



### A note about skill sheets and art activities

- I have done all of these categories with my Young Fives. So you can gear them up or down for pre-school through 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- It's a wonderful hands-on and FUN way for them to learn.
- I have done all of the art activities with them as well so you can say these are definitely "kid-tested, teacher and mother approved!"
- I've ironed out the kid-kinks so you should have smooth sailing.
- Please let me know if you have **suggestions or comments**. I'm always looking for new ideas and ways to improve!
- I have specifically not put down a time frame in my directions, because I find them misleading. Even for me they differ from year to year. Each group of students is different, and the time of year you do a project as well as their ability level will also play a part.
- My students start their day with Table Top Skill Sheets. I call them "Fun Sheets!" "That will make us smart!" To call something a "work sheet" starts you off with a negative connotation from the get-go.
- I start the first week of September with 1-3 sheets and then quickly move to 4- 5.
- By October, my students are doing booklets that are 8-10 pages long.
- I'm trying to get them ready for kindergarten, so I've developed my own workbooks, as there were none available on the market, and no budget even if there were.
- I discovered that even page turning is a skill that my students needed to learn, as well as going back through and self-correcting. I wanted them to check their work to see that they really did do all of the pages, before they raised their hand to be checked so they could move on to centers.
- As I quickly checked their work, I was able to assess who did not understand a concept.
- I make a class list and type it up so that I can print 4 on a page, run it off and use these small sheets as mini-assessment notes. I date them, and head them with what I'm assessing. I attach them to my clipboard.
- When I'm looking at a booklet that has similarities and differences, I'd title one list that, another cutting, another patterns etc. Anyone that got that booklet page wrong, I would circle their name.

- As I'm checking children's work, I only can help briefly, later when they have Free Play Center Time, I pull them out and work one-on-one with them for 5 minutes on a concept they were having difficulty with during Table Top.
- I also jot a note to parents in red ink, on the front of their booklet. "Please help your child with page \_\_\_\_\_."
- I keep all these little assessment sheets in chronological order in a mini manila envelope that I have cut in half so that the assessments peek out.
- When it comes time for report cards I use these, as well as my "one-shot" formal assessment to fill out grades. That way when parents say: "Well my child knows how to do that at home." I have ample proof that they aren't doing it here.
- These are also great to refer to during conferences.
- Whatever Table Top skill sheet my students are doing, I have one of that page on the white board.
- They sit for 5-6 minutes while we do each page together as I model and explain.
- Just because I give the "answers" up there, does not mean they do it correctly at their seat. It really shows who is listening and following directions!
- I have laminated "what-to-do" **picture + word icons** that are words that I want them to learn how to read. i.e., WRITE, CUT, GLUE, TRACE, etc.
- When they go back to their seat, if they forget what they are supposed to do, all they have to do, is look at the board and see the icon under the sheet, for a quick reminder.
- I put a piece of self-stick magnet on each icon, and keep them clipped together and stacked on the sill. I make 4 copies of each icon.
- **Click here to make a set. They are found In My Classroom under White Board.**
- All of my skill sheets are of the same format so that my students get used to them as they nail specific standards. i.e, patterns, pre-writing skills by tracing, matching, bingo dots, connect the dots, graphing, groups and sets, mazes, similarities and differences, strengthening finger muscles and learning how to cut by snip and cut sheets and pinch and poke papers.
- I also start their day with an "I Spy!" the number as they enjoy playing games. This helps them with number recognition, sequencing, and pre-writing as they trace the number.
- I allow ½ an hour for Table Top. Most children are done in 15-20 minutes.
- I do most of the art activities as centers.
- I train my Y5's to complete their Table Top skill-sheet lessons first and then move on to independent centers after they've been "checked out."
- I have everything they need at small and large tables.

- They sometimes work at that table and sometimes get the materials at the table and then return to their own seat to work at their own work station.
- I allow an hour for centers. Most children are done in 30-45 minutes.
- Each child is responsible to clean up their own station. They raise their hand to again be “checked out” after they complete their centers.
- I have anywhere from 2-4 centers in September and work my students up to 6-8 in October and November and finally as many as 9 or 10 in April and May. Our kindergartners do 12 independent ones so my Y5’s are really ready.
- My centers are designed so that they can complete all of them within that time slot. I usually have a volunteer helping me at least twice a week. This is a tremendous help, especially in the beginning. I stress to parents in a letter that I need help from 8:00-9:30 during this crucial learning time. Sometimes I get volunteers.
- 95% of them get done before recess with a few pokey Joes taking their time either because they are meticulous about their work, or because they are watching the others work or fooling around. Whatever the reason, they can continue to complete their work after recess, when the other children have Free Play Center Time. I never keep a child in for recess. They need to be outside.
- I’m able to work one-on-one with them at that time.
- It’s amazing how quickly a pokey child will get down to business and get their work done so they can go play, when they see that the other children around them are playing with trucks or Barbies etc.
- So with these tips in mind pick and choose your skill sheets and art activities and have fun. Rest assured they are all winners.
- You will enjoy yourself and so will your students!
- They are easy, fun, and for the most part you probably have all of the materials or at least they are pretty inexpensive to make.
- Plus the beauty of my crafts is that they make wonderful decorations for your classroom and bulletin boards that help build self esteem.
- They are also great keepsakes for parents too.
- We all know that there’s no time for art for art’s sake anymore, but there are at least 3 if not 5 of my report card standards in each of my projects ([check out this list](#)) so relax and enjoy. Come Teach With Me...where the core of learning really is FUN!

Some report card standards involved in my projects

1. increase listening
2. following a 3 step or more direction
3. learning how to cut on a straight & jagged lines

4. cutting dexterity/use of a scissors
5. practice gluing and putting something together
6. learning how to take care of supplies
7. identifying colors
8. sequencing
9. patterns
10. recognizing flat shapes
11. drawing shapes
12. recognizing 3-d shapes
13. small-medium-large
14. spatial directions
15. pre-writing skills - tracing
16. pre-reading skills
17. concepts of print
18. number identification
19. number sequencing
20. pre-addition
21. pre-subtraction
22. letter recognition
23. letter sequencing
24. ordinal numbers
25. sorting
26. counting by 1's
27. counting by 2's
28. counting by 5's
29. counting by 10's
30. odd/even numbers
31. Word wall words
32. writing prompts
33. name recognition
34. similarities and differences
35. patterning

Plus they are fun, build self-esteem, decorate your classroom, make mommy happy, are great for assessment purposes, increase control and finger muscles, increase upper body strength, stretch attention spans and make school a more fun and looked-forward place to be! ☺

