

## Post Office

- What to do**
1. Transform the dramatic play area of the classroom into a post office.
  2. Include a low table for the children to create letters.
  3. Label each of the boxes with a child's name (for younger children use a picture of each child).
  4. Children can take their letters to the "post office" to purchase stamps and mail their letters. Postal workers can cancel the stamps on the letters using a stamp and inkpad.
  5. Encourage the children to create letters to bring home to parents.

**Related book** *The Post Office Book* by Gail Gibbons

 Sandy Scott, Vancouver, WA

# We Can Write Letters

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**Materials**

- word wall
- stationery
- pens and pencils
- envelopes
- stickers
- mailbox

- What to do**
1. Create a word wall in your classroom of words the children are learning or have learned. Encourage the children to use the word wall to write letters to anyone they choose. The children may use any of the supplies at the post office center to do their writing.
  2. Encourage children to use words they know from the word wall and to sound out words they do not know to complete the letters.
  3. Let the children put their letters in envelopes, address them, and place them in the classroom mailbox.
  4. As a class, explain what happens to letters when they are placed in the mailbox.
  5. Arrange to have a class pen pal. As a class, write a letter to your new pen pal.

**Related books** *Clifford's First Valentines Day* by Norman Bridwell  
*Let's Visit the Post Office* by Marianne Johnston  
*The Post Office Book* by Gail Gibbons  
*To the Post Office With Mama* by Sue Farrell

 Lori Dunlap, Amarillo, TX

# Restaurants

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## Materials

menus  
small tablets  
pencils  
clothesline  
clothespins

## What to do

1. If possible, visit a restaurant, including the kitchen area. If not, read books about restaurants and ask some restaurant employees to visit your classroom.
2. Set up the dramatic play or house area to represent a restaurant. Place a table and chairs behind the kitchen appliances so that the food prep area is separate from where the “customers” eat. Tie a clothesline over the food prep area to clip food orders. Put out the menus, tablets, and pencils.
3. Encourage the children to take turns playing different roles (cooks, food servers, customers). Model for or encourage the “food servers” to use the tablets to write down what their “customers” order. The food server can clip the orders to the clothesline for the cooks to refer to it as they prepare the food in the kitchen.

**Related books** *Froggy Eats Out* by Jonathan London  
*Monsterlicious* by Erik Jon Slanderup

 Ann Kelly, Johnstown, PA

# Chinese New Year

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## Materials

chopsticks or paper and rubber bands  
rice  
rice cooker  
soy sauce  
small bowls

## What to do

1. Make chopsticks out of rolled paper and rubber bands or use real chopsticks (donated from Japanese or Chinese restaurants).
2. Make rice with the children. Encourage the children to feel the rice before it is cooked.
3. Cook the rice in a rice cooker. When the rice is done, let the children scoop rice into their bowls.