



# Table of Contents

## Chapter 1:

<b>Introduction and Center Tips</b> .....	5
The Importance of Play .....	5
Learning/Playing Goals .....	7
Other Skill Sets .....	9
Guidelines for Making Centers.....	11
Object Labels .....	13
Parent Request Letter.....	16
Scheduling and Participation.....	17
Special Pullout Section: Transition Time.....	19

## Chapter 2:

### The Foundation of Play:

<b>The Block Center</b> .....	20
Where to Set it Up.....	20
How to Set it Up .....	21
The Basics .....	21
Special Pullout Section:	
Choking Hazards.....	22
Beyond the Basics .....	23
Aside: Talking with Children about Their Cre-	
ations .....	24
Teaching Tricks .....	26
Learning Goals for the Block Center .....	27
Reproducible Shapes Activity .....	29

## Chapter 3:

### “I’ll Do It!”:

<b>The Manipulative Center</b> .....	30
Where to Set it Up.....	30
How to Set it Up .....	30
The Basics .....	31
Beyond the Basics .....	33
Teaching Tricks .....	35
Learning Goals for the Manipulative Center ..	37
Special Pullout Section:	
Letters, Numbers, and Accreditation.....	38
Tracing Lines.....	39
Tracing Shapes.....	40
Scissor Skills .....	41

## Chapter 4:

### Squishy–Scratchy–Sandy:

<b>The Sensory Center</b> .....	42
Where to Set it Up.....	42
How to Set it Up .....	42
The Basics .....	43
Beyond the Basics .....	44
Teaching Tricks .....	47
Learning Goals for the Sensory Center .....	48
Sink or Float? .....	49
Sensory Table Checklist .....	50

## Chapter 5:

### Nature’s Place:

<b>The Science Center</b> .....	51
Where to Set it Up.....	51
How to Set it Up .....	51
The Basics .....	52
Beyond the Basics .....	54
Special Pullout Section:	
How to Prepare Parent Volunteers.....	56
Teaching Tricks .....	58
Learning Goals for the Science Center .....	60
Bubble Solutions.....	61
Weather Symbols.....	62
Pet Permission Slip.....	64
Scientific Method .....	65

## Chapter 6:

### Express Yourself:

<b>The Art Center</b> .....	66
Where to Set it Up.....	66
How to Set it Up .....	67
The Basics .....	68
Beyond the Basics .....	70
Teaching Tricks .....	72
Learning Goals for the Art Center .....	74
Play Dough Recipe.....	76
Beginning Photography How Tos.....	77

## Chapter 7:

### Sounds of Music:

<b>The Music Center</b> .....	78
Where to Set it Up.....	78
How to Set it Up .....	79
The Basics .....	79
Beyond the Basics .....	80
Teaching Tricks .....	82
Learning Goals for the Music Center .....	83

## Chapter 8:

### Getting Along:

<b>The Dramatic Play Center</b> .....	85
Where to Set it Up.....	85
How to Set it Up .....	86
The Basics .....	86
Beyond the Basics .....	90
Theme Box 1: Health Care.....	90
Theme Box 2: Barber Shop/Salon .....	91
Theme Box 3: Restaurant.....	91
Theme Box 4: Fire Station .....	92
Theme Box 5: Car Repair Shop/Carwash/ Gas Station/ Carpentry Shop/ Building Site .....	92



Theme Box 6: School .....	93
Theme Box 7: Office .....	93
Theme Box 8: House .....	93
Theme Box 9: Post Office .....	94
Theme Box 10: Camping Trip/Picnic .....	94
Theme Box 11: Garden .....	95
Theme Box 12: Grocery Store .....	95
Theme Box 13: Community Helpers .....	95
Theme Box 14: World Travel .....	96
Theme Box 15: Transportation .....	96
Teaching Tricks .....	97
Learning Goals for the Dramatic Play Center ..	99
Prescription .....	101
Appointment Book .....	102
Menu.....	103
May I Take Your Order?.....	104
Fire Hat .....	105
Tickets .....	106

**Chapter 9:**

**Once Upon A Time:**

<b>The Reading Center</b> .....	107
Where to Set it Up.....	107
How to Set it Up .....	107
The Basics .....	108
Beyond the Basics .....	110
Teaching Tricks .....	112
Learning Goals for the Reading Center .....	113
Special Pullout Section:	
Books around the Classroom .....	114
How to Care for Books.....	115

**Chapter 10:**

**A Place Just to Be:**

<b>The Quiet Center</b> .....	116
Where to Set it Up.....	116
How to Set it Up .....	116
The Basics .....	117
Beyond the Basics .....	117
Teaching Tricks .....	119
Learning Goals for the Quiet Center .....	119

**Chapter 11:**

**Let's Move!:**

<b>The Playground</b> .....	120
Where to Set it Up.....	120
How to Set it Up .....	121
The Basics .....	122
Beyond the Basics .....	124
Teaching Tricks .....	125
Learning Goals for The Playground .....	127

**Chapter 12:**

<b>Other Possible Centers</b> .....	129
Computer Center .....	129
Learning Goals for The Computer Center.....	129
Cooking Center.....	130
Learning Goals for the Cooking Center .....	130
Special Pullout Section:	
Children and Peanuts.....	131
Geography Center .....	131
Learning Goals for the Geography Center.....	131
Woodworking Center.....	132
Learning Goals for the Woodworking Center ...	132

**Chapter 13:**

**Reinforcing Concepts & Themes**

<b>through Centers</b> .....	133
The Concept: Red.....	133
The Concept: Triangle Shapes.....	135
Theme: Fall Leaves .....	136
Theme: All About Me .....	137
All About Me Booklet .....	139
Theme: Winter Holidays.....	142
Special Pullout Section:	
Holidays and Celebrations.....	145
Theme: Winter Weather .....	146
Theme: Spring .....	147
Theme: Baby Animals and Farm Animals ...	149

**Chapter 14:**

**Guess What I Did Today!:**

<b>Documentation</b> .....	151
Special Pullout Section:	
Comments on Forms .....	152
Aside: Using a Camera to Document the	
School Year and Enhance Your Centers .....	154
Child/Center Report.....	157
Your Child This Week .....	158
Look What I Did Today! .....	159
Center Evaluation Form .....	160

