

Introduction

One of the most important skills for children to master in order to be successful at school is learning how to follow directions. For many children, preschool is the first experience in a group environment. Following directions is part of understanding how this classroom environment works, from lining up to doing an art project. School is a special kind of community, and getting to know its systems helps children feel like a productive part of that community.

Following directions not only helps children learn to work together, but also fosters independence. When children follow directions to complete even the smallest task successfully, it builds their confidence. Each success builds on the last, as children develop the skills necessary to become independent learners. Once children understand the framework of a given set of directions, they become free to proceed on their own with confidence. This confidence will help children as they move through the grades and tasks become more complex and sophisticated.

One increasingly important factor in children's success at school is their ability to perform well on tests. It is never too early to begin building the skills necessary for children to become confident test-takers. The activities in this book help children learn to follow oral directions, in addition to exposing them to written directions and visual clues. This exposure boosts children's performance in classroom activities—and prepares them for future homework and tests.

In this book, you'll find dozens of appealing reproducible pages that give children practice in following directions. They are easy to integrate into your curriculum because they focus on favorite themes—from weather and seasons to transportation. Engaging children in these activities also helps reinforce a variety of skills and concepts necessary for successful learning such as:

- ⊙ alphabet recognition
- ⊙ counting and numbers
- ⊙ sorting and classifying
- ⊙ colors
- ⊙ shapes
- ⊙ matching
- ⊙ sequencing
- ⊙ recognizing and creating patterns

For each theme, you'll also find activities that reinforce following directions, as well as book links to extend learning. The combination of these experiences enhances children's ability to follow step-by-step directions with accuracy and confidence—all of which adds up to learning success.

How to Use This Book

The activities in this book are organized by themes and designed to fit easily and smoothly into your existing curriculum. Look through the table of contents to find activities that tie into a particular topic of study, such as animals, transportation, school, food, weather, holidays, and more. For each theme, you'll find the following sections:

About the Theme A brief introduction to the theme, highlighting children's interests and experiences. This section also includes an extension idea, such as a whole-class bulletin board project, and book links.

Activities One to three activities in many curricular areas such as art, movement, language arts, social studies, and even cooking. These experiences are designed to give children practice in both following and giving directions as they play learning games and create interesting projects. The activities can be done as a class or in small groups.

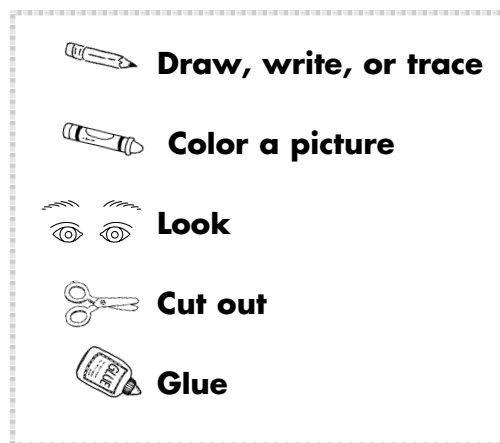
Student Reproducibles Reproducible activity pages that can be used in a variety of ways to fit the needs of your class. Use the pages as a guided whole-class activity, in small groups, or in learning centers.

Supporting Students

Each activity sheet includes written directions in simple, direct language that is easy for children to understand. Read aloud the directions as children follow along with each step. You might copy the directions onto chart paper or sentence strips to reinforce one-to-one correspondence. The written directions also include rebus-style icons to support children's understanding. Before doing an activity, explain what the icons mean.

As you lead children through the activities, be sure to emphasize the correspondence between spoken and written words, and between written words and visual clues. This will help children become increasingly independent as they gain experience in interpreting and following step-by-step instructions. In addition, model the habits and strategies you use for following directions.

The themes and activities in this book can be done in any order. You might use them all or you might choose the ones that best suit the needs of your class. However you choose to use it, this book will provide you with a valuable resource for helping children learn how to follow directions, practice basic skills, and have fun in the process!



My Senses

Your body has parts that help you see, smell, hear, touch, and taste.



1 **Look** at the pictures.



2 **Draw** lines to show which body part helps you do each activity.

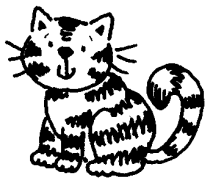


My Favorite Things

Mark which things you like best.



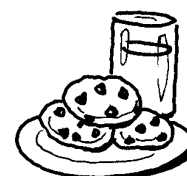
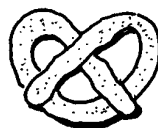
1 **Draw** a circle around your favorite animal.



2 **Draw** a square around your favorite activity.



3 **Draw** a triangle around your favorite food.



Let's Count

**How many eyes do you have?
How many feet? How many fingers?**



- ① **Count** the eyes. **Write** the number in the box.



- ② **Count** the feet. **Write** the number in the box.



- ③ **Count** the fingers. **Write** the number in the box.

