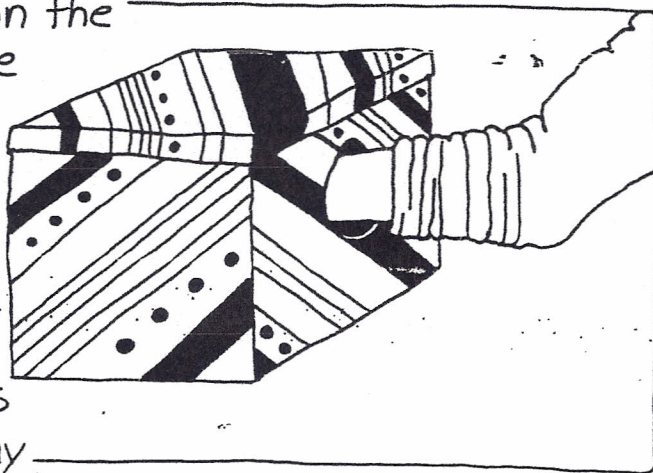


Mystery Box

Materials: Large box, scissors, decorating paper or materials.

Preparation: Decorate a large box and cut out a hand hole in the top or on the side of the box. Each day place an object in the box.

Activity: Children take turns sticking in an arm and feeling the object. So as not to spoil the game for each other, a child who guesses what is inside the box should whisper the guess to you. Open the box later each day so everyone can see what was inside.



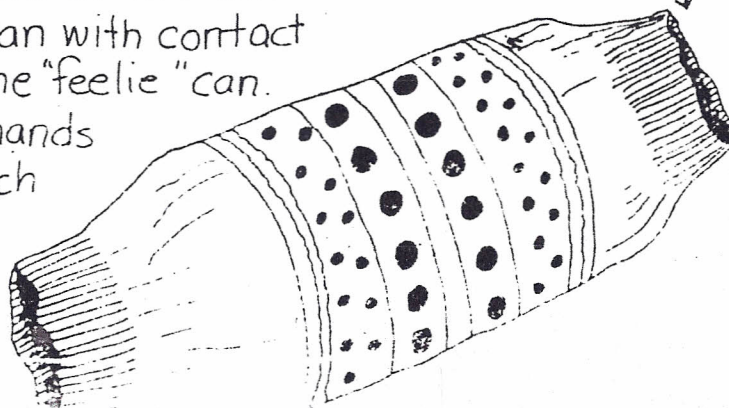
"Feelie" Can

Materials: Oatmeal box or small coffee can, two large old socks, contact paper.

Preparation: Remove the tops and bottoms of the can or box. Cut the feet off two old socks. Slip the sock tops over either end of the can and tape them down. Wrap the can with contact paper. Place a small object in the "feelie" can.

Activity: Have a child place both hands in the ends of the socks and reach into the can to find and feel the object. The child tries to guess the identity of the object without seeing it.

have children place both hands in the ends of the socks

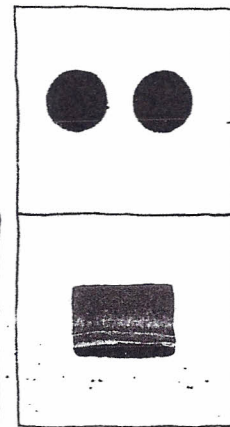
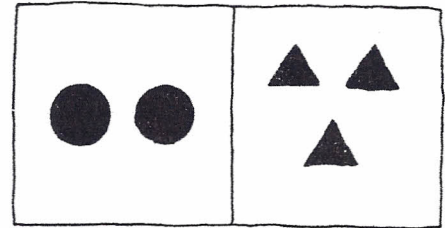
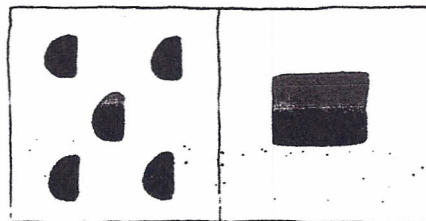


Shape Dominoes

Materials: 21 heavy cardboard rectangles divided in the middle with a line.

Preparation: Mark the cards with combinations of six different shapes.

Activity: Play shape dominoes the same as the ordinary dominoes games, except that you match like shapes as well as number sets.

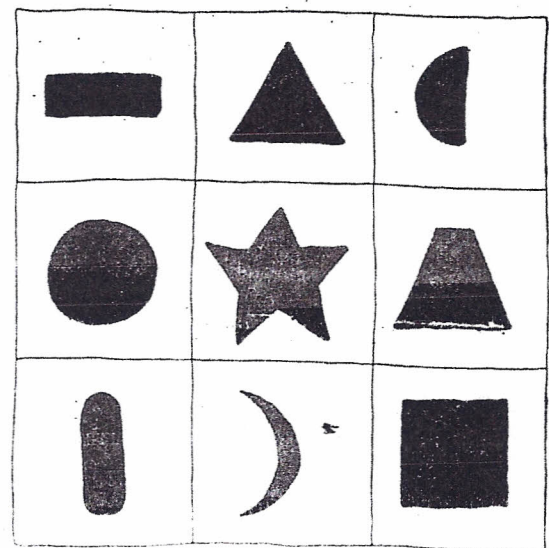


Shape Lotto

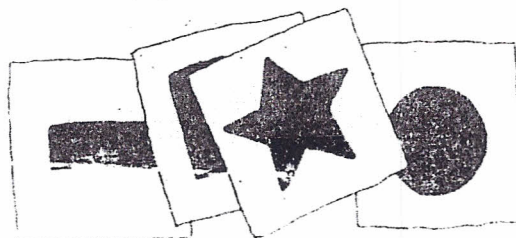
Materials: Two pieces of heavy paper (approximately 8 1/2 inches square), marking pens.

Preparation: Make two lotto boards by dividing each paper into nine boxes. Draw nine different shapes on one board and the identical nine shapes on the other board. Cut apart one lotto board into individual playing pieces.

Activity: Have your child match the individual shapes on the playing pieces to the shapes on the lotto board.



cut second board into individual pieces →



Triangle Puzzles

Materials: Construction paper, glue (optional), mounting paper (optional).

Preparation: Cut a large triangle out of the construction paper. Depending upon the age of the children, cut the triangle into strips horizontally—the greater the number, the greater the difficulty.

Activity: Mix up the pieces and have the children arrange them in proper order.

Variation: Extend this activity to have the children glue the pieces together in the proper order on another piece of paper. Have the triangle represent a Christmas tree and decorate the strips.

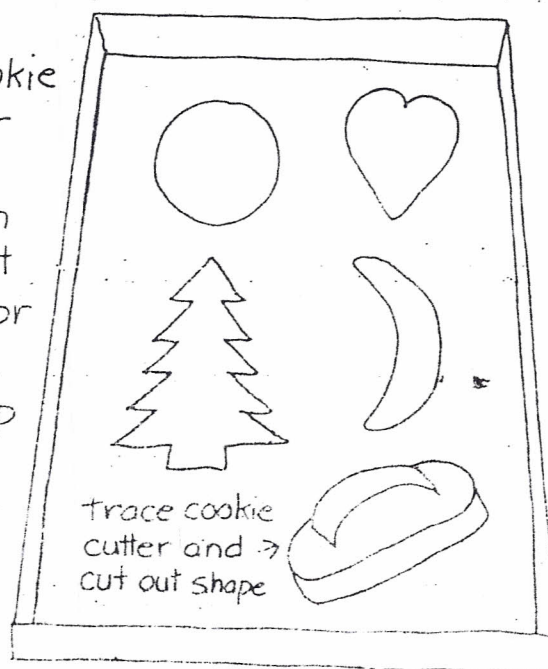


Cookie Cutter Puzzles

Materials: A low sturdy box lid, cookie cutters, utility knife or single-edge razor blade.

Preparation: Lay the cookie cutters on the lid and trace around them. Cut out the shapes with a utility knife or razor blade.

Activity: Have your children match up the holes and the cookie cutters by placing each cutter in the appropriate shaped hole.

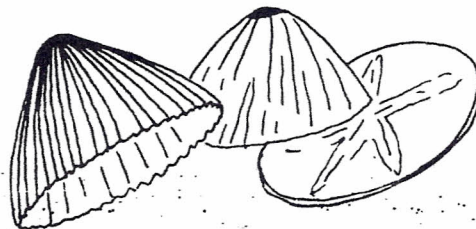


Rock Sorting

Materials: Variety of rocks, shells, leaves, or other natural objects to sort.

Activity: If you are lucky to live where there are a variety of rocks available, have your children start a collection.

Not only are rocks fun to play with, they are also valuable learning tools. The children can sort them by color, markings, size, weight, and shape.

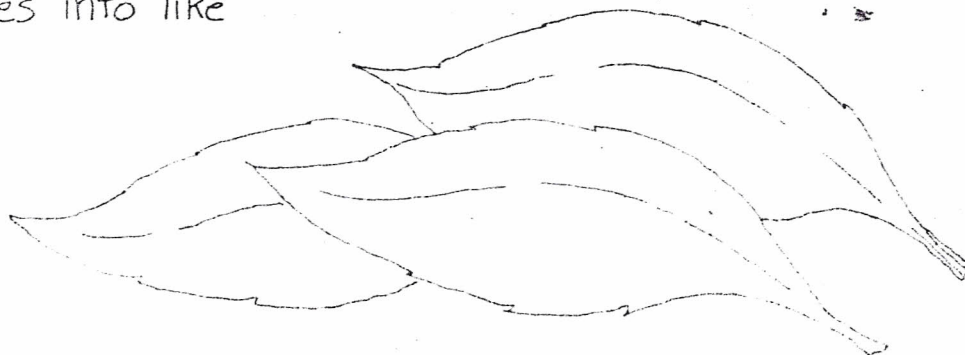
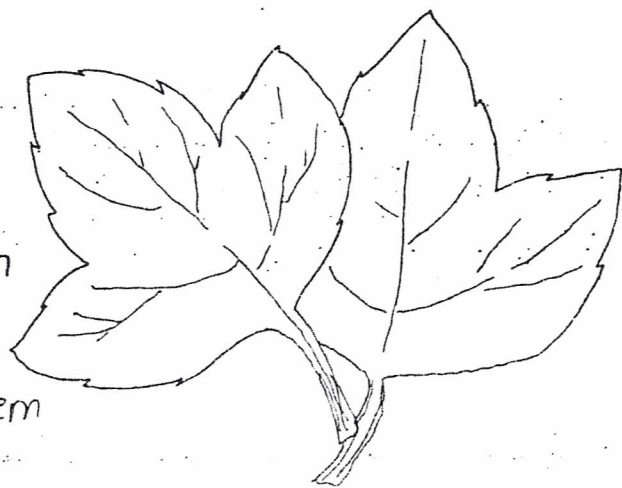


Sorting Leaves

Materials: Autumn leaves.

Preparation: When the leaves begin to fall, collect about five leaves from four or five different kinds of trees. Mix up the leaves and put them on a table or the floor.

Activity: Let your children take turns sorting the leaves into like piles.

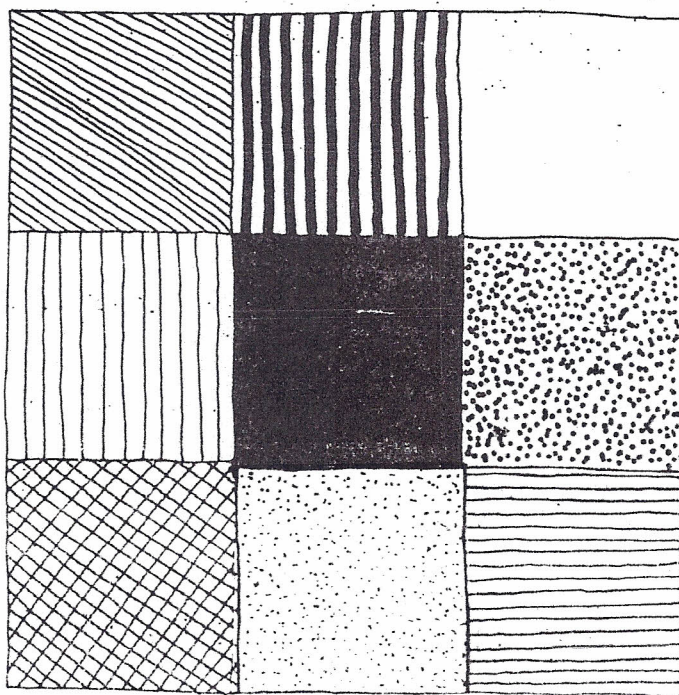
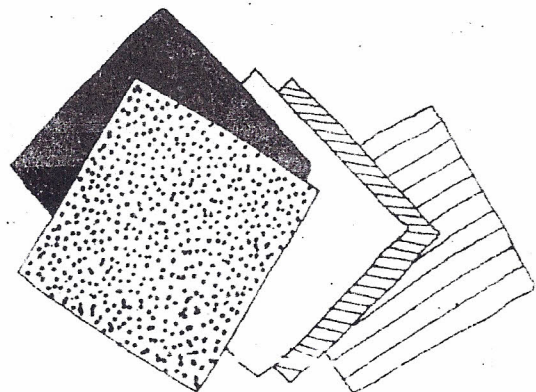
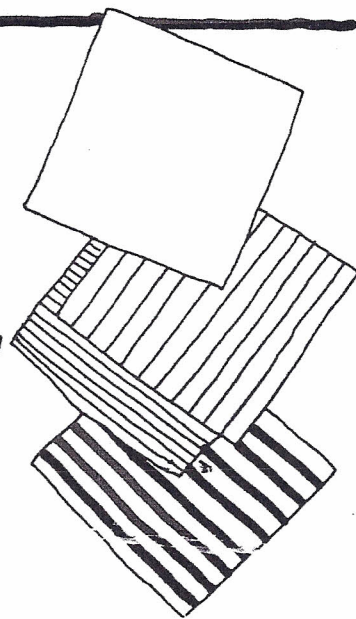


Color Lotto

Materials: Nine basic colors of construction paper, heavy cardboard, paste.

Preparation: Cut the colored paper into 3-inch square pieces. Make three squares of each of the nine colors. Cut one large piece of cardboard to 9 inches square. Cut out 18 pieces of cardboard 3 inches square. Paste a paper square, one of each color, on the large cardboard square, making 3 rows of 3 colors in each row. Paste the remaining paper squares onto the small cardboard squares. You should end up with one playing board and 18 cards.

Activity: Turn over one card of each color; set the remaining cards to one side. Have a child choose one card, turn it over, and try to match the color on the playing board. When the child finds the matching color, he or she lays the card on top of the corresponding color on the board. This continues until all the cards are matched.

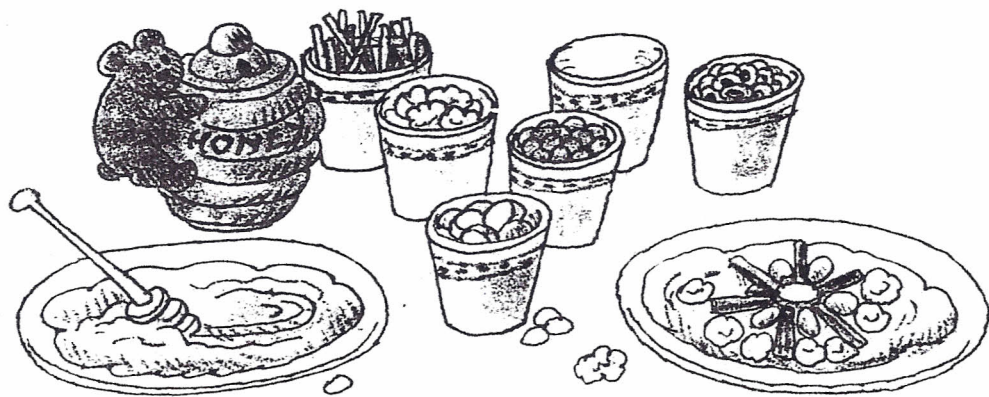


M&Ms or similar candies
gumdrops
popcorn
Cheerios (or any cereal with an interesting shape)
carrot curls or coins
raisins
peanuts or other nutmeats
flaked coconut

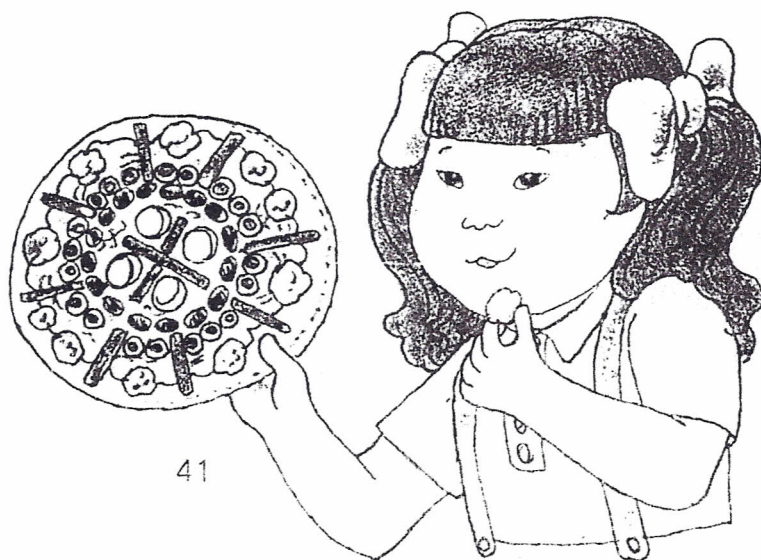
What to do:

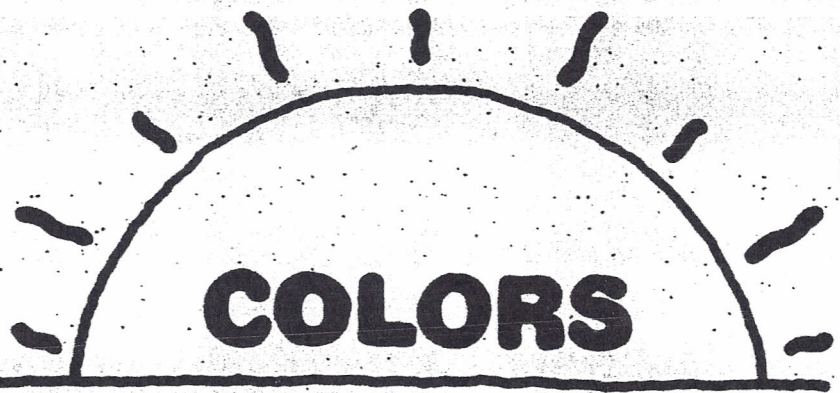
Spread a spoonful of honey over the entire surface of your plate. This will form the glue for your collage.

Select several items from each cup and arrange them on your plate in a pleasing manner.



Admire the results for a while. (You could punch a hole in the top of the plate and add a string.) Then eat!



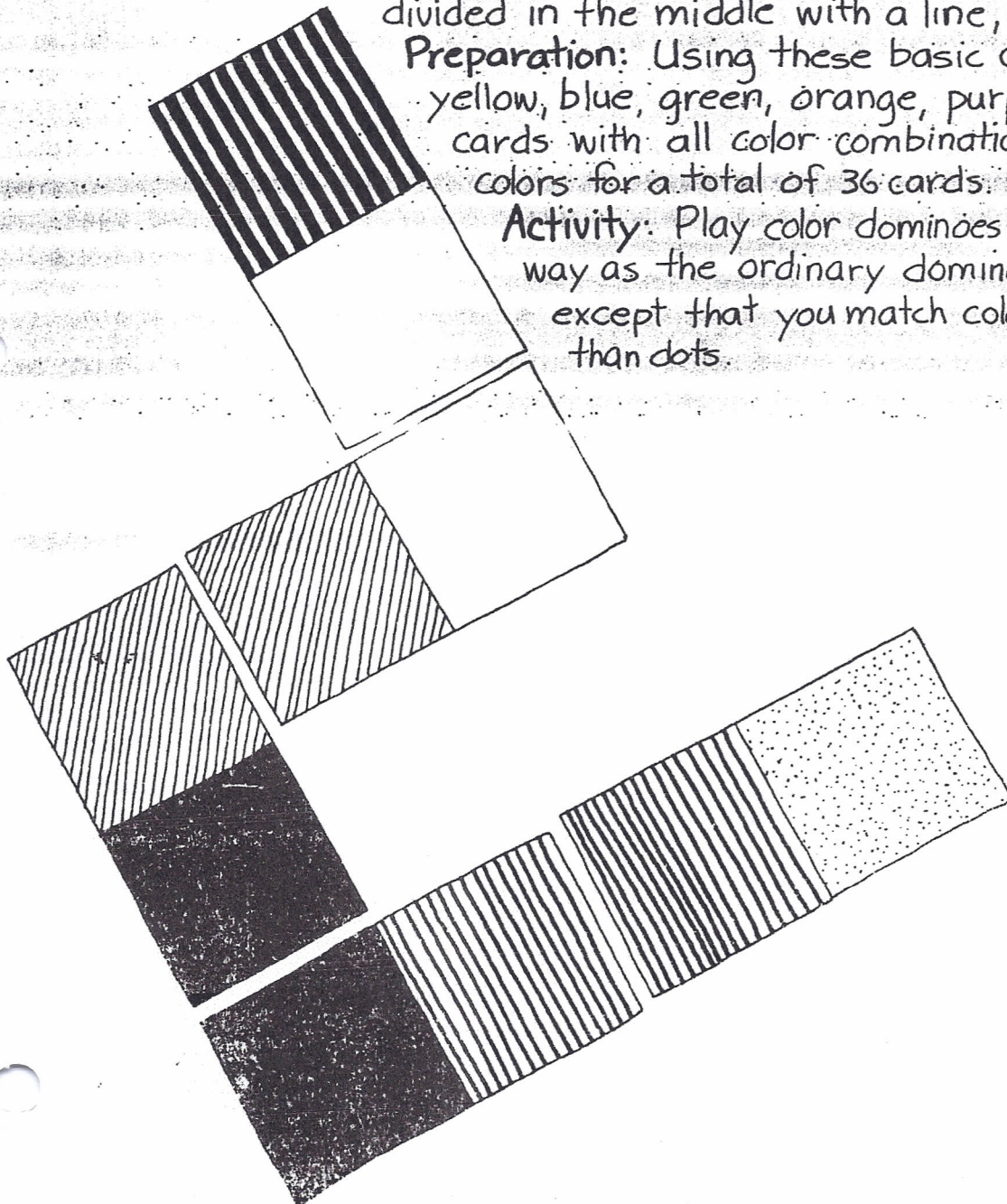


Color Dominoes

Materials: 21 heavy cardboard rectangles divided in the middle with a line, color markers.

Preparation: Using these basic colors - red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple - make cards with all color combinations of these colors for a total of 36 cards.

Activity: Play color dominoes the same way as the ordinary dominoes game, except that you match colors rather than dots.



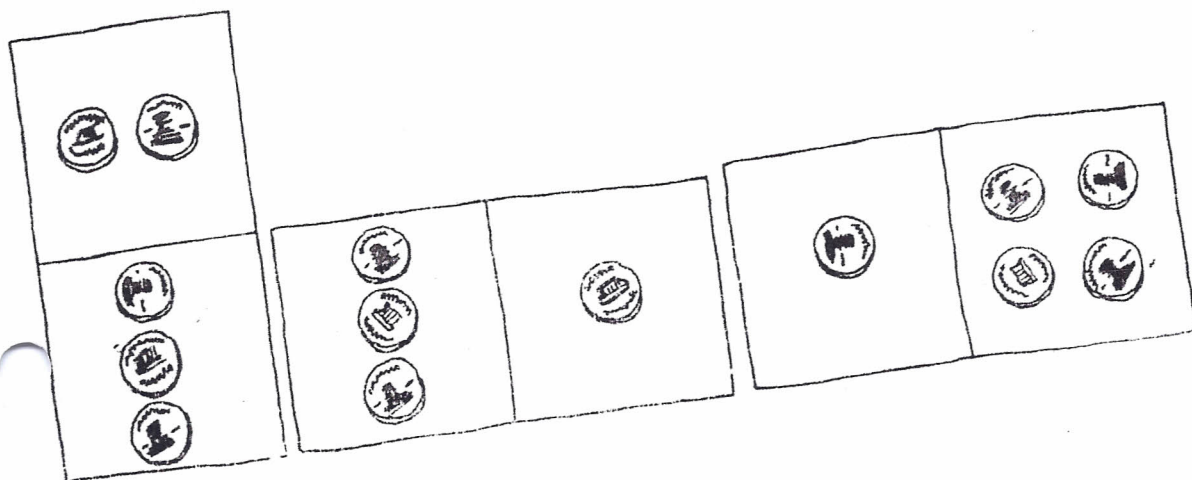


Penny Dominoes

Materials: 28 large rectangular cardboard cards divided in the middle with a line, 147 pennies, contact cement.

Preparation: Glue the pennies onto the cards the same as you would find dots on regular dominoes. Make all the combinations of numbers 0 through 6.

Activity: Have two to four players turn all the cards upside down. Each player chooses seven cards. The remaining cards go into a separate pile. Each player turns over his or her cards. The first player places one card in the middle of the playing area. The next player puts down a card that matches one of the ends of the first card, placing it end-to-end with the other card, thus creating a line of cards. If at any time a player does not have a card that matches either end of the line, he or she must draw a card from the extra pile until a card is drawn that can be used. The first person to use up all of his or her cards is the winner.



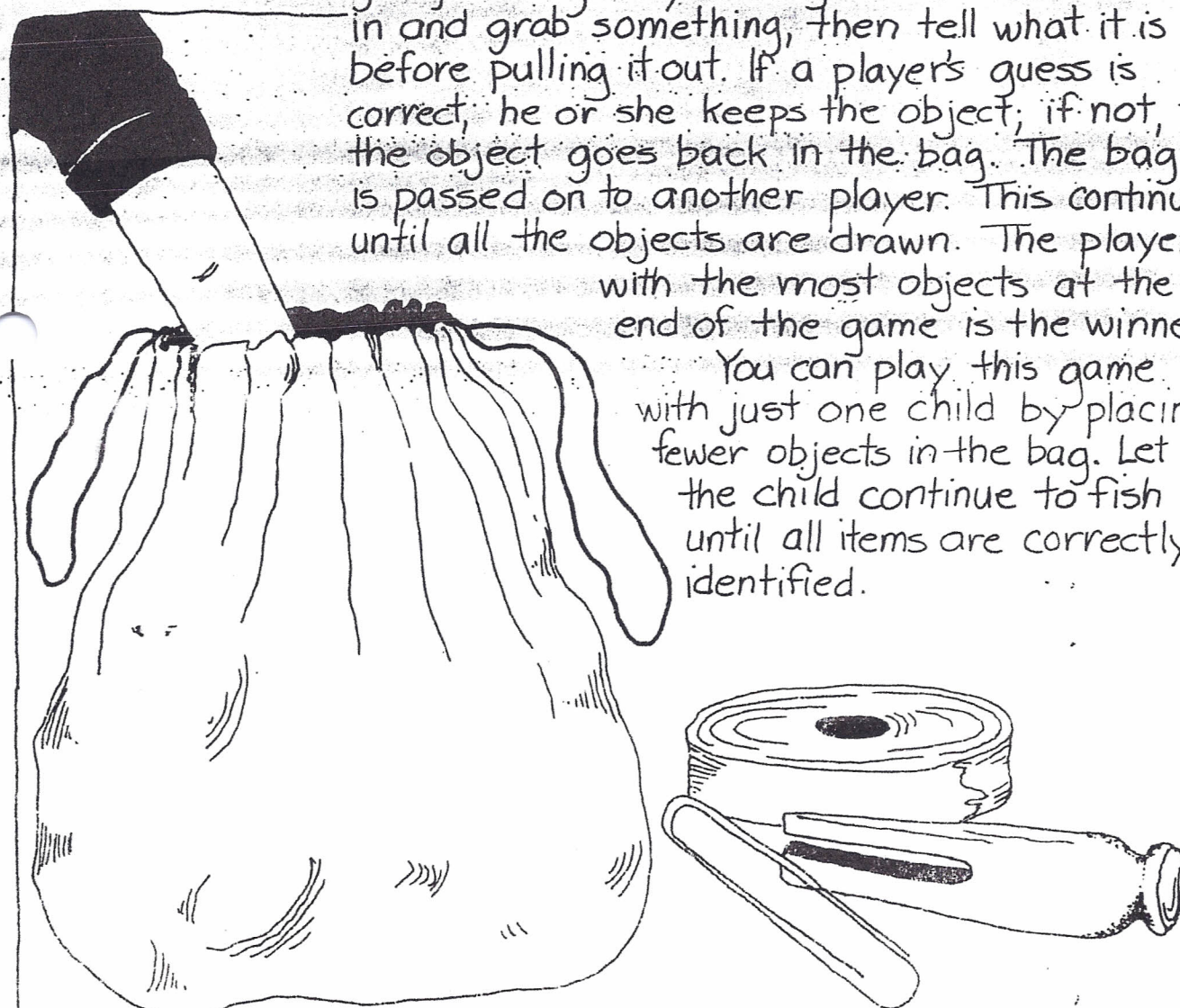
Object Fishing

Materials: Bag (drawstring plastic bag or grocery bag), small objects.

Preparation: Place about 20 small objects in a bag.

Activity: Let three or four children take turns going fishing in your bag. Have them reach in and grab something, then tell what it is before pulling it out. If a player's guess is correct, he or she keeps the object; if not, the object goes back in the bag. The bag is passed on to another player. This continues until all the objects are drawn. The player with the most objects at the end of the game is the winner.

You can play this game with just one child by placing fewer objects in the bag. Let the child continue to fish until all items are correctly identified.





Smells

Materials: 6 small bottles; 6 cotton balls; 3 fragrances, such as perfume, onion juice, and lemon juice.

Preparation: Take two cotton balls and drop some of one of the fragrances on each of them. Put them in two of the bottles. Do likewise for the remaining cotton balls and bottles.

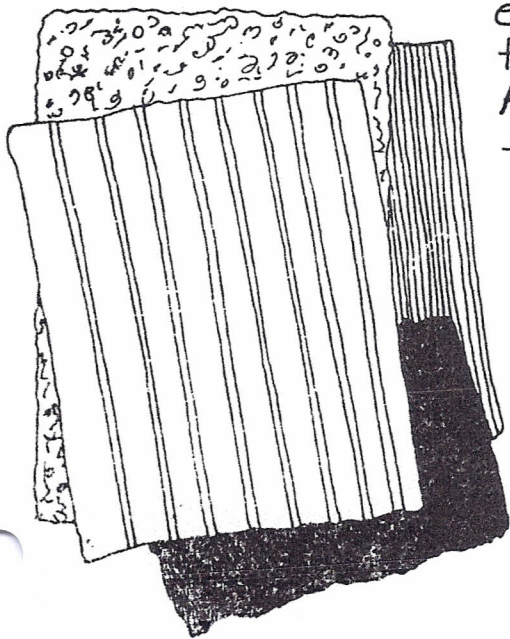
Activity: Have the child smell all of the bottles and try to match up like smells.

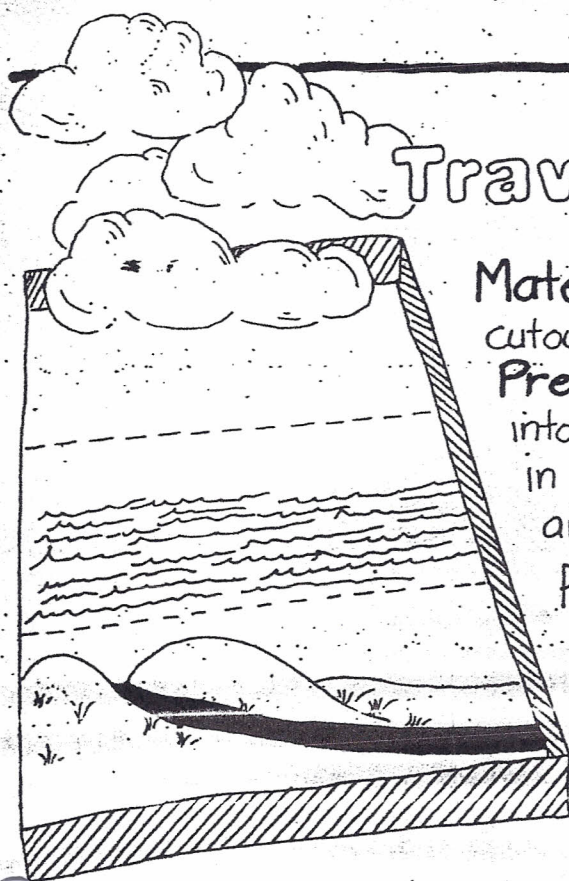
Rough Stuff

Materials: 3 or more pairs of fabric swatches with distinctly different piles and textures (for example, silk, flannel, corduroy, and terry cloth).

Activity: Blindfold the children and give them the pairs of fabric swatches. See if they can match up the pairs by feeling the differences in texture.

Variation: An easier version of this game would be to give a child three different fabric swatches, plus an extra swatch of just one of the three fabrics. See if the child can find the two fabric swatches that match.



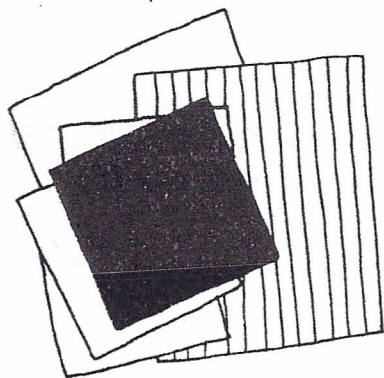


Travel Box

Materials: Shoe box with lid, magazine cutouts of vehicles.

Preparation: Divide the inside of the lid into three sections. Draw a picture of land in one section, water in another section, and clouds (air) in the last section. Glue pictures of different types of vehicles onto index cards—for example, a car, truck, boat, airplane, horse, balloon, and a ferry boat.

Activity: Have your children sort out the cards into three different piles according to where the vehicle travels—on land, on sea, or in the air. Store the cards in the box.

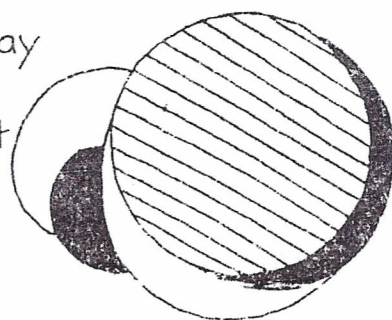


Shapes For Sorting

Materials: Red, yellow, and blue paper.

Preparation: Cut out of the red paper a large circle, a medium square, and a small triangle. Cut out of the blue paper a large square, a medium triangle, and a small circle. Cut out of the yellow paper a large triangle, a medium circle and a small square.

Activity: Mix up the shapes and lay them on a table or the floor. Have the children sort them out first by color, then by size, and last by shape.



MATCHING

Popsicle Match-Ups

Materials: Popsicle sticks, posterboard (or cardboard), pens.

Preparation: Cut cards approximately 6 inches square out of posterboard or lightweight cardboard. Trace around popsicle sticks, forming shapes and designs with the tracings as shown.

Activity: Give your children a handful of popsicle sticks and several pattern cards. Have them lay their sticks on the cards to match the shapes and designs. The children should discover that it takes four popsicle sticks to make a square and only three sticks to make a triangle.

