

A-Book-A-Week: Classroom Instruction

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

Activity Card #1	Literacy Development Category: Lots of Links: Performing the Chicka Chicka Boom Boom Play
Suggested Activity Order <p><i>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</i> is a sure-fire winner for all children. This wonderful rhyming story not only brings an emphasis to lower case letters (and their playful ways) but also unites two featured author/illustrators in the A-Book-A-Week program -- Bill Martin and Lois Ehlert. Today's lesson allows children to experience the joyful language of the text while learning a bit more about the lower case letters.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Remind children of the <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> story, explaining that too many letters climbed the coconut tree, and down they went. Tell them that today we will be acting out this story.2. With the children watching, cut a long rectangle from the brown grocery sack. At its top, staple some strips of green construction paper. Use masking tape to attach this to your chalkboard.3. Next, distribute the letter "puppets" (the cut out with a masking tape roll-up on the back). Tell each child the name of the letter as you hand him or her a puppet.4. As you read the story, have each "puppeteer" put his or her letter on the coconut tree. When the letters fall, each child can take his or her letter and place it in the pile at the base of the tree.5. Save the cutouts. Later in the week, you can place them at a station in your classroom, so children can act out <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> again.	Materials Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery sack<input type="checkbox"/> Green construction paper<input type="checkbox"/> Cut outs from the end of this file<input type="checkbox"/> Masking tape

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Activity Card #2	Literacy Development Category: Language Development: Adjectives in written language
Suggested Activity Order <i>One noticeable difference between oral and written language is the way adjectives are assembled. When we speak, we tend to join adjectives -- "The tree was tall and green and prickly." When we write, we condense adjectives -- "The tall, green, prickly tree..." Today's lesson encourages children's awareness of this difference.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Show children Bill Martin Jr.'s picture. Tell them that Mr. Martin is one of the two men who wrote the <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> story. (You might also want to remind them that Mr. Martin wrote another of our favorite books - <u>Brown Bear, Brown Bear.</u>)2. Turn to the page on which "skinned-knee D" appears. Ask the children if they can remember what part of D got hurt when he fell from the tree.3. Next, read "skinned-knee D" from the text, pointing at the words. Say, "This is the way Mr. Martin described what happened to D. He did it in very few words." Then, write the phrase on the board or on chart paper.4. Repeat this process with "stubbed-toe E", "patched-up F", "black-eyed P", and "loose-tooth T".5. Read all the phrases from your chart. Ask children what they notice. Some may say the phrases rhyme (they do, except for F). Some may say that the letters are at the end. This will allow you to draw attention to the "describing words" at the beginning.6. Remind children how Mr. Martin likes rhythm in his writing. Then, help the children see, by clapping, that all the phrases have three beats to them.	Materials Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> Chart paper and marker<input type="checkbox"/> Bill Martin Jr.'s picture at http://tiill.com/Bill's%20Story.htm <p>(You may have saved this from the <u>Brown Bear, Brown Bear Lesson...</u>)</p>

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Activity Card #3	Literacy Development Category: Acts of Writing: Noticing lower case letters
Suggested Activity Order <i>In today's lesson, we are guiding children in their awareness of upper- and lower-case letters.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Begin today's lesson by re-reading <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u>.2. Turn to the page on which the upper case Z, R, J, and N have come to "hug their little dears". Point to each of the upper and lower case letters on that page. Remind the children that Dr. Seuss talked about Big A and little a.3. Explain that today we will be looking for the little letters, the ones that we have seen in <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u>.4. Distribute the lower case letters from Activity #1, saying each letter's name as you hand it to a child.5. Point to the February alphabet, and tell the children to hunt until they find a letter that looks like their letter. When they do, have them tape their letter to the alphabet card.6. Call all the children together. Say something like the following, "Tim, you had little b. Show us where you put it." Then say, "You put it on the B page. We can see the little b in the word balloon." Repeat this process with all the letters.	Materials Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> Cut outs of the lower case letters with a masking tape roll-up on the back

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Activity Card #4	Literacy Development Category: Authors and Illustrators: Writing and Illustrating Books
Suggested Activity Order <i>In today's activity, we will be discussing authors and illustrators.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Display the four books noted in materials. Place Martin's and Ehlert's pictures on the board.2. Show children the cover of <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u>. Read the title, then read the author and illustrator information. When you read Martin's name, point to his picture. When you read Ehlert's name, point to her picture.3. Explain to children that Bill Martin, Jr. is an author. He writes the words for books. Read a bit of <u>Brown Bear, Brown Bear</u> and a bit of <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u>. You can remind the children of the rhythm Bill Martin captured in <u>Brown Bear</u>. You can point out the rhyming text of <u>Chicka Chicka</u>, and you can remind the children of your attention to his "descriptions" that you did earlier this week.4. Then direct the children's attention to the pictures in <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u>. Let the children know that Lois Ehlert made these pictures. Show them <u>Fish Eyes</u> and <u>Eating the Alphabet</u>.5. Read Ms. Ehlert's letter to the children. Let them look at the corn in <u>Eating the Alphabet</u> to see the individual pieces of paper.6. Conclude your lesson by reviewing what authors do and what illustrators do. Allow children to experiment with collage at a station in your classroom. You can put Lois Ehlert's photograph, letter, and books at the station, along with paper and paste.	Materials Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Brown Bear, Brown Bear</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Fish Eyes</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Eating the Alphabet</u> book<input type="checkbox"/> Lois Ehlert's picture (<i>see URL below</i>)

Lois Ehlert's picture (and the entire letter she wrote) can be found at this URL:
<http://www.friend.ly.net/scoop/biographies/ehlertlois/index.html>

Dear Boys and Girls,

I grew up in a home where everyone seemed to be making something. As far back as I can remember, I was always putting things together, cutting, stitching, pasting, or pounding. The feel of the object I made was as important as the look.

My mother, a good seamstress, shared her fabric scraps with me and taught me to use her sewing machine when I was about eight years old. My dad had a basement workshop, which supplied me with scrap lumber and nails. So I always had a ready supply of art materials, but not necessarily traditional ones like paper and paint.

In fact, colored construction paper was pale in tone compared to my cloth scraps. (To this day I prefer to paint my own papers to create just the right color or texture.)

I also did a lot of painting and drawing as I was growing up. But I didn't like drawing as much as cutting and pasting. Unless I used a lot of erasers (and I did) and kept changing the drawing, it never was exactly the way I wanted it. For instance, if I drew a face, I would never know whether the mouth would look better one inch closer to the nose unless I did the drawing over and over again. But if I cut out a mouth of paper, I could try it in different positions until I found the best one, then glue it down permanently.

The art technique I use most is called collage - cutout pieces of paper, fabric, or objects glued to a backing. Sometimes I paint white paper with watercolor washes and then cut it up, and sometimes I use paper with just one tone or texture. After I decide what to illustrate, I start cutting out each little piece and gluing it on a board. When you look at Eating the Alphabet, notice

the page with the Indian corn. Each kernel is a separate piece of paper.

I work in a studio in my home. I've always thought it's important to have a special area just for making art. Anyone of any age can make such a space, even if it's just a little corner in a room. When you go to this area it means you are ready to create something. I have a huge drawing board, near large windows, with cabinets and work surfaces on both sides. I keep my marking pens and pencils, paints, and colored papers in the drawers of these cabinets. On top of the cabinets at the left I have jars full of brushes, pens, pencils, scissors, a tape dispenser, a rubber cement jug, a telephone (I can keep working while I talk on the phone), and a desk calendar. The desk calendar helps me keep track of speaking dates at schools and museums, and by the end of each week it is usually full of ink spots and paint splashes.

If you are an artist or a writer like me, it sometimes is difficult to know just where ideas come from. That's a question people ask all the time. Now that I'm grown up I realize that I write and draw things I know and care about. But I still don't know exactly where all my ideas come from. It seems to take me a long time to make a book, and it is difficult but enjoyable work. It looks so simple if you get it right!

I think being creative is a part of a person's makeup. It's something I feel very lucky about. I've worked hard to make this gift as fine as I can make it, but I still think I was born with certain ideas and feelings just waiting to burst out!

Your friend,
Lois Ehlert

