

Introducing Wood Pieces

Working with Wood Pieces is a fun and relaxing way to teach children the concepts and words to describe size and shape. This activity prepares children for making capital letters.

Preparation

Set Wood Pieces in front of children.

Use *Tap, Tap, Tap*, Track 19; *Golden Slippers*, Track 20; and *Wood Piece Pokey*, Track 25 from the *Get Set for School Sing Along* CD.

Directions

1. Introduce children to the names of the Wood Pieces.

We are very particular about their names.

"This is a big line." (Holding it up in the air.)

"Can you show me a big line?" (Children hold it up in the air.)

2. Repeat for other shapes.

"This is a little line. Can you show me a little line?"

"This is a big curve. Can you show me a big curve?"

"This is a little curve. Can you show me a little curve?"

3. Play songs from the CD and have children participate while the music plays.

Skills Developed

1. Language skills
2. Size and shape concepts

Tips

1. You can introduce Wood Pieces to an entire class or to small groups during centers.
2. Don't stop with the activities we suggest. You can create some of your own.

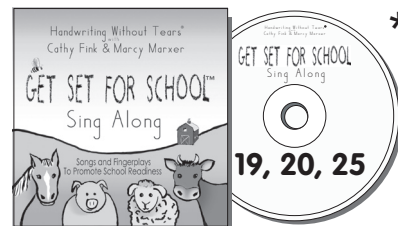
Why Wood Pieces?

How do you teach capital letter **R**? Which verbal directions do you use? If you asked 10 teachers that same question, you would be amazed at the response. Ten different teachers, 10 different responses. Thus, the reason for Wood Pieces. With Wood Pieces, we all say the same thing. You can't beat that type of consistency!

Children learn through consistency. The Wood Pieces allow children to build their capital letters (with exception of **J** and **U**) using 4 basic shapes. By using the Wood Pieces, we can build strong foundation skills for letter memory, orientation, and sequencing.

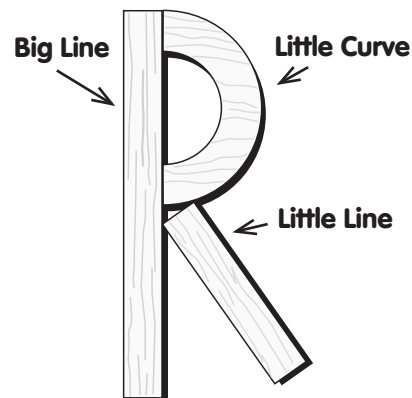
Beyond learning letters, we also use Wood Pieces to teach children the following:

- Socialization
- Body Awareness
- Prepositions
- Taking Turns
- Motor Movements
- Following Directions
- Stroke Exploration
- Patterns
- Counting



*Additional Activities:

Rock, Rap, Tap & Learn CD, *Hey, Hey! Big Line*, Track 4 and *Big Line March*, Track 6.



Positions in Space and Body Parts with Wood Pieces

Children learn positions and placement skills with Wood Pieces.

Preparation

Each child needs a big line or a little line.

Directions

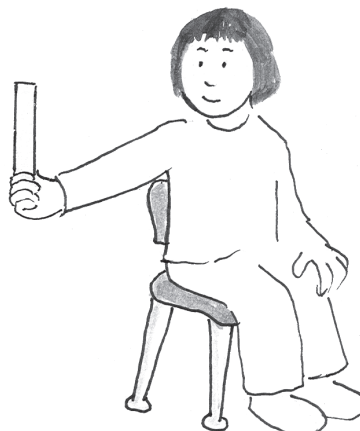
Say the name of each position or body part as you demonstrate. Have children say it too.



UP in the air
Move it UP and DOWN



UNDER your chair
UNDER your arm (one arm out)
OVER your arm



Out to the SIDE
Move it AROUND in circles



Hold it in FRONT of you
Hold it at the BOTTOM
It's VERTICAL



Climb UP and DOWN
Hold it at the BOTTOM, MIDDLE, TOP



Say HORIZONTAL
Move it SIDE to SIDE

Skills Developed

- Imitating—Children learn to watch and follow the teacher.
- Positioning—Children learn to hold and move the pieces in various positions. They learn the words that describe position.

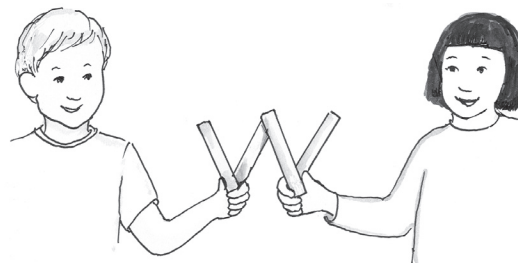
Tips

- Teach other position words such as: BEHIND my back, BETWEEN my fingers, BESIDE me, THROUGH my arm (put hand on hip first), ON my lap.
- When teaching TOP, BOTTOM, MIDDLE, use a big line. Teacher holds the big line with just one hand at the BOTTOM, then changes hands and positions, naming the position each time. Children imitate.
- Teach body parts by naming each body part as you touch it with a Wood Piece.

Other Wood Piece Activities

Make Letters Together

Children can have fun holding up Wood Pieces and making letters together. Have them try it. They will enjoy figuring out which letters (like the ones that are symmetrical) are easiest to make.

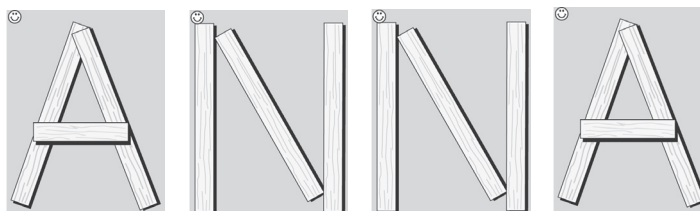


Boss of the Mat

Play the *Boss of the Mat*. Students take turns building capital letters on their Mat and guessing one another's letters. The child who is boss gets to tell each child which Wood Piece to pick up next. The boss places the Wood Pieces one piece at a time (the other children follow) until the letter is called out.

Name

The Wood Pieces are a great way to help children learn the letters in their name. Beginners do well writing their name all in capitals. When they are ready, we transition them to title case. For more information on helping children learn to write their name, see page 27 and 55 of this guide.



What Letter Is It?

This is a great activity to help children with visual memory. Give the child a Mat with Wood Pieces. Have flash cards prepared with lowercase letters on them. Show students a lowercase letter (on the flashcard) and have them build the capital matching partner on their mats.

My Turn, Your Turn

Do a tapping activity with two big lines held like **X**. Teacher taps and students wait to tap until teacher says, "Your turn!" Use just two taps until children learn to listen and wait. When they know how to do this, vary the number or rhythm of taps.



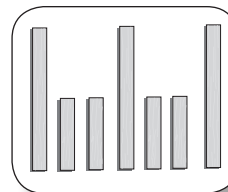
Teacher Says

Play a version of the game "Simon Says" with the Wood Pieces. Remind your children not to do anything unless you say "Teacher Says."

Teacher says, "Touch your big line to your nose."

Making Patterns

You can make many patterns using the Wood Pieces. Download these cards with images of Wood Piece patterns. Glue them to heavy cardstock and laminate. Set them out in a center and see if children can build patterns to match the cards. This is a great visual activity that helps children learn to follow directions and solve problems.



On the Line

Help children understand basic concepts of letter placement by building words with the Wood Pieces and placing them on a line made out of masking tape. Show children how letters sit right on the line.

