

EDUCATIONAL SPONGE ACTIVITIES

A to Z Countries

As a class, try to name countries beginning with the letter A all the way to the letter Z. As time allows, see if your kids know where these countries are located around the world.

Class Drawing

Create a drawing with each student adding a part. Students will take turn going up to the board and drawing a line or shape that will connect to the previous student's drawing. In order to make it more challenging, pick a topic such as person, animal, place, or thing. It will be fun to see what the picture turns out to be!

Description Exercise

Present an object to the class and have them come up with as many words as they can to describe it. List these words and talk about the importance of using many different kinds of description when writing.

Time Left in 1999 or Time into 2000

Ask your class to figure out how many hours are left in the millennium or how many we have lived in the new one. If you have more time, have them figure out seconds.

Simon Says

Play Simon Says with your class. Start off by being the leader and then let other students take over. Kids love playing the game and it really can help enforce listening skills.

A New Animal

Have your students create a "new" animal using features of several other animals. For example they might make a combine an elephant's head with a giraffe's neck, a zebra's body and a bird's legs--a zebraphant! Let them be creative and come up with an original name.

Pocket Count

Have the class find out how many pockets are in the classroom. Let them come up with a plan for how they want to do the calculation. If you still have time, have the students find the average number of pockets and you can make a quick graph on the board.

I Spy

Start this activity by locating something in the room without letting your students know. Start describing the object to your kids. For example, you might say, "I spy something red!" or "I spy something that starts with the letter G!" Your students can guess what it is and the students that guess correctly gets to start a new round.

What Is It?

Put something in an opaque bag. Have students sit in a circle and bring the bag around the circle, letting students feel the objects without looking at it. After everyone has had a chance to think about what the object might be, list his or her guesses on the board. In order to eliminate certain guesses, have students list the

properties of the object that they were able to ascertain from touching it. Narrow the choices down to those that fit with the descriptions.

Create Critters

Let your students have fun transforming the regular, "boring" letters of the alphabet into totally cool creatures! They can keep these worksheets in their desks and each time you have a couple of extra minutes, have them pull these out and start working on them. They'll love it.

Guess the Title

Read a short story to your class or a picture book and have students guess what the title is. Discuss why the students choose the titles they do.

Syllable Count

Have students make number cards for the numbers 1-6. They can simply fold a sheet of paper into sixths to do this. Randomly callout words and have students hold up the card with the corresponding number of syllables.

Related Word Toss

Use a beanbag or small ball for this activity. One person starts the game by calling out a word and then throws the beanbag to another student. That student must call out a word that relates to the previous word as quickly as they can. You should assign a time limit on how long each person can hold the bag before saying a word and tossing the beanbag to the next person. Those students who take too long are "out" of the game.

Quick Math

Have your class figure out some of the following problems: 1. How many hands are there in the classroom? 2. How many fingers are there? 3. How many noses? Encourage the students to find answers without counting one-by-one.

Twenty Questions

Pick a topic such as An Object in the Room, A Famous Person, An Animal, etc. One student must think of something in that category without telling the rest of the class. Everyone else must guess what the object is by asking Yes or No questions. The student that picked the object must ONLY answer Yes or No to the questions asked. The class has twenty guesses.

Team Pictionary

Separate the class into two teams. Have an easel with a pad of paper in front of the class where both teams can see it. Have a list of words ready that you want the class to try and depict. The teams take turns drawing and guessing. One person from Team A draws first and their team tries to guess what they are drawing by shouting out guesses. If they guess correctly they get 5 points. If they don't guess it, Team B can try to guess for 5 points. Usually a one minute time limit is given per word.

Story Chain

Arrange the class in a circle on the floor. Pick one student to start a story with one or two sentences. Students continue around the circle with each adding another sentence or two to the story. You can assign a specific topic

for the story or you can let the students decide. To make it more challenging, have first person begin the story with a word starting with "A" and have the next student start the next sentence with "B" and so on.

How many words can you find?

Give students a word that they have been studying recently and have them find words contained within that word. Make it a contest, seeing who can find the most words.

Mapping it Out

Have the children write out the directions or draw a map from school to their home, Covington to Memphis, Mrs. Jones room to the library, etc.

Top Ten

Ask the children to make lists of their 10 favorite foods, singers, songs, television shows, or whatever else you decide. Do you need more time? Have them alphabetize the list.

A Hoarse Horse

Write sets of homonyms and illustrate them or write a sentence using both of them.

Line up Codes

Ask the children to get in line by calling their names in alphabetical order and see if the children can tell why you are calling them in the order you have chosen. You could go from A - Z or try Z -A for a change.

We Had a Great Day!

Before dismissal, tell the children that they have had a great day. Ask them to tell you who helped it be such a good day. If they can't list the reasons, help them see that quiet workers, polite children, thoughtful comments caused all of you to have a good day. Let them know you are proud of them and they should be proud of themselves.

Just have a minute or two? Try these middle school ideas.

List as many nouns in the room as you can.

List as many models of cars as you can.

List as many things as you can that have two wheels.

Name cities in Tennessee, the United States, foreign countries.

Give a multiplication or division problem and call on a friend to give the product or quotient.

List words you believe will be in today's lesson.

Write a paragraph which involves several of those words or ideas.

Scan the text to locate some of these words. If some are located, read the selections aloud and discuss the meaning in context. (This is good preparation for reading assignments.)

List the continents of the world.

Name as many kinds of storms, gems, precious stones, teachers at this school, countries and their capitals, states and their capitals, cartoon characters, etc.

Name all the colors you know.

List as many parts of an automobile as you can.

List types of transportation. Write a paragraph describing your favorite and least favorite and why.
 Write one kind of food beginning with each letter of the alphabet.
 List all of our city facilities that serve the community.
 Describe five conditions that would be best for plant growth. Have them list the opposite and why those conditions would fail.
 List the simple machines and an example of each.
 Describe an animal's habitat, biome, or environment and choose one to read aloud and see if the class can guess what animal would live there.
 Write a paragraph about your favorite holiday.
 Explain which explorer you would like to be. Why?
 Complete an open-ended story or a story-starter.
 Look at a picture and write a story about it.
 Describe one interesting experience you have had.
 Create a picture out of a number.
 Count by 2's, 3's, 4's, etc. How far can you go?
 Brainstorm lists of words for themes--ex: autumn, space, heroes, winter
 Write down one good thing about each of your classmates.
 Have an "Indian Stones" Tournament

As quickly as you can, name as many:

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| -gems or precious stones | -teachers at this school | -states |
| -kinds of flowers | -kinds of ice cream | -U.S. presidents |
| -colors | -models of cars | -cities or towns in Texas |
| -countries of the world | -things made of cloth | -movie stars |
| -breeds of dogs | -foods that are alphabetical | -holidays |

Write or tell me:

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| -names of cartoon characters | -about your favorite book |
| -ordered pairs of numbers | -three smells you like and why |
| -adjectives that begin with each letter in your name | -what would you do if you saw an elephant in your back yard? |

Play:

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| -Twenty Questions | -I Spy | -Charades |
| -Simon Says | -ABC game | --Silent Water, Still Water |
| -Quiet Game | -Who Am I? (guessing famous people) | --First person makes a sentence that uses all "A's", second person gets B, and so on... |

Make up:

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| - 5 things you do after school | -three names for rock groups |
| - a sentence using alliteration | - one sentence using the words _____ |

Read:

- a famous quote & discuss its meaning
- tongue twisters

Give them:

- mental math problems to solve
- time to describe an object they see
- minute mysteries
- logic problems
- flash card relays
- words to spell
- brainteasers
- word puzzles