



# WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN™

*Learning Through Play*



## WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN™

Dear Kindergarten Families or Family,

Welcome to Issue 7 of our Learning Through Play newsletter.

We hope that Kindergarten is going well! As the weather gets cooler and winter approaches, there will be new routines for managing winter clothing with different and fun outdoor play.

It's the season to cosy up with your child and get creative. Make things together using their imagination and their newfound kindergarten skills. They could be using their scissors and crayons, using the magnetic letters to create words, writing their name or drawing a family picture.

Keep reading, writing, creating and playing every day with your child- because it builds new skills and warm connections too.

With care, The WTK Team

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## WHAT'S INSIDE

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**You are your child's first and best teacher!**

**Follow your child's lead as you play and explore together**

**Talk and read with your child in your first language**

**Support sharing and taking turns**

**Celebrate every step of learning and growing**

# HUNTING FOR SHAPES

Learning to notice and describe shapes helps children build early geometry and observation skills. Exploring shapes in the natural world makes learning meaningful and fun.

## Try This: Hunt for Shapes Outside

Go for a walk together and look for shapes in nature—a round rock, long sticks, an oval leaf etc.

- Encourage your child to name the shapes they see and talk about what makes them special.
- When you return home, grab some paper and use the **scissors**, and **crayons** from your WTK bag to create fall shapes.
- Cut out some shapes and try making a picture with them.
- Invite your child to colour them and arrange the shapes into a picture—a forest, pumpkin patch, or leaf pile!

Use the **magnetic numbers** to count how many of each shape you used.



# HUNTING FOR SHAPES

**Why it's great for learning:**

**Strengthens sorting, counting, and patterning.**

**Encourages observation and spatial thinking.**

**Connects math learning to the world around us.**



## Make It Even More Fun!

Sort your paper shapes by colour, size, or type. Create a pattern, such as leaf-tree-leaf-tree, and ask, "What comes next?"

Play "Toss a Shape" using the shapes in your pocket dice. See *Family Activity Guide* for instructions.

See if your child can spot those same shapes inside your home!

**Tip:** Notice shapes wherever you go—on signs, doors, windows, and even food!

**Real-life connections make math fun and memorable.**



# TINY NATURE BUILDERS

Building and creating with natural materials helps children develop early science and technology skills like problem solving, observation, and design. Exploring how to build solid, balanced structures in nature also strengthens fine motor coordination and creativity.



**Why it's great for learning:**

**Builds problem-solving and planning skills.**

**Encourages observation and early science thinking.**

**Strengthens fine motor coordination.**

**Fosters creativity and persistence.**

## Try This: Tiny Nature Builders

- Go for a walk and collect small, safe items such as sticks, rocks, pinecones, or leaves.
- Find a flat area outside (or use a tray indoors) and invite your child to use these materials to build a tiny structure—a bridge, tower, animal home, or sculpture.
- Ask questions that guide thinking: “Which stick could be the base?” or “How can we make it stand without falling?”
- Encourage your child to test different ideas and make changes if something doesn't work.

## Make It Even More Fun:

Draw a simple plan or picture.

Add labels to show parts of the structure—like *wall*, *roof*, *tunnel*, or *path*.

Take a photo of your creation before the wind or weather changes it!

**Tip:** Use your home language to describe shapes, sizes, and positions—like *tall*, *round*, *under*, or *next to*. Talking about designs in any language builds strong thinking and communication skills!



# MOVE LIKE THE WIND

Exploring movement through dance helps children express themselves, build coordination, and connect with the world around them. As the weather changes, the wind outside can inspire creative play!



## Try This: Wind Dance and Drawing

Go outside together and notice what the wind is doing—moving leaves, waving branches, or rustling clothing.

Ask: “How does the wind move today? Is it gentle or strong?”

Encourage your child to move their body like the wind—spinning, swaying, or fluttering.

When you return indoors, draw how the wind looked or felt.

Ask: “What colours show a windy day?” or “Can you draw the way your body moved?”

**Why it's great for learning:**

**Builds creativity and body awareness.**

**Strengthens self-expression through art and movement.**

**Encourages focus and coordination.**

**Connects physical activity with imagination.**

**Tip: Use your home language to describe how the wind feels—soft, cool, quick, or strong. Talking about sensations builds rich vocabulary in every language!**

## Make It Even More Fun:

Play soft or lively music and move together to match the rhythm. Add scarves, ribbons, or tissue paper to make the movement flow. Invite your child to lead the dance and choose the music next time!

# LET'S MOVE AND BREATHE



Learning to calm our bodies helps children manage big feelings and focus their thinking. Simple breathing and movement strategies can help children feel relaxed and ready to learn.

## Try This: Falling Leaf Breathing

Invite your child to stand tall and take a deep breath in through their nose.

As they breathe out slowly through their mouth, have them **pretend to be a leaf** drifting gently to the ground.

Repeat several times—breathing in to “reach up” like a tall tree, and breathing out to “float down” like a leaf.



Tree Pose



Cat Pose



Cow Pose



Butterfly Pose



Cobra Pose



Child's Pose

## Make It Even More Fun:

Write or draw something that helps your child feel calm inside each leaf—like listening to music, reading, or hugging a family member.

Hang the leaves on a wall or window to make a “Calm Corner.”

## Why It's Great for Learning:

- Builds self-regulation and body awareness
- Encourages mindfulness through movement
- Strengthens emotional vocabulary
- Creates a visual reminder of calm strategies

Tip: Try this activity before bedtime or after active play to help your child relax and refocus.



# INDOOR OBSTACLE ADVENTURE

Moving, climbing, and balancing help children build strong bodies and confident movement skills. When it's too cold or rainy to play outside, you can create a fun obstacle course right at home!

## Try This: Indoor Obstacle Adventure

Gather safe household items like cushions, chairs, or boxes.

Set up a simple path—crawl under a chair, walk along a line of tape, or hop over a small pillow.

Add stations for fine motor play using your WTK bag:

- Pick up magnetic letters or numbers with tongs or fingers.
- Cut paper shapes with scissors and match them to colours or numbers along the course.
- Roll the pocket dice and move that many times.
- Draw a finish-line flag using crayons.

Take turns timing each other or adding new challenges.

Why it's great for learning:

Strengthens large and small muscles

Builds coordination and balance

Promotes teamwork and turn-taking

## Make It Even More Fun:

Play music and move to the beat as you go through the course.

Change the route each time—go backward, sideways, or on tiptoe!

Add a dramatic twist: pretend you're adventurers crossing a river or stepping on clouds.

**Tip:** Adapt the course for your space—use what's available and safe in your home. Children can describe their movements in any language, building both physical and language skills!



## MORE IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

We hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter.

You are receiving this newsletter because your child's school participates in the **Welcome to Kindergarten™** program.

You are your child's first and best teacher, so have fun talking, reading, creating and playing every day!

For more ideas, check out our future newsletters or our resource page at

<https://welcome-to-kindergarten.ca/resources/>



### ABOUT WTK

Welcome to Kindergarten™ (WTK) supports new Kindergarten children and families, in warmly welcoming them to school. WTK offers high quality early learning materials and family support. All WTK activities and resources are based on current research and effective practice in early learning, transition to school, family engagement and community involvement.

### WTK Contest

Send us a photo of you trying out one of these activities or playing with items from your WTK kit. You could win one of our WTK books! We will draw with every newsletter! Send photos to [info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca](mailto:info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca)

