

Real and Found Materials

Instructional goals can often be achieved with found, donated, or made items. These materials or supplies also add a “real” dimension to the instructional program and can be a cost-saving measure. The following is a list of such materials to enhance the instructional centers and activities in Pre-K classrooms. This list is not all inclusive; however, the items listed are examples of real and found materials that can be used in the classroom. The safety of these items should be considered when placing them in the classroom for student use.

Language and Literacy

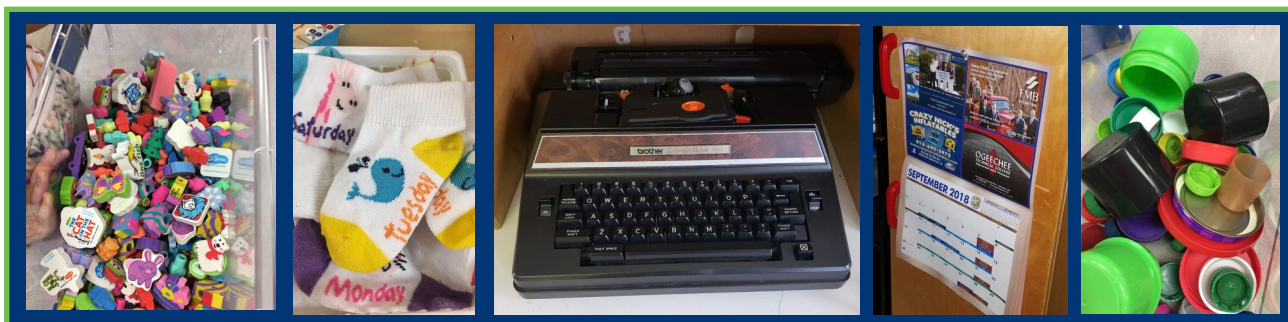
- Brochures
- Cancelled stamps
- Cell phones
- Class-made books
- Clipboards
- Computer keyboards
- Coupons
- Envelopes
- Date books or calendars
- Fast food logos—signs, books, word cards, etc.
- Greeting cards
- Hotel note pads
- “Junk” mail
- Hotel note pads
- Magazines
- Newspaper
- Restaurant menus
- School supply catalogs
- Spiral notebooks
- Sock puppets
- Teacher-made file folder games.
- Telephones
- Miscellaneous paper—receipt forms, order forms, etc.

Math

- Acorns, seeds, etc.
- Beads
- Bottle caps
- Buttons
- Clothespins
- Erasers (in various shapes)
- Popsicle sticks
- Mittens
- Paper clips
- Plastic tokens or chips
- Silverware and a tray
- Seashells
- Socks
- Dominoes
- Calculators or adding machines
- File folder games
- Golf tees
- Graph paper
- Laundry scoops and detergent container tops
- Number cubes/Dice
- Paint samples
- Playing cards
- Plastic jars, containers, and lids
- Puzzles made from front of cereal boxes
- Rulers
- Tape measures
- Scales (balance, bath, food)
- Shoestrings for lacing
- Simple cartoons cut into sequence strips
- Timekeepers (stopwatch, hourglass, kitchen)

Music

- Aluminum pie pans
- Bells on pipe cleaners
- Crepe paper streamers
- Dress scarves for dancing
- Drums made from coffee cans
- Maracas - recycle plastic bottles to fill with items to make sounds and seal the top.
- Pots with wooden spoons
- Rain sticks made from shipping or gift wrap tubes
- Rhythm sticks made from wooden dowels/spoons
- Streamers made from fabric hair bands and thin satin ribbons
- Streamers attached to dowel sticks, tongue depressors, or cardboard tubes

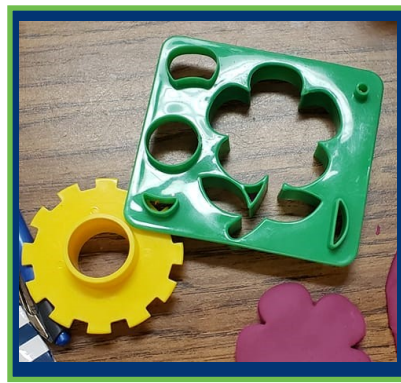


Dramatic Play

- Backpacks
- Baby clothes
- Briefcase and file folders
- Broom
- Canister set
- Canteens
- Cookbooks
- Coupons
- Clocks (digital, wall, desk, etc.)
- Coffee pot
- Diaper bag
- Dishcloths
- Dishes and utensils
- Disposable diapers
- Dustpan
- Eggbeater
- Egg timer
- Empty egg cartons
- Empty food containers
- Empty baby powder containers
- Empty seed packets
- Empty spice containers
- Gardening gloves
- Grocery store advertisements
- Hats/caps
- Headphones
- Lunchboxes
- Measuring cups/spoons
- Menus
- Microphones
- Pet dish
- Picnic basket
- Placemats
- Plants
- Plastic mixing bowls
- Plastic baby bottles
- Plastic/silk flowers or plants
- Paper bags (grocery, shopping)
- Potholders
- Telephones
- Pots/pans
- Receiving blankets
- Rolling pin
- Rolodex or address book
- Sale flyers/brochures
- Sifter
- Steering wheels
- Stuffed animals
- Suitcases
- Tablecloths
- Teapot
- Toaster or any small appliance with cords cut off
- Walkie-talkies
- Wardrobe box from movers
- Dress-up clothes

Art

- Aluminum foil
- Beads
- Buttons
- Cardboard
- Cardboard tubes
- Carpet pieces
- Cloth scraps
- Clothespins
- Coffee filters
- Colored tape
- Construction paper scraps
- Contact paper
- Cookie cutters
- Cotton balls
- Cotton swabs
- Egg cartons
- Elastic
- Fabric scraps
- Fly swatter
- Golf tees
- Greeting cards
- Magazines
- Marbles
- Masking tape
- Old shirts for smocks
- Muffin tins, shallow containers, saucers for printing, mixing, painting
- Newspaper
- Paint chip samples
- Paper bags
- Paper clips
- Paper cups/plates
- Paper punchers
- Paper towels
- Plastic knives
- Popsicle sticks
- Rolling pins
- Rubber bands
- Sandpaper
- Scotch tape
- Sequins
- Shells
- Shoeboxes
- Shoestrings
- Sponges
- Spools
- Spray bottles
- Squeeze bottles
- Stencils made from cardboard
- Straws
- String
- Styrofoam
- Tissue paper scraps
- Wallpaper samples
- Wood scraps
- Wrapping paper
- Yarn



Real and Found Materials

Science

- Bark
- Binoculars
- Bug exoskeletons
- Compass
- Dental molds
- “Discovery” bottles made using plastic bottles
- Fabric with different textures (velvet, satin, burlap, corduroy, etc.)
- Field guide books
- Flashlight
- Popsicle sticks for labeling plants
- Kaleidoscopes
- Leaves
- Moss samples
- Magnifying glasses
- Non-toxic plants
- Outdoor weather thermometer
- Pinwheels
- Pinecones and pine needles
- Rocks/stones
- Sandpaper in a variety of grades
- Scent games (sealed containers filled with various items of different smells)
- Seashells
- Seedling trays and seeds
- Snakeskins
- Stethoscope
- Sticks
- Soil samples
- Sound games (sealed containers filled with various items to make different sounds)
- Science magazines (examples: National Geographic, Ranger Rick, Kids Discover)
- Terrarium made from a soft drink bottle
- Windsocks
- Wind chimes
- X-rays

Sensory Table

- Basters
- Bottles
- Clear plastic tubing
- Corks
- Eggbeaters
- Funnels
- Garden tools
- Ice
- Ladles
- Measuring cups
- Molds for sand play
- Packing materials
- Plastic cups/bowls
- Serving spoons
- Scoops
- Short garden hose
- Sifters
- Sponges
- Small spray bottles
- Strainers
- Tongs and tweezers
- Whisks
- Watering cans

Blocks

- Blueprints or sample floor plans
- Bubble wrap
- Carpet pieces
- Cardboard tubes/cylinders
- Carpenter’s apron
- Cones from yarn
- Construction cones
- Construction hats
- Empty egg cartons
- Graph paper, rulers, pencils
- Homemade blocks (oatmeal containers, jewelry boxes, shoeboxes, cereal boxes, etc. wrapped in contact paper or wrapping paper)
- Linoleum pieces
- Maps
- Measuring tape
- Paper scraps
- Masking tape
- PVC pipes
- PVC connectors
- Plastic containers
- Pool noodles
- Safety goggles
- Shipping tubes
- Tool Belt
- Ramps covered with different surfaces (corduroy, foil, sandpaper)
- Steering wheel
- Styrofoam
- Thread spools
- Toolbelt
- Work gloves
- Wood scraps (sanded smooth)

