the week or a picture that begins with that sound
    - Student gets to keep the plate if correct.
    - Who
- **Differentiation**
  - For stude week and backgrou cue to the
  - Or, elimir

The Picture Con



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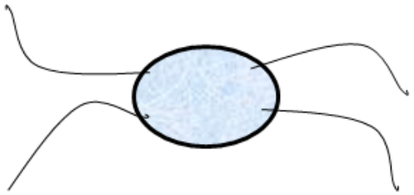
The paper plate game gets kids up and moving around.

Jellyfish Craft

- This craft is specifically designed for students with severe disabilities to enable them to complete it as independently as possible.
- This craft also addresses the sensory needs many of our students have.
- You will need
  - Clear contact paper
  - Glitter
  - Sequins
  - yarn



- **Directions**
  - Cut a piece of contact paper in the shape of a circle that has a diameter about 10-12 inches
  - Remove paper, keeping sticky side up
  - Let students add glitter and sequins to sticky surface
  - Students place yarn around edges with long tail hanging outside the circle (See example)
  - Fold circle in half, sticky sides together
  - You have a finished jellyfish!

- Differentiation

  For students that need more stability, you may need to secure the circle to the desk using tape on the non-sticky side.

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Each week has a craft that is specifically designed so students can do much of it independently.

Incredible Butter in a Jar

Each week has a simple picture recipe that is done on day 5 as the last activity of the week.

Ingredient Labels

Butter in a Jar

- Preparation
  - Print out ingredient labels and affix to ingredients prior to lesson
    - Depending on the learning level of your students you can either pre-measure the ingredients so they are just dumping in what is in the containers, **or**
    - Allow your students to measure out the correct amount (good for older students especially)
  - Review and address any food allergies
  - Depending on learning style of your students, either print a class copy of the recipe directions or make a copy for each student
    - *For students that are visually overwhelmed, cut apart the recipe and mount each step on a separate index card*
- Directions
  - As a class prepare butter in a jar following the recipe

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Recipe

1. Fill jar half full with

2. Add a pinch

3. Shake for about 30 minutes until lump

4. Pour off liquid

5. Spread butter on bread

6. Eat

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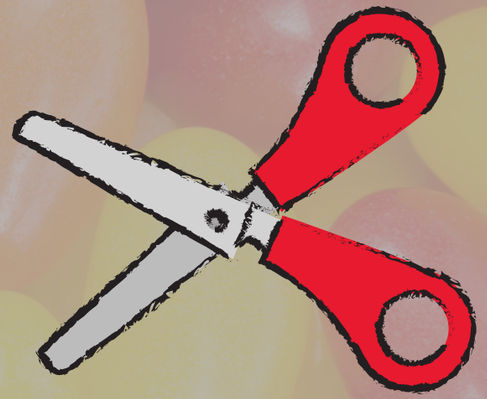
INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES



- CIRCLE MAP
- SORTING ACTIVITY
- COLLAGE
- CRAFT
- ACTIVITY TO GO WITH A SOCIAL STORY

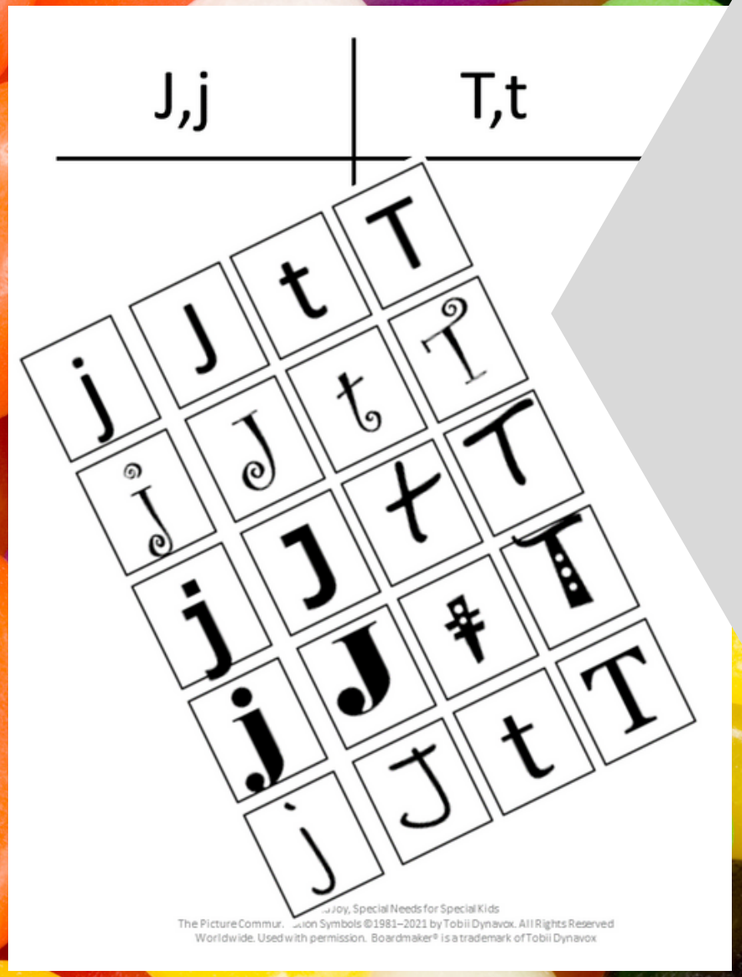
- EACH INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY COMES WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR DIFFERENTIATION

- EVERY UNIT HAS THE SAME ACTIVITIES

Each circle map comes with 2 choices:

An errorless option with only correct answers

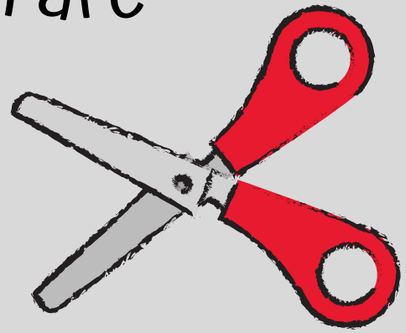
An option that has wrong answers mixed in students will need to set aside.

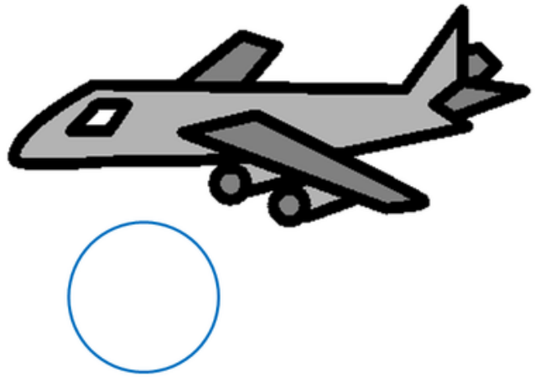


There are sorting activities.

One sort uses pictures and one uses letters in various fonts.

Directions for differentiation are included..





The letter J is ☐ the jet.

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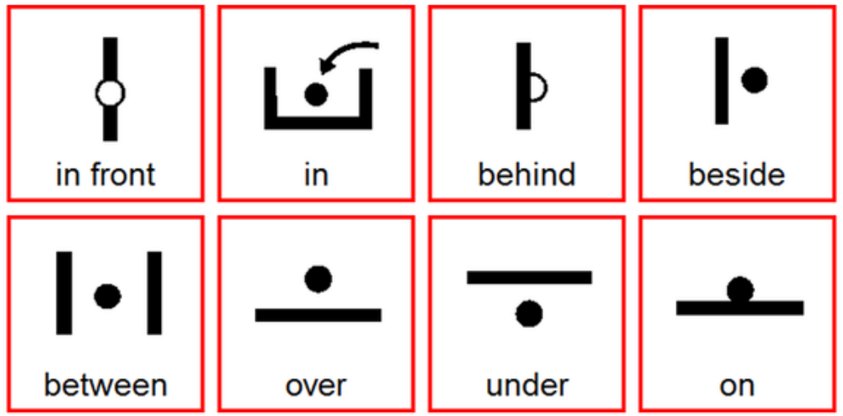
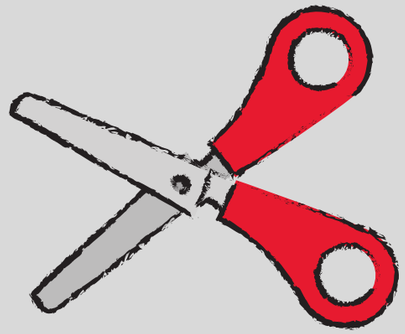
J j J



Students complete a preposition booklet indicating where the letter of the week is located in relation to various objects.



Letter J collage

- Directions
  - Print out one copy per student of the upper-case letter template on cardstock
  - Paint the interior of the letter J with white glue
  - Empty Jell-O powder into a cup
  - Let students sprinkle powder onto interior of letter template
- Differentiation
  - Different types of Jell-O will have different scents. FUN!
  - For students that have a hard time pouring things, make a small hole in the Jell-O envelope so powder will come out slowly when held over paper

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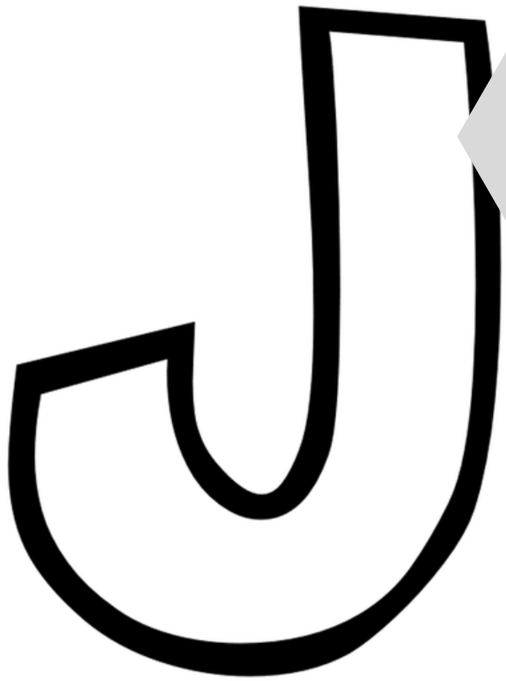

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Students make a collage using a letter template and an item for that letter of the week. There are modifications and ways to differentiate included.

Ugh, I don't want to wait.

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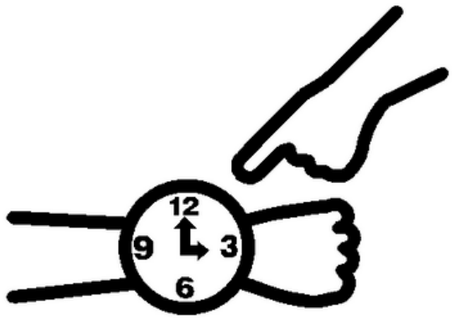
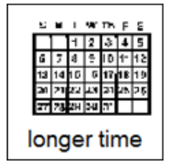
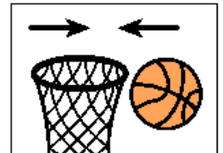


But it won't be too long.

Each unit has a social story. This one is on waiting just a minute. It also comes in a black and white booklet.

Waiting can be tough. Some things take a long time, and some things take a short time. Look at the pictures on the next page and put them in the correct column depending on how long you think they will take.





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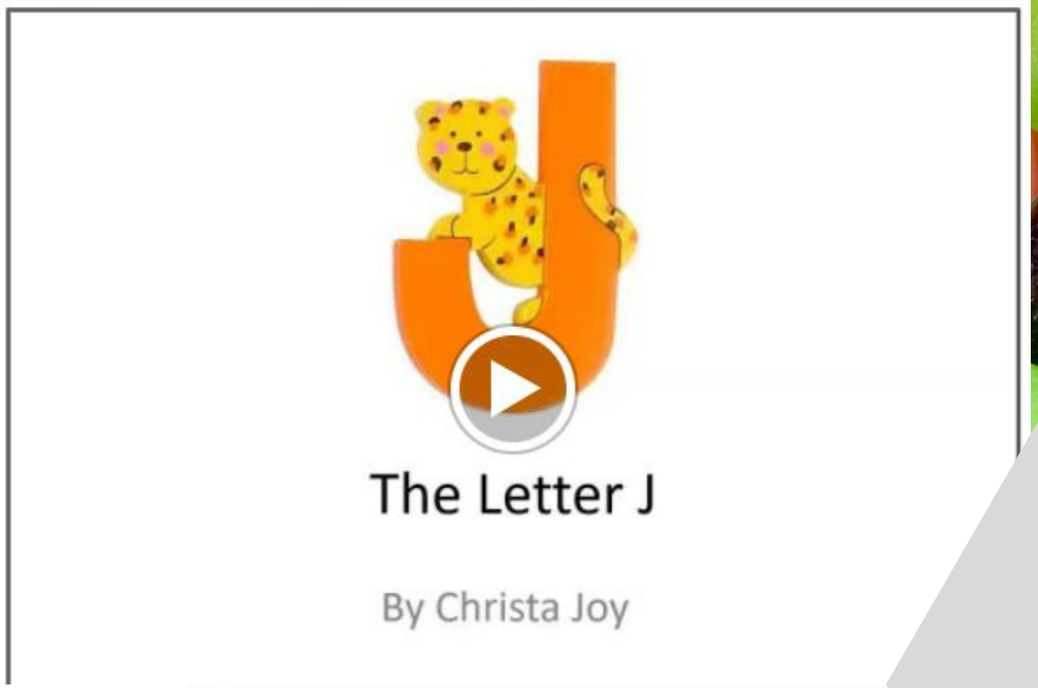
There is an individual activity that relates to that social story. This one has students sort things that take just a minute or those that take longer. Directions and modifications are provided.

DIGITAL ACTIVITIES

- CIRCLE MAP
- 2 SORTING ACTIVITIES
- CIRCLE ALL THE OBJECTS STARTING WITH THE LETTER OF THE WEEK
- PREPOSITION BOOK
- ACTIVITY TO GO WITH A SOCIAL STORY

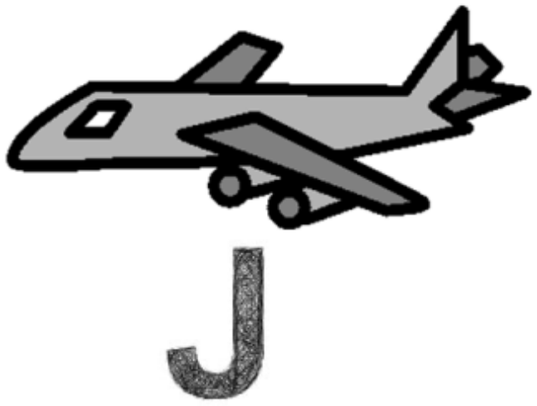
- THERE ARE 2 SETS OF SLIDES.
  - ONE IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENTIATED WITH COLOR
- BOTH BOOKS ARE EMBEDDED AS MOVIES INTO THE SET OF SLIDES

Watch the movie on the Letter J



Watch the movie Waiting Just a Minute

Students can watch the movies of both the letter of the week book and the social story.

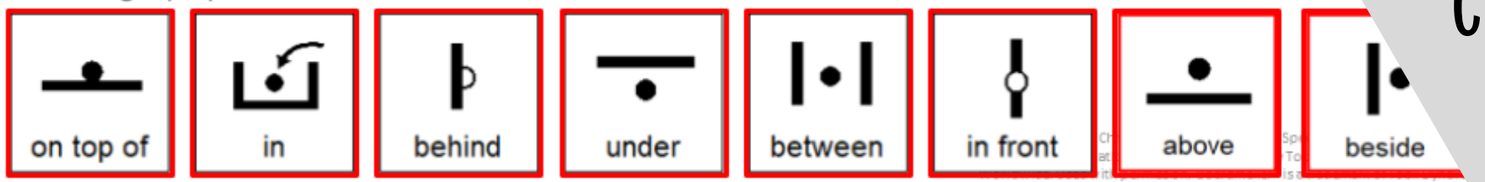


J

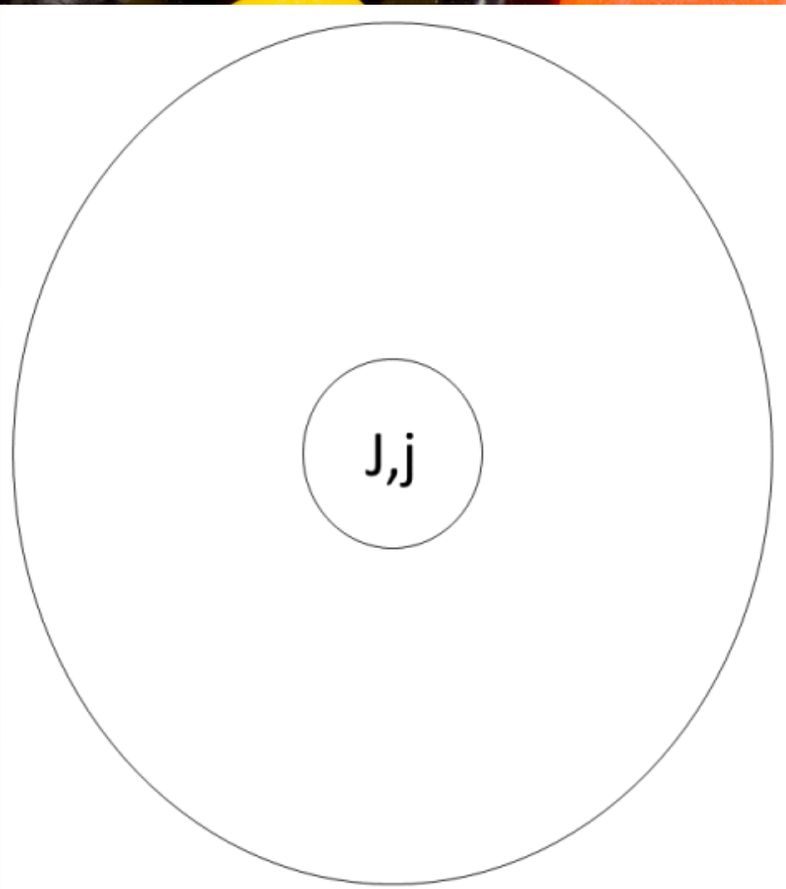
The letter J is ☐ the jet.

The letter J is ☐ the

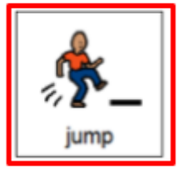
Match the right preposition.

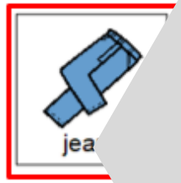


Each activity is set up so students can click and drag answers. No typing is required.



Place the pictures in the circle map that start with the letter J.





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The second set of slides uses color for differentiation and extra support for students who may need it. Mix and match slides from both sets to make the perfect set for each student.

I realize there will be some students out there unable to do cutting activities. I have a blog post with ways to complete activities without a pair of scissors!!

Click Here to read more!!