

# CONTENTS

About This Book .....	v
About the Author .....	viii
About the Illustrator .....	viii
About the Content Developers .....	ix
Explaining Learning Centers to Parents .....	xix

## I. Managing Learning Centers I

Creating Areas .....	1
How to Begin Using Learning Centers .....	1
Acquiring Low-Cost Furniture .....	2
Arranging the Room .....	2
Structure and Planning .....	3
Stage 1 .....	3
Center Visitation 4	
Implementing Stage 1 5	
Ten-Day Training Program 5	
Stage 2 .....	7
Center Visitation 7	
Implementing Stage 2 8	
Stage 3 .....	8
Center Visitation 8	
Implementing Stage 3 10	
Providing Materials .....	10
Keeping Track of Work .....	11
Evaluating Learning at the Centers .....	11
Observation 11	
Reading Conferences 14	
Writing Samples 15	
Running Records 15	
Retelling 15	
Self-Checking 15	
Hard Copies 16	

Learning Centers and Special-Needs Children .....	16
The Teacher Center	16
The Library Center	18
The Listening Center	18
The Computer Center	18
The Art Center	18
The Writing Center	18
The Word Play Center	19

## **2. Organizing Learning Centers 21**

Finding Materials .....	21
Commercial Materials	21
Teacher-Made Materials	21
Ongoing Materials	22
Storing Center Materials .....	22
Making Storage Containers .....	22
Envelopes and Plastic Bags	23
Stationery Boxes	25
Cylinder Containers	26
Shopping Bags	27
Baskets	28

## **3. The Learning Centers 29**

The Teacher Center .....	29
How to Use the Teacher Center	30
Basic Equipment	37
Making a Flannel Board	37
Recommended Books: Joan's Choices	38
Activities	40
Thematic Activities	43
The Library Center .....	45
Basic Equipment	46
Acquiring Materials	47
Recommended Books	48
Activities	52
Thematic Activities	53

The Listening Center .....55  
     Basic Equipment 56  
     Acquiring Materials 56  
     Recommended Audiobooks 57  
     Activities 58  
     Thematic Activities 59  
 The Computer Center .....60  
     Basic Equipment 61  
     Acquiring Materials 61  
     Recommended Software 62  
     Thematic Activities 64  
 The Art Center .....66  
     Basic Equipment 67  
     Making Modeling Compound 68  
     Activities 68  
     Thematic Activities 74  
 The Writing Center .....76  
     Basic Equipment 78  
     The Word Wall 78  
     Activities 79  
     Thematic Activities 85  
 The Word Play Center .....87  
     Dramatic Play and Reading Games 87  
     Basic Equipment 89  
     Assembling the Games 90

**4. Learning Center Thematic Units 95**

August and September: School Days .....95  
     Theme Decorations 96  
     Game and Dramatic Play Areas 96  
     Theme Setup 97  
     Bulletin Boards 97  
     Whole-Group Activities 97  
     Back-to-School Trail Mix Recipe 98  
     Snacktime Fruit Recipe 98  
     Content Area Activities 99  
     Word Play Center Activities 99  
     Thematic Books 99

October: Pumpkin Patch .....	111
Theme Decorations	111
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	111
Making the Scarecrow	112
Theme Setup	113
Bulletin Boards	113
Whole-Group Activities	113
Pumpkin Pie Recipe	113
Content Area Activities	114
Word Play Center Activities	115
Thematic Books	115
November: Native American Tepee .....	126
Theme Decorations	126
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	126
Theme Setup	129
Bulletin Boards	129
Whole-Group Activities	129
Cranberry Sauce Recipe	129
Native American Necklaces	130
Content Area Activities	130
Word Play Center Activities	130
Teacher Resource Book	131
Thematic Books	131
December and January: Winter Wonderland .....	142
Theme Decorations	142
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	142
Theme Setup	144
Bulletin Boards	144
Whole-Group Activities	144
Hot Apple Cider Recipe	145
Content Area Activities	145
Word Play Center Activities	145
Thematic Books	145
February: Black History Month and Valentine's Day .....	157
Theme Decorations	157
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	157
Theme Setup	158
Bulletin Boards	158
About the Game Cards	158

- Whole-Group Activities 161
- Cornbread Recipe 162
- Content Area Activities 162
- Word Play Center Activities 162
- For Further Study 163
- Teacher Resource Book 164
- Thematic Books 164
  
- March: Spaceship .....177
  - Theme Decorations 177
  - Game and Dramatic Play Areas 177
  - Theme Setup 178
  - Bulletin Boards 178
  - Whole-Group Activities 178
  - Zero-Gravity Space Pudding Recipe 179
  - Content Area Activities 179
  - Word Play Center Activities 179
  - Thematic Books 180
  
- April: Springtime .....191
  - Theme Decorations 191
  - Game and Dramatic Play Areas 191
  - Theme Setup 192
  - Bulletin Boards 192
  - Whole-Group Activities 192
  - Egg Salad Sandwich Recipe 193
  - Content Area Activities 193
  - Word Play Center Activities 194
  - Thematic Books 194
  
- May: Cinco de Mayo .....204
  - Theme Decorations 204
  - Game and Dramatic Play Areas 204
  - Theme Setup 205
  - Bulletin Boards 205
  - Card Game and Matching Game 205
  - Whole-Group Activities 206
  - Nacho Beef Hot Dip Recipe 206
  - Content Area Activities 207
  - Word Play Center Activities 207
  - For Further Study 208
  - Teacher Resource Book 208
  - Thematic Books 209

Additional Learning Center Thematic Units .....	219
Lunar New Year .....	219
About Lunar New Year	219
Theme Decorations	220
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	220
Making the Lion Masks	220
Making the Lanterns	221
Making Good-Luck Signs	221
Theme Setup	221
Bulletin Boards	221
Card Game	221
Whole-Group Activities	222
Easy Fried Rice Recipe	222
Chinese Tea Eggs Recipe	223
Content Area Activities	224
Word Play Center Activities	224
Thematic Books	224
Restaurant .....	235
Theme Decorations	235
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	235
Theme Setup	236
Bulletin Boards	237
Whole-Group Activities	237
Doughnut Recipe	237
Content Area Activities	238
Word Play Center Activities	238
Thematic Books	238
Roman Holiday .....	250
Theme Decorations	251
Game and Dramatic Play Areas	251
Theme Setup	252
Bulletin Boards	253
Card Game	253
Whole-Group Activities	254
Roman Pudding with Spicy Wafers Recipe	254
Content Area Activities	254
Word Play Center Activities	255
For Further Study	255
Making a Volcano	256
Teacher Resource Books	256
Thematic Books	257

Valentine’s Day and Dental Health Month .....266

- Theme Decorations 266
- Game and Dramatic Play Areas 266
- Making the Mailbox 267
- Theme Setup 267
- Bulletin Boards 268
- Whole-Group Activities 268
- Cherry Pie Recipe 268
- Content Area Activities 269
- Word Play Center Activities 269
- Thematic Books 269

**5. Learning Center Skill Games 281**

Part One: Assembling Skill Games .....281

- Assembling Board Games 281
- Board Game Directions 284
- Assembling Card Games 285
- Card Game Directions 287
- Assembling Sorting Games 288
- Sorting Game Directions 290
- Assembling Matching Games 291
- Memory-Style Matching Game Directions 293
- Puzzle-Style Matching Game Directions 294

Part Two: Game Cards and Answer Keys .....295

- Abbreviations 295
- Antonyms 301
- Compound Words 307
- Consonant Blends 313
- Consonant Digraphs 335
- Contractions 341
- Figurative Language 347
- Homophones 353
- Syllables 359
- Synonyms 362

**Appendix: Correlation with Standards 371**

**Additional Resources 379**

