



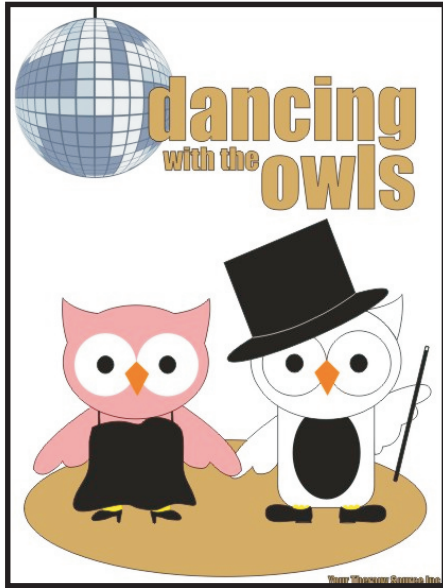
# **Your Therapy Source News**

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

**Issue 36 - March 2012**

**[www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com)**

# New and Popular Products



## Dancing with the Owls

Download these 12 dancing cards and game ideas to encourage movement breaks

Regular price: \$2.99

**SALE PRICE** until 3/16/12 **only \$0.99**



[www.YourTherapySource.com/dancingowls](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/dancingowls)



## Typical Classroom Sensory-Based Problem Behaviors & Suggested Therapeutic Interventions

**By: Ileana S. McCaigue OTR/L**

This download breaks down sensory based problem behaviors and looks at what the child may be displaying, the possible underlying causes and sensory strategy solutions.

List Price for electronic book: \$19.95

[www.YourTherapySource.com/mccaigue](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/mccaigue)

# Recent Research for Autism and Cerebral Palsy

## Autism and Motor Skill Development

Recent research was published in *Autism* regarding motor skill development in children with autism. The researchers studied 144 children from 67 families where at least one child had a diagnoses of autism. The Bruininks Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency, 2nd Edition, was performed on sibling pairs. The results indicated the following:

1. the lower the score on the Bruininks the greater the degree of social impairment and severity of autism
2. total motor composite scores were at least one standard deviation below the mean in 83% of the participants with autism
3. only 6% of the unaffected siblings exhibited one standard deviation below the mean with regards to total composite score
4. overall motor skills in siblings without autism were essentially normal

The researchers concluded that motor impairment constitutes a core characteristic of autism.

Reference: Hilton CL, Zhang Y, White, MR, Klohr CL, Constantino J. Motor impairment in sibling pairs concordant and discordant for autism spectrum disorders. *Autism*. Published Jan. 18, 2012. doi: 10.1177/1362361311423018

## Aquatics and Cerebral Palsy

The *International Journal of Pediatrics* recently published research entitled Aquatic Exercise Programs for Children and Adolescents with Cerebral Palsy: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go? It is a review article on research since 2005 on this topic. The results indicate that there is limited research on this topic. Most of the studies were done with small sample sizes and higher functioning children (GMFCS Levels I, II and III). Only one participant with GMFCS Level IV was studied and no participants with Level V. Of the six articles that were included in the review most of the interventions were aerobic activity in the pool for 45 minutes, 2-3 times per week. The researchers recommend additional research including all children with cerebral palsy regardless of GMFCS.

You can read the entire study [here](#).

Reference: J.W. Gorter and S. J. Currie. Aquatic Exercise Programs for Children and Adolescents with Cerebral Palsy: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go? *International Journal of Pediatrics* Volume 2011, Article ID 712165, 7 pages doi:10.1155/2011/712165

# Hot Topics

## Active Video Games Not So Active

A recent study published in *Pediatrics* compared activity levels of two groups of children given a Wii. There was 78 children, ages 9-12, who participated. Each child was given a new Wii console of which none had previously owned. One group of children were asked to choose one game that was fitness focused ie Wii Fit Plus. The other group of children were asked to choose one inactive game ie Mario Kart. The children wore accelerometers for 6 weeks. At the end of 6 weeks, they were allowed to choose one new game for an additional 6 weeks. At the end of the 12 week study, there was no difference in the level of activity between the two groups.

Reference: Marcus, M. Active' video games may not boost kids' fitness: study. Retrieved from Medical Xpress on 2/29/12 at <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-02-video-games-boost-kids.html>

## Practice Makes Perfect

Researchers studied how mice learned new motor tasks and observed changes in the motor cortex (specifically dendritic spines). The results indicated the following when analyzing the spatial distribution of new connections or clusters that formed between brain cells:

- spatial analysis showed that one third of the newly formed synapses were located next to another new synapse. The new synapses were formed over several days
- second connections which formed from repetitive activation strengthened the first connection - this clustering may "magnify the strength of the connections"
- when learning two different tasks new synapses were formed but they did not cluster together

One more study to support that practice makes perfect when it comes to motor skills.

Reference: Medical XPress New connections between brain cells form in clusters during learning. Retrieved from the web on 2/22/2012 from <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-02-brain-cells-clusters.html>

## Including Preschoolers

Head Start Body Start presented a webinar on [including preschoolers with special needs](#) in active play. This webinar had lots of great ideas. Here are a few tips that I found helpful:

- "teach children how to stop before you teach them how to go" - Diane Craft PhD
- cover balloons in panty hose to prevent any broken pieces if it pops and to prevent children from biting the balloons
- put eye bolts on each side of the room, clip a clothes line onto the eye bolts when you need a quick room divider for games or to hang objects from
- several tips on modifying lessons

You can download the handouts from the webinar [here](#).



# On The Web...

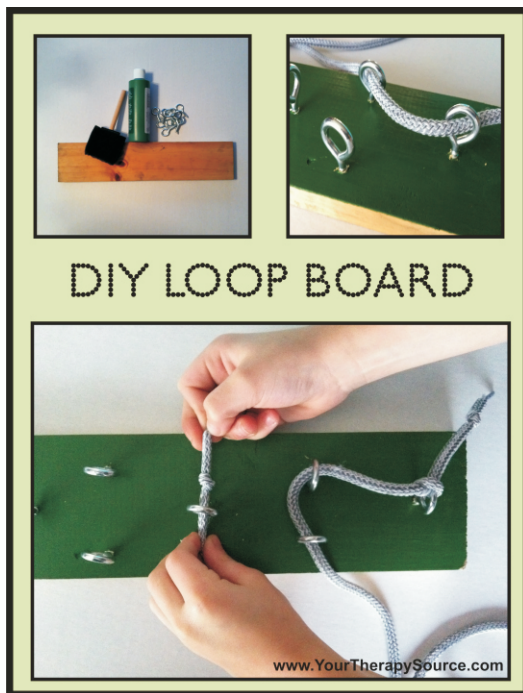
## Handwriting Research

There was a handwriting summit a few weeks ago in Washington DC sponsored by Zaner Bloser. Now they have put up all the research presentations which you can view in full online for free. You can watch the videos and even get the slides for the 6 presentations (one is presented by Jane Case Smith OTR, EdD). In addition, you can [download the white paper](#) which summarizes research on why handwriting belongs in today's classroom.

Here is the link to the [6 presentations](#).

## Discounts for Handwriting Font

Zaner-Bloser contacted me to offer my readers a discount for Zaner-Bloser [handwriting](#) Fonts Online. It allows you to create worksheets, practice pages and more. They are offering it for \$14.99 until 12/31/12. There is a free version so you can test it out if interested. Enter code ZBFOP to receive the paid version of ZB Fonts Online for only \$14.99. Exp. 12/31/12. You can get more information at the [Zaner-Bloser website](#).



## DIY Loop Board

Here is a simple do it yourself project costing about \$3.00. You can watch the video at [YourTherapySource.com](#).

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[www.Facebook.com/YourTherapySource](http://www.Facebook.com/YourTherapySource)

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# Movement Breaks

## I Spy Movement Breaks

Here is a simple, novel activity for quick movement breaks in the classroom or at home. Pour some colored rice or beans into a recycled water bottle. Write down several exercises that can be done with no equipment ie jumping jacks, marching in place, squats, etc. Write the activities on both sides of heavy duty cardstock (I used a recycled folder). Slide them inside the bottle and give it to the child.

When it is time for a movement break the child has to find and perform all the different exercises in the bottle. If you wanted you could connect a list to the bottle so the child could mark off what exercises they found in the bottle. If a child is unable to read, try placing pictures of different animals in the bottle and the child would have to perform all the animal actions.

If you have a group of children, play musical I Spy bottle. Pass the bottle around the group. When the music stops, the child holding the bottle has to find an exercise and be the leader of the group to perform the exercise.

This activity encourages:

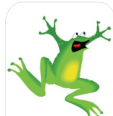
- visual perceptual skills
- physical activity
- memory
- bilateral coordination



For more movement ideas in the classroom check out [Mini Movement Breaks](#) and [Classroom Activity Posters](#).

### LEAP YEAR

Can you complete all the activities in under two minutes?



Leap around the room 10x like a frog.

Write in the missing numbers on the calendar.

February 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1			4
		7	8		10	
12	13			16		18
	20	21			24	
26			29			

4 L's

Leap years happen every four years. Find four items in the room that start with the letter 'L' for Leap year!

Trace the path of the leaping kangaroos.



Go to [www.YourTherapySource.com/motorminute](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/motorminute) for more motor minute challenges.

## Leaping Movement Break

Although the leap year day just passed kids will still enjoy this quick movement break celebrating leaping. You can print it on the next page. Check out more motor minute ideas at [www.YourTherapySource.com/motorminute](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/motorminute)

# LEAP YEAR

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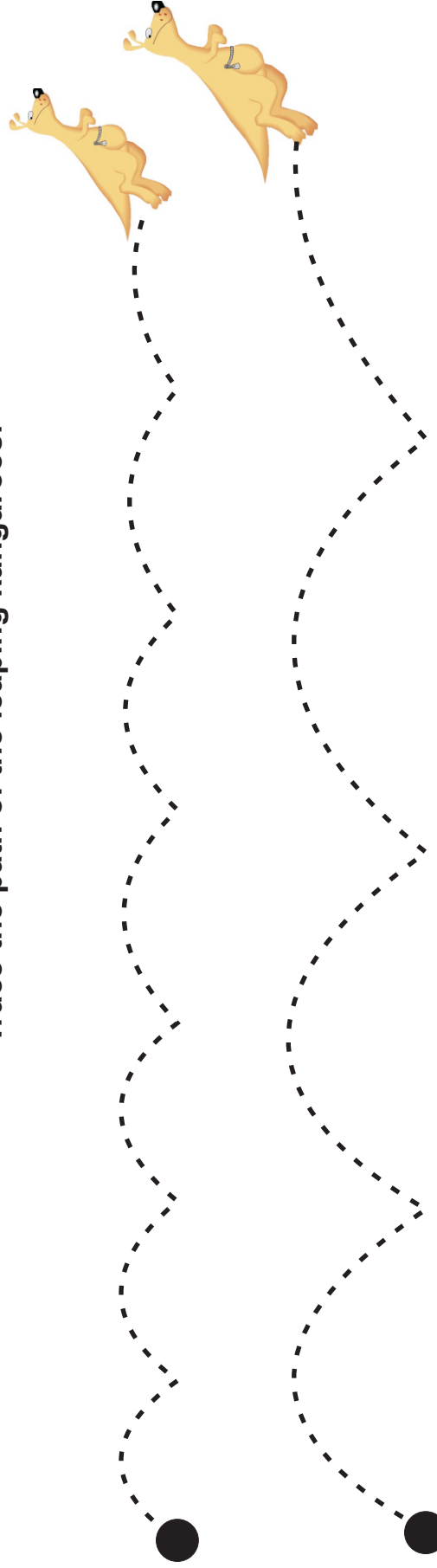


Leap around the room 10x like a frog.

Leap years happen every four years. Find four items in the room that start with the letter 'L' for Leap year!

## 4L's

Trace the path of the leaping kangaroos.



# Activity Idea: Bead Maze

P

**Purpose:** Strengthen and refine fine motor and coordination skills

**Materials:** felt, beads, string, cardboard (needle and thread or sewing machine)

## How To Make the Bead Maze:

*Step 1:* Fold a standard piece of felt in half. Draw an 'S' shape lightly on the felt.

*Step 2:* Place one edge of string at the start of the 'S'. Cover it with a small square of felt. Sew in place.

*Step 3:* Lace beads onto string. Place the end of the string at the end of the 'S' shape, cover with small piece of felt and sew in place.

*Step 4:* Cut small squares of felt to make the tunnels. Sew the tunnels in place over the string. Just move the beads out of the way when you sew each tunnel. Make sure though that the tunnel is high enough to allow the beads to pass through. Also, make sure you make a several tunnels to guide the beads through or the string will be too slack. Fold the felt in half and sew closed except the bottom.

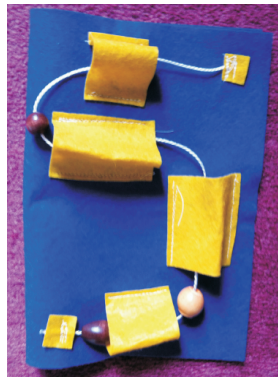
*Step 5:* To provide some stiffness to the maze, slip a piece of cardboard inside the felt pocket.

*Step 6:* Play with the maze by trying to push the beads through all the tunnels.

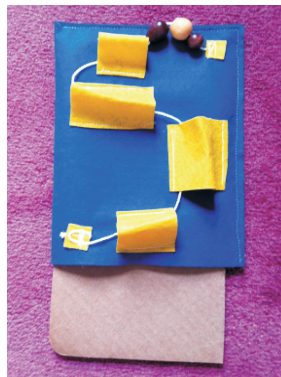
Step 1-3



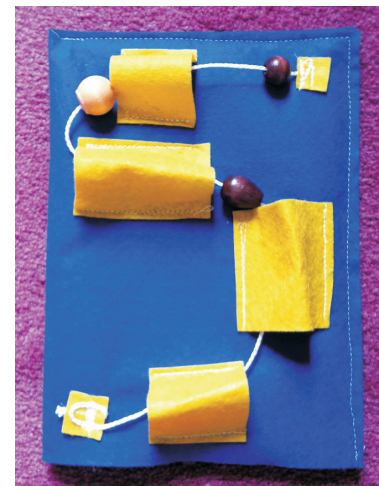
Step 4



Step 5



Step 6



Check out these free printables on the next pages to use with large bubble wrap. Kids can tell a story popping pictures as they go or perform exercise repetitions popping numbers. There is even a free blank board to make your own popping game.

Need more fine motor activities?

Check out our website - [www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com) .



# BUBBLE WRAP DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Print out the page you would like to use.

Step 2: If using the numbers or story time page line up large bubble wrap on top of the page and tape it together. If using the blank page, write your ideas in the circles and then tape the page to the bubble wrap sheet.

Step 3:

For **Story Time Bubble Wrap** have the child create a story verbally using the picture icons in any order. When they use the picture in the story they should pop that bubble. Continuing adding parts to your story and popping the bubble wrap until all pictures have been popped.

For **Number Bubble Wrap** you could match this up with other activities such as exercises.

Check out

Action Alphabet (<http://yourtherapysource.com/actionalphabet.html>),  
Physical Activity Games ( <http://yourtherapysource.com/activitycards.html>)  
or Locomotor Cards (<http://yourtherapysource.com/locomotor.html>) for ideas.

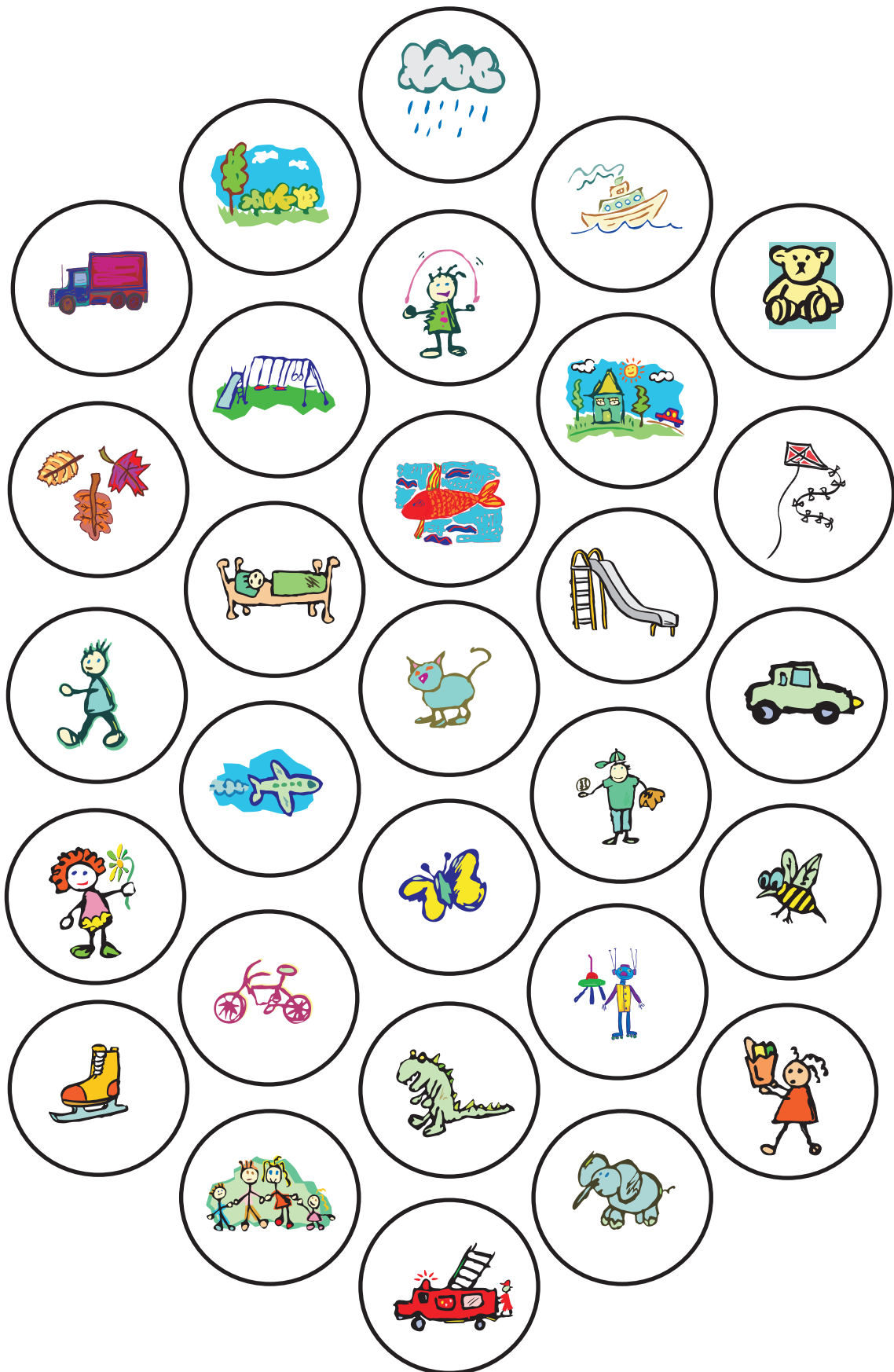
If you have those activity books, print out the cards and place them face down. Turn a card over and pop a number bubble. The child can perform the exercise the number of times under the popped bubble wrap. Continue until all the numbers have been popped.

For the **blank bubble wrap** you could write anything such as: sight words, math problems, letters, vocabulary words and more. The child must read the word or do the math problem. If they get it right they can pop the bubble. Continue until all the bubbles are popped.

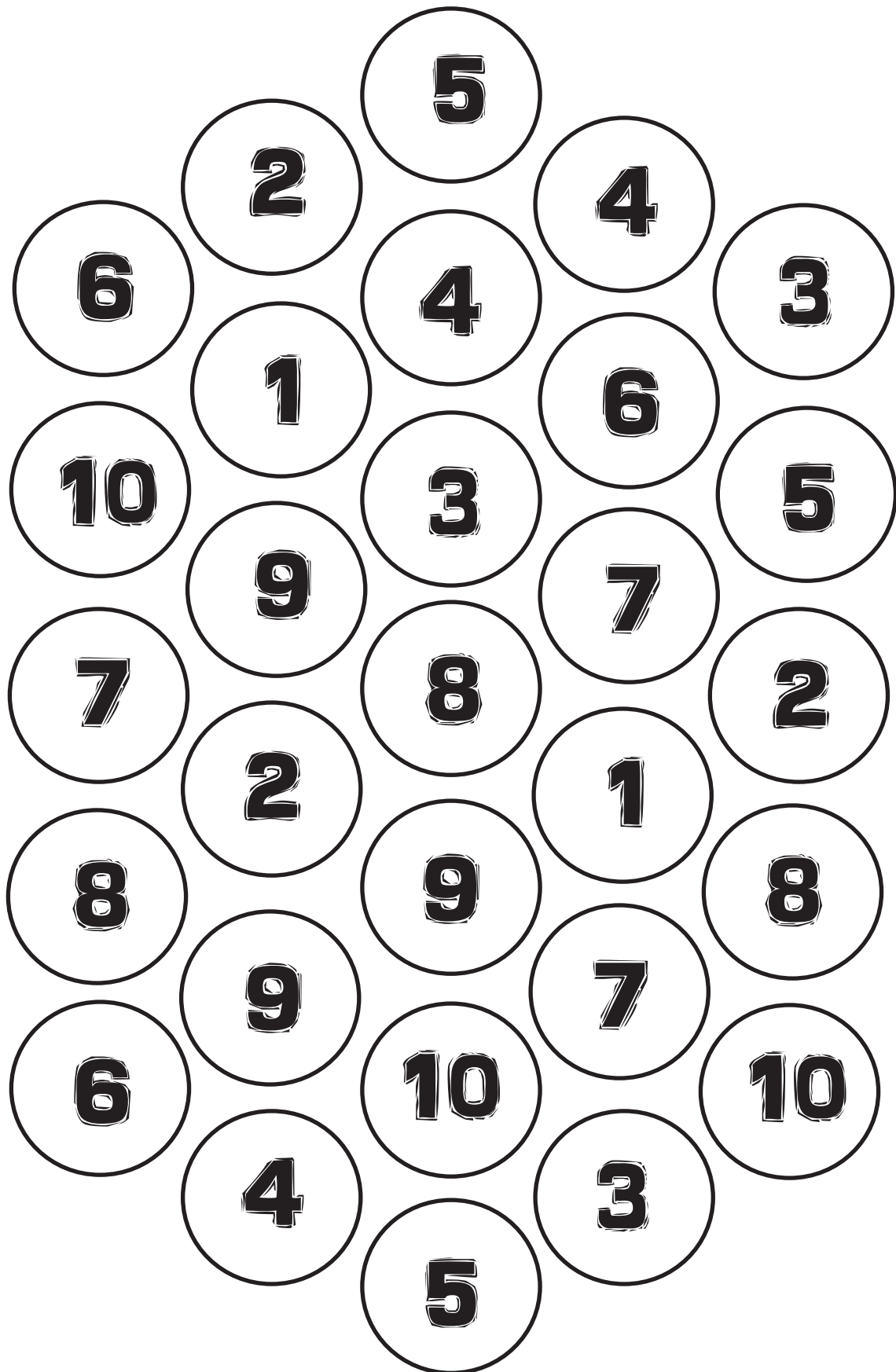




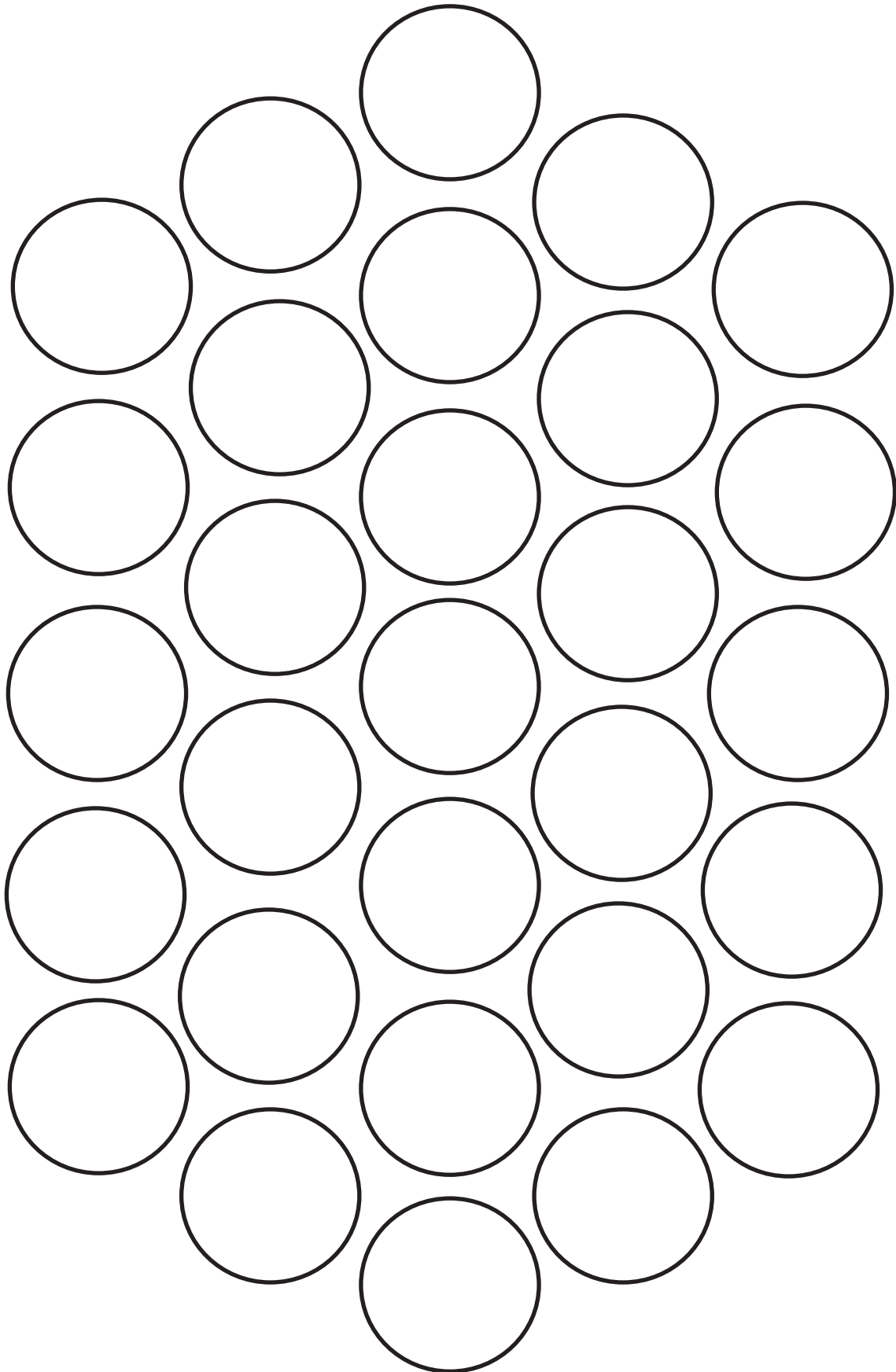
# BUBBLE WRAP STORY TIME



# BUBBLE WRAP NUMBERS



# BUBBLE WRAP POP



## More Activity Ideas



### Button Gloves

[www.YourTherapySource.com/freebuttongloves](http://www.YourTherapySource.com/freebuttongloves)

### Vertical Puzzles



<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/02/twist-on-puzzles-idea-1.html>



### Twist Puzzles

<http://yourtherapysource.blogspot.com/2012/02/twist-literally-on-puzzles-part-2.html>

## Handwriting Tips

### Starting Writing

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Some students are not sure where to start writing on the paper. Please highlight or darken the left margin of the paper to provide a visual cue for the student to begin writing on the left side of the paper.

~Thank you~

### Writing from Left to Right

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To reinforce writing from left to right, please draw a green line down the left side of the page and a red line down the right side of the page.

~Thank you~

### Stopping Writing

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Some students try to write too much at the end of the line rather than starting a new line. Please highlight or darken the line on the right side of the paper for a visual cue that the line is ending.

~Thank you~

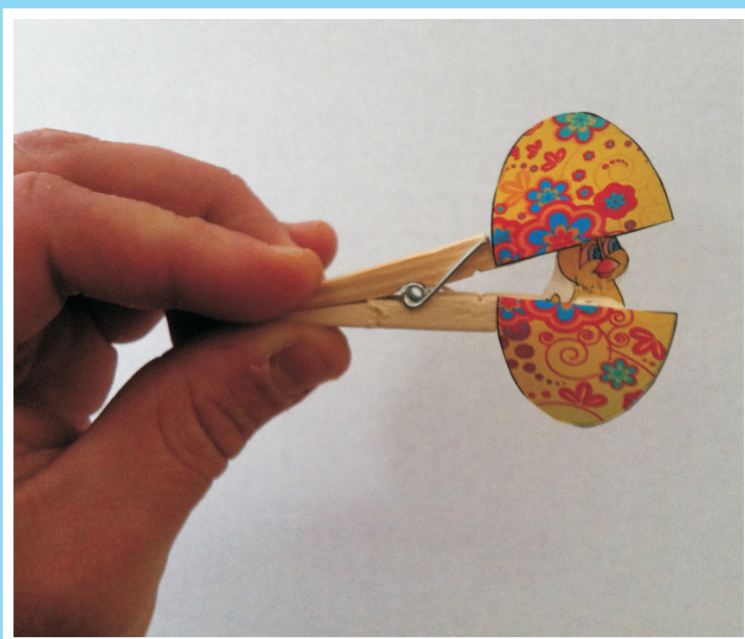
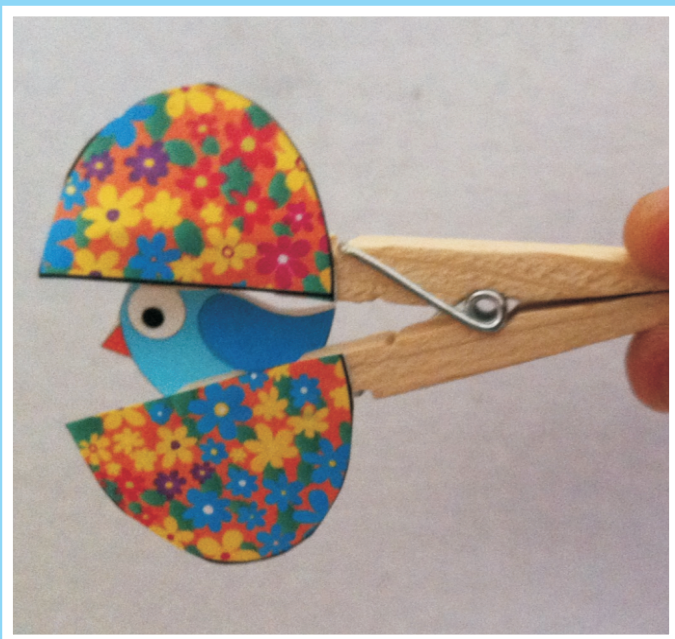
### Tactile Cues To Start Writing

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For an additional cue for where to start writing, please place a waxed string, ruler or strip of dried glue on the left side of the margin to provide a tactile (touch) and visual reminder to starting writing from the left.

~Thank you~





# HATCHING BIRDS

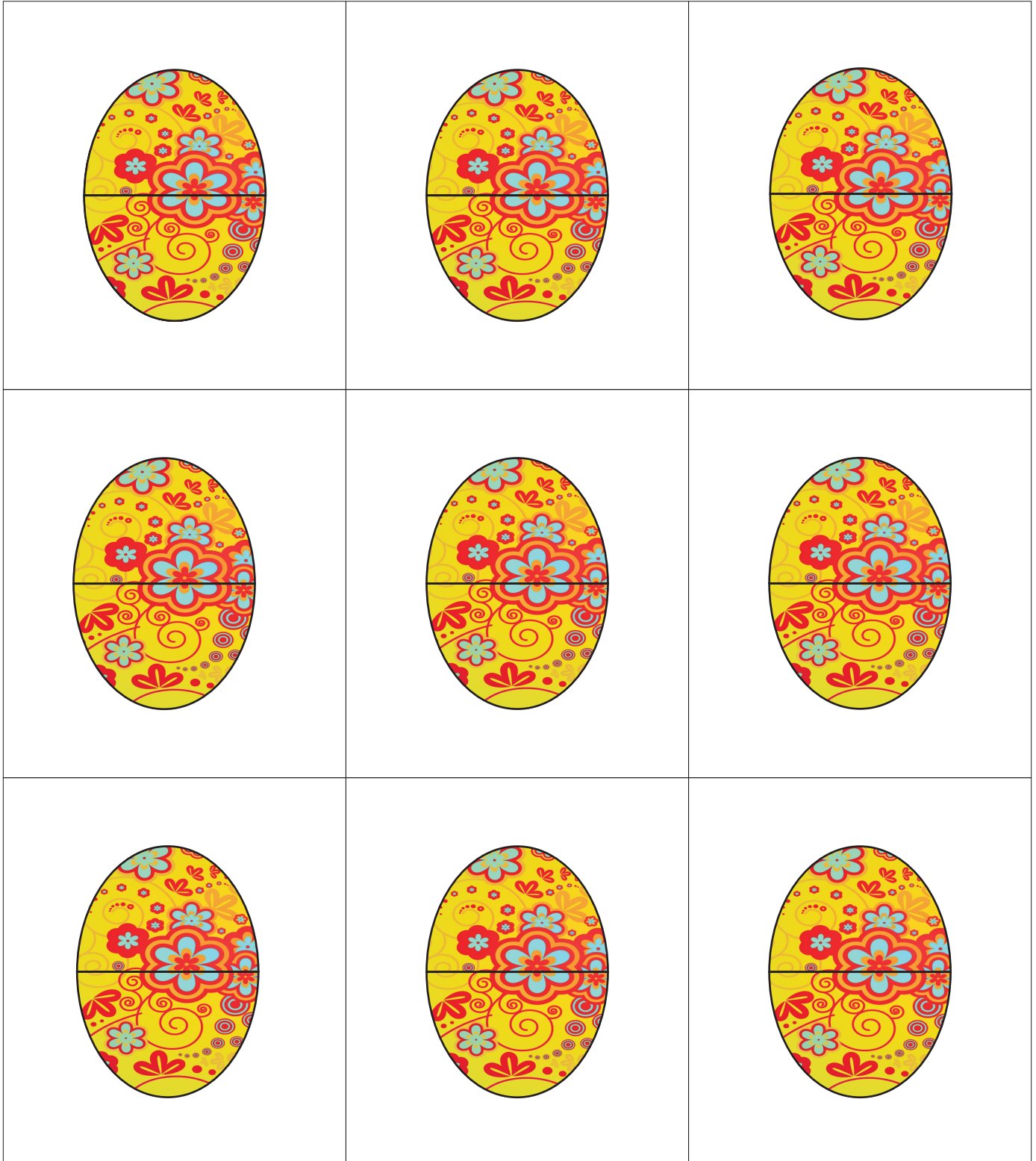
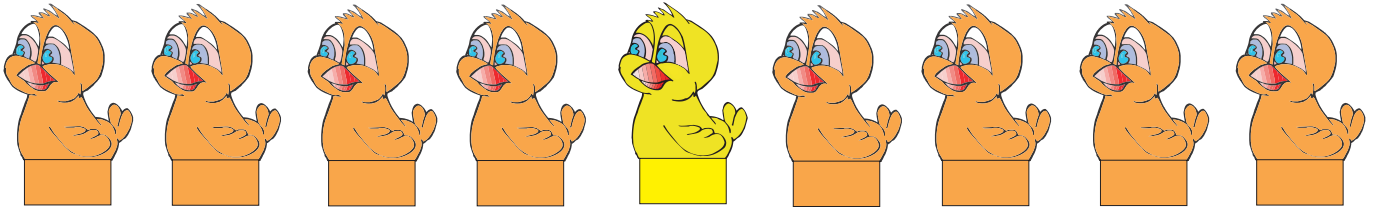


[www.YourTherapySource.com](http://www.YourTherapySource.com)



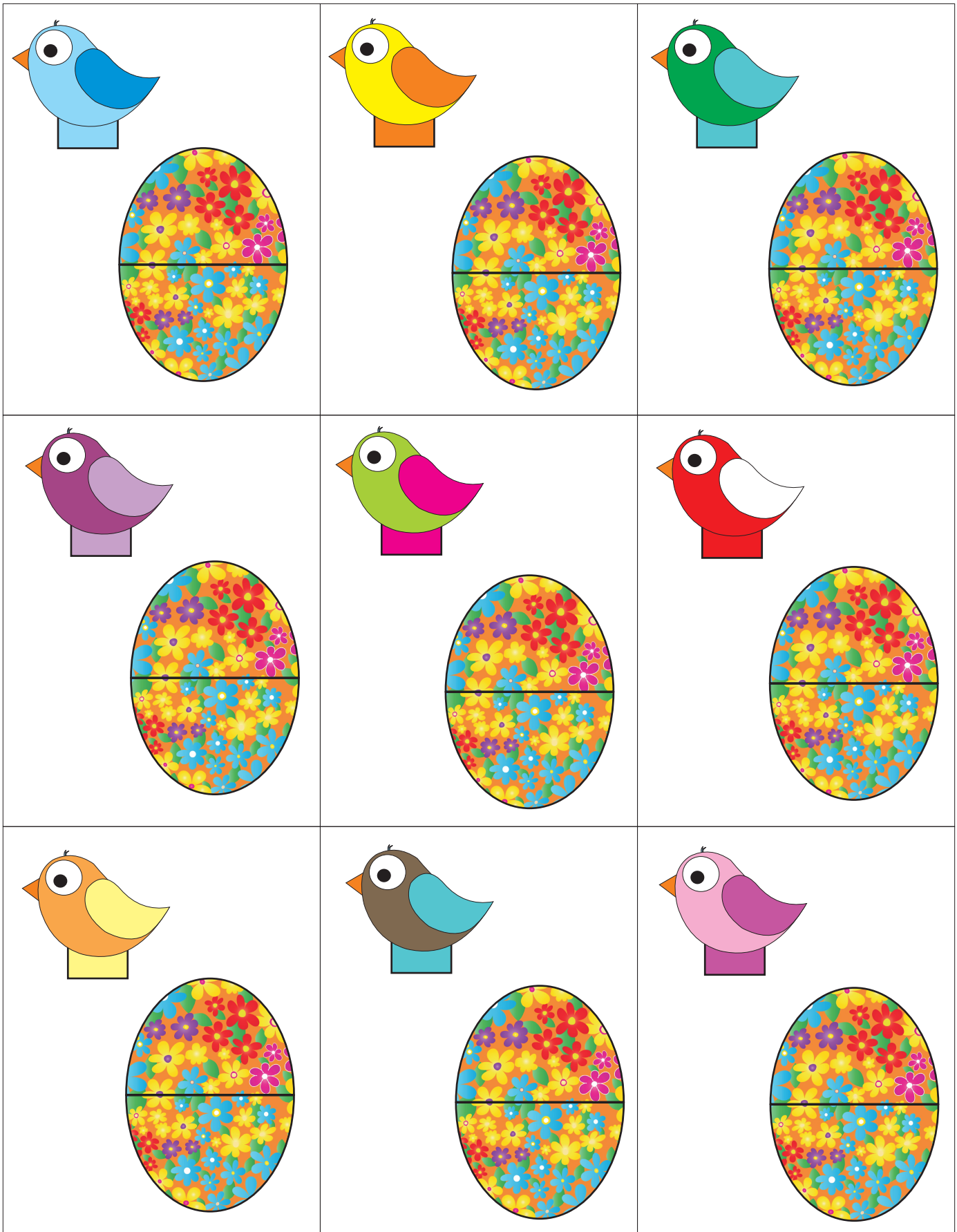
# Find the Birdie

Directions: Print out and glue onto the clothes pin with the chick hidden behind. The goal of the game is to find the cloths pin egg with the yellow chick inside.



# Bird Memory

Directions: Print out two copies of this page. Cut out each egg and birdie. Glue the egg to the front of one side of the clothes pin and the birdie hidden behind the egg. Make matching sets and play a game of memory.



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