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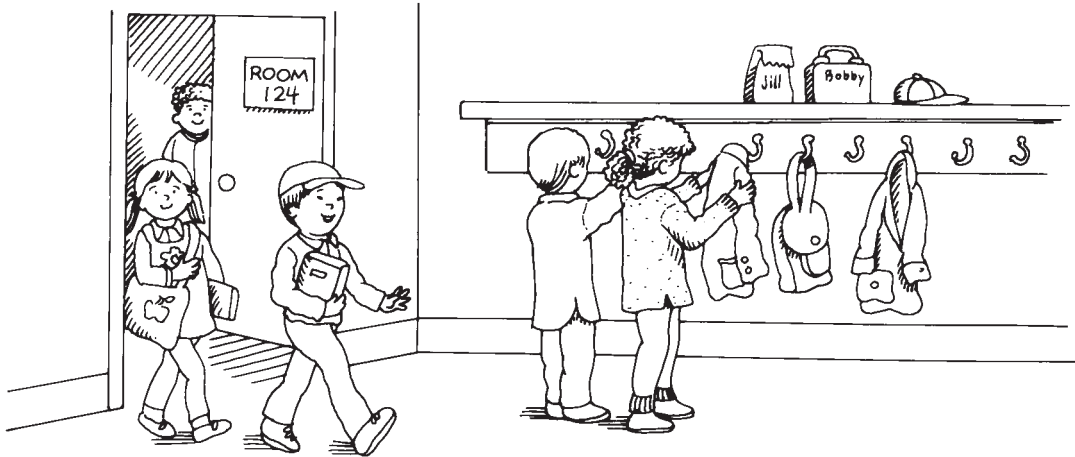
# Introduction

Every teacher has some of those “Now what do I do?” moments when an activity ends much sooner than expected, an assembly is canceled at the last minute, or there is just not enough time to prepare for a specific activity. *One Step, No Prep* is designed for just these kinds of situations. It provides 98 math and language arts activities that can be instantly implemented. They require no last-minute preparation or setup, and the procedures are clear and simple. Best of all, these activities help you make the most out of every instructional minute in the school day.

## Organization

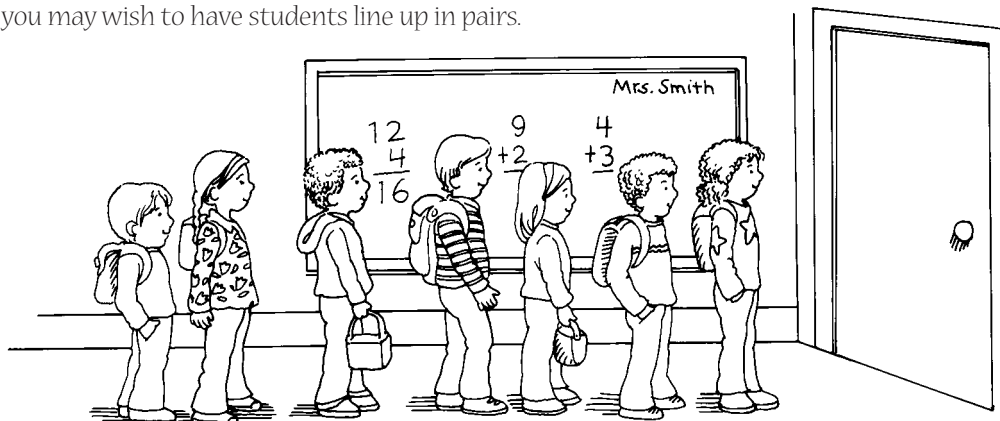
The games in this resource are adaptable to fit neatly into your daily schedule and meet the specific needs of review and transition times. The activities are organized into three categories:

**Warm-up Games** are for times when students enter the classroom, after a break, or at the start of a new activity. Use the moments before students enter the room to gather necessary materials.



**In-between Games** are appropriate for “leftover” time, as a filler between activities or subjects, or at any other gap in the day’s schedule.

**Transition Games** are activities in which students’ participation or response grants them permission to line up, leave the classroom, or move to the next activity or setting. To speed up these games, you may wish to have students line up in pairs.



As you look at the games, you will see that many are adaptable to any of the three categories. Students’ needs and the amount of time available will help determine your best use of each game.

## Materials

The majority of activities in this book either require no materials at all or only materials commonly found in a classroom: paper, pencils, chalk, chalkboard, overhead projector, overhead pens, and the like. (These items are not included in activities' materials lists.) Some games do use manipulatives and charts commonly found in classrooms or materials that can be conveniently stored or displayed continuously, such as a direct-beam flashlight, a hanging number line, and a grab bag. These materials are featured in several different activities, so having them accessible will facilitate instant implementation of many delightful games. The following paragraphs describe the purpose, preparation, and presentation of these recurring materials.

### Flash Cards

Several activities in this resource call for flash cards. These cards can contain math facts, spelling words, vocabulary words, or high-frequency words. Prepare these materials by writing the words or math facts on index cards. Use colored index cards to help categorize your information (e.g., use a different color card for each arithmetic operation), and laminate the cards you will use over and over. Use large cards for activities that require students to see them from a distance; use smaller cards for independent games, small-group games, partner games, and "grab bag" activities.

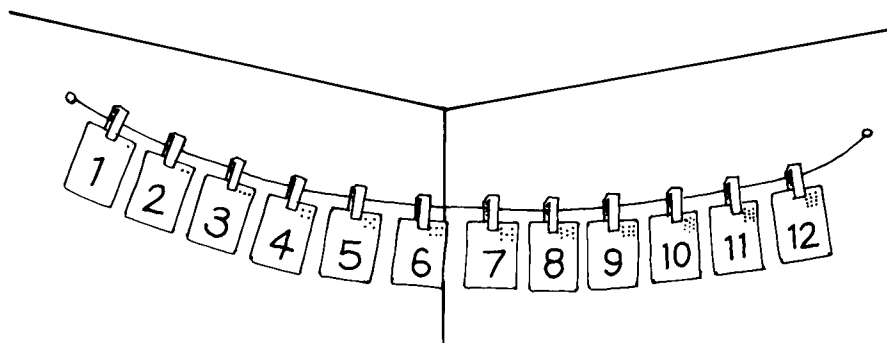
### Grab Bag

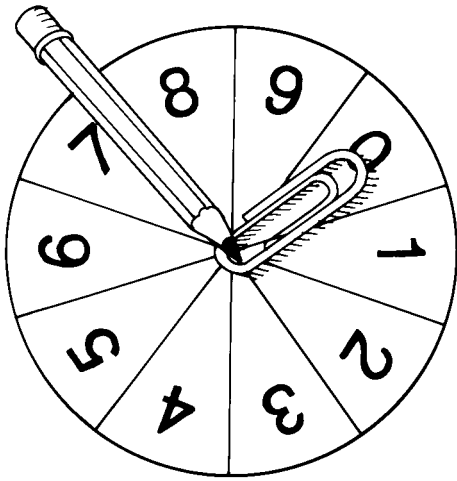
A grab bag is any opaque bag large enough to hold cards or scraps of paper. Cards for grab bag games require data ranging from spelling words to numbers to portions of reproducibles. Prepare a separate grab bag for each game, label the bags according to the game or games with which they are used, and store them in an easily accessible place. Paper bags will work, but cloth or plastic bags are more durable.



### Hanging Number Line

Displaying a hanging number line not only provides you with constant access to a material used in several of this book's games, it provides a reference tool for students learning numbers and math facts. Prepare the number line by hanging a length of twine across a corner of your classroom. Use clothespins to attach large number cards to the "clothesline" in sequential order. This book provides number cards (pages 62–64) you can reproduce (and enlarge, if possible) to create your hanging number line.





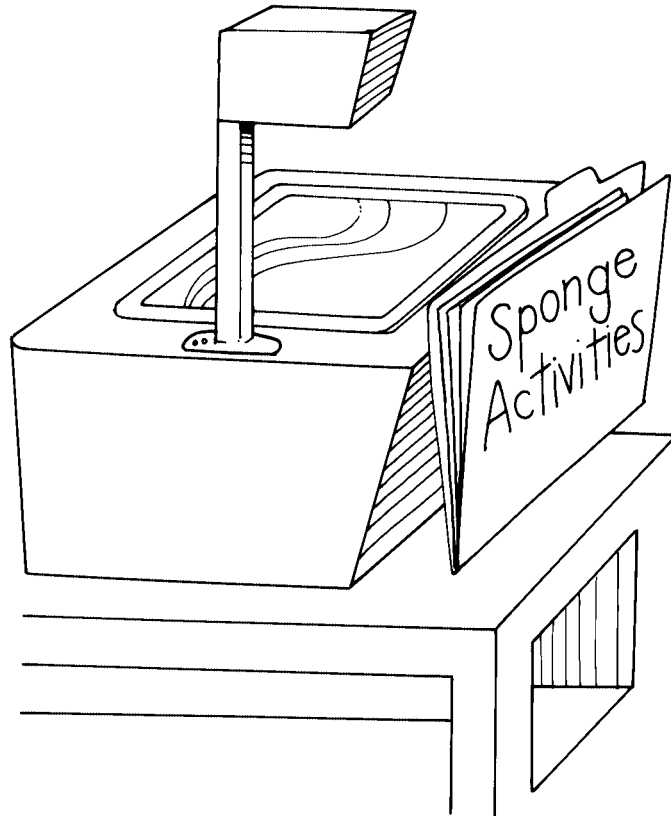
## Spinners

Page 55 contains four reproducible spinners—a 0–9 spinner, a 1–10 spinner, a more/less spinner, and a blank spinner—called for by several games in this book. Photocopy these spinners onto card stock, and give a set to each student. Photocopy the spinners onto acetate, and keep a set in a folder near your overhead projector. Use the transparency spinners for whole-group activities, and invite students to use their card stock spinners when working independently. Show students how to place the point of a pencil inside a rounded end of a paper clip on the center of the spinner and spin the paper clip around the pencil point while holding the pencil in place.

## Planning Ahead

After previewing the games in *One Step, No Prep*, you will see how easily these activities will fit into your curriculum with minimal effort and maximum benefit. Take the time at the beginning of the school year to collect and store close at hand the materials needed for the games. Making these materials easily accessible will improve your ability to spontaneously begin sponge activities that incorporate them. Here are some other tips for preparing your class to play these games on the spur of the moment:

- 🕒 Provide each student with a resealable plastic bag containing 20 linking cubes, ten of one color and ten of another.
- 🕒 Photocopy and enlarge the Telephone Spelling reproducible (page 61). Laminate it and have it ready for repeated use. Store it with wipe-off crayons and a cloth rag for erasing.
- 🕒 Create reusable overhead transparencies for games you play frequently by photocopying reproducibles found in this book onto acetate or by using permanent markers to draw game materials on acetate. Label and store these transparencies in folders near your projector for quick and easy access. Use erasable overhead pens to play these games.

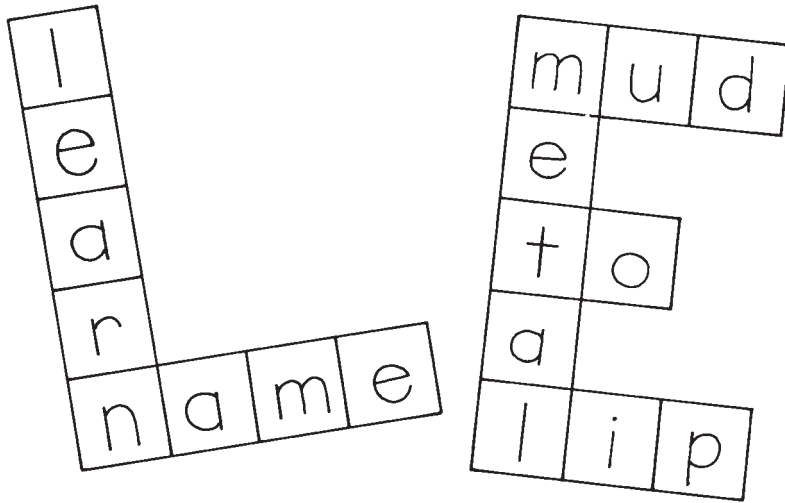


To effectively implement these games, familiarize yourself and your students with the procedures. At the beginning of the year, select a handful of games to introduce and practice with students. Be sure to set your standards and expectations for conduct during the games as you introduce them. Post a list of the games so students can help select the ones they play during those “Now what do I do?” moments. Once students are familiar with the games, you will have no trouble adapting them to fit students’ growing knowledge and skills.

# Block Letter Crosswords

**Materials** ⌚ none

Draw a block letter on the chalkboard. (Straight-edged letters such as E, F, L, and T work best.) Divide the letter into boxes to create a crossword puzzle. Have students brainstorm words that fit into the puzzle. Complete the puzzle as a class.



**Teacher Tip**



Conduct the activity in cooperative learning groups. Have each group draw and complete a puzzle made

from a letter you designate. (Ask all groups to use the same letter.) Invite more advanced groups to see how many different ways they can complete the puzzle. Share the solutions as a class.

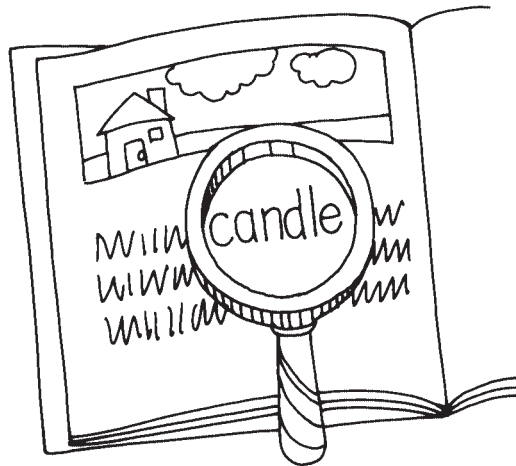
One Step, No Prep © 1999 Creative Teaching Press

# Browse and Find

**Materials** ⌚ reading book

As students get ready to read a new story, use this activity to help them focus on the new words in the story. Have students turn to a designated page in the story and browse the page. Then, ask them to find specific words. Give clues to help students find the words (e.g., phonetic or structural clues, synonyms, or antonyms). For example:

- ⌚ Find a word that means *large*.
- ⌚ Find a word that has the little word *and* in it.
- ⌚ Find the word that has the *oi* sound in it.
- ⌚ Find the word that means the opposite of *hard-working*.



**Teacher Tip**



Invite students to browse and find words in the story for which they would like to

make up clues. Have them write the clues during their free time or as homework. Use these clues the next time students read the story.

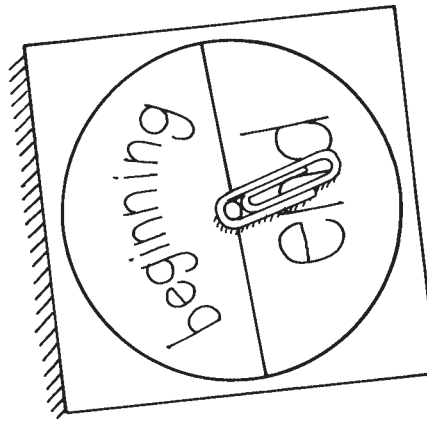
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# First and Last

**Materials** 🕒 blank spinner (page 55)

Create a spinner with two sections labeled *beginning* and *end*. Divide the class into three or four teams. Write the digraphs *th*, *ch*, and *sh* on the chalkboard. Have the first team choose a digraph. Then, spin the spinner. If the spinner comes up *beginning*, the team must think of a word with the digraph at the beginning. If the spinner comes up *end*, the team must think of a word with the digraph at the end. Give the team a point for a correct answer.

wish



**Teacher Tip**



For less advanced students, provide a word list. This gives these students reinforcement in identifying

sounds and reading words. This game is easily adaptable for individual letters or sounds other than digraphs.

# Full House

**Materials** 🕒 Word Families reproducibles (pages 56-59)

In advance, select word family rimes you wish to use. (A word's rime is the first vowel and all the letters that follow. For example, *ick* is the rime in *trick*.) Refer to the Word Families reproducibles for ideas. Draw a house on the chalkboard for each rime. Make the house portion large enough to write in, and label the roof with the rime. Divide the class into teams of three or four players, and assign each team a house. Conduct a relay race in which players from each team take turns writing a word in their house. Declare the team whose players each write a word in their house first the winner. After the game is finished, have the class check each house for accurate spelling and read the words aloud.



**Teacher Tip**



For more advanced students, count the letters in each word rather than just the words to determine the winner. This

will encourage students to use blends, clusters, and word endings.



# Initial Vowel Relay

**Materials** ⌚ none

Divide the class into relay teams. Divide the chalkboard into columns, one for each relay team, and write the letter *a* at the top of each one. Line up a team in front of each column. Explain to students that they are to think of a word that begins with the short *a* sound and, when it is their turn, write it in their column. However, if a word already appears on their team's list, it cannot be used again. They must think of a word that has not been used. The first team to have each player write a correctly spelled word wins. Have the class read each team's list of words.

Team 1	Team 2	Team 3
a	a	a
at	apple	alligator
ax	and	after
		answer

**Teacher Tip**



If students tend to copy other teams' lists, give each team a different vowel sound. If you give each

- team the same vowel,
- repeat the game using a new vowel sound. This game is easily adaptable for many other skills, including long vowels, blends, and synonyms.

# Letter Links

**Materials** ⌚ none

Assign each student a letter of the alphabet. Depending on the number of students in your class, omit difficult consonants (i.e., *q, x, z*) and vowels. Choose a theme or setting (e.g., zoo, store, circus, beach), and challenge students to name a related item that begins with their letter.



**Teacher Tip**



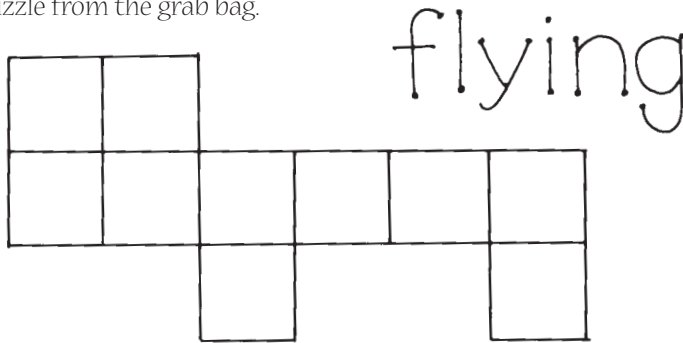
Ask students to think of an adjective (or two) that can describe their word. Challenge them to think

- of adjectives that also begin with their designated letter to create alliterative phrases (e.g., *big blue balloons*).

# Puzzle Me a Word

**Materials** 🕒 Puzzle Grid reproducible (page 60), grab bag

Prior to the lesson, photocopy the reproducible grid (on card stock, if possible). Write words very lightly in the boxes, one letter per box. Write "tall" letters (i.e., *b, d, f, h, k, l, t*) and letters with a "tail" (i.e., *g, j, p, q, y*) in two vertical boxes. Cut out these word "puzzles" prior to the activity. Put the puzzles in a grab bag and list all the grab bag words on the chalkboard. Select a student to choose a puzzle from the grab bag and show it to the class. Invite students to guess the word, and have the person who guesses correctly lead the class in spelling it. Ask this student to choose another puzzle from the grab bag.



**Teacher Tip**



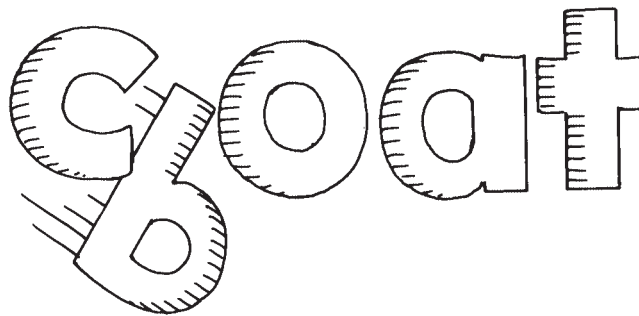
When preparing the puzzles, write the words lightly enough so you can read them but your students cannot

see them from their seats. This will help you remember which word goes with each puzzle without giving away answers to students. When selecting words, be aware of using multiple words that have the same puzzle shape.

# Shift and Change

**Materials** 🕒 none

Have students add, omit, or substitute letters in a given word to make new words. Orally give a brief prompt (e.g., *Drop the c from crow or Add a b to oat*). Do not include in your prompt the phrases *the word* or *to the word* because these extra words may divert students' attention away from the auditory blending process.



**Teacher Tip**



After students have experience making the letter changes, increase the difficulty by giving defini-

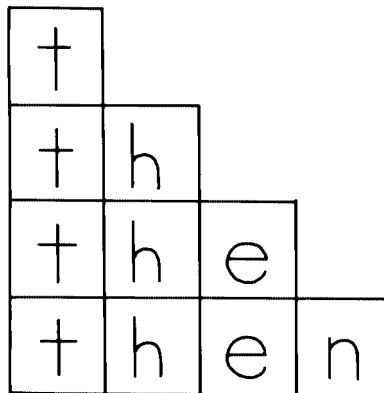
tions instead of words. For example, you might say *Change the b in boat to make a word that is something you wear in cold weather*. This requires students to combine phonetic and semantic clues to come up with an appropriate response.



# Spelling Stairs

**Materials** ⌚ none

Draw a box on the chalkboard. Have a student choose a letter, and write it in the box. Draw two same-sized boxes horizontally under the first one. Write the same letter in the first box. Ask students to suggest a second letter for the second box that could, in combination with the first letter, begin a word. Write that letter in the second box. Draw three boxes under the existing boxes, forming a staircase pattern, and write in the first two letters. Ask a volunteer to name a letter for the third box. Continue in this fashion until a word is made. Initially, this should be done as a teacher-guided activity in which you walk the students through the thinking process aloud. Depending on your students' ability level, use consonant-vowel-consonant words, spelling words, or high-frequency words.



**Teacher Tip**



Conduct this activity with students in pairs. Give everyone the same first letter. After

- the activity is completed,
- have the pairs share the word they built. See
- which pair came up with the longest word. Extend
- the activity by challenging more advanced
- students to add letters before as well as after
- the given letter. This encourages use of
- polysyllabic words, prefixes, and suffixes.

# Stretch It

**Materials** ⌚ none

Introduce this activity by stating a simple sentence containing only a "who" and a "what" (e.g., *The puppy barks*). Explain to students that they are going to "stretch" the sentence by adding more details. Write the question words *When*, *Where*, and *Why* on the chalkboard. Ask students to suggest words that could be added to the sentence to make it longer. As students share their ideas, point to the question word that labels what they are saying.

When	Where	Why
at midnight	outside the door	because he's cold

**Teacher Tip**



Do this activity orally to give students practice expanding sentences. With repeated practice, students will

- be better able to compose
- complex sentences in their daily writing. If you have
- additional time at the end of the game or at other
- points in the day, invite students to illustrate their
- "stretched-out" sentence.