

# Circle Time Lessons

## Unit overview

### Day 1 Introduction - Bears

Introduce the new unit: **Bears**

Talk about different types of bears. Sort pictures into 2 groups.

### Day 2 Types of Bears

Look at the real pictures of the different types of bears.

Sing a song about the 8 types of bears.

### Day 3 Giant Panda Bears

Look at the real pictures of pandas. Recite the "Munching Pandas" chip clip poem.

### Day 4 Polar Bears

Look at the real pictures of polar bears. Play the "Hungry Bear" hide & seek carpet game. Recite the action poem "Polar Bears" and move like a polar bear.

### Day 5 Brown Bears (Grizzly)

Look at the real pictures of brown bears. Sing the "Bear Pokey" song. Label the parts of a bear.

**Bears**  
Activate background knowledge

**Day 1 lesson plans**

Bears are found all over the world. Bears are very intelligent animals with an excellent sense of smell. The most common type of bear in the United States is the American black bear.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will recognize letters of the alphabet.

**Activities:**

- Sort pictures into two groups: Is it a bear or not?
- Play the "Sleepy Bear" carpet game.

**To Play the Game:**

- Lay out the cookie cards and identify the letters and colors.
- Ask a bear under one of the cookies and recite the poem to find it.
- Children guess where the bear is hiding by identifying the letter or color.

**Extension Idea:**  
Teach the ASL sign for bear. Once your done, have the children practice saying the words "bear" and "brown bear" while moving their fingers in a stroking motion on your shoulders.

**Types of Bears**  
8 species of bears

**Day 2 lesson plans**

There are 8 species of bears: brown bears, American black bears, Asian black bears (moon bears), giant pandas bears, sloth bears, sun bears, spectacled bears (Andean bear), and polar bears.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will use new vocabulary.

**Activities:**

- Examine the real pictures of the different types of bears. Engage in discussion questions about bears. What do you notice is the same about each bear? What is different about the bears?
- Play the "Bear" carpet game. Look at the pictures of the each verse of the song.

**Giant Pandas**  
Live in China

**Day 3 lesson plans**

Giant pandas live in China, but there are a few pandas that live in zoos. Pandas have black patches around their eyes and black ears. Pandas are born with white fur and get their distinctive markings later.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will count from 1-5 and manipulate objects with their hands.
- The students will observe and use critical thinking skills.
- The students will demonstrate an understanding of print concepts.

**Activities:**

- Show the photograph posters of panda bears. Engage in discussion questions.
- Use the chip clip poem "Munching Pandas." Add a panda to the bamboo after reading each verse.
- Use the QR code provided to watch the real life pandas at Happiness Village Baby Panda Park. [www.responsibilityworksheets.com/learn/panda.html](http://www.responsibilityworksheets.com/learn/panda.html)
- Students can observe the pandas and fill out the recording sheet.

**Extension Idea:**  
Teach the ASL sign for panda. Use your fingers to make a circle around your eye.

**Polar Bears**  
Live in the Arctic

**Day 4 lesson plans**

Polar bears live in the Arctic, which is very cold and snowy. These bears have very thick fur and an extra layer of fat to keep them warm in the freezing temperatures.

**Objectives:**

- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will identify numbers.
- The students will demonstrate basic locomotor skills.

**Activities:**

- Examine the real pictures of the polar bears. Engage in discussion questions: Why do polar bears have white fur? How do polar bears keep warm?
- Play the number recognition game called "Hungry Polar Bear". Sing the song, "Polar Bears." Act out the motions in the song.

**Brown Bears**  
Also known as Grizzly bears

**Day 5 lesson plans**

Brown bears are also known as grizzly bears. They live in the forests and mountains in North America, Europe, and Asia. Brown bears have what looks like a hump between their shoulders. This is actually a large muscle.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice the attributes and ask questions.
- The students will demonstrate basic locomotor skills.
- The students will demonstrate an understanding of print concepts.

**Activities:**

- Examine the real pictures of the brown bears. Ask the students what they know about brown bears. Where does this type of bear live?
- Sing the song "Bear Pokey" and perform the actions within the song.
- Label the different parts of the bear.
- Use the counting or paper plates activity. Hide some bears in a cave (box) or under the paper. Students count how many are outside the cave and try to figure out how many are hiding inside.

**Extension Idea:**  
Use the recipe card to make yummy bear toast.

# Circle Time Lessons

## Unit overview

### Day 6 Black Bears

Look at the real pictures of a black bear. Sort pictures into 2 groups. Take a class poll.

### Day 7 Other Bears

Look at the real pictures of the bears. Practice active listening skills by solving these riddles all about animals. Take a class poll.

### Day 8 Hibernation

Look at the real pictures. Sing the "Hibernation" song. Sort pictures into 2 groups.

### Day 9 Teddy Bears

Look at the real pictures of teddy bears. Read the poem "My Bear" on the pocket chart.

### Day 10 Conclusion

Conclude the bears unit by creating a knowledge chart. Practice logical thinking skills by playing the bear "Grid Game."

**Black Bear**  
Live in forests and mountains

Black bears are smart, timid bears that live in forests in the United States. The black bear usually eats plants, berries, and insects. Never approach a bear!

**Objectives:**

- The students will express themselves using words and sentences.
- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.

**Activities:**

- Examine the picture of the black bear and ask questions. Would you like to see a bear?
- Sort pictures into 2 groups: Things that one bear does and things that another bear does.
- Take a poll \*Have you ever seen a bear?\*
- Students will use name cards or post-it notes to show their answer on a bar graph. Alternatively, they can make a pictograph by taping up around the different readings.

**Extension Idea:**  
Read the story "Boggs and Bear" by Michael Rosen. Set up a writing station with writing paper and envelopes with email addresses to represent each class.

**Gong on a Bear Hunt**

**Day 6 lesson plans**



**Other Bears**

The spectacled bear, cloth bear, Malayan sun bear, and the Asiatic black bear are not as well known as the polar bear, giant panda, brown, and black bear. All of these bears are just as interesting though.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will interact and participate in circle time.
- The students will express themselves using words and phrases.

**Activities:**

- Examine the real pictures of the different bears. Engage in discussion questions.
- Take a poll. Students use name cards or post-it notes to show their answer on a bar graph. Which is your favorite bear?
- Show the pictures of the bears inside each bag. Students practice identifying the bears. They guess the check inside.

**Play:** Can you move like a bear? Walk like a bear? Can you crawl like a bear? Can you swim like a bear?

**Which bear is your favorite?**

**Day 7 lesson plans**



**Hibernation**  
Sleeping until spring

During the winter, food can be hard to find, so some animals go into a deep sleep called hibernation. Bears, chipmunks, bats, garter snakes, hedgehogs, box turtles, groundhogs, bees, and ladybugs all hibernate.

**Objectives:**

- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will demonstrate basic locomotor skills.

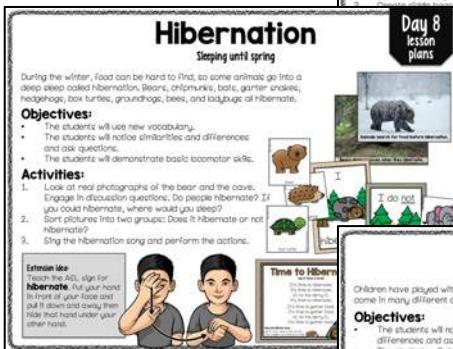
**Activities:**

- Look at real photographs of the bear and the cave. Engage in discussion questions. Do people hibernate? If so, where do they hibernate?
- Sort pictures into two groups: Does it hibernate or not hibernate?
- Sing the hibernation song and perform the actions.

**Extension Idea:**  
Teach the ABC sign for hibernate. Put your hand over your eye. Close your eye. Then put it down and over. Then hide that hand under your other hand.

**Time to Hibernate**

**Day 8 lesson plans**



**Teddy Bears**  
A traditional toy

Children have played with teddy bears for over 100 years. They come in many different colors and sizes, but all are lovable.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will demonstrate an understanding of print concepts.
- The students will answer questions.

**Activities:**

- Ask students to bring their favorite teddy bear to school.
- Show the photographs of the teddy bears. Engage in discussion questions. Do you like a teddy bear? What is your favorite thing about your teddy bear?

**Play:** Add each of the sentences to the picture cards to help complete each line. Take turns pointing to the cards and the students will logically figure up behind choose one or all of the prompts.

**My Bear**

**Day 9 lesson plans**



**Conclusion**  
Unit Conclusion

To conclude the unit, ask the students what they have learned about bears.

**Objectives:**

- The students will actively participate in conversations.
- The students will notice and extend simple patterns.

**Activities:**

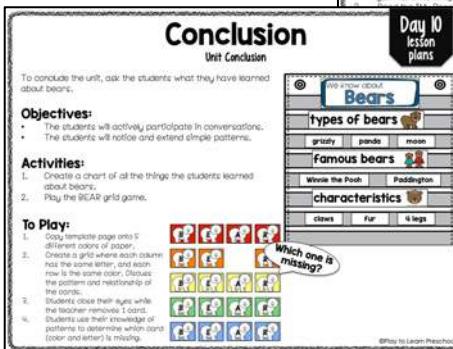
- Create a chart of all the things the students learned about bears.
- Play the BEAR grid game.

**Play:**

- Print the template page onto 5 different colors of paper.
- Create a grid where each column has a different color.
- Now, the same color. Discuss the pattern and relationship of colors.
- Students close their eyes while the teacher changes the colors.
- Students use their knowledge of patterns to determine which color (color and letter) is missing.

**We know about Bears**

**Day 10 lesson plans**



# Bears

## Activate background knowledge

Bears are found all over the world. Bears are very intelligent mammals with an excellent sense of smell. The most common type of bear in the United States is the American black bear.



## Objectives:

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will recognize letters of the alphabet.

## Activities:

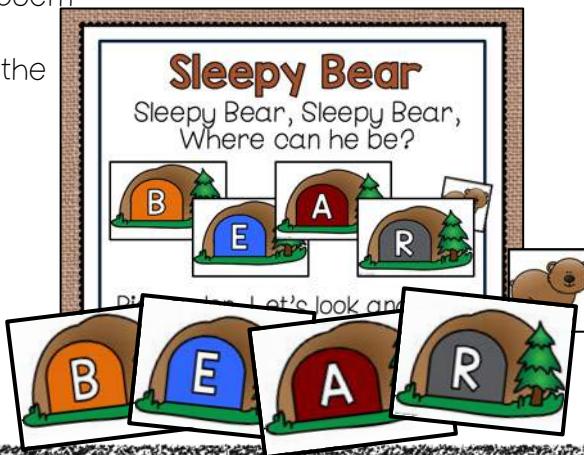
- Sort pictures into two groups: Is it a bear or not a bear?
- Play the "Sleepy Bear" carpet game.

### To Play the Game:

- Line up the cave cards and identify the letters and colors.
- Hide the bear under one of the caves and recite the poem to find it.
- Children guess where the bear is hiding by identifying the letter or color.

### Extension Idea:

Teach the ASL sign for **bear**. Cross your arms over your chest. Move your fingers in a scratching motion on your shoulders.



# Types of Bears

## 8 species of bears

There are 8 species of bears: brown bears, American black bears, Asian black bears (moon bears), giant panda bears, sloth bears, sun bears, spectacled bears (Andean bear), and polar bears.

### Objectives:

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will use new vocabulary.

### Activities:

- Examine the real pictures of the different types of bears. Engage in discussion questions about bears. What do you notice is the same about each bear? What is different about the bears?
- Sing the song "Bears." Look at the pictures of the different bears during each verse of the song.

#### Extension Idea:

##### Measurement

A polar bear has huge feet. Draw a polar bear footprint (about 12 inches wide). Stand inside the footprint and compare the size of your feet to a polar bear's foot.



**Bears**  
Tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It"  
There are 8 types of bears in the world!  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
We can name each one.  
This game is really fun.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world!

There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
The sun bear is the smallest.  
The polar bear is the largest.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
The grizzly is a brown bear.  
And a black bear.  
In the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.  
The spectacled lives in the Andes.  
In China there are one panda.  
There are 8 types of bears in the world.



# Giant Pandas

## Live in China

Giant pandas live in China, but there are a few pandas that live in zoos. Pandas have black patches around their eyes and black ears. Pandas are born with white fur and get their distinctive markings later.

### Objectives:

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will count from 1-5 and manipulate objects with their hands.
- The students will observe and use critical thinking skills.
- The students will demonstrate an understanding of print concepts.

### Activities:

- Show the photograph posters of panda bears. Engage in discussion questions.
- Recite the chip clip poem "Munching Pandas." Add a panda to the bamboo after reading each verse.
- Use the QR code provided to watch the real life pandas at Happiness Village Baby Panda Park. <https://explore.org/livecams/panda-bears/china-panda-cam-2>
- Students can observe the pandas and fill out the recording sheet.

#### Extension Idea:

Teach the ASL sign for **panda**. Use your index finger to draw a circle around your eye.



Scientist's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**Panda Cam - Observation Notes**

Draw a picture of a panda here.

Panda Activity:

eating	playing
sleeping	walking
climbing	



# Polar Bears

## Live in the Arctic

Polar bears live in the Arctic, which is very cold and snowy. These bears have very thick fur and an extra layer of fat to keep them warm in the freezing temperatures.

### Objectives:

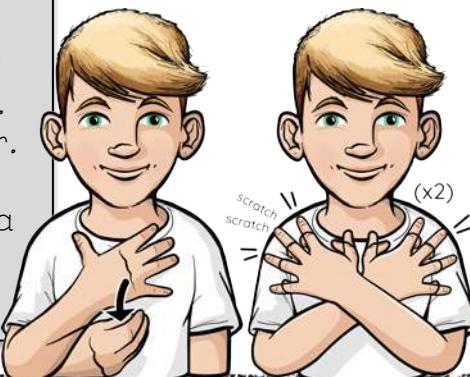
- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will identify numbers.
- The students will demonstrate basic locomotor skills.

### Activities:

- Examine the real pictures of the polar bears. Engage in discussion questions. Why are polar bears white? How do polar bears keep warm?
- Play the number identification game called "Hungry Bear."
- Sing the song, "Polar Bears." Act out the motions in the song.

#### Extension Idea:

Teach the ASL sign for **polar bear**. Make the sign for white by pulling extended hand away from your chest. Then make the sign for bear. Cross your arms over your chest. Move your fingers in a scratching motion on your shoulders.



**Polar Bears**  
To the tune of "London Bridge"

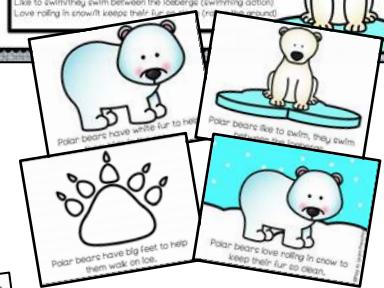
Polar bears have white fur,  
have white fur, have white fur.  
Polar bears have white fur,  
it helps them hide in the snow.

Repeat verses with:  
Have big feet to help them walk on ice (stomp feet)  
Like to swim they swim between the icebergs (swimming action)  
Love rolling in snow keeps their fur clean (roll around)

**Hungry Bear**

Big, fluffy polar bear,  
Hungry as can be?  
Where is the fish?

1 2 3 4



# Brown Bears

Also known as Grizzly bears

Brown bears are also known as grizzly bears. They live in the forests and mountains in North America, Europe, and Asia. Brown bears have what looks like a hump between their shoulders, this is actually a large muscle.

## Objectives:

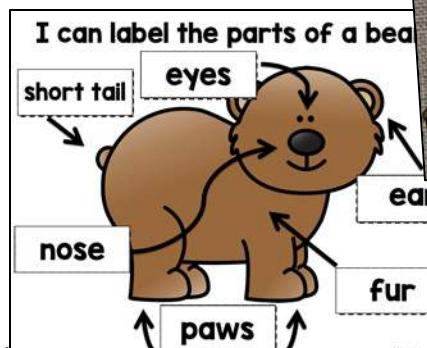
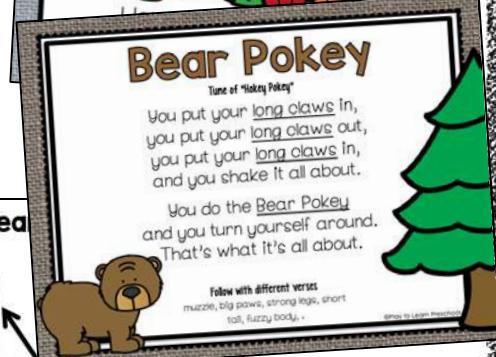
- The students will notice the attributes and ask questions.
- The students will demonstrate basic locomotor skills.
- The students will demonstrate understanding of print concepts.

## Activities:

- Look at the real pictures of the brown bears. Ask the students what they know about brown bears. Where does this type of bear live?
- Sing the song "Bear Pokey" and perform the actions within the song.
- Label the different parts of the bear.
- Work on computation with sets of 5 by playing the "5 in a cave" game. Use bear counters or the paper print-outs. Hide some of the bears in a cave (bowl) or under the paper. Students count how many are outside the cave and try to figure out how many are hiding inside.

### Extension Idea:

Use the recipe card to make some yummy bear toast.



# Black Bear

Live in forests and mountains

Black bears are small, timid bears that live in forests in the United States. The black bear usually eats plants, berries, and insects. Never approach a bear!

## Objectives:

- The students will express themselves using words and sentences.
- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.

## Activities:

- Examine the picture of the black bear and ask questions. Would you like to see a bear?
- Sort pictures into 2 groups: Things that are black and things that are not black.
- Take a poll: "Have you ever seen a bear?"
  - Students will use name cards or post-it notes to show their answer on a bar graph. Alternatively, they can make a physical graph by lining up behind the different headings.

### Extension Idea:

Read the story *Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen. Set up a sensory retelling station with small bins to represent each place.

**Going on a Bear Hunt**  
Sensory experience extension activity

Read the story *Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen to the class.

- Set up a sensory retelling station with small bins to represent each place:
  - Grass - Exeter: taller grass, patch of meadowgrass, or a section of plastic grass
  - Water - Water table or tub filled with water
  - Mat - soft or textured mat
  - Blanket - soft, warm, cozy, fuzzy
  - Snowdrifts - artificial snow, fake snow, or cotton balls
  - Clouds - white clouds
  - Spider webs - spider webs or sticks draped with a sheet
- Use these signs to label each bin.
- Students can explore each sensory object and retell the story.

Long, wavy grass	Deep, cold river	Thick, cozy mud	Big, dark forest	Swirling, whirling snowstorm	Narrow, gloomy cave
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# Other Bears

The spectacled bear, sloth bear, Malayan sun bear, and the Asiatic black bear are not as well known as the polar bear, giant panda, brown, and black bear. All of these bears are just as interesting though.

## Objectives:

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will interact and participate in circle time.
- The students will express themselves using words and phrases.

## Activities:

- Examine the real pictures of the different bears. Engage in discussion questions.
- Take a poll. Students use name cards or post-it notes to "vote" for their answer on a bar graph. Which is your favorite bear?
- Create riddle bags. Print the pictures of the different bears and put inside each bag. Attach the corresponding riddle to each bag. Read the riddle while the students practice their active listening skills. They guess the species of bear, then check inside.

### Extension Idea: Move like a bear

Bears move in lots of different ways. Can you move like a bear? Start with a bear crawl: get on your hands and knees and then lift your knees off the ground. Try walking across the room. Can you also climb, run, or swim like a bear?

# Hibernation

## Sleeping until spring

During the winter, food can be hard to find, so some animals go into a deep sleep called hibernation. Bears, chipmunks, bats, garter snakes, hedgehogs, box turtles, groundhogs, bees, and ladybugs all hibernate.

### Objectives:

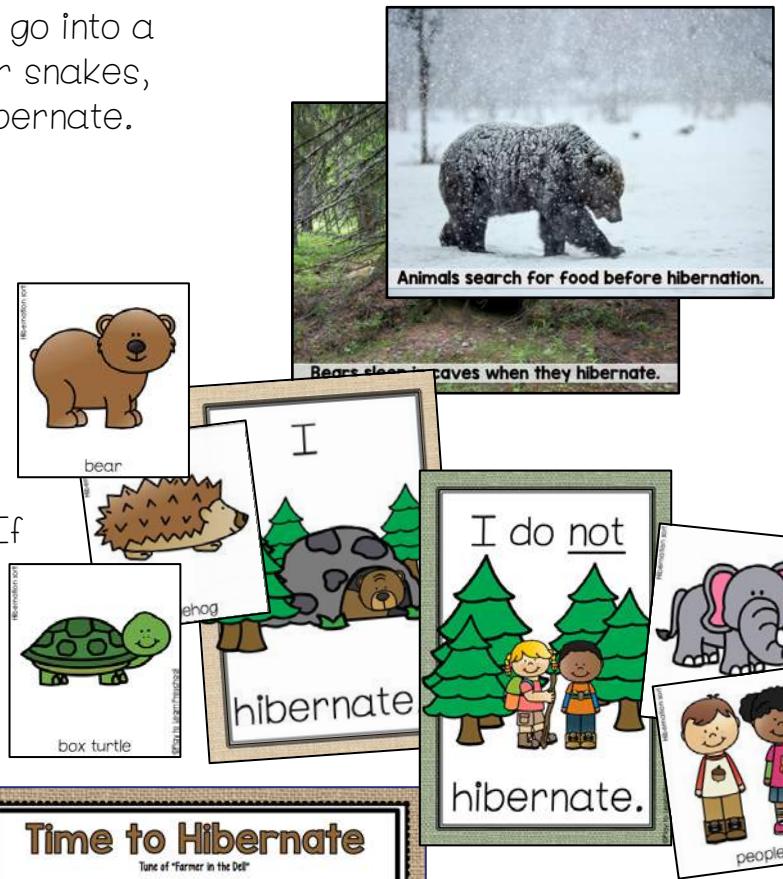
- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will demonstrate basic locomotor skills.

### Activities:

- Look at real photographs of the bear and the cave. Engage in discussion questions. Do people hibernate? If you could hibernate, where would you sleep?
- Sort pictures into two groups: Does it hibernate or not hibernate?
- Sing the hibernation song and perform the actions.

#### Extension Idea:

Teach the ASL sign for **hibernate**. Put your hand in front of your face and pull it down and away then hide that hand under your other hand.



**Time to Hibernate**  
Tune of "Farmer in the Dell"

It's time to hibernate,  
It's time to hibernate.  
Hi, ho the derry-O,  
It's time to hibernate.

It's time to gather food,  
It's time to gather food.  
Hi, ho the derry-O,  
It's time to gather food

Follow with different verses:  
gather food, make a nest, eat the food, snuggle in our beds, go to sleep.

# Teddy Bears

## A traditional toy

Children have played with teddy bears for over 100 years. They come in many different colors and sizes, but all are loveable.

### Objectives:

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will demonstrate an understanding of print concepts.
- The students will answer questions.

### Activities:

- Ask students to bring their favorite teddy bear to school.
- Show the photographs of the teddy bears. Engage in discussion questions. Do you have a teddy bear? What is your favorite thing about your teddy?
- Read the "My Bear" story. Add each of the sentences to the pocket chart. Use the picture cards to help emergent readers remember each line. Take turns point to each word as you read the story.
- Use the prompts about teddy bears to make a graph either on a pocket chart or by physically lining up behind each heading. You can choose one or all of the prompts.

#### Extension Idea:

Ask students to bring a teddy bear from home to have a teddy bear picnic.



**My Bear**

My bear can read. 

My bear can skate. 

**Does your Teddy bear have...?**

 a bow	 no bow	 a tag	 no tag
Jay	Gloria	Phil	Manny
Mitch	Claire		
Cam			

# Conclusion

## Unit Conclusion

To conclude the unit, ask the students what they have learned about bears.

### Objectives:

- The students will actively participate in conversations.
- The students will notice and extend simple patterns.

### Activities:

- Create a chart of all the things the students learned about bears.
- Play the BEAR grid game.

### To Play:

- Copy template page onto 5 different colors of paper.
- Create a grid where each column has the same letter, and each row is the same color. Discuss the pattern and relationship of the cards.
- Students close their eyes while the teacher removes 1 card.
- Students use their knowledge of patterns to determine which card (color and letter) is missing.

We know about  
**Bears**

**types of bears**

grizzly	panda	moon
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**famous bears**

Winnie the Pooh	Paddington
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**characteristics**

claws	fur	4 legs
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©Play to Learn Preschool

# Centers

- Writing Practice
- Beginning Sound Sort
- Line Tracing
- Patterning
- Counting Bears
- Teddy Bear Size Sorting
- Count & Clip Cards
- Shape Matching Folder
- Cutting Practice
- Journaling
- Book List (recommendations)

## Center Activities

**Writing Practice** Literacy Center

**Objectives:** The students will write letters.  
**Preparation:** Copy each page and place into a plastic sleeve (or print on cardstock and laminate).  
**Procedure:** Students use a dry erase marker to trace the word.



**Beginning Sound Sort** Literacy Center

**Objectives:** The students will identify the beginning sound of each word.  
**Preparation:** Copy the picture cards. Glue the cover on the front, and the sorting mats on the inside. Cut and laminate the smaller pieces.  
**Procedure:** Students sort the pictures by their beginning sounds.



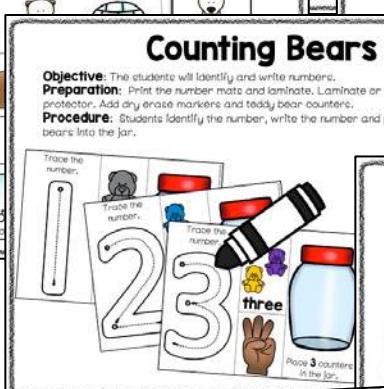
**Patterning** Math Center

**Objective:** The students will identify and extend simple patterns.  
**Preparation:** Print the pattern cards and pieces, mat, laminate and cut apart.  
**Procedure:** Students identify the pattern and extend it by placing the next correct piece.



**Counting Bears** Math Center

**Objective:** The students will identify and write numbers.  
**Preparation:** Print the number mats and laminate. Laminate or put into a page protector. Add dry erase markers and teddy bear counters.  
**Procedure:** Students identify the number, write the number and place the number of bears into the jar.



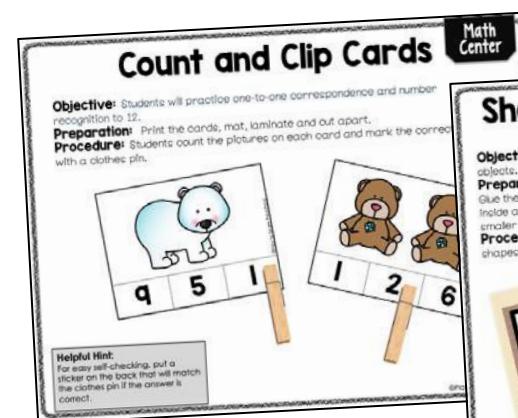
**Sorting** Math Center

**Objective:** The students will sort by color and size.  
**Preparation:** Print the sorting mats onto different colored paper, to match the colors of your teddy bear counters. Set out the sorting mat and counters.  
**Procedure:** Students sort the teddy bear counters by color and size.



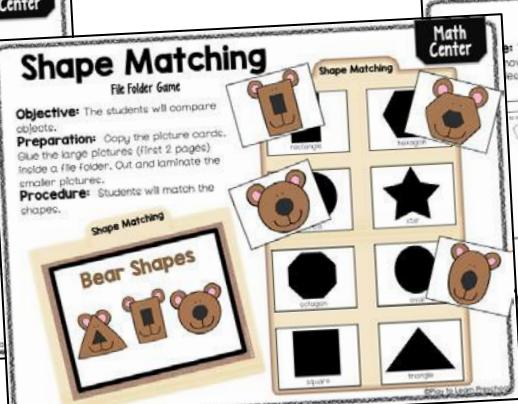
**Count and Clip Cards** Math Center

**Objective:** Students will practice one-to-one correspondence and number recognition to 12.  
**Preparation:** Print the cards, mat, laminate and cut apart.  
**Procedure:** Students count the pictures on each card and mark the correct with a clothespin pin.



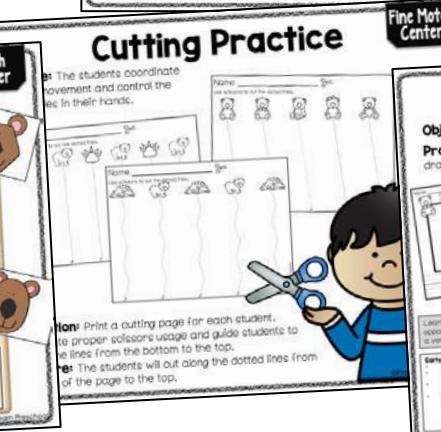
**Shape Matching** Math Center

**Objectives:** The students will compare objects.  
**Preparation:** Copy the picture cards. Glue the large pictures (first 2 pages) into a file folder. Cut and laminate the smaller pictures.  
**Procedure:** Students will match the shapes.



**Cutting Practice** Fine Motor Center

**Objective:** Print a cutting page for each student, to proper scissor usage and guide students to cut from the bottom to the top.  
**Preparation:** The students will cut along the dotted lines from the page to the top.



**Journaling** Literacy Center

**Objective:** The students will understand the purpose of writing.  
**Preparation:** Print the journal prompts. Students can use the journal prompts to write and draw a picture. The words can also be written for the student if necessary.

