



## Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness

Mission: Every child in Pottstown will enter Kindergarten ready to learn and achieve



# PEAK Classroom Connections

*PEAK Classroom Connections: Creating a professional learning community for the early learning teachers in Pottstown to share ideas, improve instructional practices and implement researched-based best practices in the delivery of quality early learning experiences*

## PEAK NEWS

### Career Counseling

Jessica Lees, with Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children, is working with PEAK teachers on individual career advising. Jessica will consult with each teacher to identify career goals, assist in finding resources and appropriate classes to meet goals. Jessica is working with Eastern University to offer a Bachelors degree in Early Childhood Education in Pottstown for people currently having an Associates degree. If you have an Associates degree and want to pursue the four-year degree, contact Emily Baddeley, PEAK Pre-K Coach, at 610-718-8635.

### Health and Wellness Initiative

Sandy Leh has joined the PEAK initiative as the Early Childhood Health Specialist. Sandy will work

with partner programs to address nutrition, exercise, and other health-related needs that directly impact children's readiness for kindergarten.

Sandy is also providing professional development on health, safety and nutrition topics to community program staff. If you have questions related to health or wellness issues, contact Sandy at 610-858-9310.

### New Community Partner Programs

In 2007-2008, PEAK is working with additional community partner programs on quality improvement and professional development. PEAK welcomes KinderCare Learning Center, Warwick Child Care Center, Grace Lutheran Preschool and Dot-Len Academy. KinderCare and Warwick are also partners with the state-funded Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts program.



November 2007

### Special points of interest:

- ☞ PEAK News
- ☞ Literacy
- ☞ Finger Plays and Songs
- ☞ Arthur's Thanksgiving
- ☞ Transition Planning
- ☞ Class Books
- ☞ Teacher Resources

NEW EMAIL  
ADDRESSES

Mary:  
mrieck@pottstownsd.org

Emily:  
ebaddele@pottstownsd.org

## Thanks for Teachers

Thanks to our teachers everywhere  
Who teach our children with love and care.  
You make the world a better place  
And leave us all touched by your grace.

Children may forget the things you say,  
Or skills and facts you taught them today.  
But they'll remember how you made them feel  
Smiles and encouragement are very real.

The difference you make, you may never know.  
You plant the seeds that continue to grow.  
A simple story, a little song  
Will stay with them, their whole lives long.

When you love teaching and things you do,  
You'll help your children love learning, too.  
Life is short. Let's have more fun!  
Thanks for happy memories you give little ones!



### Contact Information:

Mary Rieck

PEAK Coordinator  
610-970-6655

Emily Baddeley  
PEAK Pre-K Coach  
610-718-8635

Lori Davidson  
Family Engagement  
610-718-5372

[www.peakonline.org](http://www.peakonline.org)

# LITERACY IDEAS TO MOTIVATE CHILDREN

Call children “readers” and “writers” and call their earliest, non-conventional efforts “reading” and “writing.”

**Give children authentic reasons to read and write.** At home, this includes writing thank you notes or helping with the grocery list. It means letting the child “read” the story to you.

**Provide dramatic play situations** with real literacy materials such as checkbooks or appointment calendars.

**Fill the classroom with functional print**—schedules, daily menus, helper charts and shelf labels.

**Support children's efforts with a wide variety of interesting materials.** Save card inserts from magazines and old stationery. Look for fun and colorful pens and pencils. Buy an etch-a-sketch or mag-

netic writing board from a garage sale.

**Provide children with clear models of words and letters.** Consider alphabet charts or posters and simple word cards. Children can make their own alphabet books or you can purchase commercial ones.

**Create a library corner** that is inviting to children with a wide range of printed materials—storybooks, magazines, poetry, non-fiction, and wordless books.

**Give children opportunities to reenact the stories they have heard.** Provide puppets or simple costumes and props.



## Turkey Finger Plays and Songs

### Five Little Turkeys

Five little turkeys by the barn door,  
One waddled off, then there were four.  
Four little turkeys out under the tree,  
One waddled off, then there were three.  
Three little turkeys with nothing to do,  
One waddled off, then there were two.  
Two little turkeys in the noonday sun,  
One waddled off, then there was one.  
One little turkey—better run away!  
Soon will come Thanksgiving Day!

### My Turkey

I have a turkey big and fat.  
He spreads his wings  
(Fan hands at hips.)  
And walks like that.  
(Struts back and forth.)  
His daily corn he would not miss,  
(Pretend to eat corn.)  
And when he talks, he sounds like this—  
-Gobble, gobble, gobble.

### Mr. Turkey

(If You're Happy and You Know It)  
Hello, Mr. Turkey, how are you?

Hello, Mr. Turkey, how are you?  
With a gobble, gobble, gobble,  
And a wobble, wobble, wobble,  
Hello, Mr. Turkey, how are you?

### Gobble, Gobble Song

(Pop Goes the Weasel)  
A turkey is a funny bird,  
His head goes wobble, wobble.  
He know just one funny word,  
It's Gobble, Gobble, Gobble.

### Albuquerque Turkey

(My Darlin' Clementine)  
Albuquerque is a turkey  
(Put hands on hips like wings.)  
And he's feathered and he's fine.  
And he wobbles and he gobbles  
(Strut and wiggle.)  
And he's absolutely mine.

He's the best pet you can get.  
(Pretend to stroke a turkey's head.)  
Better than a dog or cat.  
He's my Albuquerque turkey,  
And I'm awfully proud of that.

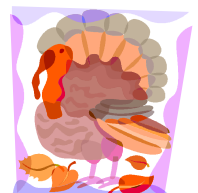
Albuquerque is a turkey  
(Lay hands on palms as you smile.)  
And he's happy in his bed.  
Cause for our Thanksgiving dinner,  
We'll have pizza pie instead!  
(Put palm up in the air like twirling a pizza)

### Mr. Turkey

Mr. Turkey's tail is big and wide,  
He swings it when he walks.  
His neck is long,  
His chin is red  
And he gobbles when he talks.

### I'm Mr. Turkey

I'm Mr. Turkey, Turkey, Turkey  
I'm Mr. Turkey Big and Fat.  
I've got feathers, feathers, feathers,  
I've got feathers down my back.  
When I walk I wobble, wobble, wobble,  
When I talk I gobble, gobble, gobble.  
I'm Mr. Turkey, Turkey, Turkey  
I'm Mr. Turkey Big and Fat.



# NOVEMBER BOOK FEATURE

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## *Arthur's Thanksgiving* by Marc Brown

### **Creative Arts—Feather Painting**

**PA EL:** Use a variety of visual art forms for creative expression and representation

Materials: feathers, construction paper or manilla paper, water, tempera paint, large plastic containers or meat trays, small plates.

1. Mix paint so that it is about 1/2 water and 1/2 paint. Pour small amounts into plastic containers so that it covers the bottom of the container.
2. Use fall paint colors and for each color of paint provide a feather and a plate beside it to rest the feather on when not in use. If the feather is left in the paint, it will absorb too much paint and will not be a good brush.
3. Demonstrate for the children how to float the feather on top of the paint, how to gently lift it over to their paper and how to use the quill end of the feather like a brush handle.
4. Display the children's paintings in the classroom.

### **Literacy—Retelling the Story**

**PA EL:** Communicate ideas, experiences and feeling for a variety of purposes

1. Read the story to the whole group several times so the children are familiar with the story.

2. Assign the children different parts of the story and have them act out the story as it is read.

3. To extend the story further, create props or felt-board pieces and place in the literacy center with a copy of the book for the children to use independently.

### **Music and Movement—Turkey Trot**

**PA EL:** Express self through movement and music

1. Teach your children to do the "Hokey Pokey."
2. Write new lyrics to the "Hokey Pokey" using the names of the turkey body parts instead of their body parts.  
Example:

You put your right wing in,

You take your right wing out,

Put your right wing in

And flutter it all about.

You do the turkey trot and

You turn yourself around

That's what it all about!

3. Continue adding verses for the long neck to stretch it all about, spreading tail to strut it all about and beak to gobble it all about.

If you enjoy the Arthur books by Marc Brown visit <http://pbskids.org/arthur/index.html> for more ideas.

## Kindergarten Transition Planning

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It may be November but Pottstown community early learning Pre-K teachers and school district Kindergarten teachers are already planning activities to provide a smooth transition for children and families from Pre-K to Kindergarten.

On November 8, fifty-five teachers met to discuss how they can work closer together to prepare children to be successful in Kindergarten. Each community program was paired with a Pottstown elementary school and teachers worked together to plan activities to strengthen the connection between the community programs and Kindergarten. Many creative ideas were shared during the evening. The plans for each school vary but some of the ideas for the year are listed here. As teachers begin to implement ideas with partner schools, please keep us informed of what is happening around transition. If you want to serve on the PEAK Kindergarten Transition Team, contact Mary Rieck at 610-970-6655.

1. Create a book about Kindergarten and send it to the community Pre-K class.
2. Create a video about Kindergarten and have it narrated by a Kindergarten student.
3. Have Kindergarten teachers and/or principals visit community programs to read a book to the Pre-K class.
4. Plan a playground evening at the elementary school and invite children and families to visit the school and play on the playground and tour the school
5. Create pen pals between the community programs and kindergarten and share letters back and forth.
6. Plan an end of the year picnic where the community children can meet Kindergarten children.
7. Have Pre-K children pose questions to the Kindergarten children and have them respond with letters.
8. Have Pre-K students visit Kindergarten class.

# Creating Class Books

PEAK  
Teacher Newsletter

Class books are a great method to assist children in adjusting to the classroom and routine. They also provide meaningful literacy additions the various center areas. Here are some ideas for class books that can be made throughout the year.

## Schedule Book

Take photos of the children during each part of the day: arrival time, circle time, outside time, center time, lunch time, etc. Add a photo to each page, and sequence the pages in order. Any time the children want to know what comes next, they can find the answer in the book.

## Special Day Book

Each time you have a "special day" throughout the school year, add a photo to this book as a reminder of that day. .

## Silly Sally Book

After reading *Silly Sally*, by Audrey Wood, make this class book. "Silly \_\_\_ went to town, walking backwards upside down."



Photos are taken of the children walking different ways. The upside down picture can be pictures of children standing glued upside down or pictures of children hanging from the jungle gym.

## Block Idea Book

Take photos of children with something they have built in the block center. Continue to add to the book so that children can see what other children have created.

Peyton made a tent.



## Idea Book

Take photos of children with things they have made using open ended materials, like pattern blocks or play dough. These books are placed in the center with the material for children to use as ideas for creations. Each material can have a separate book, such as the "Pattern Block Book" or "Lego Book".

Lucas made a dog.



## How-To Book

Make a how-to book by taking photos of each step in making something. For example, each step of a cooking activity, each step as children make an airplane with blocks, each step for using and cleaning up paint, etc.

Add a spoonful of sweetened condensed milk.



## Our Town Book

Each page says "In our town, we have a \_\_\_\_." Photos of several places around town are included in your book (gas station, Wal-Mart, fire station, McDonald's, etc.). Ask parents to help out by taking pictures of their work places or places the families visit on the weekend.

## If You Give a Kid a \_\_\_\_\_

This book is based on the Laura Numeroff books. Each page says: "If you give \_\_\_ a \_\_\_ he'll want \_\_\_\_\_ to go with it!" For example, "If you give Sarah pizza, she'll want juice to go with it!"

## PEAK Teacher Resource Center

PEAK has a variety of books available for checking out by community teachers. Remember also to check the PEAK web site for resources and ideas for the classroom—[www.peakonline.org](http://www.peakonline.org). Contact Emily to borrow any of the following books:

*Month-by-Month Preschool Almanac*—Scholastic

*Theme Kits Made Easy*—Leslie Eslinger

*Literacy Play*—Sherrie West

*Building Structures with Young Children*—Ingrid Chalufour

*Learning to Read and Write*—Susan Neuman

*Basics of Assessment*—Oralie McAfee

*Writing in Preschool*—Judith Schickedanz

*Make Way for Literacy!* Gretchen Owocki

*Much More than the ABCs*—Judith Schickedanz

*Health, Safety and Nutrition Activities*—Joanne Matricardi

*Little Hands Art Book*—Judy Press

*EcoArt*—Laurie Carlson

*Mudworks*—MaryAnn Kohl

*Before the Basics*—Bev Bos

*Don't Move the Muffin Tins*—Bev Bos

*Together We're Better*—Bev Bos

*The Kids' Nature Book*—Susan Milord

*Scribble Art*—Mary Ann Kohl

*Snips, Snails & Walnut Whales*—Phyllis Fiarotta

*Science is Simple*—Peggy Ashbrook

*Nuturing Knowledge*—Susan Newman

*Young Children and Picture Books*—Mary Reck Jalongo

*Everyday Discoveries*—Sharon MacDonald

*Preschool Classroom Management*—Laverne Warner