
Look What I Can Do!

a teacher's guide

Created by marcie colleen

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Look What I Can Do!

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How To Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Look What I Can Do!* is designed for students in preschool through second grade.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Look What I Can Do!* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant New Jersey content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Look What I Can Do!*, show entire book. Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, author, illustrator, spine, jacket flap.

- Looking at the front cover, who is the author? What is her job?
- Who is the illustrator? What is her job?
- What do you think the book will be about?
- What clues to the story are found in the illustrations?
- Make a prediction about what is hiding under the jacket flap. Is it the same as the front cover or different?

Read the dedication/copyright spread.

- What is a dedication?
- What do these dedications tell you about the author and illustrator?
- Compare the owlets on the cover to the owlets on spread. How do you think they tie in with the title, *Look What I Can Do!?*

After students read or listen to the book, ask the following:

- What are some of the things that the baby animals struggle to do?
- What about some of the things that the children struggle to do?
- Can you remember something that you had a hard time learning to do?
- Is there something you cannot wait to learn how to do when you get older?
- What does the word "try" mean? What does the word "proud" mean?
- Why is it important to "keep trying on your own"?

Start a discussion based on the illustrations.

- Count how many animals, people, insects, and arachnids you find on each spread. Look closely. Some are tiny and hard to spot.

- Take a close look at the parent in each illustration. How would you describe that parent? What do you think he or she is feeling?

As a class, read *Cloudette* by Tom Lichtenheld.

- What do the big clouds do that Cloudette wants to do?
- What are some ways that Cloudette tries to make it rain?
- What finally happens when Cloudette meets the little frog in a dried up pond?
- How is this story similar to *Look What I Can Do!?*

Rhyme Time

Look What I Can Do! is written in rhyme. Here are some activities that can be used to introduce rhyming words.

Engine and Caboose

- Introduce the concept of producing rhyming words with train engines and caboose pictures or objects. Explain that the caboose always stays the same but the engines will be different.
- Pick a sound for the caboose such as “at” and place many different beginning engines/sounds in front to make rhyming words (e.g., h-, m-, c-).

“I Spy”

- Start the activity by sitting with the children in a large circle. Provide them with a sentence containing two rhyming words. For example: “I spy a chair and a bear.” The first object name is something in the room and the second object name doesn’t have to be in the room. Both objects must rhyme.
- Have the child to the right create a different “I Spy” sentence.
- Continue around the circle until all students have the opportunity to create their own rhyming sentence.

Tip: Place objects around the room that are easy to rhyme. Point them out to the children if they need suggestions.

Fill in the Blank

- Re-read *Look What I Can Do!* to the class. At the end of the 2nd sentence of each stanza, pause and have children raise their hands to give the correct rhyming word to complete the sentence.

For example:

It's not easy to reach the twig.

I stretch up tall. Hey look, I'm _____!

- Allow children time to make up silly sentences using other words that rhyme but don't make sense.
- Continue through book until all children have participated.
- Additional activity: Try this with other rhyming books.

Teaching Verbs

In *Look What I Can Do!* the baby animals face new challenges. It's a story about trying and doing. For this reason, it is a wonderful book to teach verbs.

Look What I Can Do!

- Show each picture in the book and ask students what the baby animal is trying to do. Have them answer using only ONE word. (stand, slither, fly, etc.)
- Explain that these action words are called verbs.

Simon Says Verbs

The Simon Says Verbs game is a fun activity that helps students identify verbs from other parts of speech. The students will get some healthy exercise while playing this game.

- Stand in front of the class and say, "Simon says..." followed by a verb. The children do what Simon says. For example: "Simon Says dance." The children should dance.
- Mix in some words that are not verbs. For example: "Simon says table." At this time, students should not move because table is a noun, not a verb.
- Additional activity: Individual students can take turns playing Simon Says Verbs with each other.

Action Bingo

In this version of Bingo, the students compete to be the first to perform all the actions on the list. Items can be arranged in a normal bingo grid or simply as a list.

Some possible items for the list are:

- Tell a joke.
- Pretend to take a bath or shower.
- Select someone to sing a song with you.
- Behave like a duck for 10 seconds.
- Say something nice about three different people in the room.
- Shake hands with three other people in the room.
- Walk from one end of the room to the other with an object between your knees.
- Act like an egg being cracked and fried.
- Draw a picture of yourself and give it to someone in the room.
- Find something in your pocket or purse to give to the person on your left.
- Retell the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.

How to Play:

- Each student or team of students must perform all the actions in front of someone. Those who participated or observed the action must check off that item on the list.
- Whoever gets all the items signed first, wins!
- Extra Challenge: List a single word verb for each action performed.

When I Grow Up...

It's often hard for young children to understand why they can't do what older kids and grown-ups do. This activity helps students focus on things they'd like to accomplish in the future.

- Brainstorm activities students want to do when they are older. For example: read, write in cursive, ride a bike, drive a car, travel by plane, go on a rollercoaster, etc.
- Each student begins with the phrase: "When I grow up, I will be able to..." and then fills in the blank.
- Activity can be completed as a writing assignment and/or by drawing a picture.

Math

Word Problems

Some students may find pictures or props helpful when working on these word problems.

1. Baby Turtle wants to swim. He takes 3 steps toward the water. He stops and then takes 5 more steps. How many steps has Baby Turtle taken toward the water?
2. Baby Spider spins a web. She spins 2 times. Then she spins 4 times. How many times does Baby Spider spin?
3. Daddy Frog eats 1 fly, then 2, then 3, then 4 more. How many flies does he eat?
4. Baby Bear has been catching fish with her mother. They catch 7 fish, but 3 jump back into the water. How many fish do they have?
5. Mama Bird has laid 8 eggs. 2 of the eggs hatch. How many eggs are not hatched?

10 Little Nuts Scavenger Hunt

It's not easy to find my place,

I hide a nut, but leave a trace.

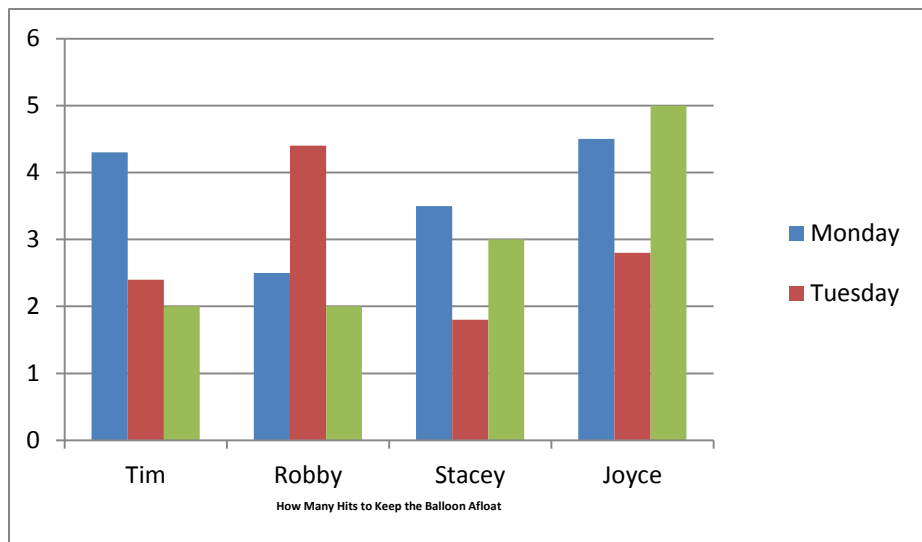
Use this scavenger hunt to sharpen counting skills.

- Create several paper cut-outs of acorns. Number them from 1-5, so there are different sets of each number. Hide these acorns around the room.
- Ask students to find #1 acorn, #2 acorn, etc. until they have a set of 5. If a student sees a number they already have collected, he/she must leave it for another student to find.
- The first group of students to find acorns 1-5 in that order, wins.
- Additional activity: This same game can be played with a set pattern of colors or pictures to teach sequencing.

My Personal Best Graph

Kids love to keep score, especially if the game allows them the opportunity to improve over time.

- Play a game to see how high each student can build a tower out of blocks or how many times they can hit a balloon without letting it touch the floor. These activities build motor skill and concentration.
- Create a graph and chart results over several days. Students should work independently and try for their personal best. Goals can be set at the end of each session—what to try and what to accomplish the next day.



Science

Forest, Field, and Stream

- As a class, create a list to categorize the animals in the story.

Forest Animals

Field Animals

Stream Animals

- Ask students:

What are these different areas called?

What do the animals in each category or habitat have in common?

How are they different from the animals in another category?

Could the animals of the forest live in a stream? How about stream animals living in a field? Why or why not?

What other animals could be added in each category?

What about us? Where do we live?

- Have students create a drawing of their own home or habitat.
- Have students create a drawing of what their house would look like if they lived in ANOTHER habitat.

How Animals Move Game

This activity focuses on listening.

- Stand at front of room and call out the name of a mammal, bird, fish, or reptile, and a movement. For example: "Horses fly." "Birds crawl." "Fish swim."
- The students only move if they hear a correct relationship between noun and verb. In the example above, they should make a swimming movement.
- When an incorrect relationship is given, the students should not move. Those who move at the wrong time must sit down.
- Make the game short so children never have to sit out for very long.

Baby Animals Collage

Creating a baby animals collage is the perfect way to have young students practice their cutting and gluing skills. It's a simple activity that requires paper, magazine photos of baby animals, safety scissors, and glue.

- Students cut out baby animals from magazines, then glue them on paper.
- Once finished, students name the animals on their collages.

Baby Animals Matching Game

A baby animals matching game allows students to practice their visual and memorization skills.

- Use clip art or search on the Internet for animal pictures. Print two copies.
- Glue pictures on two separate index cards. Laminate cards.
- Students shuffle the "deck" and lay the cards face down. Players take turns flipping over two cards at a time searching for a match.

- A variation involves matching the baby animal to the adult animal.

Life Cycles

Change is a part of “growing up” for all living things.

- Read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and discuss how the caterpillar changes.
- As a class, research the life cycles of several animals in *Look What I Can Do!*, especially that of the frog and bird.
- Discuss how animals develop differently than humans.
- Ask students to find pictures of themselves from infancy through present day. Have them ask their parents what they were like at each age.
- In school, students create a timeline using the above.

Health & Life Skills

Overcoming Obstacles

Obstacle courses represent a fun, healthy way to build confidence. Courses can be designed to fit the needs of students with varying abilities.

- Using playground equipment, demonstrate crawling under the slide, swinging across the monkey bars, hopping through a row of tires, and so forth.

OR, at the park, demonstrate leaping over logs, crawling under bushes, somersaulting on the grass, and so forth.

OR, create obstacles out of everyday materials. For example: a string between two trees for a low hurdle, a blue towel for a pool, etc.

- Before beginning the race, walk through the course to make sure everyone understands how to get to the end in a safe manner.
- At race time, let each student run it alone while being timed. Offer rewards based on fastest time, but include awards for best sportsmanship, best balance, safest runner, and more. Students can also compete against themselves and try to improve each time.

Animal Yoga

Animal yoga helps children refine their gross and fine motor skills. A great resource: *You Are a Lion! And Other Fun Yoga Poses* by Taeun Yoo, Nancy Paulsen Books, 2012.

- Lead children in stretching and warm-up exercises.
- Ask children to name an animal and its behavior and act it out.

For example, owl:

- Fly: by flapping their arms
- Look around: by turning their heads slowly from side to side
- Perch: by bending their knees and standing on their toes with their arms at their side
- Swoop: by sticking their arms out straight to each side and dipping their heads down and then back up from side to side

Social Studies

All About Me; All About My Family

This multi-book project enhances confidence, allows the students the opportunity to get to know one another, and serves as an introduction to community. Students make books that contain pages with answered questions and pictures. Yarn is used to bind the pages together. The first book features the student, and each student should have a special day that he reads his book to the class. Separate books (done in the future) can feature siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even pets.

- Pages in each book include:

A portrait

I am called _____

My first and last name is _____

My address is _____

I live in _____ (the country, a city, etc.)

I live with _____

I am good at _____

Being Part of a Community

This activity presents a memorable way for children to learn what it means to be part of a community.

- Read *The Gingerbread Man Loose in the School* by Laura Murray. Discuss the Gingerbread Man's journey inside the school.
- Talk about how schools are part of a larger, outdoor area called a neighborhood. Explain how a neighborhood is part of a community.
- With help from students, create a large map of the community that includes their school.
- Research what animals live near their school. Ask: Are any of these animals in *Look What I Can Do?*
- Have students draw the animals and place them on the map.
- Additional activity: Discuss how animals help a community.