

Free

BUILD and LEARN **with Blocks!**

**Ages
2-5**



Pierce County Library System

FAVORITE BOOKS

for Math Learning and Play

Building with blocks is a
WONDERFUL WAY
to learn together

**20 Big Trucks in the
Middle of the Street**
by Mark Lee

Baby Goes to Market
by Atinuke

Balancing Act
by Ellen Stoll Walsh

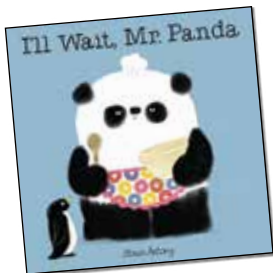
**Everybody in the
Red Brick Building**
by Anne Wynter

Fry Bread
by Kevin Noble Maillard

How Long is a Whale?
by Alison Limentani

I Got the Rhythm
by Connie Schofield-Morrison

I Read Signs
by Tana Hoban



**I'll Wait,
Mr. Panda**
by Steve Antony

It Looked Like Spilt Milk
by Charles G. Shaw

Marta! Big & Small
by Jen Arena

Mouse Shapes
by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Not a Box
by Antoinette Portis

One Family
by George Shannon

**Pete the Cat:
I Love My White Shoes**
by Eric Litwin

**Round is
a Tortilla**
by Roseanne Thong

Say Hello!
by Rachel Isadora

**So Many Circles,
So Many Squares**
by Tana Hoban

Ten Black Dots
by Donald Crews



When children build, they learn about:

Mathematical Concepts

- Learning numbers and counting
- Recognizing shapes
- Measuring and area
- Spotting patterns and repetition

Social Learning

- Building together and cooperation
- Sharing
- Waiting
- Problem solving

Language and Vocabulary

- Storytelling such as describing what they built.
- Using math words including over, under, beside, through, longest, smallest and more.

Imaginative Play

- Building on their own and independent play.

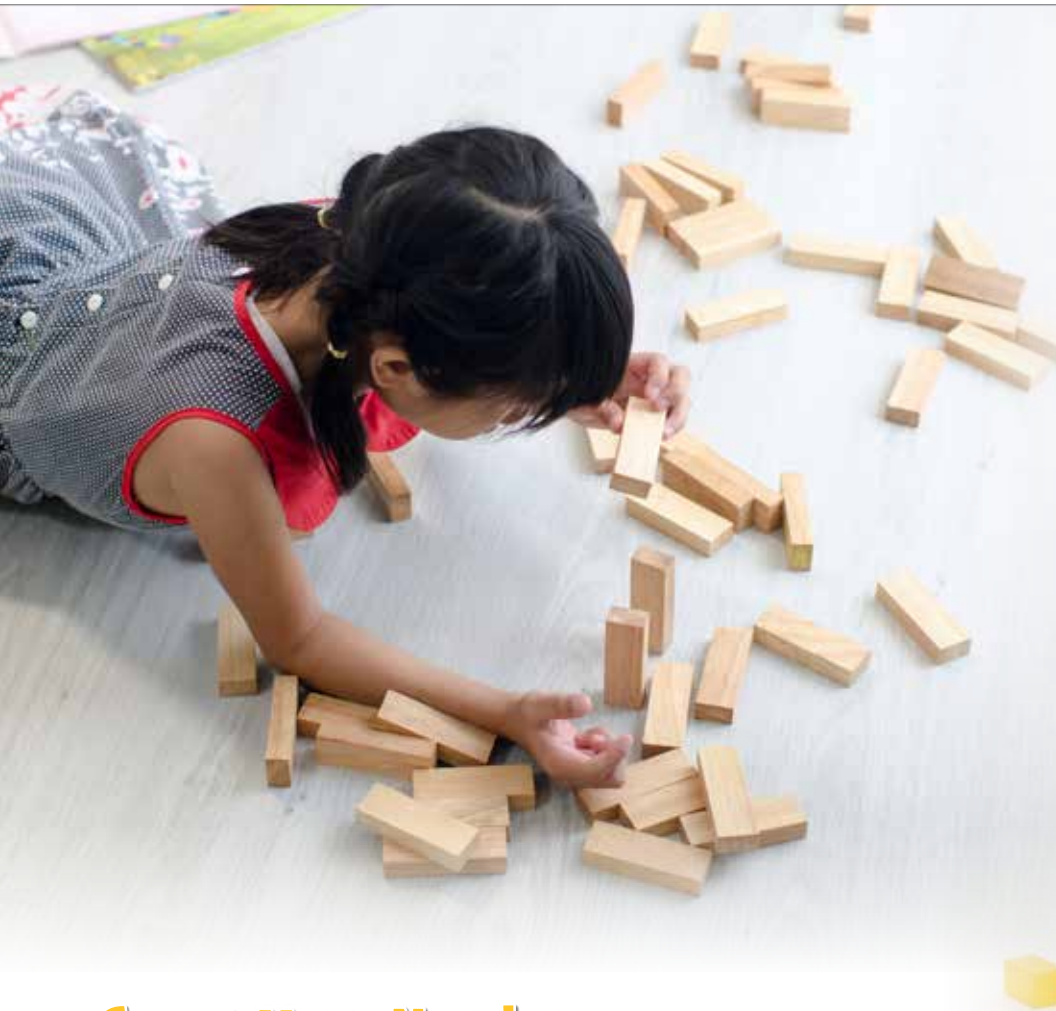


Have fun building and creating!



NUMBERS and COUNTING

Understanding numbers and counting
is essential for math learning -
COUNT EVERYTHING!
(Especially learning numbers 0-20)



Count Your Numbers

Draw a number on a piece of paper and
count out that number of blocks together.
Draw another number and repeat.

Build the Tallest Tower

Build a tower and count how many
blocks you stack before the tower
falls down! Rebuild the tower
and count again. Is the
number the same
or different?
How tall is
your tower
compared to a
favorite stuffed animal?



SHAPES

Basic geometry begins with
KNOWING THE NAMES of shapes

Choose One Shape

Let the child choose one shape.
Sort all of those shapes from the rest.
What can you build using that one shape?

Guess the Shape

Place one block into a bag or
pillowcase. Encourage the child
to feel the shape and try to guess
what shape it is without looking at it.

Expand Shapes

Let the child choose a shape and do
a search for that shape around the
house. Make a list of what you find.

Build Shapes with Blocks

Use blocks of all shapes to
build one large shape such
as a triangle or a rectangle.



MEASUREMENT

Blocks are a fun way to help children
LEARN ABOUT MEASUREMENT

Use Math Words

When building together, use math words.
Many of these words describe measurement –
tallest, biggest, widest, longest, etc.

Use a Block as a Measuring Tool

Choose one of the blocks and use it to
measure things – how many of that
shape does it take to measure a book?
Or your arm? Place blocks all around
a shoe. How many blocks did it take
to get all around the shoe?

Build the Longest Road

Build a long road together,
or have a contest to see who
can build the longest road.
How many blocks did you
use to build the long road?
Count them together.

PATTERNS

Creating patterns with blocks is a fun way to **LEARN ABOUT REPETITION** – an important math concept! Make patterns with shapes or colors.

Go on a Pattern Hunt

Look for patterns around the home or when you go on a walk (bricks, tile, books on a bookshelf, dishes in a cupboard). Can you create these patterns using blocks?

Make a Pattern Puzzle

Trace some of the block shapes on a piece of paper. Invite the child to color the shapes. Use this drawing as a puzzle – placing the corresponding block onto the shape outline.

Build a Pattern City

Children can turn their buildings into patterns. Create a building using all red blocks. Then create another building with only blue blocks. Repeat red and blue for as long as you like (or as many blocks) as you have!

IMAGINATIVE PLAY

Blocks are an incredible toy with endless possibilities - **THEY CAN BECOME ANYTHING**, sparking a child's imagination!



Create a Block Animal

Build a block animal. What kind of animal did you make? Is it big or little? How many feet does it have?

Build a Block Home

Use the blocks to make a home for a favorite stuffed animal or doll.

Build Outside

Bring some blocks outdoors on a nice day. Do the blocks make shadows? If you have sidewalk chalk, trace the different block shapes. Bring in pinecones, sticks, leaves, rocks and other items from nature to use with the blocks.

Do a Home Scavenger Hunt

Incorporate recycled materials into block play! What can you find around the home that can be used with the blocks for even more fun building and learning? Go on a scavenger hunt. Together, search for tubes, boxes, containers, toys and more.



LANGUAGE LEARNING

Playing with blocks supports
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

The more you encourage a child to describe what they are seeing and doing while they build, the better.

Build a Block Teeter-Totter

Build a teeter-totter with your blocks and other objects found at home. You will need something long that can serve as the teeter-totter (perhaps a long piece of cardboard). Using blocks of various sizes, place them on either side. How can you



balance the teeter-totter?

A wonderful book to pair with this activity is "Balancing Act" by Ellen Stoll Walsh.

Design with Block Dominoes

On a flat surface, build a line of blocks close together, one after the other. Knock down the last block you line up, setting off a line of blocks falling down! Did it work? Why or why not? What could you change to make it work better?

Make a Block Chute

Using a wrapping paper tube, hold it at an angle for the child to drop small blocks through the tube. Ask the children to describe what happens to the blocks. Which blocks move through the tube faster?



BUILDING TOGETHER – SOCIAL SKILLS

When children build block structures with other children, they practice skills like sharing, working together and problem-solving. Children can also build what they see in their communities.

Play Restaurant

Use blocks as pretend food. Encourage the child to be the chef or waiter and have them serve a three-block soup or four-block salad, or some other fun block-counted meal.

Explore Day Versus Night

Build your home out of blocks. Talk about how things look different when it is light outside versus when it is dark. Shine a flashlight in the middle of the building. How does it look different when the flashlight is on?

Combine Blocks and Cars

Use blocks to create structures for cars such as a garage, parking lot, car wash, roads, bridges and more.



Build Your Neighborhood

Take a walk around the neighborhood and talk together about what you see. Build your neighborhood using blocks.

Block play is generously sponsored by the Pierce County Library Foundation.