



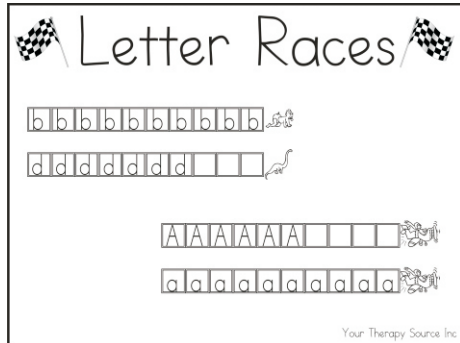
Your Therapy Source News

**Digital magazine for pediatric
occupational and physical therapists.**

Issue 33 - December 2011

www.YourTherapySource.com

New and Popular Products



Letter Races

Download this set of one player games to practice letter formation

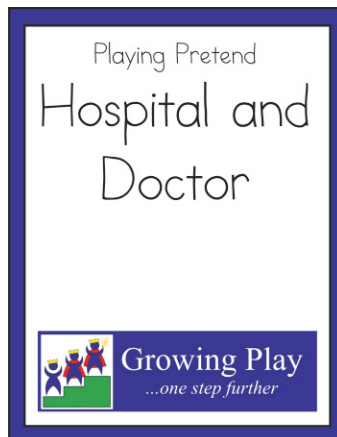
Regular price: \$4.99

SALE PRICE until 12/18/11 only \$1.99

www.YourTherapySource.com/letteraces



Growing Play Activities



Children love to role play and pretend. Growing Play (a division of Your Therapy Source Inc) has published packets that take role playing one step further. Encourage literacy and reading with these fun extensions for pretend play. Spark children's imagination and creativity. You can download and view sample pages from each book on the website.

Introductory price \$1.99 per download

www.YourTherapySource.com/growingplay

www.YourTherapySource.com

Tips for Teaching Dressing Skills



When children learn how to dress themselves it is a huge accomplishment. Independent dressing is a skill that needs to be taught and practiced. Here are some tips for teaching a child how to dress:

1. Children will usually learn to undress first. Remember to allow children practice time to undress. Praise them for being independent when undressing (if appropriate).
2. Be patient. Do not try to teach dressing skills if you are in a rush. It takes children a long time to dress themselves. Perhaps pick out clothes the night before to eliminate one step.
3. Provide verbal cues as necessary. Try to use the wording on each step by step direction for consistency. As the child becomes more independent, reduce the verbal cues until they can be discontinued completely.
4. Try teaching dressing using backward chaining. Backward chaining means that an adult provides assistance throughout several steps until the child can complete the last steps independently. For example - you help the child hold the shirt, put arm through, put overhead and put other arm through. The child then completes the last step independently of pulling the shirt down. Continue this process by advancing to the child completing the last two steps...then last three steps...etc until the child is independently putting on the shirt.
5. If you are not sure where to start, try the easiest items first - elastic shorts, elastic pants or shirts without buttons.
6. Lay the clothes out in the proper order and direction for the child. Make sure all the clothes are turned right side out.
7. Practice dressing skills with larger dress up items to increase motivation levels.
8. Model the steps by dressing a doll first. The child can practice dressing and undressing dolls or stuffed toys.
9. If the child is sensitive to clothing, try cutting tags out of the shirts or purchasing seamless clothing. Try washing the clothes several times before wearing.
10. If the child needs complete assistance for certain steps, try doing hand over hand to complete that step until the child becomes more independent.
11. Once the child can complete the dressing tasks independently, practice the skills in different environments (i.e. bathroom versus bedroom) or with different types of clothing (i.e. tighter fitting versus looser fitting).
12. Try practicing getting dressed in front of the mirror unless it confuses the child.
13. Try completing the dressing skills in sitting on the floor or on a bench if it is too difficult in standing.
14. If the child has one side of the body weaker or tighter than the other, dress that side first. If undressing, remove the weaker/ tighter side last.

Visit
www.YourTherapySource.com/rubricsdressing
for more information.

Kids as Teachers?



Do you ever let the students that receive therapy services teach other students? Research has shown that the highest retention rate of what you have learned results from teaching others, with practicing the skill coming in a close second. During therapy sessions, therapists spend hours working on practicing and learning new skills. When a child does reach a goal and learns a new skill it would be very beneficial for that same child to teach that skill to another child.

Here are the benefits of teaching others:

1. Demonstrates that you have full knowledge of the skill.
2. Forces you to review what you learned.
3. Provides you with a sense of accomplishment that you are helping others.
4. Helps to commit the information to long term memory and a permanent motor plan.
5. By teaching the skill, the child may have to research the skill even further to explain it properly so you are generating new knowledge.
6. The child will be seen as a role model since he/she was able to learn the skill.

Now of course in therapy there are some skills that would be hard for a child to teach but in general most skills could be taught by a child. In addition, the children may be able to offer tips and insights that adults can not.

Why not give it a try?



Playing Pretend - School

Download of 28 forms and signs to play school. Let the kids be the teachers.

www.YourTherapySource.com/gpschool

Children with Disabilities Participation in PE and Extracurricular Activities

T

he Department of Education has published a report entitled Creating Equal Opportunities for Children and Youth with Disabilities to Participate in Physical Education and Extracurricular Activities. It is a 24 page report that provides an overview on the law, guidelines for physical activity and suggestions to increase opportunities. Here is a summary:

IDEA and Section 504 are the laws that require children and youth with disabilities have access to physical education and extracurricular activities.

In general, children should participate in 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day. For children with disabilities, the recommendation is to work with your health care partner to determine an appropriate number of minutes per day of physical activity.

The suggestions to increase opportunities are the following:

- * make sure that the activity is accessible for all children with disabilities.
- * use specialized equipment or modify equipment if necessary
- * educate personnel on adapting games and activities
- * encourage an inclusive teaching style
- * assess progress on an individual basis
- * utilize staff with strong behavior management skills
- * use a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach for the physical education curriculum

For more information and a list of references and resources you can read the report in its entirety here - <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/equal-pe.pdf>.

Reference: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Office of Special Education Programs, Creating Equal Opportunities for Children and Youth with Disabilities to Participate in Physical Education and Extracurricular Athletics, Washington, D.C., 2011.

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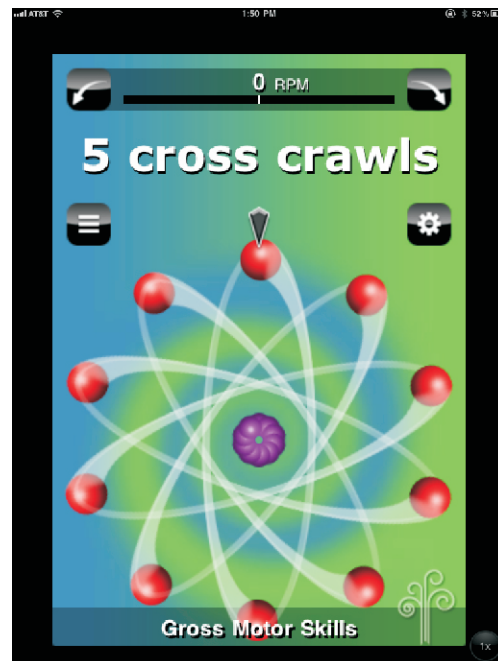


Fun App to Use for Motor Skill Practice

Here is an app I came across called Spinnerz. This app is only \$0.99 and you can customize the spinners with your choices. There are some fun graphics to spin with as well - Holiday themes (i.e. Santa's arm spinning), a fish spinning around and lots of mesmerizing images.

There are many preinstalled spinners that basically work like a magic 8 ball. Ask a question and it will give you a prediction or answer which does not exactly pertain to therapy but...you can make your own lists. Here are some suggestions for make your own lists:

1. warm up activities before handwriting tasks
2. gross motor skills to wake the body up
3. calming activities
4. proprioceptive input activities
5. different colors - spin a color and run to find an item that is that color

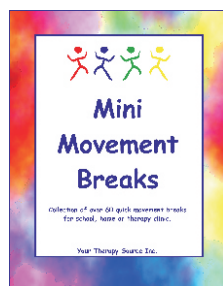


Obviously there are many more ideas that you could come up with to suit the children that you work with.

One more bonus - you can actually activate the spinner by blowing on it like a pinwheel too! It is a little difficult but it does work. Go into the settings and turn on the breath control. Now slide the weight all the way to the left and the friction should be low. Just blow right over the center of the spinner and it will start the spinning action. (I could not get the blowing action to work on the iPad only the iPhone)

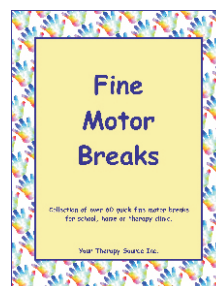
I really like this app because it allows you to customize it. Plus, I like any app that I can add physical activity to. You can download it for \$0.99 at the app store here <http://itunes.apple.com/ke/app/spinnerz/id334571554?mt=8>

If you need simple activity ideas check out our Mini Movement Breaks and Fine Motor Breaks.



Mini Movement Breaks

www.YourTherapySource.com/minimove



Fine Motor Breaks

www.YourTherapySource.com/finemotorbreaks

Physical Activity in Children

Fitness and Mental Health In Children

Another study has been published touting the benefits of physical activity in children and its effects on their mental health. A longitudinal study was done in Australia with the researchers reporting the following:

"Our main findings are that higher levels of fitness are resulting in lower levels of depression and stress and greater body satisfaction and this is even after accounting for the potential negative effect of body fat."

This study was looking at the effect of strong physical education programs in public schools. The researchers concluded that psychological well being in children is linked to cardio-respiratory fitness and physical activity.

Reference: Fitness Boosts Mental Health. Retrieved from Australian National University at <http://news.anu.edu.au/?p=12201>

Gender Differences in Sedentary Behavior

Interesting research in *Pediatrics* on the different sedentary behaviors of boys versus girls. Three hundred thirty one preschool children wore accelerometers over a period of 2 weeks. The results indicated the following:

- * girls were more sedentary than boys
- * for boys sedentary behavior was correlated with the amount of weekly tv/video games and physical activity equipment in the home
- * for girls body mass index and coordination was significantly correlated with sedentary behavior

None of these results are surprising but they do validate that children need to be physically active from a young age or bad habits will start very early. In addition, if girls in particular have deficits in coordination skills this needs to be addressed at this early age to prevent a lifetime of sedentary behavior. Simple tips can be offered to parents to increase physical activity time such as decrease tv/video game time, increase physically active play time, eat healthy and practice coordination skills such as throwing, catching, skipping and any other ball skills.

Reference: Wonwoo Byun, Marsha Dowda, and Russell R. Pate Correlates of Objectively Measured Sedentary Behavior in US Preschool Children *Pediatrics* 2011; 128:5 937-945; published ahead of print October 17, 2011, doi:10.1542/peds.2011-0748

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Hot Topics

Block Play and Spatial Awareness

A recent study in *Mind, Brain and Education* indicated that playing with blocks helps children to understand spatial concepts such as over, around and through. The researchers found that parents who participated in guided block play with their children had significantly higher proportions of spatial talk. Guided block play consisted of playing with the blocks along with guided instructions for how to build different structures.

Developing the skills to express and understand spatial skills are the first step in understanding spatial ability and awareness such as math skills, visual perceptual skills and body awareness. Maybe next time you see a child struggling with spatial awareness take a quick moment to determine do they understand spatial language the first building block to spatial awareness.

Reference: Fisher, K. Interactive play develops kids' spatial skills. Temple University. Retrieved from the web on 11/3/11 at <http://news.temple.edu/news/interactive-play-develops-kids-spatial-skills>

Use of Weighted Vest

The *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* published research on a pilot study of 10 second grade students that exhibited difficulties with attention span. The intervention group wore a weighted vest and the percentage of time on task was measured. The control group wore a non weighted vest. The examiners and data collectors were blind to whether the student was in the intervention or control group. A statistical analysis revealed that the weighted vest was not effective in increasing time on task.

You can read the full text article at AJOT - <http://ajot.aotapress.net/content/65/6/688.full.pdf+html>

Reference: Amy Collins and Rosalind J. Dworkin. Pilot Study of the Effectiveness of Weighted Vests Am J Occup Ther November 2011 65:688-694; doi:10.5014/ajot.2011.000596

Classroom Background Noise

Background noise in classrooms can influence a student's ability to learn. Many children with sensory processing disorder in particular can be distracted by different noises. Frequently classroom seating accommodations are suggested based on the student's ability to stay on task. Some recent research indicated that students who spent time in louder classrooms performed worse on tests. Sound levels were taken in classrooms when they were empty to compare the different rooms that the tests were taken in. Therefore, the sound levels were only background noise that influenced the test scores.

Did you know that the recommendation for classroom background noise should not exceed 35 decibels? This research showed that for optimal performance on a test, the sound level should be at 28 decibels (the level of a whisper).

This data is from during test taking but makes me wonder about everyday learning. What about classrooms that are participating in group learning? The decibel level is more like 50-65 (loud conversation). Curious to see research on understanding of material in louder classrooms.

Reference: Braconnier, D. Study shows background noise affects test scores. Retrieved from the web on 11/12/11 from <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-11-background-noise-affects-scores.html>

More Hot Topics

Child Welfare and Gross Motor Skills

Here is an interesting study published in *Pediatric Physical Therapy*. One hundred seventy six children in the child welfare system underwent gross motor skill evaluations, physical examinations and case workers were interviewed. The results indicated the following:

- * significantly lower gross motor skills for children in foster care versus kinship care
- * children who were abused or neglected also received lower gross motor scores
- * overall the mean gross motor score for children in the child welfare system was lower than children in the general population.

You can read the research article in full at *Pediatric Physical Therapy* -

http://journals.lww.com/pedpt/Fulltext/2011/23040/Factors_Influencing_Gross_Motor_Development_in.6.aspx#.

Reference: Hanson. H. et al. Factors Influencing Gross Motor Development in Young Children in an Urban Child Welfare System *Pediatric Physical Therapy*:

Winter 2011 - Volume 23 - Issue 4 - p 335-346 doi: 10.1097/PEP.0b013e3182351fb5

Postural Control and Fine Motor Skills

The *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* published research on the relationship between postural control and fine motor skills in infants. The medical records were reviewed of 105 preterm infants. The Alberta Infant Motor Scale was used to assess postural control and the Peabody was used to evaluate fine motor skills. Statistical analysis revealed that the development of postural control is related to the development of fine motor skills particularly in this pre-term group of infants with delayed postural control. The researchers state that this information supports the intervention techniques during occupational therapy of proximal to distal development.

View the full study at AJOT - <http://ajot.aotapress.net/content/65/6/695.full.pdf+html>

Reference: Tien-Ni Wang, Tsu-Hsin Howe, Jim Hinojosa, Sharon L. Weinberg. Relationship Between Postural Control and Fine Motor Skills in Preterm Infants at 6 and 12 Months Adjusted Age. doi:

10.5014/ajot.2011.001503 *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* November/December 2011 vol. 65 no. 6 695-701

Serial Casting and Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Pediatric Physical Therapy published a medical records review following serial casting in 9 boys with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and ankle contractures. The results indicated improvements in range of motion (12 degrees on the right, 11.6 degrees on left with knee extended and 7.8 degrees on right and 8.7 degrees on the left with knee flexed). In addition, the boys were assessed on a timed 10 meter run, ability to climb four stairs and transfers from floor to standing. These scores were unchanged following the serial casting. The researchers concluded that serial casting increases range of motion in the ankle with no loss of function or speed in boys with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Reference: Glanzman, Allan M. et al. Serial Casting for the Management of Ankle Contracture in Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. *Pediatric Physical Therapy*:

Fall 2011 - Volume 23 - Issue 3 - p 275-279 doi: 10.1097/PEP.0b013e318227c4e3

On The Web...

Podcast on Integrating Movement Across the School Day

Just finished listening to an informative podcast on integrating movement across the school day. This free podcast can be listened to online or you can download it and save it to listen on your mp3 player. It offers some nice ideas on incorporating more physical activity throughout the day.

You can listen to the podcast entitled More than Just Gym: Integrating Movement Across the School Day at The Whole Child - <http://whatworks.wholechildeducation.org/podcast/more-than-just-gym-integrating-movement-across-the-school-day/comment-page-1/#comment-19124>.

My favorite point that was a great reminder is that physical activity in the classroom is not just for the younger children. It can be even more important for the older students who have such a heavy caseload of school work. Middle and high school students brain and body benefit from these bouts of exercise throughout the day.

New Adapted Desk for Students

Check out this interview with the creator of the Desktop Desk. This is a great product for student with disabilities in the school setting. Worth a look for sure. Read the interview, check out pictures and view video of the desk in use at the blog -

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2011/11/new-desk-for-individuals-with-physical.html>



Video Activity Idea: Musical Magnet Maze

[Check out this activity idea on the website to practice visual motor and bilateral coordination skills. You can view the video here - \[www.YourTherapySource.com/videomagnetmaze\]\(http://www.YourTherapySource.com/videomagnetmaze\)](#)

Pool Noodle Circle:

Here is an economical idea to practice visual tracking, bilateral coordination. You can view it on the blog at www.yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2011/11/visual-tracking-and-bilateral.html



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Free Stuff

Lots of free stuff this month:

December Clothes Pin Play Mat

Progress Monitoring Form - Scissors Skills

Raining Letters Activity

Pretend Play Sample Pages: use these pages to encourage literacy, writing and spark creativity when children are playing pretend animal activities, doctor and school.

Visit

www.YourTherapySource.com/growingplay
for more information on these products.

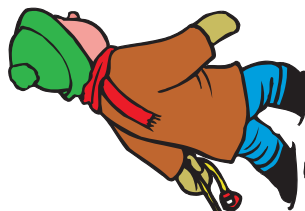
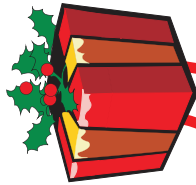
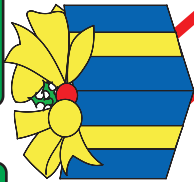
Only \$1.99 introductory price.

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H A P P Y

H O L I D A Y S



Directions: Laminate board. Write matching letters (Happy Holidays) on clothes pins. Pin the matching letter to the edge of this mat. Use a wipe off marker to trace the paths from the presents to the sled.

Progress Monitoring Forms Holding Scissors

School Year: _____

Name: _____

Therapist: _____

Dates of Interventions

Practicing the skill: _____

Visual perceptual activities: _____

Fine motor skill practice: _____

Coordination activities: _____

Muscle strengthening activities: _____

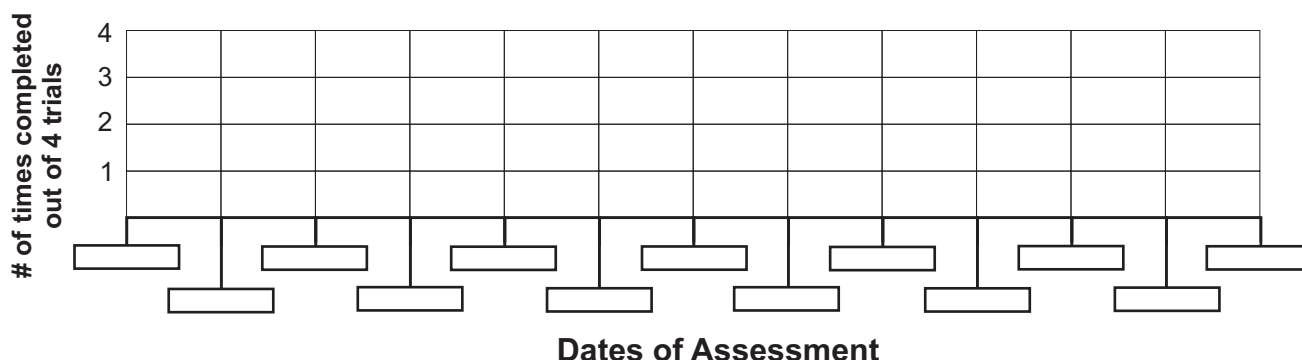
Consultation with staff or parents: _____

Other: _____

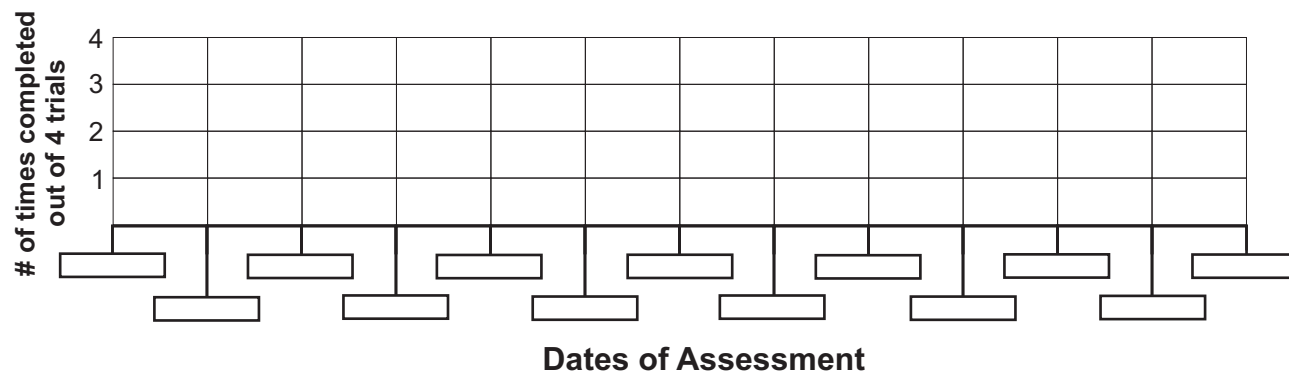
Type of scissors used: _____

Circle: Right handed or left handed scissors

Out of 4 trials, how often does the child hold the scissors correctly?



Out of 4 trials, how often does the child hold and move the piece of paper he/she is cutting correctly?



Comments:

Directions for Raining Letters Match Up:

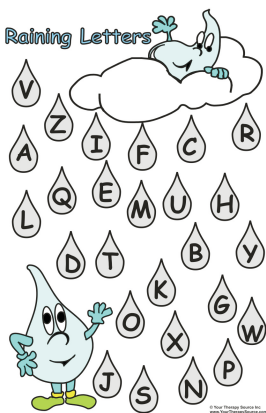
1. Print out pages one and two.
2. Cut out the lower case letters below.
3. Place page one on the floor or table. Have the child fold each lower case letter in half. Place all the cut up letters in an open umbrella upside down.
4. On "GO" the child lifts up the umbrella overhead dumping all the lower case paper letters on to the floor. Then the child matches up the lower case letter on top of the upper case rain drop letter. See how fast you can match up the letters.

Directions for Hide and Seek Letter Match Up:

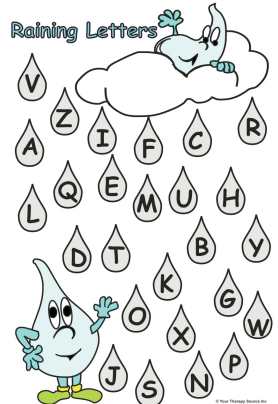
1. Print out pages one and two.
2. Cut out lower case letters below.
3. The adult or another child should hide the lower case letters around the room. Hide the letters at eye level, up high and down so that the child has to reach or squat to find some of the letter.
4. On "GO" the child tries to find all the lower case letters and match them on top of the capital rain drop letters on page one.

Directions for Pick the Letter:

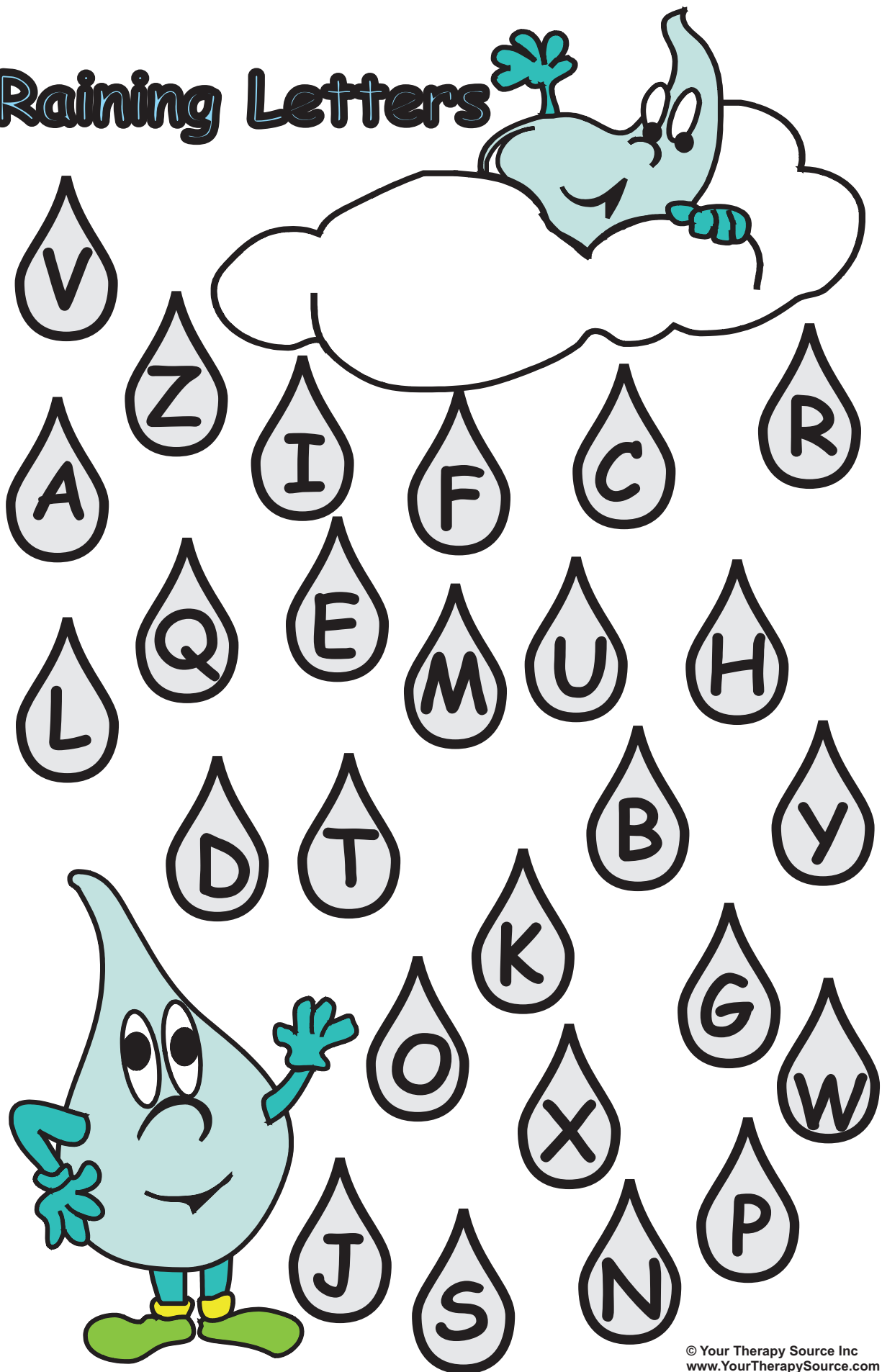
1. Print out page one. Hang it on the wall.
2. Blindfold the child and spin him/her around three times. The child should try to touch the poster on the wall. Remove the blindfold. The child needs to identify the letter he/she is touching. Then have the child air write, make body into that letter shape or find an object in the room that starts with that letter. Repeat for many different letters.



a	b	c	d	e
f	g	h	i	j
k	l	m	n	o
p	q	r	s	t
u	v	w	x	y
z				

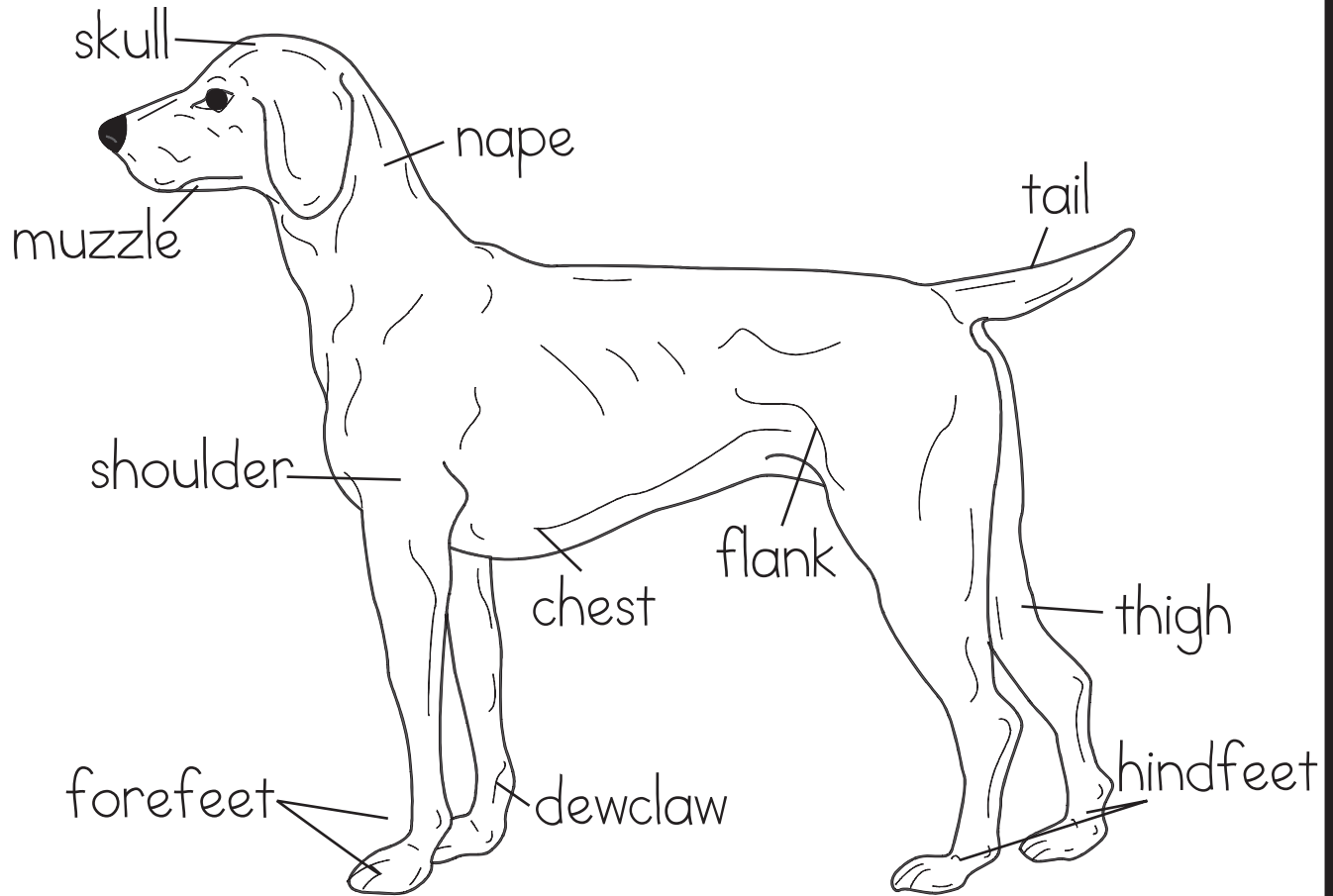


Raining Letters




Dog Examination

Circle any body parts where the dog is having a problem.



Does the dog have fleas?  ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Does the dog have ticks?  ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Does the dog have a fever?  ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**










Emergency Form



Name: _____

Is the patient having problems with:

	bleeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	heart	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	broken leg	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	headache	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	having a baby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	sprained arm	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	face	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



























Report Card

Student's Name:

School:

Grade:

Teacher's Name:

School Subject	Great	Good	Okay
 Reading			
 Math			
 Writing			
 Art			
 Music			
 Physical Education			

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