

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 an all-inclusive list and 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
Carbon paper
Cereal box books and other class-made books
Cereal box word strips
Clipboards
Computer keyboards
Coupons
Date books or calendars
Fast food logos—signs, books, word cards
Felt/velon/dryer sheets characters/letters for flannel board
Flannel board made by covering a piece of cardboard box with flannel
Greeting cards
Homemade puppets-socks, gloves, tongue depressors, paper bags, potholders
“Junk” mail, envelopes, canceled stamps, magazine stamps
Hotel note pads
Magazines
Mini-page from newspaper
Misc. paper—receipt forms, order forms, counter checks, etc.
Restaurant menus
School supply catalogs
Spiral notebooks
Teacher recorded story tapes
Telephones

Math

For sorting and counting

Acorns, seeds, beans, nuts in shells	Plastic/silk flowers cut from stems
Bottle caps	Plastic tokens or chips
Buttons	Silverware and a tray
Clothespins	Seashells
Colored pasta	Socks
Erasers (in various shapes)	
Ice cream sticks	
Hair accessories (barrettes, elastic/fabric bands, etc.)	
Mittens	
Noodles with holes for stringing	
Paper clips	

General

Dominos	Playing cards
Calculators or adding machines	Plastic jars, containers and lids
File folder games	Puzzles made from front of cereal boxes
Film containers	Rulers, tape measures
Graph paper	Scales (balance, bath, food)
Laundry scoops and detergent container tops	Shoestrings
Lotto games made using stickers	Simple cartoons cut into sequence strips
Number cubes/Dice	Timekeepers (stop watch, hour glass, kitchen)
Paint samples made into seriation games	

Dramatic Play

Backpacks	Empty baby powder containers	Paper bags (grocery, shopping)
Baby clothes	Empty seed packets	Play money
Brief case and file folders	Gardening gloves	Potholders
Broom	Grocery store advertisements	Telephones
Camouflage shirts/vests	Hats/caps	Pots/pans
Canceled stamps	Headphones	Receiving blankets
Canister set	Lunch boxes	Rolling pin
Canteens	Measuring cups	Rolodex or address book
Cookbooks	Measuring spoons	Sale flyers/brochures
Coupons	Microphones	Sports outfits (jerseys, helmets, shin guards, etc.)
Costumes	Newborn baby clothes	Sifter
Clocks (digital, wind-up, wall, desk, etc.)	Old prom dresses, ties, hats, shoes, shirts, gloves, costume jewelry, pocketbooks, scarves, watches, wallets, etc.	Steering wheels
Coffee pot	Pet dish	Stuffed animals
Diaper bag	Picnic basket	Suitcases
Dinner plates (plastic)	Placemats	Teapot
Dishcloths	Plants	Toaster or any small appliance—cords cut off
Dishes and utensils	Plastic mixing bowls with lids	Walkie-talkies
Disposable diapers	Plastic baby bottles	Wardrobe box from movers
Dustpan	Plastic/silk flowers or plants	
Eggbeater		
Egg timer		
Empty food containers		

Creative Art

Aluminum foil	Clothespins	Cotton swabs
Balls of any size	Coffee filters	Dental floss
Beads	Colored tape	Empty cans (cover cut edges with masking tape)
Bits of wood and balsa	Combs	
Buttons	Computer paper	Egg cartons
Cardboard	Construction paper scraps	Elastic
Cardboard tubes	Contact paper	Fabric scraps
Carpet pieces	Cookie cutters	Fly swatter print
Cloth, felt, rug, fur scraps	Cotton balls	

Food coloring
Golf tees
Greeting cards
Kitchen gadgets
Liquid starch
Magazines
Masking tape
Matchbox cars
Men's shirts for smocks
Muffin tins
Newspaper
Paint in old deodorant bottles
Paper bags
Paper clips
Paper cups
Paper plates

Paper punchers
Paper towels
Pasta of different shapes/types
Pipe cleaners
Plaster of Paris
Plastic knives
Push up sticks
Rolling pins
Rubber bands
Sand paper
Scotch tape
Sequins
Shells
Shoebboxes
Shoestrings

Sponges
Spools
Spray bottles
Squeeze bottles
Stencils made from cardboard
Straws
String
Styrofoam
Tissue paper scraps
Toothbrushes
Wallpaper samples
Wood scraps
Wrapping paper
Yarn

Blocks

Blue prints or sample floor plans
Bubble wrap
Carpet pieces
Cardboard tubes/cylinders
Carpenter's apron
Cones from yarn
Construction hats
Empty egg cartons
Fabric tablecloths, small blankets
Graph paper, rulers, pencils
Homemade blocks (oatmeal containers, jewelry boxes, shoeboxes, cereal boxes, etc. wrapped in contact paper or wrapping paper)
Linoleum pieces
Maps
Paper scraps, masking tape

PVC pipes and connectors
Plastic berry containers
Plastic construction cones
Safety goggles
Shipping tubes (chutes for mini-cars)
Shoebboxes for mini-car garages or tunnels
Slants/ramps covered with different surfaces (corduroy, foil, sandpaper)
Steering wheel
Styrofoam
Thread spools
Tool belt
Wood scraps (sanded smooth)
Work gloves

Science

Moss samples
Magnifying glasses
Nuts in shells (pecans, walnuts, coconuts, etc.)
Non-toxic plants
Outdoor weather thermometer
Pinwheels
Pinecones and pine needles
Rocks/stones
Sandpaper in a variety of grades
Seashells

Seedling trays and seeds
Snakeskins
Stethoscope
Sound games (film containers filled with various items such as dry beans, dice, bells, dry rice, etc.)
Science magazines (examples: *National Geographic*, *Ranger Rick*, *Kids Discover*)
Terrarium made from a soft drink bottle
Windsocks, pinwheels, wind chimes
x-rays

Sensory Table

Basters
Bottles
Clear plastic tubing
Corks
Dry beans, rice, oatmeal, potato flakes, lentils, corn
Eggbeaters for water table
Food coloring for water table
Funnels
Garden tools
Ice
Ladles
Measuring cups
Molds
Packing materials (regular or biodegradable)
Pasta (bow tie, seashells, curly, corkscrews)
Plastic cups and bowls
Serving spoons
Scoops
Short length of garden hose
Sifters
Sponges
Small spray bottles
Strainers
Tongs and tweezers
Whisks
Watering cans

General

Tree Bark
Binoculars, bird feeder, birdseed, bird book (for playground or to place outside the classroom window)
Bug boxes made from old boxes
Compass
Dental molds
"Discovery" bottles made using plastic bottles
Fabric with different textures (velvet, satin, burlap, corduroy, etc.)
Field guide books
Flashlight
Ice cream sticks for labeling plants
Kaleidoscopes
Leaves
Mineral samples

Music

Aluminum pie pans
Bells on pipe cleaners
Crepe paper streamers
Dress scarves or strips of fabric for dancing
Drums made from coffee cans
Maracas - use old soft drink bottles, fill with rice, beans, etc. and glue tops on
Music recordings (various types)
Pots with wooden spoons
Rain sticks made from shipping or gift wrap tubes
Rhythm sticks made from wooden dowels
Streamers made from fabric hair bands and thin satin ribbons
Streamers attached to dowel sticks, tongue depressors or cardboard tubes

Outdoor

Blanket/tablecloth/flat sheet (in place of parachute)
Blankets to sit on (read books, work on puzzles, etc.)
Bowling pins made from empty oatmeal containers
Cheerleader pom-poms
Concrete culvert section (tunnel)
Empty appliance boxes (supervise appropriately)
Frisbees
Kites and string
Magnifiers
Old tires for climbing through, hopping in, etc. (be sure to drill drain holes)
Photography paper to expose in the light
Plastic construction cones
Potato sacks (burlap or canvas)
Racquetball rackets and rubber balls (safety goggles, too)
Rowboat (imaginative play)
Small boxes (for throwing small ball and bean bags)
Squirt bottles
Traffic signs made from new toilet plungers and cardboard signs
Tent (offer appropriate supervision)
Wicker baskets (to balance and carry on heads)

This list is not exhaustive nor is it intended to endorse specific products or suppliers.

Please refer to GELDS (Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards) for specific standards and indicators.