



Learning through play: connecting the Jamaican Early Childhood and Early Primary curricula with *Sesame Street*

TEACHERS' GUIDE



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Image credits

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Message from the Ministry of Education and Youth (MoEY)



Dr Kasan Troupe
Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education and Youth

In an era when technology has influenced significant changes in student profiles and approaches to learning, responding strategically is a necessity. This reality has presented the challenge of sourcing appropriate educational resources for children, parents, teachers and other stakeholders who are supporting education based on national priorities. The move to align education with entertainment video content for children is both timely and commendable. It is for these reasons that the MoEY is greatly appreciative of the partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in making this vision a reality through the alignment of selected *Sesame Street* programmes with the National Standards Curriculum and other curricula for young children. This teachers' guide and the accompanying handouts will serve several purposes, the primary one being a source of reference on how to effectively engage children in learning in ways that are interesting, attention holding and meaningful.

The *Sesame Street* programmes are an excellent tool for extending and enhancing the learning experience of young children. Some of the features include engaging characters, catchy tunes, and fun-filled content that makes watching them a truly enjoyable experience. It is important to note that the programmes cover a wide range of topics and subjects, including literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills, such as following instructions, working together, and sharing feelings, to mention a few possibilities. The length of the episodes caters to the attention span of children who are unable to focus for long periods. For these reasons, this proposal is likely to appeal to the educator who is looking to diversify their teaching methods.

In terms of skill building, children will get the opportunity to explore situations that foster creative, critical and reflective thinking. This is because the characters included often face challenges that require problem-solving in ways that are responsible. The wide range of topics can be used to engage students by asking questions, clarifying concepts, facilitating discussion, and providing opportunities to apply concepts while helping them to retain important principles through the use of visualization strategies.



The use of the *Sesame Street* programmes as intended is a practical example of how to diversify the learning modalities as a means of ensuring access to education; a strategic imperative of the MoEY. This approach confirms the importance of incorporating different modes of learning, such as media content, into the traditional classroom setting to cater to students' diverse learning styles.

In your use of the teachers' guide and handouts, you will be able to adopt and adapt the recommended activities as you implement practices aligned with the holistic focus required to teach young children.

Best wishes as we all play our part in transforming practices that will prepare our children for the 21st century and beyond.



Message from the Early Childhood Commission (ECC)



Mrs Karlene Deslandes
Executive Director, Early Childhood Commission

Learning should be fun. The best way for a child to learn is to be so completely involved in the activity that the objective is achieved naturally within a child-centred environment.

Welcome to another engaging educational experience. This is where the Jamaican curriculum intertwines with a popular children's programme: *Sesame Street*. The project is accredited to the Ministry of Education and Youth, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Early Childhood Commission in Jamaica. The programme will capture areas such as Language Development, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Engineering, Caring for the Environment and Character Building. These areas will be covered in handouts for parents and teachers which are designed to meet children's needs.

The process will include the following features, which have a specific colour and icon: "Watch together," "Play and learn together," "Talk together," "Links to find out more together" and "Links to *Sesame Street* content."

"Watch together" will involve making connections between curriculum-based topics and *Sesame Street* episodes. "Play and learn together" provides general tips and suggestions to support children's development in different areas as teachers and families play with them. "Talk together" provides conversation starters and questions that teachers and parents can ask children as they interact and play with them. "Links to find out more together" and "Links to *Sesame Street* content" provide links to additional resources to encourage children, family members and teachers to explore the topics further.

The programme is built on the principle that children learn best through play and interaction with the environment. This is also the first guiding principle of the Jamaica Early Childhood Curriculum Guide. When a child plays within a learning environment intentionally organized, several age-appropriate skills are developed. This is the ideal path that affords children to transition effectively to the primary level.



Background

In 2020, Jamaica benefitted from a regional IDB-financed project with Sesame Workshop whereby distribution of approximately 120 hours of content were made available to broadcasting partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.

While the initial aim of the initiative was to provide educational content while children were not able to access face-to-face classes during the pandemic, these high-quality resources can continue to be beneficial to educators and children.

As such, user-friendly resources and materials for teachers and parents that link *Sesame Street* episodes and content with the Jamaican curriculum for early childhood and early primary grades (1-3) have been created.

- 13 handouts for teachers and parents on different topics.
- This teachers' guide with additional guidance for teachers on how to use the episodes to help children thrive.
- A short recorded training webinar with additional information on how to utilize the handouts and teachers' guide.

These resources can be used:

- with the episodes that will be aired by media outlets,
- long-term with other content on YouTube and Sesame Workshop's website,
- as stand-alone resources to encourage playful learning throughout the day or while watching other educational content.



Screen time and safe behaviours

It is important to find a balance where a developmentally-appropriate amount of screen time can be used to support children's development.

Sesame Workshop notes, "A healthy digital diet is one in which children use educational material that is safe, child-friendly and is bound by a routine with limits." Monitoring what children are watching and the websites they are visiting is also critical to ensuring children's safety. It is important to talk with children about safe online behaviours, such as not communicating with strangers, and not sharing personal information on websites, especially with strangers. Families should also be reminded of safety tips for online content.

To watch the video with more tips from Sesame Workshop and access more resources about managing screen time safely visit <http://sesameworkshop.org/resources/maes-minute-screen-time-routines/>.

Age and screen time

[The American Academy of Pediatrics](#) suggests that:

- Children who are younger than two years old should have very limited media use with an adult present to "co-view, talk, and teach" high-quality programming.
- Children between two and five years old should be limited to no more than one hour of screen time per day, with an adult co-viewing or co-playing with children. Children should also be watching media that is interactive, nonviolent, educational, and pro-social.
- While children who are older than five years old will be continuously exposed to digital media, media should not displace "other important activities, such as sleep, family time, and exercise," and adults should still check their children's media use to ensure their health and safety.

Benefits of watching *Sesame Street*

Sesame Street has been providing high-quality educational content for young children since 1969. [A study conducted in 2015 \(Kearney & Levine\)](#) found that when the show was first aired in 1969:



- An average of five million children watched a typical episode.
- The biggest improvements in school performance were seen in boys and black, non-Hispanic children.
- The effects were greatest for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- “*Sesame Street* is one of the largest and most affordable early childhood interventions ever to take place.”

Watching *Sesame Street* at school and at home can, therefore, be beneficial to young children’s development. This is particularly the case when teachers and family members interact with children to enhance their experiences.

Interacting with children to enhance their media experience

Interact with children while you are watching educational content like *Sesame Street* together. Children gain the most from a learning experience when they can have back and forth conversations and related interactions with someone else. They develop their communication and social skills as they respond to questions posed and extend and steer conversations. Your interactions with children throughout the day should also inform the type of educational content you select as you choose programming based on children’s interests.

Focus on asking open-ended questions to keep the conversation going

- Close-ended questions that require a short answer or a correct answer do not easily encourage conversation because you cannot build on children's responses. Children cannot share their thoughts, wonderings and opinions either. Open-ended questions like, “How did you...” or “Why do you think that...” allow children to develop their critical and higher-order thinking skills while learning that their thoughts matter.

Do not wait until children can talk back before you interact and converse with them

- Even infants, toddlers and non-verbal children benefit from conversations as you wait for their responses using gestures, expressions or sounds. They are learning new vocabulary words, how to socialize with others and that their voice and opinion matters.



Listen and notice what excites children as you talk and watch together

- As children get older, consider how to extend your conversations into mini projects, activities or learning centres. Children can make suggestions and help you to plan and execute their ideas.



Sesame Street at school

Sesame Street content

Sesame Street has a lot of rich, safe content that can help children develop in all areas. Some of the episodes or vignettes also focus on developing specific types of content and skills. Additional episodes and engaging educational content can be found on [Sesame Street's channel on YouTube](#) as well as on [Sesame Workshop](#), [PBS Kids](#) and [PBS Learning Media](#). Here is a description of the episode types that might be aired on local Jamaican networks like PBCJ between 2023 and 2024:

- 1) *Super Grover and Elmo the Musical* focus on STEM/STEAM (science, technology, engineering, [arts], math) as the characters use different strategies to figure things out and solve problems. You can incorporate similar strategies throughout the day as you help children to develop these skills.
- 2) *Elmo's World* supports whole child development as it encourages children to be enthusiastic about learning new things. As they are watching, notice what children seem most interested in and find out more about it together.
- 3) *The Furchester Hotel* focuses on avoiding catastrophe through problem-solving. You can reference the characters' strategies and episodes as you encourage children to be problem-solvers throughout the day.
- 4) *Me Want Cookie* is a series of very short vignettes that focus on self-control. Children can talk about the different ways that Cookie Monster maintains self-control and ways they can have self-control too.
- 5) *Cookie Monster's Foodie Truck* helps children to learn about how different foods are made and where they come from. This is a great way to get children excited about trying new foods and learning about other cultures and types of foods in the process.
- 6) *Magical Car Races* helps children to overcome obstacles. While watching, if possible, you can pause the episodes to ask children how they might brainstorm and solve problems. You can also create centres or games with simple obstacles that they can work together to face and overcome. For example, create an obstacle course while playing outside, or create simple mazes in construction centres. You can also make connections with themes like "Transportation."
- 7) Each episode of *Cookie's Crummy Pictures* focuses on a different aspect of self-regulation, which is previewed at the beginning with the "rating" for the



episode's movie, for example, rated "TP" for task persistence. You can reference the different strategies used in the episodes to support the development of specific skills as you help children self-regulate.

- 8) A few public service announcements provide health and hygiene tips on topics such as handwashing. Reference these as needed to help children stay healthy and safe.
- 9) "Elmo's Playdate Special" was developed to offer suggestions on ways to connect during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. This messaging and suggestions for ways to stay connected can also be applicable for children while engaged in distance learning due to illness, or while on long breaks.
- 10) The Christmas special, "Once Upon a Sesame Street Christmas" talks about kindness during the holiday season and celebrations from different religions and cultures. The messaging of kindness and respect for diverse cultures and people can be applicable year-round.

Creating activities linked to *Sesame Street* episodes

There are many ways that you can build on and extend what children have learned while watching educational content. Here are some step-by-step tips for how you can create simple activities to enhance children's experiences.

- 1) Select engaging episodes based on children's interests and things they are curious about and want to learn more about. Encourage children to make suggestions and share their favourite episodes.
- 2) Observe children as they watch the episode.
- 3) Notice what excites the children and what they seem most interested in.
- 4) Talk with children about their interests and questions they might have.
- 5) Build on these interests through spontaneous activities after the episodes (e.g. by singing related songs, or acting out scenes) and, with the children, plan additional engaging activities and experiences based on their ideas and interests.
 - Activities that integrate different subject areas and skills can be developed for independent, small group or whole group fun. A sample early childhood activity plan and primary school lesson plan are included at the end to show an example of how specific activities might be developed from episodes.



- 6) While engaging activities that are not theme-related are always welcome, where possible, consider whether this can also tie into the current theme children are learning about.
 - For example, make connections with other celebrations and cultures and communities while watching the Christmas special. You can also watch *Magical Car Races* and talk together about the different types of transportation that could be used and how that might affect the obstacles the characters face.
- 7) Provide toys and open-ended materials for centres and independent play at tables or small areas. When children also have access to open-ended materials and time for play and exploration, they can build on what they're seeing.

Creating learning centres and playful activities based on *Sesame Street*

You can create learning centres, or corners based on children's interests, the content they are watching or the topic and area of focus. Centres' materials do not have to cost a lot and many centres can be made using reusable and recyclable "trashables" or "loose parts" and other items that are gathered and repurposed.

You can even create centres in a box or bag when you have limited space. Place items like blocks, toys, puzzles, loose parts and games in boxes or bags. Then, encourage children to choose a box or bag, then play with and explore the materials on the floor or at their seat, either independently or with peers.

Think and ask

First, think about the general focus of the centre and ask yourself how to make it as hands on as possible so that children can take the lead and learn through play and experiences.

- For example, if making a centre where children can practise building, include blocks or simple materials like clean, dry sponges, paper towel rolls with a few slits along the edges to notch them together, and small boxes or cups for building.
- Add pictures as inspiration that children can reference, and writing materials so they can plan their building before making it. Vary the materials and pictures to keep it inviting and appealing. Encourage children to share suggestions for



centres, materials they would like included and invite them to help you to create the centre.

Expand on the ideas in the handouts to make the learning centres

- Make a math centre by adding playing cards, items to sort, number cutouts, blocks, cubes, rulers and other materials.
- Add child and teacher-created dolls, writing and drawing materials and boxes for cribs and furniture to make an “All About Me” centre where children can role play and have fun. As children learn more about others like community helpers and other cultures change the props to include simple items like dress up clothes or equipment the children help you make from loose parts, trashables and gathered items.
- Place items to explore and manipulate, such as puzzles, different leaves, items with different textures, items you can build with like blocks and boxes and art supplies to create a STEAM centre. Primary school children can explore measurement with the addition of rulers and tape measures. Children can help you gather these items and families can donate items like magazines and paper towel rolls.
- Create a language and literacy centre by adding items like playdough, writing and art supplies, a tray with clean sand or dirt and an unsharpened pencil to practice writing letters or words, different kinds of paper, magazines, books and letter manipulatives. Children can help you to make word or name cards that they can reference as they write. They can even find pictures for the words in magazines.
- Infants and toddlers can enjoy exploring lots of simple, hands on materials like sealed bottles filled with different noisemakers like small stones. They can build with small boxes, open and fill clean containers, explore textures using cloth scraps (that can also be used to make dolls or toys), and play with water and toys in a shallow bucket on the floor.

Play with children in the centre so that you can follow their lead and talk together

- Build on children's questions and comments. Not sure what to ask to help them talk with you? Use some of the questions in the handouts and build on children's responses as you engage in back and forth conversations. Questions starting with words like “what” and “where” can be used to elicit one or more word responses;



while questions starting with words like “how,” and “why” encourage children to think critically and share their opinions. Here are some examples:

- What is he doing?
- What would happen if ___?
- Where are they hiding? Where would you hide? Why would you hide there?
- How do you think they solved their problem? How would you solve it?
- Why do you think they decided to go around the obstacle? What would happen if they did not go around?

Connecting episodes with children of different ages

Infants and toddlers

While watching very short episodes with infants and toddlers:

- Describe what they are seeing so they develop their receptive vocabulary.
- Observe children’s facial expressions, questions, body language and sounds they are making to note things they like, dislike or are curious about.
 - Use this information to plan similar activities and to note the type of content you will show them.
 - Note their attention span to ensure they are not disengaged and so that they are watching the screen for a very limited time.
- Sing children’s favourite songs and do their favourite movements throughout the day.
- Consider the type of open-ended play materials you can provide for further play and exploration.
 - For example, if infants and toddlers particularly like the different sounds they are hearing, create simple instruments by filling unbreakable bottles with different noisemaking materials like small stones, leaves, and buttons then sealing them so that children can safely explore the sounds.

Pre-schoolers

While watching episodes with pre-schoolers:

- Engage with children about what they are watching. Ask guiding questions to help them to understand and share about what they notice.



- Note children's questions, curiosities, comments and reactions so that you can tailor the types of episodes and content you share with them in the future.
- This will also help you to provide children with engaging, related activities and materials for open-ended play.
- Reference strategies children have learned by watching the episodes throughout the day.
 - For example, ask children how they might solve a problem like the Furchesters or be like Super Grover during STEAM related activities.
- Encourage children to help you to create simple puppets using socks, bags, or glue cardboard cutouts onto fudge sticks.
 - They can read books to their puppets, play with them and use them to act out their favourite scenes.
 - They can also use them in theme-related activities. For example, they can tell their puppets all about themselves or role play special celebrations with them.

Primary school children (grades 1-3)

While watching episodes with young primary school children:

- Engage with children about what they are watching. Ask open-ended questions that promote their higher-order thinking skills to help children integrate and apply the information they are receiving.
 - For example, ask, "What would you do if you were ___?" "Why do you think that ___ happened? What do you think will happen next?"
- Encourage children to ask questions and brainstorm activities and projects that could be developed from their curiosities and interests in the episodes.
 - Children might like to learn more about a type of food they eat after watching *Cookie Monster Foodie Trucks* and that could become a project about growing and preparing the food.
 - Children might work in groups to use simple materials like boxes to create different obstacle courses and types of transportation because of their love for *Magical Car Races*. Provide "loose parts" or different easily accessible materials such as boxes, household and natural items for exploration and play.
 - Children might also want to research and learn more about something they have learned about while watching *Elmo's World*.



- Encourage children to lead the activities by facilitating a discussion with their classmates and to make connections with what they have been watching and what they have been learning at school and at home.

How to use the handouts

Thirteen two-page handouts have been created for teachers and parents on a range of topics:

- All about me
- Creative expression
- Healthy habits
- Kindness and respect
- Language
- Learning through play at any age
- Literacy
- Math
- Our environment
- Persistence and problem-solving
- Self-regulation
- STEAM
- We are all special

Using the handouts during activities and interactions

- The handouts include suggestions on how to build on and extend *Sesame Street* episodes or related educational content in different topic and subject areas. These are simple ideas that can be implemented at any time with very limited, easily accessible materials.
- Use these handouts as jumping off points to spark your imagination about ways you can support your students' development.
- Jamaica's curricula also emphasize the importance of integration. While these handouts might focus on specific areas for ease, you can integrate and incorporate different ideas and approaches from all of the handouts at any time or in any activity throughout the day.
 - For example, you might see STEAM concepts coming out in a language activity or highlight how children are showing kindness, respect and persistence while working together on a project about the environment.
- The handouts can be read online (on a computer, phone or tablet) where you can click directly to access the additional links.



- If desired, you can print the handouts and look up the additional links using the titles that are provided.

Sharing handouts with families

- The handouts should also be shared with families so that they can use these suggestions while watching educational content with their children. They can also incorporate these ideas without watching educational content.
- Individual handouts can be sent out at important times of the year, with links to all of the content if families want to learn more at any time.
 - For example, if your focus for parent support is on social emotional development, you might start with handouts related to that topic.
 - Then, think about how you pace the distribution of the other handouts to support families during meetings, consultations or other events. You can also use these opportunities to remind families about online safety for children and the importance of supervising and engaging with their children while online.
- Families can also be given these handouts based on their specific needs and interests.
 - If a child requires additional support in a particular area, sharing a handout and walking through some tips with families will help them to hone in on this specific area in an approachable, easy to execute manner.



Sample primary school lesson plan and early childhood activity plan

Tips from this guide as well as from the handouts can be incorporated in different activities and moments throughout the day.

As an example of how watching episodes and implementing activities can also be formally included in planning, the next pages show:

- A sample primary school lesson plan.
- A sample of two components from a daily early childhood activity plan.



Sample primary school lesson plan

Subject: Science

Grade: Grade 3

Theme: All About Me

Focus Question: How can I be a problem solver like Super Grover?

Key Concepts/Vocabulary: problem, problem solver

Attainment Targets

- Use recognizable handwriting and appropriate spelling and vocabulary to write for a variety of purposes
- Respond critically and aesthetically to a variety of stimuli

Materials/Resources:

- Episode of *Super Grover*
- Writing and drawing materials including paper or books for each student

Objectives

Students should be able to:

- Write to share ideas and feelings (showing sensitivity to language)
- Respond critically to material observed
- Develop and use relevant vocabulary to describe/ discuss/ evaluate informational material and other material



[*Sample primary school lesson plan' continued*]

Activities

Engage

- The teacher will introduce the *Super Grover* episode by asking students to consider how Super Grover and the characters solve the problem they encounter. The teacher will prompt students to pay attention to the skills and strategies they use to solve their problems.
- Students will then watch the *Super Grover* episode.

Explore

- While watching the episode, pause if needed to engage students in discussion about what they are noticing.
- After, talk together about what happened in the episode. The teacher can ask guiding questions to help students share how Super Grover and the characters solved the problem and the skills and strategies they used to do so.
- Ask students to also think about what they might do in that situation and together, compare and contrast that with the approach taken in the episode.
- Provide students with writing and art materials to write and draw about how they think they can be Super Grover in their own lives. How might they be problem solvers? What strategies could they use when they are faced with a problem?

Explain

- Encourage students to share their writing and drawings with their peers. Encourage them to ask each other questions and make connections with each other's work.

Extend

- Invite students to think of ways to encourage each other to be problem solvers throughout the day.



['Sample primary school lesson plan' continued]

Evaluation

Were students able to:

- Write to share ideas and feelings related to how they could be problem-solvers?
- Respond critically to the episode and the information they and others shared during the activity?
- Develop and use relevant vocabulary showcased in the episode and activities to describe/ discuss/ evaluate informational material and other material?

Post-Lesson Reflection



Sample early childhood daily activity plan: Circle Time and Guided Learning

Age: 3-year-olds

Theme: Foods

Subtheme: Healthy Foods

Circle Time/Whole Group

Topic/Activity Title: We Can Be Monster Foodies Too

Duration: 20 minutes

Objectives: Children should be able to ask, understand and respond to simple questions during conversations then share and write (scribble or include a few letters) about their preferences about food.

Skills

- Ask, understand and respond to simple “who,” “what” and “where” questions
- Express preferences in foods, music, songs

Materials & Resources

- *Sesame Street* Episode of *Cookie Monster Foodie Truck*
- Paper or children's books
- Pencils and crayons

Procedure: Introductory Activity

- Introduce the activity by telling children that they will watch a *Sesame Street* episode about food. If desired, sing children's favourite food related song e.g., “Linstead Market.”
- Tell children that after they watch the episode they will talk about where that food comes from and how it is made so they should listen out for that.



['Sample early childhood daily activity plan: Circle Time' continued]

Procedure: Developmental Steps

Step 1:

- Watch the episode with children and observe what they notice and are interested in as they are watching.

Step 2:

- Ask questions or highlight noteworthy things based on children's interests as you watch together.

Step 3:

- After watching, ask children questions about what they noticed and talk together about how the food grows or is produced. Write down children's responses in steps and highlight the numerals and target letters or sounds as you write.

Step 4:

- Ask children to think about the type of food they would like to grow or produce and encourage them to write and draw about it.
- Time permitting, encourage them to share their writing (scribbles or a few letters) and drawing with their classmates; or share at a different time.

Assessment

- Observe children during the activity and take note of whether children were able to answer questions and participate in the conversation, then share their preferences about food.

Reflection



Guided Learning (Teacher-Directed)

Duration: 5–7 minutes

Topic/Activity Title: Food Rhymes

Objectives: By the end of the activity, children should be able to produce a word that rhymes with a given word.

Skills

- Observe, talk about and sort things that are the same and different
- Begin to express self through a variety of media in music, art/crafts, games, dramatic/role play
- Practise rhyming words

Materials & Resources

- Optional: pictures of rhyming words including foods and food related items (e.g., yam, jam; cake, snake)

Procedure: Introductory Activity

- Remind children that they have been learning about food and that they watched *Sesame Street* and talked about food earlier too. Now, they will play a rhyming game with food.
- If desired, sing one of children's favourite songs and ask them to listen for and point out the rhyming words in the song. Remind children that rhyming words are words that sound the same at the end like "cheese" and "please."

Procedure: Developmental Steps

Step 1:

- Children can play a rhyming game. The teacher can say a word and ask children to say a rhyming word. "I say jam, you say ___". Made up words are ok.
- If using the pictures, children can also try to find the rhyming pairs by saying the names and matching the pictures together.



[Sample early childhood daily activity plan: guided learning' continued]

Step 2: Optional differentiation

- Provide extra support by continuing to play the game using the same word family, e.g., words that end in “-at.”
- Instead of having children produce a rhyming word, children can choose from two words you say to see if they rhyme. “Which word rhymes with tea – bee or run? Tea, bee or tea, run?” They can also be provided with two words and put their thumbs up or make another gesture if they rhyme and put their thumbs down if they do not. “Do bee and tea rhyme?”
- For an additional challenge, children can lead the activity or be provided with three words (two that rhyme and one that does not) and select the two words that rhyme.

Assessment

- Observe and take note of whether children were able to produce a word that rhymes with a given word.

Independent Activity 1: Let Us Cook Healthy Foods

- Children can be provided with pretend food, play pots and pans and recipes from cookbooks to pretend to cook and serve healthy foods together. Children can also “write” their own recipes, menus, receipts for a restaurant meal, etc.
- These items can also be included in a centre/ corner and children can play with them there.

Independent Activity 2: Sorting Foods

- Children can be provided with pictures of food or pretend food and be encouraged to sort them in different ways. They can sort by colour, type, food group, beginning sound, etc.

Reflection



Links to additional resources for teachers and families

Sesame Street

- PBS Kids has online games featuring *Sesame Street* and other characters www.pbskids.org
- PBS Learning Media has a *Sesame Street* collection that includes episodes with related lesson plans and activities for extending the learning in different areas like [Science](#), [Social Development](#) and [Literacy](#). They also have [virtual field trips](#) about a range of topics that are not connected to *Sesame Street*. (www.pbslearningmedia.org).
- Sesame Workshop has resources for teachers and parents including courses, activities, tips, articles, printables and games www.sesameworkshop.org

Local and Caribbean resources

- Caribbean Early Childhood Development Good Practice Guide <https://www.caribank.org/publications-and-resources/resource-library/guides-and-toolkits/caribbean-early-childhood-development-good-practice-guide>
- The Early Childhood Commission www.ecc.gov.jm
- The Ministry of Education and Youth's *Game-Based & Interactive Learning Activities for Early Years* <https://www.unicef.org/jamaica/media/4646/file/Game-Based%20Manual.pdf>
- Printables and activities aligned with the early childhood curriculum themes by term. Handouts for parents can be found in the July–early September, 2017 folders. The July–September 2018 folders have a series of handouts related to setting the foundation for reading and comprehension <http://bit.ly/littleleaderspages>
- *Purposeful Play and Active Learning for Early Childhood and Primary Learners* is a resource developed by OECS to support Caribbean schools during the COVID-19 pandemic <https://www.oecs.org/en/our-work/knowledge/library/purposeful-play-and-active-learning-for-early-childhood-and-primary-learners/viewdocument/3471>



- *Reach Up and Learn Parent Manual: Activities for Children Up to Age 3 Years*
https://reachupandlearn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Parent-Manual_ReachUp-2020_0.pdf
- The STEP Centre YouTube channel has Jamaican videos and activities for children with severe and multiple disabilities
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzgYvERaH37_hYamgjrC-3Q

Language, literacy and math

- Cox Campus has free resources for families and teachers, including video based online school activities for toddlers through grade 3
<https://www.coxcampus.org/families/>
- Free decodable books and other resources based on the progression used by Jolly Phonics <https://www.speldsa.org.au/SPELD-SA-Phonic-Readers-New-Series>
- The Hanen Centre's Language development resources
<https://www.hanen.org/Home.aspx>
- Math activities for all ages <https://nrich.maths.org/>
- Reading Rockets Resources for teachers and parents to support children as they learn to read <https://www.readingrockets.org/>

Digital libraries

- Book Fusion (Jamaican library of free books)
<https://www.bookfusion.com/libraries/MOEYI>
- Global Digital Library (6,000+ books in over 83 languages) <https://digitallibrary.io/>
- Room to Read <https://literacycloud.org/>
- Epic!, a free online library service for schools with books for different levels, videos, and audiobooks. Schools can sign up for free and then give their class a code for free access during school hours www.getepic.com

Resources on gender, inclusion and play

- *Learning Through Play at School: A Study of Playful Integrated Pedagogies That Foster Children's Holistic Skills Development in the Primary School Classroom*, White Paper



https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332407365_Playful_integrated_pedagogies_that_foster_children's_holistic_skills_development_in_the_primary_school_classroom

- *Learning Toys Production Guide* <https://plan-international.org/publications/learning-toys-production-guide/>
- UNICEF's *Gender Responsive Pedagogy: A Toolkit for Teachers and Schools 2nd edition* <https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/6726/file/GRP-A-Toolkit-for-Teachers-and-Schools-2020.pdf>

Professional development

- Cox Campus' free video-based courses <https://coxcampus.org/educators/>
- Free webinars on a number of topics for teachers <https://home.edweb.net/>
- Sesame Workshop's courses and webinars <https://sesameworkshop.org/resources/courses-and-webinars/>
- Virtual Lab School short courses on different topics www.virtuallabschool.org

Social emotional and other support

- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>
- Understood (a website to support those who "learn and think differently") <https://www.understood.org>



References

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