Leaf Word Family Game
(-an)

About Me

Dr. Jenni Jacobs is the founder and CEO of The Learning Professor. She has been in the field of education for 25 years in a variety of roles, including family child care provider, infant/toddler teacher, preschool teacher, school age teacher, elementary teacher, educational director, college instructor, and instructional designer.

Her educational background includes a BSEd in PreK through 3rd grade education, a Master's in Child Development, and an EdD in Special Education, with a focus on content mastery and gamification.

Though she considers herself an early childhood generalist, her top areas of expertise include infant toddler development and curriculum, preschool development and curriculum, brain development, classroom management, and challenging behaviors. She tries to always blend theory along with good practice in all of her content to make it relevant and practical for teachers.

About This Packet

This packet has been designed to provide concrete experiences for preschool and Kindergarten children that align to standards of developmentally appropriate practice. As a result, you will not find worksheets for children to complete in this packet. What you will find are lots of play-based games that will teach children the concepts that are important for them to understand at this age level.

For each activity, you'll receive an overview of the activity, instructions on getting the activity ready for children, a list of required materials, printable(s) if applicable, and teacher interaction tips.

Want to Know More?

Check out my website and blog. You'll find articles about a variety of topics as well as online courses that may interest you.

The Learning Professor
Shaping minds,
Changing Hearts

www.learningprofessor.com

Word Families Game Instructions

This activity focuses on alphabet instruction, while introducing children to the concept of word families. Word families are groups of words that have a common sound pattern. They are useful for children in the emergent stage of literacy development because they help children focus on the phonemes within the words.

Most word family activities have children focus on matching the beginning sound (onset) to the ending part of the word (rime) or match the word to a picture, or a combination of all of these. This can be too complex for preschoolers because they are just beginning to pay attention to phonemes, and they are most often not yet able to read the words.

This word match game allows children at various stages of development to play. The goal is to find the words that match. It may sound simplistic to you, but for a young child, this involves a lot of discrimination skills...especially when the words look so similar. Children playing this game will likely draw the following conclusions:

- All of the words end in the same two letters
- Those last two letters always sound the same
- Some of the beginning letters match one another but others look different
- When the beginning letter matches a card with the same beginning letter, they both say the same word
- All of the words rhyme

These are important concepts for children to learn, and is an important first stage before moving on to more difficult word family activities.

Children who do not yet have phonemic awareness skills may just use letter discrimination to find the matching letters at the beginning of the words. Children who are more advanced may begin to notice that all of the words look the same at the end and may want to "read" them. When you tell these children what the end of the word says, the children can use their knowledge of beginning sounds to blend the beginning sound to the rest of the word and read the words. They will be so excited that they are reading the words on their own!

Word Families Game
Preparing for Use

Getting Ready

1. To implement this activity in your classroom, print out 1 copy of the game you desire. This game is designed to be played during center time as a choice, so you only need one copy for the whole class.
2. If you'd like the back of the cards to be something other than white, you can cut out a piece of construction paper in the same shape, or you can print out a copy of the blank shapes that are provided.
3. Laminate the shapes or cover with contact paper for durability.
4. Place the pieces in a basket or on a tray and place in the classroom. I like to put my games on my manipulative shelf as a way of incorporating literacy into that area. The children in my classroom generally play with the manipulatives on the carpet, and this game works nicely in the same space.
5. A blank set of cards is provided for you to focus on other word families.

Playing the Game

Version 1 (Easier):
Place all of the cards face up on the ground. Children take turns finding a match. I recommend no more than 2 children at a time.

Version 2: Play as a "memory" type of game with the words facing down. Children take turns choosing 2 cards at a time to find a match. When they find a match they get to keep their set of cards.

Teacher Interaction

As the children are playing the game, draw their attention to the sounds, patterns, and words. Ask questions or make statements that revolve around the following concepts. What do you notice about how these words sound? What is the same about all of these words? What letter is that at the beginning of that word? What sound does that letter make? That's an S. It makes the sound <s>. If you put together the <s> and the <it> what word do you get?
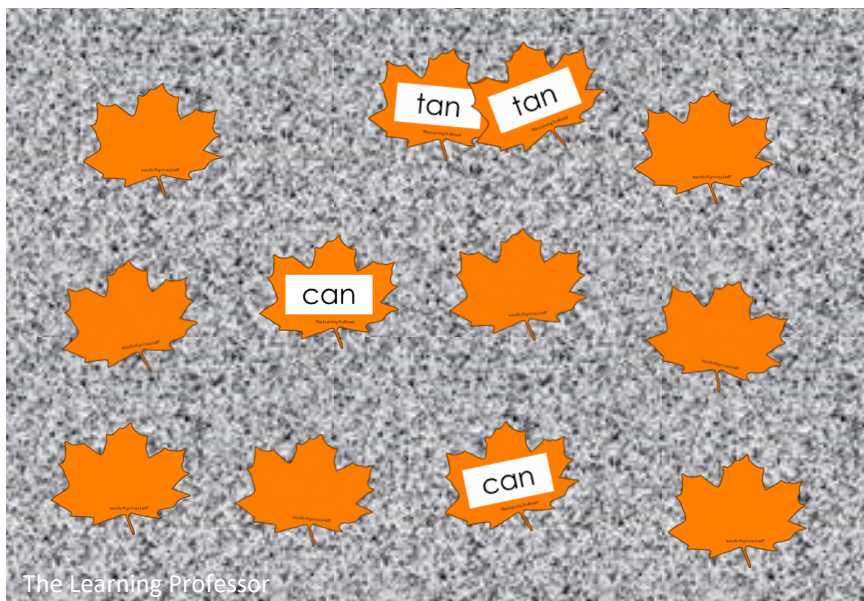
Leaf Word Family Game

ban

The Learning Professor

ban

The Learning Professor

can

The Learning Professor

can

The Learning Professor

fan

The Learning Professor

fan

The Learning Professor

Leaf Word Family Game

man

The Learning Professor

man

The Learning Professor

pan

The Learning Professor

pan

The Learning Professor

ran

The Learning Professor

ran

The Learning Professor

Leaf Word Family Game

tan

The Learning Professor

tan

The Learning Professor

van

The Learning Professor
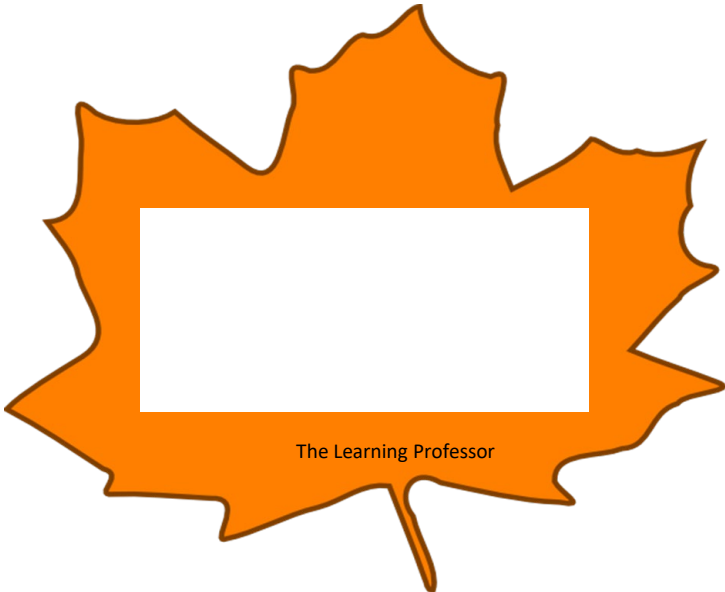
van

The Learning Professor

Dan

The Learning Professor

Dan

The Learning Professor

Leaf Word Family Game

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

Pictures for the Back of the Card

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

The Learning Professor

One Classroom, Many Languages: Strategies for Dual Language Learners

Nearly one in three US children live in a household where a language other than English is spoken. Dual language learners are a diverse group of children, and include all children in a household where someone speaks a language other than English. Including dual language learners in your classroom can be challenging, particularly when you don't speak the child's home language. In this course, you'll learn more about the universal nature of language development, how to support language learning for all children, and how to specifically support dual language learners in your classroom. This class is designed for teachers of infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms, but does have a heavy emphasis on infant and toddler classrooms. Approved for Step Up To Quality.

Description
In this course, we will cover the following topics:
The Universal Nature of Language
- Supporting Language Development for All Children
- Growing Up Bilingual
- Maintaining the Home Language
- Supporting Literacy
- Quality Language and Literacy Environments
- Supporting Dual Language Learning
- Supporting Families and Classroom Staff

You'll hear from leading experts in the field as you learn to support language development for all children, and specifically how to support dual language learners.

The Learning Professor
Shaping minds, Changing Hearts