

Ideas for Split-Grade Classrooms

Ideas for Split-Grade Classrooms — Primary

You will need the following classroom materials for these activities:

- magazines and newspapers
- writing paper or journals
- blank paper for drawing
- pencils, crayons, scissors, markers, glue, rulers
- reading materials or the classroom library
- geoboards
- pattern blocks
- scissors
- dot paper
- elastics

Reading

- Choose a book from the classroom collection that has something to do with the environment (e.g., recycling, reusing, reducing) or wildlife. Read the story and write a journal entry about what the book tells you about saving the environment or wildlife.
- Choose a picture book or a chapter book from the classroom collection. Read the story and think about what happens at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the story. Draw three pictures that retell the story and show the beginning, the middle and the end.
- Choose a book from the classroom collection that has a character in it around the same age as you. Read it and write a journal entry about what you really like or dislike about being your age.
- Choose a book or a story from the classroom collection. Read it and think about the story's ending. Pretend you are the author. Change the ending and write your own version of how you would like the story to end.

- Choose a folk tale from the classroom library. Read the folk tale and draw three pictures that retell the story. Show the beginning, the middle and the end.
- Read a book or magazine article about animals and their changes over the seasons (e.g., hibernation). Draw three pictures in sequence to show the changes that you have learned about.

Writing

- Write about a time you did something special for someone. Make a drawing or a cartoon to go with your story.
- Write down the titles of five folk tales. Rewrite the titles as newspaper headlines. Choose one and write the news story.
- Imagine the principal of your school was away one day. You were asked to step in and run the school. Write a letter to the principal describing what you did during your day as the principal. Discuss any changes you made in the school and explain why you made them.

Mathematics

- Use elastics to make a picture on a geoboard, using as many different shapes as you can. Try to use all the space on your board. Trade geoboards with a friend.
- On dot paper, draw your geoboard picture. Add colour and detail.
- List 15 objects from nature (e.g., tree, river, puddle). Beside each object, print "cm" (centimetre), "m" (metre) or "km" (kilometre) to describe how you would measure the object.
- List 15 objects from nature (e.g., bird, snowflake, seed, flower). List them again, this time from smallest to largest in length or height.

- Take a piece of paper. Fold the paper into eight boxes and in one box design a pattern for wallpaper. The pattern in your wallpaper must have three repeating colours and two repeating shapes. Repeat the pattern in all eight boxes.
- Using pattern blocks, design a creature. Follow these rules:
Your creature must
 - have at least three congruent shapes,
 - have a line of symmetry and
 - be made of at least four different kinds of pattern blocks.
- Trace your creature on a blank piece of paper.
- Draw the line of symmetry.
- Label the congruent shapes with a C.
- “Estimation” means thinking and guessing. Create a picture with a certain number of similar objects in it (e.g., cookies in a cookie jar). Add colour and details to your objects. Print the exact number of objects that are in your picture in pencil on the back of your sheet. Pass your picture around and ask your friends to estimate the number of objects by looking at your picture, briefly, without counting.
- Estimate the length of the following objects in centimetres. Print your estimates in your math notebook.

1. your thumb	4. your math book
2. your foot	5. a chapter book
3. your eraser	6. a picture book

Once you have finished recording the estimates, measure and record the exact measurements beside your estimates.

Ideas for Split-Grade Classrooms—Junior

You will need the following classroom materials for these activities:

- newspapers, comic books, magazines, grocery-store flyers
- writing paper or journals
- blank paper for drawing
- pencils, pens and/or markers
- reading materials—picture books, poetry collections, information books
- scissors
- glue
- rulers
- erasers
- Miras (optional)

Reading

- Read the travel section of a newspaper. Choose a place that you would like to visit. Read about this place and make a list of things you would do there. Organize your list under some headings, such as “sightseeing,” “foods to try,” “outdoor activities” and “cultural events.”
- Choose a picture book or short novel from your classroom collection. Read the story and pick two interesting characters. Create a chart to compare their characteristics under the headings “same” and “different.”
- Remember to include
 - physical descriptions—what the characters look like
 - what they say to others
 - what they do—their actions
- Choose a book from your classroom collection or school library about outdoor activities (e.g., camping, cycling, hiking, baseball, soccer). Choose a topic you are interested in and, after reading about it in the book, write a summary of key points that you think would be interesting to share with your classmates. Share your ideas with a partner.

- Choose a poetry collection from your classroom or school library. Read a variety of poems on a particular topic (e.g., nature and animals or games and sports). Select a poem you enjoyed reading. In your journal, write a brief response about your feelings and personal reaction to the poem. Think about the poet's perspective and your own.

Writing

- Carefully cut an interesting photo out of a newspaper. Read the headline or caption that accompanies this photo, but do not include it when you cut out the photo. Cut out the headline or caption and set it aside. Glue the photo onto a piece of white paper. Trade photo pages with a classmate. Examine your partner's photo and think about what it represents. Write three headlines or captions that, in your view, could go with the photo.

Trade photos and share headlines. Compare your headlines with the headlines from the newspaper. Reflect on the differences and similarities.

- Imagine that you have been asked by the school principal to review and evaluate how the school is running on a daily basis. The principal wants you to pick three rules or routines that you think are working well for the school and students, and three rules or routines that, from your perspective, need to be changed. Describe your ideas and why you think your changes would work well.

Mathematics

- List 20 things in your day-to-day life that are measured (e.g., groceries, travel, schedules). Beside each of the 20 items, write the appropriate unit of measurement.
- You have been sent to the grocery store to buy groceries. You have been given \$65.00. List the foods that you will buy. Refer to a newspaper advertisement or grocery-store

flyer to determine the cost of each item. You must include the four food groups: breads and cereals; meat and alternatives; vegetables and fruit; and dairy products. Print the approximate cost beside each item, and be sure your grocery total comes as close as possible to \$65.00.

- Select any newspaper (ideally one with more than one section). Use this to identify fractions following any of the procedures listed below.
 - Estimate what fraction of a page is occupied by pictures.
 - Estimate what fraction of a page is occupied by text (words).
 - Estimate what fraction of a page is occupied by advertisements.
 - Estimate what fraction of the entire paper is made up of particular sections (e.g., sports, business).
- Design a survey with four or five choices that explores your classmates' favourite kinds of music. Quietly survey your peers and record your data. Create a graph to show your results.
- Refer to the summary of scores from the sports section in your newspaper. Select the scores from five games in any one sport. What are the mean and the mode of the scores of those games? If possible, refer to results from another day or night and make the same calculations. How are they similar? How are they different?
- You have been hired by a company to create a new wallpaper design. Begin by folding a square piece of paper into eight equal sections. Create a design for your wallpaper sample that is repeated in all eight sections to form a pattern. Consider colour, shape and position in creating your design. Share and discuss your design with a classmate.

- Locate a picture of a person's face in a magazine. Cut out the picture. Fold the picture in half vertically and then cut along the crease. Glue half the picture onto a piece of blank paper. Now draw in the other half of the face as accurately as possible. (You may wish to use a Mira as an aid.)
 - Draw an irregular geometric shape. Compare your shape with a classmate's shape. How are your shapes alike? How are they different? Discuss the side and angle properties of your shapes. Are there any lines of symmetry? Draw a reflection of your shape.
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