

Explore & Learn

Lessons and Activities

PK, TK, and VPK Instruction

How Does My Body Work?

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Wondrous and Marvelous



Dona Herweck Rice

Illustrated by Kate Fallahee

Oh, it would be great to have feathers—
what a wondrous and marvelous thing!
Just look at me covered in feathers from
the top of my head to the tips of my toes.



But feathers I have not...
...this hair is what I've got.



Oh, it would be great to have paws—
what a wondrous and marvelous thing!

I'd have four furry paws, one at the
end of each leg and each arm.




But paws I have not...
...these feet and hands
are what I've got.



Oh, it would be great to have a tail—
what a wondrous and marvelous thing!

Can you imagine me with a long, curly tail
that wags and grabs, flips and flings?



A child with dark, curly hair is sitting in a sandbox, digging with a shovel. The child is wearing a green and white striped shirt and blue shorts. A yellow ball is on the sand nearby. The background shows a wooden fence and a red cloth on the left.

But a tail I have not...
...this nothing is what I've got.

Oh, it would be great to have gills—
what a wondrous and marvelous thing!

Watch me swim underwater for hours, doing
summersaults and dives!



But gills I have not...
...this nose is what I've got.

Oh, it would be great to have feathers
and paws and a tail and gills—



what wondrous and marvelous things!
What an exceptional and terrific me I would be.

But these things I have not...



...my own wondrous and marvelous body is
what I've got!

Notes for the Grown-ups

This book allows for a rich shared reading experience for children who are early and developing readers. The rhyme and images help new readers to tell the story, either as they read or as they are read to. What a valuable tool for building the confidence new readers need to embark on the adventures that await them while reading!

To extend this reading experience, do one or more of the following:

Imagine with the child what it would be like to have various other body parts that some animals have, such as antlers, a beak, a trunk, a horn, or floppy ears.

Talk together about how animal bodies and human bodies are the same or different.

Ask the child to tell you what they love about their own “wondrous and marvelous” body.

Ask the child to draw a picture of themselves using their body in a way that makes them happy, such as dancing, playing a sport, or even sleeping.

After reading, come back to the book again and again. Rereading is an excellent tool for building literacy skills.

How Does My Body Work?

Teacher's Guide



Day 8 Preparation and Materials

Morning Meeting

- **Materials:** *Morning Meeting* routine (card 1); cardboard shape cutouts
- **Preparation:** Locate the circle, square, and triangle cutouts from Day 3.

Literacy

- **Materials:** *Teach Letters and Sounds* routine (card 2); copy of *Wondrous and Marvelous*

Literacy Explorations

- **Materials:** *Pencil Grasp* routine (card 11); drawing paper
- **Preparation:** Ensure that each Literacy Exploration center is prepared.

Physical Development

- **Materials:** beanbags (one for each set of partners)

Phonological Awareness

- **Materials:** *Blending* routine (card 7)
- **Preparation:** Locate the *My Body Compound Word Cards* from Day 1.

Mathematics

- **Materials:** construction paper; string
- **Preparation:** Cut the construction paper and string into different-length pieces. You will need four or five paper strips for demonstration and a piece of string for each student.

Social Development

- **Materials:** *Writing Social Stories* routine (card 16); “Feeling Excited” social story poster
- **Preparation:** Locate the social stories that students started on Day 5.

Fine Motor Development

- **Materials:** *Pencil Grasp* routine (card 11); *Sky Writing* routine (card 12); *Number 1* (page 10 of *Student Activity Book*)

Science

- **Materials:** *Introduce Vocabulary* routine (card 6); *Bones* vocabulary concept card; image of a human skeleton; *Animal X-ray Cards* (page 91)
- **Preparation:** Cut apart the *Animal X-ray Cards*, and place them around the room. Prepare to share the human skeleton image.

Creative Explorations

- **Materials:** *Fingerprint Critter* (page 11 in *Student Activity Book*); ink pads (one for each set of partners); crayons (enough for groups to share); hand wipes (one for each student)
- **Preparation:** Locate the student fingerprints from Day 7.

Music and Movement

- **Materials:** “Musical Body” audio recording (musicalbody.mp3) and lyrics (page 90)
- **Preparation:** Prepare to share the audio recording of the song.

Closing Circle

- **Materials:** *Closing Circle* routine (card 18)

Morning Meeting



10-15
minutes



1. Follow the *Morning Meeting* routine (card 1).
2. Hold up the circle, square, and triangle cutouts from Day 3, and review the names of each shape. Say, “We will pass these three shapes around the circle. When it’s your turn, I will say a shape’s name, and you will hold up the shape cutout.”
3. Model saying the name of a shape and holding up the cutout. Have students pass the shape cutouts around the circle, pausing as you say the name of a shape for each student.



Free Play

Free Play is a fundamental part of the *Explore & Learn* day. See page 13 for free play ideas related to this unit.



Literacy



20-30
minutes



Alphabet Knowledge Warm-Up

1. Gather students together, and follow the *Teach Letters and Sounds* routine (card 2) to teach the letter of the day. Choose which letter to teach based on your scope and sequence. (See page 39 in the *Management Guide* for more information.)

Whole-Group Lesson

2. Display the book *Wondrous and Marvelous*. Say, “Today, we are going to reread *Wondrous and Marvelous* and use our imaginations to describe what we would do if we had animal body parts.”
3. Read the book aloud.
4. After reading, model using the sentence frame, *If I had ____, I would ____*. You will fill in the first blank with an animal body part that you do not have and the second blank with an action. For example, you might say, “If I had wings, I would fly high in the sky.”
5. Have each student share their response using the sentence frame.

Scaffolded Support

When students are responding with the sentence frame, you may provide a few choices to complete the first blank. For example, *tail, floppy ears, and claws*.



Literacy Explorations



Meet with one group to deliver Small-Group Lesson 3 (see page 16), while the rest of the students engage in self-chosen centers. For more information about independent learning centers, see page 17.

Physical Development



1. Gather students together in the best area for partners to toss beanbags, and discuss expectations. Demonstrate how to toss a beanbag underhand to a student, and ask the student to catch it with two hands. Then, have the student toss it back to you.
2. Have student pairs stand about two feet apart and begin gently tossing beanbags back and forth. After a few minutes, have them move a few steps apart. Continue in this manner until they are five or six feet apart. Have students count how many times they can toss and catch their beanbags without dropping them.
3. For the last few minutes, discuss how the eyes and hands work together to catch the beanbag. Have students share the body parts needed to toss the beanbag.

Phonological Awareness



1. Gather students together, and say, "Today, we are going to practice making compound words. You can make compound words by putting two smaller words together. Let's use our picture cards to review a compound word we already made and to learn some new ones."
2. Display the *My Body Compound Word Cards* from Day 1, and point to the sun card. Say, "This is sun." Hold up the flower card, and place it next to the sun card, saying, "This is flower. Let's put them together: sun, flower, sunflower!"
3. Place the sunflower card under the sun and flower cards. Say, "The smaller words give us a clue to the meaning of the compound word." Discuss the connection between the words that make up the compound and the compound word.
4. Follow the *Blending* routine (card 7) to form the compound words sunflower, cupcake, basketball, mailbox, and airplane.

Scaffolded Support

Provide students with copies of the *My Body Compound Word Cards* so they can manipulate the cards as they blend the words. For example, students may touch each card as they say the word parts, then run their fingers across the bottoms of the cards as they blend the words together.



★ ★ Teacher-Choice Read-Aloud

Per the pacing plan suggestions on page 38 of the *Management Guide*, after the phonological awareness activity is a good time in the *Explore & Learn* day for a teacher-choice read-aloud.



Mathematics



Whole-Group Lesson

1. Gather students together, and review the words *long*, *longer*, *longest*, *short*, *shorter*, and *shortest*.
2. Display the paper strips you prepared where students can see. Say, “Yesterday, we lined up sticks to compare their lengths. Today, we will line up groups of objects to compare their lengths.”
3. Line up the paper strips, noting that the bottom of each strip needs to be at the same point to compare their lengths. Have students help place them in order from shortest to longest by answering the following questions as you move the paper strips in order:
 - Which paper is longest?
 - Which paper is shortest?
 - Which paper is shorter than the ____ paper?
 - Which paper is longer than the ____ paper?

Small-Group Practice

4. Distribute a piece of string to each student, and have them form groups of three or four. Have groups align their pieces of string and place them in order from shortest to longest.
5. Have students create sentences to describe the lengths of their strings, using the words *longest* and *shortest*. You can provide the sentence frames, ____’s string is shortest and ____’s string is longest.
6. Distribute new pieces of string to students, and repeat the small-group practice as time allows.

Social Development



1. Gather students together, and display the “Feeling Excited” social story poster. Reread, “She is so excited because today she has a playdate with her good friend, Kent!” Note that sometimes in stories there are multiple characters and illustrators can choose to include those other characters in their drawings.
2. Encourage students to think about including other people in their illustrations. Distribute students’ social stories, and allow time for students to review and add to their illustrations. Have students make plans for characters or other details they can add to their drawings and share their plans with partners.
3. Have students move to their workspaces and continue to work on their social stories. Encourage students to add more details. Support the remaining students in completing step 5 of the *Writing Social Stories* routine (card 16) by scribing their stories.

Language Development Support

Tell students that characters are the people, animals, or creatures in stories. Characters do things that make stories more interesting. Have students identify the characters in familiar stories before brainstorming characters they can add to their own social stories.



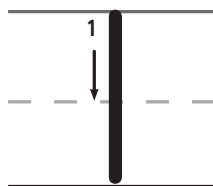
Fine Motor Development

10-15
minutes

independent work



whole group



1. Have students move to their workspaces, and say, “Today, we will be writing the number one. Which parts of our bodies are there just one of?” Accept a variety of student responses.
2. Follow the *Sky Writing* routine (card 12) to make 1. As you model making the lines in the air, say, “Down.” Have students practice.
3. Model writing 1 in clear view of students. As you make the movements with your writing tool, say, “Down.”
4. Have students complete *Number 1* (page 10 of *Student Activity Book*). As students work, monitor for proper pencil grasp, pressure, and paper positioning, correcting as needed.

Science

15-20
minutes

whole group

1. Gather students together. Have students feel their heads. Ask, “Is your head hard or soft?” Accept a variety of student responses. Explain that the skin and hair on the outside of your head are soft, but that there is bone, called the skull, underneath. Say, “We have hard bones all throughout our bodies.”
2. Share the *Bones* vocabulary concept card using the *Introduce Vocabulary* routine (card 6).
3. Share an image of a human skeleton you prepared. Ask students, “What do you think would happen if we didn’t have any bones?” Accept a variety of student responses. Explain, “The bones in our bodies make up our skeletons and support our bodies. Our bones help us stand and sit upright, and they protect our organs, like our brains and hearts.”
4. Tell students that the bones in their bodies are alive and growing. Some foods, like milk, cheese, eggs, kale, broccoli, and salmon help their bones grow strong. Ask students which of these foods they like to eat.
5. Share that doctors take special pictures of bones, called x-rays. Explain, “There are some animal x-rays hanging in the classroom. Just like us, the bones in animals give shape to their bodies. See if you can guess which animal each x-ray shows.”
6. Have students walk around the classroom, observing and discussing the *Animal X-ray Cards* (page 91) you placed around the room.
7. Reveal the animals for each card at the conclusion of the activity.

Creative Explorations



15-25
minutes



independent work



whole group

1. Gather students together, and display some examples of fingerprints from Day 7's Creative Explorations lesson. Ask students to share what they noticed about their fingerprints. Accept a variety of student responses.
2. Have students move to their workspaces to complete *Fingerprint Critter* (page 11 in *Student Activity Book*). Explain to students that they will use their fingerprints to make a special critter or animal. Tell students to stamp their thumbs one time on the sheets, then use their pencils and crayons to add to the thumbprint to make a critter, real or imaginary.
3. Use a blank sheet of paper to model stamping your thumb and adding body parts, such as eyes, arms, and legs, to make a critter. You may choose to make a real or imaginary critter.
4. Have students move to their workspaces to complete *Fingerprint Critter* (page 11 in *Student Activity Book*). Distribute materials, and remind students that they should only stamp their fingers on the paper.

Language Development Support

Review the names of taught body parts, and have students discuss how they may add them to their fingerprint critters.



Music and Movement



10-15
minutes



whole group

1. Gather students together. Say, "Let's practice the movements in our new song, 'Musical Body.' Look, listen, and repeat what I say and do!"
2. Read and model the movements for each line, pausing for students to repeat each one. For example, "With a clap, clap here and a snap, snap there. (pause) Here a clap. (pause) There a snap. (pause) Everywhere a clap, snap. (pause)"
3. Play the audio recording of the song, having students sing the words. Model the movements so students can watch and copy you.

Closing Circle



5-10
minutes



whole group

1. Follow the *Closing Circle* routine (card 18).
2. If time allows, choose an extension activity from the routine card.

Card 1

Morning Meeting

Objective: Students will build community through safe, predictable routines.

Materials: Daily Picture Schedule Cards ([schedulecards.pdf](#); *optional*)

Gather and Greet

1. Signal to the whole group that it is time to gather for the morning meeting. You may choose to use a song as a transition.
2. Gather students together in a circle. Remind students about personal space and the importance of keeping their hands and feet to themselves.
3. Have students greet each other. You may choose to do a whole-class greeting with a song or have students pass one of the following greetings around the circle by greeting the peers next to them:
 - high five
 - elbow bump
 - fist bump
 - wave

Our Day

4. Share the plan for the day. This can be done by reviewing the *Daily Picture Schedule Cards* together or through a morning message—a short note addressed to the class that includes one or two main events that will take place during the day. The daily learning objectives are included in the *Teacher's Guide* for your easy reference.

Theme

5. Have students engage with the theme, color, shape, and/or phrase of the week. Ideas are included in the daily lesson plans in the *Teacher's Guide*.

Card 2

Teach Letters and Sounds

Objective: Students will learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent to support reading readiness and emergent writing skills.

Materials: *Letter Cards* ([lettercards.pdf](#))

Preparation: Choose which letters to teach based on your scope and sequence. (See page 39 in the *Management Guide* for more information.) Prepare to share the selected *Letter Cards*.

Name It

1. Display the selected *Letter Card*, and say, "This is the letter _____. This is a capital _____ (*point to the capital letter*), and this is a lowercase _____ (*point to the lowercase letter*)."
2. Point to the *Letter Card*, and say, "What letter is this?" (*Students respond with the letter name.*)

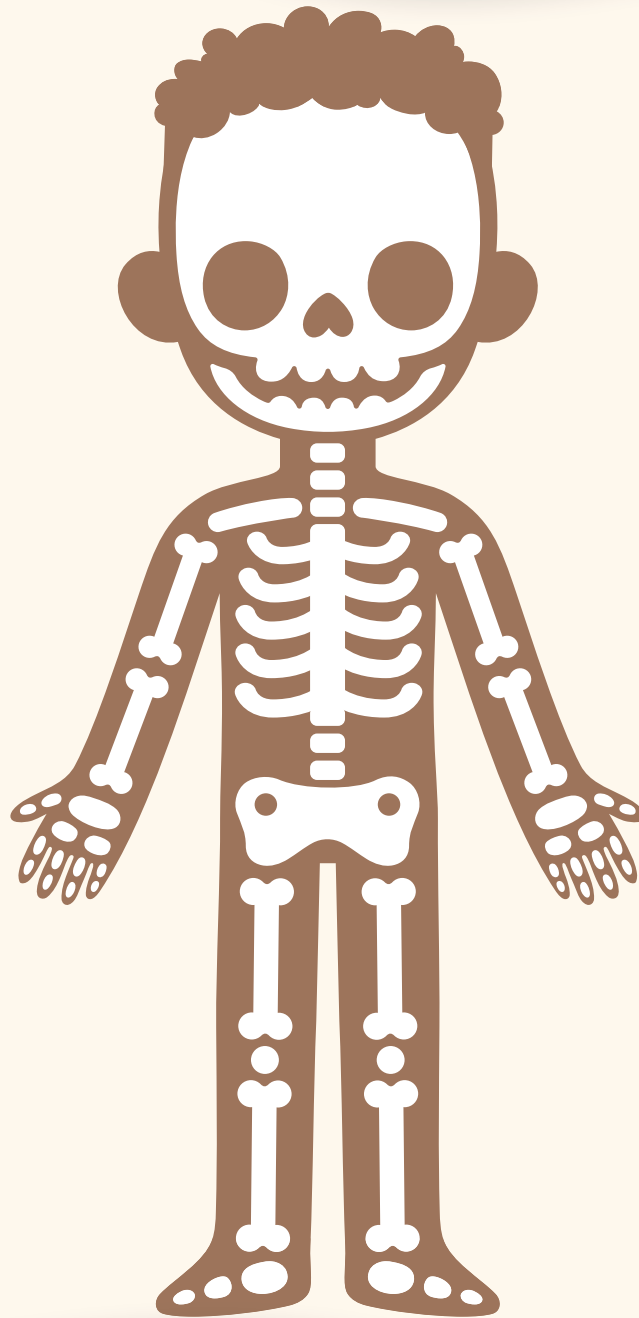
Say It

3. Say the sound the letter represents, and discuss how the sound is formed. Have students repeat the sound several times.

Write It

4. With your finger, trace the capital letter on the card. Narrate your movements, describing the starting point and the types of lines you are forming.
5. Ask students to hold up their pointer fingers and form the lines of the uppercase letter on flat surfaces. Have students repeat the sound the letter makes while they are forming the letter.
6. Repeat steps 4–5 with the formation of the lowercase letter.

bones



**hard parts inside a body that keep
organs safe and help people to stand**

bones

Related Words

frame

skeleton

skull

Sentence

My **bones** are part of my skeleton inside my body.

Engage

- ★ What bones in your body help you jump?
- ★ Without our bones holding us up, what might we look like?
Show me.
- ★ How do doctors see bones under our skin?
- ★ Look at the picture. Try feeling for the hard bones in the different parts of your body.



Feeling Excited

Cam E. Chameleon wakes up early in the morning. She is so excited because today she has a playdate with her good friend Kent! Kent has been on a family trip, and Cam feels like she hasn't seen him in a long time. They plan to meet at their favorite playground that has a roller slide and the fastest swings. Cam knows she is going to have so much fun! Her excitement is BIG. When Cam gets really excited, she has a hard time focusing.

Cam is so excited that she wakes up early and cannot fall back to sleep. It is so early that her parents are not even awake yet. She knows she is not allowed to be noisy before they wake up, so she practices a strategy her teacher taught her to help focus. First, she squeezes her fists into tight balls, and then she releases them. Second, she squeezes her toes, curling them tightly. She relaxes her toes and moves on to her shoulders. She scrunches them up close to her ears and counts to five before letting them rest. Next, her favorite part: Cam makes her face all scrunchy. She giggles calmly as she relaxes her face. Finally, she squeezes her whole body into a tight ball. **She gives herself a big hug, squeezing her arms as hard as she can, and counts in a whisper, "Five, four, three, two, one." She releases her tight squeeze, and her whole body feels relaxed and calm.**

When Cam is finished, she notices her body has less big energy and she is ready to focus on getting ready for her day. She hears her parents waking up, and she smiles so wide her eyes squint. She greets them with a bear hug and tells them how excited she is to have fun with Kent today.

Key Words

calmly
energy
excited
relaxed
scrunchy
squeezes
strategy
tight



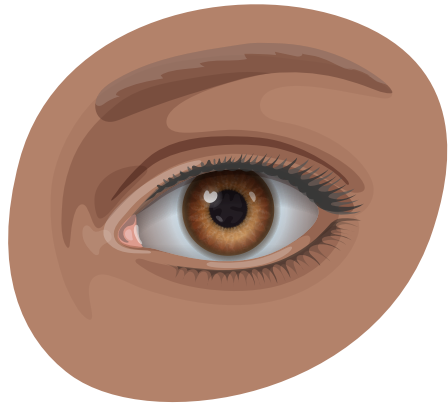
Listen



tcmpub.digital/el_story3

My Body Compound Word Cards

Make a copy of these cards for the Days 1-2 and 8-9 lessons.



eye



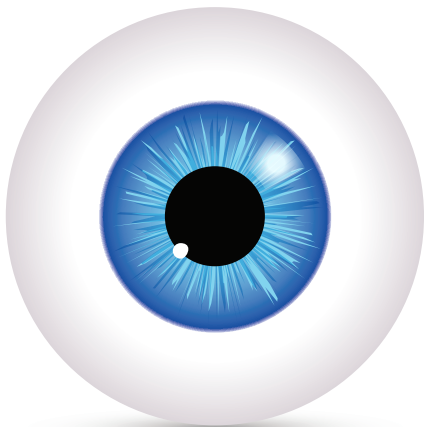
sand



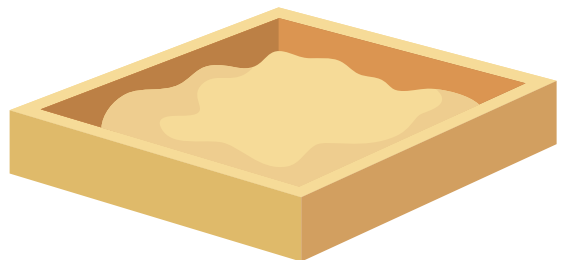
ball



box



eyeball

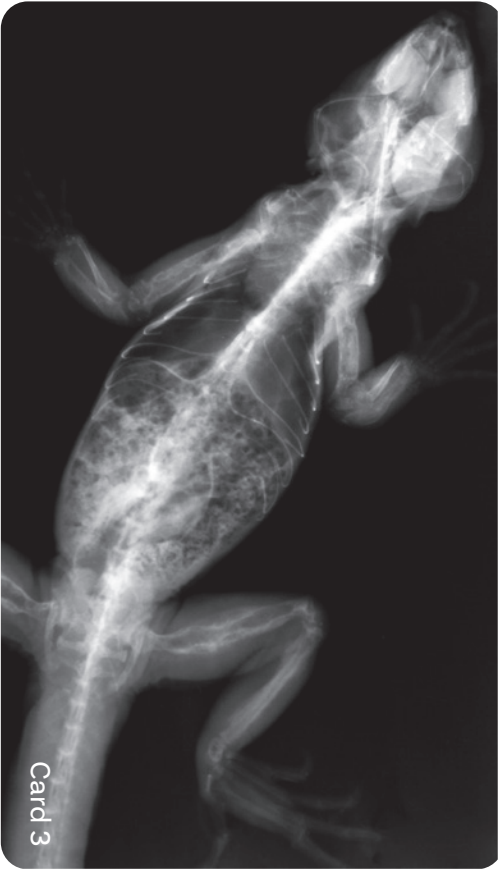


sandbox

Animal X-Ray Cards

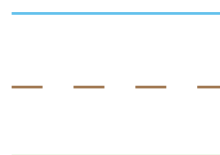
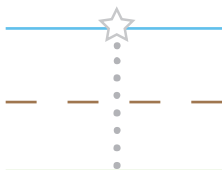
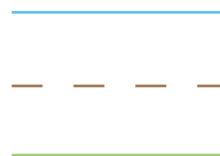
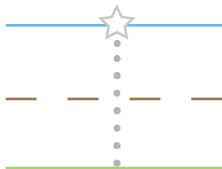
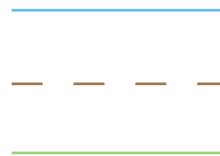
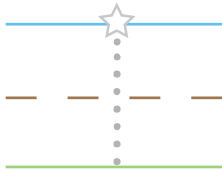
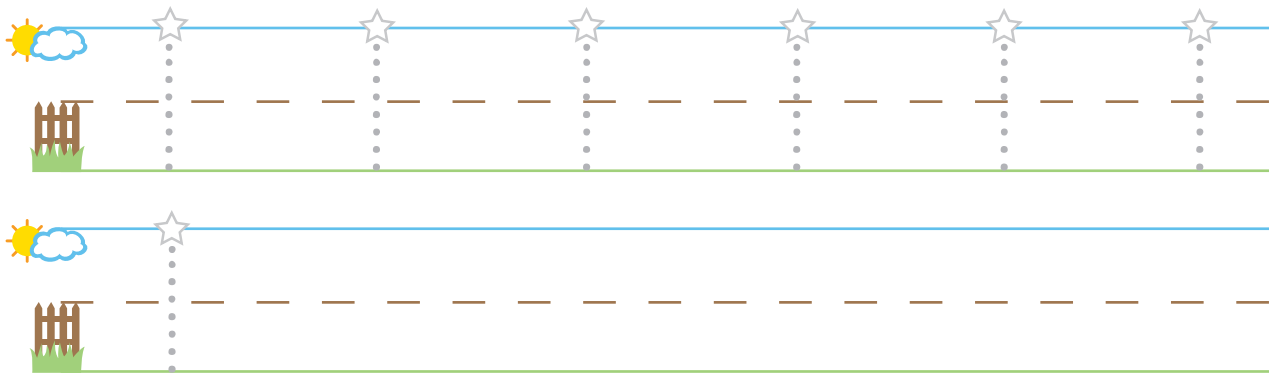
Make copies of these cards for the Day 8 lesson.

The x-rays depict the following animals: turtle (card 1), fish (card 2), iguana (card 3), dog (card 4).



Name: _____

Number 1



Adults, read this aloud: Start at each star. Trace each number. Then, write your own numbers.

Name: _____

Fingerprint Critter



Adults, read this aloud: Stamp your thumb on an ink pad. Then, stamp it on this paper. Use a pencil and crayons to add body parts and other details. Make your own real or imaginary critter.

Social Development and Executive Functioning

Social development and executive functioning include skills and competencies that are essential to getting along with others and managing cognitive processes to regulate behavior. Developing these skills is essential in early childhood as young learners set the foundation for healthy identity development and strong interpersonal relationships.

There are six components that will be assessed in this area:

- **Building Relationships**—Building relationships is the ability to establish and maintain relationships with peers and adults. This involves communicating with others, working together to achieve shared goals, and navigating social situations that may involve differences or conflicts.
- **Social Awareness**—Social awareness is the capacity of early learners to become aware of the needs, desires, and perspectives of others. This involves feeling empathy and showing care for others. Students use cues and situational context to learn that other people's perspectives may be different from their own. Social awareness also involves understanding and navigating social norms.
- **Decision-Making**—Decision-making involves the processes through which prekindergarten students gather information and make choices that balance their own needs and rights with others' needs and rights. When making personal choices and engaging in social interactions, students consider different ideas and solutions. They also reflect on and evaluate the consequences of their decision-making.
- **Working Memory**—Working memory is the capacity to hold information in mind for a short amount of time. Young learners draw on working memory to process information and complete tasks. This includes focusing when gathering information, organizing thoughts and information, following multistep directions, and problem-solving.
- **Attention**—Attention involves the ability to take in information from the environment and select and focus on one or more things. Students at this level are developing their abilities to sustain attention for increasing lengths of time. Attention involves focusing sufficiently to understand information or perform a task and ignore distractions.
- **Self-Control**—Self-control is the ability to manage one's own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions. This includes regulating emotions in various social situations, delaying gratification, and controlling impulses to make thoughtful and intentional choices.



Social Development and Executive Functioning Checklist

Date: _____

Teacher Directions: During each two-week unit, use this checklist to indicate each child's level based on your observations. Use the following symbols, and include notes about their work when possible.



Advancing



Meeting



Emerging



Beginning

Student Name	Building Relationships	Social Awareness	Decision-Making	Working Memory	Attention	Self-Control

Social Development and Executive Functioning Rubric

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Use the *Social Development and Executive Functioning Checklist* to summarize these skills throughout this unit. Based on your notes and annotations on the checklist, determine at which level the student is working for each criterion. Circle or highlight the rating for each component.

	Advancing	Meeting	Emerging	Beginning
Building Relationships	Builds, sustains, and expands relationships.	Builds and sustains relationships.	Starting to build and sustain relationships.	Starting to build relationships with support.
Social Awareness	Considers the needs, desires, and perspectives of others when making choices.	Is aware of the needs, desires, and perspectives of others.	Starting to be aware of the needs and desires of others.	Starting to be aware of the needs of others with support.
Decision-Making	Considers multiple ideas when making choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Makes choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Starting to make choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Starting to make choices with support.
Working Memory	Recalls information to follow multi-step directions and solve problems.	Recalls information to follow multi-step directions.	Starting to recall information to follow directions.	Starting to recall information for short amounts of time with support.
Attention	Focuses and sustains attention for increasing periods of time.	Focuses and sustains attention.	Starting to focus and sustain attention.	Starting to focus on one thing with support.
Self-Control	Manages own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions in various social situations.	Manages own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions in routine situations.	Starting to manage own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions.	Starting to manage own feelings and thoughts with support.