BRIGANCE®

Readiness Activities

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Introduction to the *BRIGANCE® Readiness Activities*

OVERVIEW

The *BRIGANCE® Readiness Activities* is a comprehensive resource that includes engaging teaching activities and strategies, developmental skill sequences, and a wealth of practical instructional techniques and tips to help strengthen children's school-readiness skills in five key early learning domains:

- Language Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Health and Development

The readiness skills addressed in the *Readiness Activities* are those commonly included in preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade curriculums and reflect the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, the National Early Literacy Panel Report, and national and state standards. The *Readiness Activities* is designed to be used with children up to seven years of age and can be used to support any developmental readiness program.

Using the abundant resources provided in the *Readiness Activities*, teachers can implement individual and group instruction to help all children build and strengthen their school-readiness skills across multiple domains. Used in conjunction with the *BRIGANCE® Screens III* and the *BRIGANCE® Inventory of Early Development III*, the correlated teaching activities and resources in the *Readiness Activities* address those skill areas identified during a child's screening or developmental assessment.

The *BRIGANCE® Readiness Activities* resources help early childhood teachers and program directors

- link screening and ongoing assessment with instruction.
- provide developmentally appropriate instruction for all types of learning styles so that every child can experience success.
- deliver differentiated instruction for each child.
- target essential school-readiness skills.
- build home-school connections through family letters and take-home learning plans.

The *BRIGANCE® Readiness Activities* helps early childhood educators

- link assessment with instruction. Planning instruction based on assessment results helps teachers target and deliver developmentally appropriate instruction, building children's school-readiness skills. Teachers who use the *BRIGANCE® Screens III* and the *BRIGANCE® Inventory of Early Development III* to assess their children's developmental and academic skills will find activities and strategies in the *Readiness Activities* that correlate to identified skill areas of strength and need. Using these correlated teaching activities and instructional resources, teachers can provide targeted instruction for their children.

- meet the individual needs of each learner in the classroom. With over 300 teaching activities (many with variations or extensions), the *Readiness Activities* covers a broad range of developmental readiness skills in key early learning domains, providing teachers with an abundance of choices to meet each child's needs. By selecting those activities and strategies that are geared to a child's individual learning needs, teachers can provide differentiated instruction for each child.

- make instruction fun and engaging for children and accessible for parents and families. Within each domain in the *Readiness Activities*, there are easy-to-implement teaching activities, creative suggestions for incorporating readiness skills in everyday activities, and recommendations for read-aloud books to share with the children. For families, there are letters for teachers to send home that suggest fun at-home activities to reinforce skills children are learning and that recommend books families can read together.

USING THE *BRIGANCE® READINESS ACTIVITIES*

The *Readiness Activities* is a comprehensive instructional resource that provides early childhood educators with easy-to-plan and easy-to-use activities, offering meaningful learning experiences for every child in the classroom.

The *Readiness Activities* is divided into five tabbed sections, one section for each domain (Language Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Health and Development). Each domain is divided into specific skill sections, which include Teaching Activities and other instructional materials to support the specific skills within that domain.

ELEMENTS COMMON TO SKILL SECTIONS WITHIN THE DOMAINS

The skill sections within the five domains of the *Readiness Activities* share common elements. To facilitate quick reference, the common elements for each skill section appear in the following order:

- **Objective** states the skill(s) to be taught.

- **Domain** states the particular skill area on which the skill focuses.

- **Rationale** explains why the skill is important.

- **Related Skills** refers to similar skills taught in other sections.

- **Sequence** provides guidance for planning and sequencing effective developmental instruction.

- **Recommendations for Effective Teaching** provides practical suggestions for incorporating the skill into everyday classroom activities.

- **Factors That Impact Development** describes behaviors a child may exhibit if he or she is experiencing difficulty learning new skills.

- **Teaching Activities** provides multiple activities to teach the skill or sequence of skills. These activities are listed in order of difficulty and accommodate all types of learning styles (visual, aural, tactile, and kinesthetic). Each teaching activity identifies the appropriate group size (individual, small group, or class) and the materials or manipulatives needed and describes specific procedures for conducting the activity.

ELEMENTS COMMON TO THE DOMAIN SECTIONS

The elements common to each domain section appear at the end of the section in the following order:

- **Comprehensive Skill Sequences** provides a detailed sequencing of both milestone and intermediate developmental skills that children typically develop by age seven. (The primary or "milestone" skills are shown in bold type.) The Comprehensive Skill Sequences are useful for identifying prerequisite skills, intermediate skills, and skills subsequent to the milestone skills, providing teachers with a helpful guide or reference for planning age-appropriate curriculum and instruction.

- **References** provides a list of the many resources used to develop the *BRIGANCE® Readiness Activities*. Teachers can find additional information about the early learning skill areas and readiness skills in these resources.

- **Read-to-Me Books** provides a list of age-appropriate books for teachers to read to children. The books listed relate to the skills being taught and are available in most school libraries.

  It is important to remember that reading to children helps them:
  – develop a love of books and the desire to read.
  – contributes to their understanding of the nature and uses of print.
  – gain knowledge from pictures and printed material.
  – gain insight into the reading process.
  – expand their vocabulary.
  – develop strong listening skills.

- **Letters to Families**, provided in both English and Spanish, are reproducible letters that suggest fun at-home activities for reinforcing readiness skills and recommend age-appropriate and skill-related books to read as a family. (An Introductory Letter to Families explains to families that these letters will be coming home throughout the year. See pages 13–14.)

- **Learning Plans** are illustrations of the readiness skills children are learning. The Learning Plans can be sent home with children to help them share with their families those skills they have been working on at school.

Introduction

SUGGESTED STEP-BY-STEP DIRECTIONS

1. Select Appropriate Skills for Instruction

The specific needs of the children in your classroom should inform your instruction and determine the readiness skills you will teach.

- The *BRIGANCE® Screens III* and the *BRIGANCE® Inventory of Early Development III* are ideal tools to use to identify children's strengths and needs. The *Screens III* and the *IED III* include a variety of assessments in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional development, physical development, and daily living or self-help skills to use to identify children's strengths and needs in these skill areas.

- The correlation chart, found on pages 15–22, links skill sections in the *Readiness Activities* with assessments in the *IED III*. Use this chart to help you identify the skill section in the *Readiness Activities* from which to select Teaching Activities that address specific readiness skills.

2. Identify Appropriate Instructional Objectives and Developmental Skill Levels

It is important to begin instruction at an appropriate level in the skill sequence. Because skills within the assessments in the *IED III* (and within the Comprehensive Skill Sequences included in this resource) are developmentally sequenced from the earliest mastered skills to more difficult ones, children's present level of performance can be pinpointed within the skill continuum. In an assessment's skill sequence, skills immediately following those identified as mastered are, in most cases, logical skills to be identified as instructional objectives. The skill sections in the *Readinness Activities* provide objectives and skill sequences within the section. Some sections provide a sequence of prerequisite skills, which can be useful when teaching earlier or precursor skills is necessary before introducing more difficult milestone skills.

3. Use the Appropriate Teaching Activities

Once you have determined the appropriate skill level within a skill section, select the Teaching Activities that best accommodate the children's specific needs, your teaching style, and your teaching situation. Determine which Teaching Activities are appropriate for your group size and the skill levels of the children.

4. Reinforce Skills that Have Been Taught

It is important that children have an opportunity to practice, review, and integrate a skill after it has been taught. Many Teaching Activities have variations to use if you choose to use an activity again.

Sending home the Letters to Families and the illustrated Learning Plans that are found at the end of each domain section are other ways to reinforce skills children are working on.

5. Conduct Ongoing Evaluation

After instruction, it is important to evaluate children's skill acquisition. For some children, readiness skills that have been taught may be emerging, for other children, these skills may be mastered.

Observe the children informally to determine the progress they are making in a particular skill area and, if applicable, conduct appropriate ongoing assessment with a tool such as the *BRIGANCE® Inventory of Early Development III*. Use your classroom observations and the results from ongoing assessment to inform next steps for instruction, continuing to build and strengthen your children's readiness skills.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF THE *BRIGANCE® READINESS ACTIVITIES*

- Adapt the contents of this resource to best accommodate your teaching style, your teaching situation, and the needs and learning styles of the children.
- Adapt instructions or directions if needed. For example, if children appear to have difficulty understanding directions or if questions seem to reference concepts unfamiliar to the children, reword directions or reframe questions.
- Ensure that learning takes place for each child by providing input in a variety of styles (visual, aural, tactile, kinesthetic).
- Allow children to repeat an activity as often as necessary for them to achieve success.
- Identify children who might need additional support from other professionals in your school community.
- Supplement this resource with any other developmentally appropriate materials that meet the needs of the children, your teaching style, and your curriculum.

Colors

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Objective

- To recognize and name colors.
- To use color names to communicate information and share experiences.

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DOMAIN

Language Development: Vocabulary

RATIONALE

The ability to recognize and name colors helps a child become more aware of her environment. A child talks about the colors of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, the clothes she wears, and the colors she uses in her paintings. Children make discoveries about color when they use a variety of art materials and engage in creative activities, including painting, drawing, and sculpting. Color knowledge also can help a child navigate the environment more safely when color is used for warning signals, caution signs, or stop signs.

Sequence

SEQUENCE OF SKILLS

Although each child's developmental rate and pattern is unique, the following is a sequence of skills that children typically develop through the age of seven years. Use the skill sequences as a general guide when planning your instruction. The developmental age notations to the left of each skill provide guidance in selecting the appropriate skill level and activity for instruction.

Matches colors:

[2-0] red	[2-6] green	[3-0] brown
blue	yellow	black
	orange	pink
	purple	gray
		white [4-0]

Points to colors requested:

[3-0] red	[3-6] green	[4-0] brown
blue	yellow	black
	orange	pink
	purple	gray
		white [5-0]

Names colors when pointed to:

[3-6] red	[4-0] green	[4-6] brown
blue	yellow	black
	orange	pink
	purple	gray
		white [5-6]

Language Development

Teaching Activities

1. Color Day

Materials:
- Drawing paper.
- Paintbrushes.

Materials in one specific color.
- Yarn, stickers.
- Construction paper.
- Paint (watercolors, finger paints, tempera paints).
- A marker or pen.
- A variety of items.

Group Size: Class.

Preparation: Introduce one color at a time on a special day called "Color Day." Dedicate that day to a different color each week for 11 weeks. Extensive exposure to a single color will help children learn to identify the color and remember it.
- On the day before "Color Day," show children a swatch of the color that they will learn. Give them a paper circle of that color to take home.
- In the Letter to Families, explain "Color Day" and request that families help their children pick out an article of clothing, a toy, or a snack of that color. For example, if the color is yellow, a child might wear a yellow T-shirt.
- For those children who forget or don't have something in that color, make a star in that color that children can wear.

Procedure: Attempt to use the targeted color in everything the children do on that day. For example, on Yellow Day, do the following:
- Wear something yellow to school.
- Provide a yellow snack, such as bananas or lemonade.
- Plan a painting activity with yellow paint.
- Assemble a display of yellow things, such as daffodils, lemons, and a toy school bus. Invite children to name the things they see that are yellow.
- Tie a piece of yellow yarn around each child's finger as a reminder.
- Put yellow stickers on each child's drawings.

- Learn a poem about the color. For example:
  Yellow is a color.
  Let's name the things we see.
  The Sun and a banana.
  Are yellow. Do you agree?

2. Color Match

Materials: Blocks (at least two of each color).

Group Size: Individual or small group.

Procedure: Use blocks to demonstrate to children how to match colors. At first, use only two matching blocks. Later, add other colors, one at a time. Do the following:
- Hold up one block for the children to see.
- Ask the children to find another block that is the same color.
- Match the two blocks as you talk about the objects' colors with the children.

VARIATION: Cut flowers from colored construction paper, at least two flowers in each color. Have the children match flowers that are the same color.

3. The Color Shape Sort

Materials: Shapes cut from construction paper in the colors that you plan to teach.
- Construction paper.
- Scissors.

Group Size: Individual, small group, or class.

Preparation: Cut various shapes, such as stars, circles, squares, and hearts from colored construction paper.

Procedure: Do the following:
- Select shapes in two colors.
- Shuffle the colored shapes.
- Demonstrate the activity by naming the colors as you sort the shapes into color categories.
- Have children sort the shapes by color. As they work, encourage them to name the colors in each sort. Provide help, as needed.
- As children become proficient in matching two colors, introduce other colors, one at a time.

Vocabulary Colors

Language Development

Response to and Experience with Books

Objective

- To demonstrate an interest in books and enjoyment in literacy activities.
- To participate in book-related conversations, asking and answering questions about characters, story events, and ideas, concepts and facts (or asking and answering questions that demonstrate understanding).

DOMAIN

Literacy: Book Knowledge

RATIONALE

Research studies conclude that five-year-olds who have been read to regularly throughout their early years are inquisitive and tend to do better in school. Children who have been read to have better language skills, are more motivated to learn to read, and have a better understanding of the reading process than those who have not been read to. Giving young children successful and enjoyable experiences with books will help create book knowledge, the desire to read, and will cultivate a lifelong love of reading.

Sequence

SEQUENCE OF SKILLS

Although each child's developmental rate and pattern is unique, the following is a sequence of skills that children typically develop through the age of seven years. Use the skill sequences as a general guide when planning your instruction. The developmental age notations to the left of each skill provide guidance in selecting the appropriate skill level and activity for instruction.

1-6 Turns several pages in a book at once.
Points to pictures of animals or common objects.
Looks at pictures selectively.
Turns book right-side-up.
2-0 Turns pages individually.
Points to and names simple pictures.
2-6 Shows an interest in books and reading.
3-0 Describes actions depicted in pictures.
Takes part in reading by "filling in" words and phrases.
4-0 Gains information from books about real things.
Tries to read books from memory.
Follows along in a book being read.
Recalls some main events when asked, "What happens in this story?"
5-0 Retells story from a picture book with reasonable accuracy.
Attempts to read by looking at pictures.
Reads some words by sight.
6-0 Tries to read words by using phonics, context clues, or picture clues.
Reads simple stories aloud.
Distinguishes between fantasy and reality.**7-0**

Literacy

Teaching Activities

1. Let's Get Ready to Read!

Materials: A favorite picture book

Group Size: Individual or small group.

Procedure: Before reading to children, introduce book handling skills to show them how books are read. Do the following:

- Gather children in a circle on the floor. Make sure that each child can see you and the book.
- Hold up a favorite book so that the front cover is facing them. Say: "This is the front cover of the book. It gives us important information. Point to the title and say: "The title of the book is (pause) . . ." See if children remember the title. If not, read the title.
- Continue holding up the front cover. Say: "The author of the books is . . ." "An author is the person who writes the story."
- Point to the illustrator's name. "The illustrator of the book is . . ." "An illustrator is the person who draws the pictures."
- Slowly open the book. Say: "We read a story by opening the book this way. Here is the first page." Continue turning the pages until you get to the end. "Here is the last page of the book. This is where the story ends." Close the book and show children the back cover and say, "This is the back cover of the book."
- Read the book aloud with expression. After reading, ask children to help you retell the story.

2. Repeat After Me!

Materials: A picture book with repetitive verse or phrase.

Group Size: Individual or small group.

Scheduling: The repetitive storybook will be read three times. Plan your storybook reading so that the first and second readings occur over one or two days. The third reading can happen a few days later.

Procedure: Have children sit comfortably in a circle on the floor around you. Then do the following:

FIRST READING:
- Before reading, underline the title with your finger as you read it aloud. Draw children in by reading with expression.
- As you read, pause to explain the meanings of unfamiliar words. Use your voice or gestures, or point to an illustration to convey a word's meaning.
- Make comments as you read, briefly summarizing what's happening to help children follow story events.

SECOND READING:
- Remind children that they have read this book before and point out one or two things that they might remember. Ask children to help you retell the story, ask questions, such as: "What happened here?" "What happened next?" "What did the character do first?" "What is he going to do now?" Encourage children to use these words when they discuss story events.
- Pay close attention to children's facial expressions, comments, and questions to see if they understand the story.

THIRD READING:
- Now that children are more familiar with the book, read it again and invite them to chime-in by saying the repetitive verse or phrase. Pause before the refrain and encourage them to read it as you track the print.

SUGGESTED BOOKS WITH REPETITIVE TEXT:

The Gingerbread Man by Jim Aylesworth

I Went Walking by Sue Williams

Time for Bed by Mem Fox

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

The Little Red Hen by Paul Galdone

The Lady with the Alligator Purse by Nadine Westcott

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina

More Spaghetti, I Say by Rita Golden Gelman

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst.

Number Concepts

Objective

To demonstrate number concepts to ten.

To count objects: ³⁻⁰ 1 2
⁴⁻⁰ 3 4 5 6 7
⁵⁻⁰ 8 9 10 ⁶⁻⁰

DOMAIN

Mathematics: Numbers and Operations

RATIONALE

Young children have an informal understanding of quantity. They know if someone gets more crackers than they do. Teachers build on this early interest to develop a sense of numbers and operations as well as mathematical competencies. Counting is a fundamental skill on which children build higher-level math skills. Rational counting is the ability to name "how many" by associating a number name with a quantity of objects. The skill of counting objects in two sets and determining the total quantity comes before the basic computation skills of addition and subtraction.

Sequence

TEACHING SEQUENCE

Teach the Child One-to-One Correspondence

The basis for counting to determine "how many" is one-to-one correspondence. One-to-one correspondence is the assigning of one and only one number to each object in a set. Requiring a child to create one-to-one matching between objects helps her understand that each object in a set is represented by one and only one number.

Teach the Child to Count Aloud as He Touches Each Object

Touching an object while saying the number name aloud helps reinforce the one-to-one correspondence involved in counting. If the child touches objects as she counts aloud, you will know if she is skipping numbers or giving two number names to a single object.

Teach the Child to Tell the Total Quantity

Once the child can successfully touch each object while counting aloud, have her repeat the last number stated to tell the total quantity.

Teach the Child to Tell Only the Quantity

Once the child can successfully count aloud and tell the total quantity, have her count the objects silently and state only the total quantity aloud.

When Joining Sets, Teach the Child to Count Consecutively

Teach the child to count consecutively when counting objects in two separate sets. Many children have difficulty counting when the sequence is interrupted. Demonstrate counting consecutively by assigning aloud the next number in sequence to the first object of the second set.

Begin by Joining a Set of Only One to Another Set of Objects

When a child is first joining sets, have her join a set of only one object to another set of objects. For example, if you are teaching the child to join sets to make a total of six, have her join a set of one to a set of five.

SEQUENCE OF TEACHING ACTIVITIES

1. **Initially, Use Concrete Objects**

   When you begin teaching rational counting, use concrete objects. A child at the readiness level attaches meaning more easily to concrete objects than to printed material. Give the child opportunities to work with familiar objects. It's fun to use the children themselves to demonstrate the counting of objects.

2. **Next, Use Pictures of Objects**

   After the child exhibits competence in counting concrete objects, use pictures of objects on the chalkboard and on paper.

Teaching Activities

1. A Dozen Eggs

Materials:
- An egg carton.
- Twelve plastic eggs.

Group Size: Individual or small group.

Procedure: Teach children one-to-one correspondence. It is the basis for learning how to count. Do the following:

- Place the egg carton and the twelve eggs on a table in front of the child.
- Point out the twelve empty compartments of the egg carton. Tell the child to place one egg in each compartment. When the child is finished, talk to her about what she did. For example, say:

  "How many eggs did you place in each compartment?"
  "Did you have any eggs left over?"
  "Did you have the same number of eggs as compartments?"
  "Did you have one egg for each compartment?"

- Say: "Just as you put one egg in each compartment, we say one number for each object when we are counting."

2. Going on a Picnic

Materials:
- A blanket: optional.
- Sets of picnic items: a set of paper plates, a set of paper cups, a set of paper napkins, a set of plastic spoons.

NOTE: The quantity of each set of items should correspond to the number of children in the group.

Group Size: Small group. Initially, begin with three or four children.

Procedure: Teach children one-to-one correspondence. Seat the children at a table or have them sit cross-legged on a blanket. Tell them that you are going to have a pretend picnic. Then do the following:

- Take turns passing out the picnic items. Explain that each child will get one.
- Place a paper plate in front of each child and ask: "Do you have one plate?" When the children confirm that they each have a plate, say: "We have the right number of plates. Each child has one plate."
- Invite one of the children to pass out the cups. Then talk about what the child has done. Ask:

  "Do we have enough cups?"
  "Do we have any extra cups—more cups than we need?"
  "Do we have the same number of cups as we have children?"
  It might be helpful for some children to count the cups and then count the children. Say, "Is the number the same?"

- Have the children continue passing out the picnic items. Make sure that each child gets one of each item.

Mathematics