

Sense-a-Tional Spring!

Fun activities to celebrate the season of Spring!



Welcome to Gee Whiz Education

At Gee Whiz, we are excited to offer you this booklet of hands-on experiences you can do with your child/children that relate to the season of spring. Most of these experiences use materials you probably have around the house and take very little time to prep. Not only are the activities fun, they are educational as well.

Below you will see a box that contains the developmental areas each activity addresses and the associated picture codes. When you read the activity plans, just look for these codes. They will tell you what developmental areas you are addressing as you do each experience.

Following this page, you will find the activities. **Items in red may need a little more time to prep or gather.** We hope you find them super easy to follow and a lot of fun! Please, feel free to reach out to us at customerservice@geewhizeducation.com if you have any questions. We are excited to provide you with this fun, educational experiences we strongly believe your child/children will enjoy.



What Developmental Areas Does Gee Whiz Address?

	Language Development Talking, listening, communicating
	Literacy Knowledge Reading, books, letters & more
	Math Knowledge Counting, grouping, sorting, etc.
	Science Knowledge Experimenting, observing, predicting
	Approaches to Learning Trying new things, persistence, cooperation
	Logic & Reasoning Problem-solving, abstract thinking
	Social Studies Knowledge Families, community, environment
	Creative Arts & Music Fine art, pretending, dancing, singing
	Social & Emotional Development Self-regulation, engaging with others
	Physical Development & Health Small & large motor skills, safety, nutrition



This symbol indicates the experience addresses character education.

Get Moving!

This symbol indicates the experience helps children build gross motor skills.



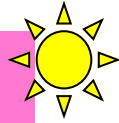
This symbol indicates the experience can, or should, be done outdoors.

Sense-a-Tional Spring!

Enjoy the following activities with your entire group!

Exploring Together: Discovering Spring

(all ages,     )

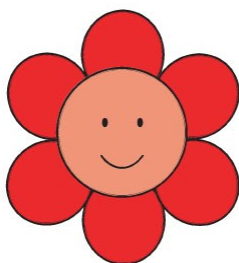


Materials:

- ☐ Cellphone or digital camera
- ☐ OPTIONAL FOR EXTENSION: White paper, crayons/markers, paint, paintbrushes (your choice)
- The change of seasons opens the door for many opportunities for children to use their senses to explore and learn. If spring hasn't come to your area yet, just save these activities and plan to use them when it does. As children participate in this experience, they will observe, share ideas with others and make discoveries while using their senses.
- It's time to go on a Spring Hunt. Take the children outdoors and go for a hunt to look for signs of spring in your areas. Encourage them to use their senses of sight, hearing, touch and smell to discover signs of spring. How many different signs can they find? Nonverbal children can point to what they find and you can describe it for them. As the children look for, and discover, signs of spring, they will practice sharing ideas with others and learn new vocabulary.
- Once inside, have each child share his/her favorite sign of spring found during the Spring Hunt. For children who are not yet verbal, you can name some of the signs they found and encourage them to nod or shake their heads to share which they liked best.
- EXTENSION:** Provide more advanced children with art materials and invite them to paint or draw pictures to show the signs of spring they discovered.

Questions to Spur Thinking

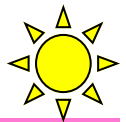
- What color of flower did you find? Where did you find it?*
- What did you like most about this game?*
- How could we use the flowers to play a different game?*



Questions to Spur Thinking

- What signs of spring do you think we might find?*
- What signs of spring did we find?*
- Which signs of spring are your favorites? Why?*

Get Moving!



Exploring Together: Put the Flower...

(all ages,       )

Materials:

- ☐ **Flowers taped to drinking straws** - To prepare, print out p. 7, cut apart and attach each flower to a drinking straw. If you have a big group, you will need to prepare more than one set.

Ahead of Time: Hide the flowers around the room or even outside.

- Children love to find things and they also love to play games. This experience achieves both of these goals. At the same time, it helps children build listening skills, reinforces colors, incorporates positional concepts and gets the children moving ... all at the same time.
- Act like you are looking for something as you move around the room or outdoor play space. As children become curious, explain that you are looking for hidden flowers. Challenge the children to help you find them. For children who are more verbal, encourage them to describe where they found their flowers. Nonverbal children and point to where they found theirs and you can describe the location.
- Next, make sure that each child has one flower and then play the game, "Put the Flower..." Sing the song, "Put the Flower..." (p. 8) and incorporate different body parts and positional words like over, under, behind, between, etc. We have several verses included but you will want to add more. Play for as long as the children show interest.
- EXTENSION:** Locate some plastic flower vases and put these out with the flowers taped to straws you used to play the game. The children can then use these materials to create flower arrangements.

Sense-a-Tional Spring!

Small Group/Center Activities (Toddlers - 4 years)

Stamp Paint Flowers

(Toddlers—4 years, ? 🖐️ 🔑 🖍️ 😊 💬)

Materials:

- ☐ White paper
- ☐ **Empty, clean water bottles and/or soda bottles** (no lids)
- ☐ **Folded paper towels soaked with paint on paper plates** (assorted colors)

- This art experience also challenges children to think creatively because they will be using a common every day item (water bottle) for a totally different purpose. Additionally, this experience invites children to make and test predictions. It also opens the door for you to talk about, or reinforce, colors.
- Set out all the materials and invite those children who show interest to use them for stamp painting. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Toddlers/Twos/Young Threes: For these children, you will probably need to show them how to press the bottom of the water bottle on the paint-soaked paper towel and then on the white paper. These children may decide to do things their own way... which is fine. With art activities, the process is much more important than the end product. Additionally, be sure to talk about the colors of paint these children use as they create.
- Older Threes/Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can predict what they think they will see when they press the bottoms of the water bottles in paint and then on paper. They can also talk about the colors of paint they choose to use and what happens when the colors mix. These children may think of other recyclable materials they want to try as part of this experience. If so, help them locate these materials if at all possible

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you think you will see when you lift the water bottle?*
- *What other recyclable materials do you think would make flower shapes if you used them for printing? Why do you think that?*
- *How does the flower look? Feel? Smell?*
- *What do you think we would find if we looked at the part of the flower that is under the dirt?*

The Parts of a Flower

(Toddlers—4 years, 💬 ❤️ 😊 ? 🔑 ⓘ 🖐️)

Materials:

- ☐ **Access to a real, nontoxic flower (planted)**
- ☐ **Unbreakable magnifying glass** (if available)
- ☐ Notebooks, crayons/markers
- Hands-on exploration is the best way for children to learn. During this experience, the children will explore a flower to learn more about its parts, how it grows, where it grows, what helps it grow, etc. Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Head outside with the unbreakable magnifier (if you have one) as well as the notebooks and crayons/markers (see option for Fours/Advanced Preschoolers below). Play, "I Spy" and describe the flower the children will explore. See if they can find it based on the clues you give.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: Invite this group to look at the flower with you. Describe the different parts of the flower (e.g., petals, leaves, stems). Invite the children to smell the flower. Those who are verbal can describe what they smell. Invite the children to gently touch the flower. How does it feel? Use plenty of language when working with these children. This will help them build future language and vocabulary skills.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can be challenged to identify the parts of the flower as they explore. Some may already be able to name these on their own. Invite these children to find other flowers and then compare/contrast them. Provide them with paper and crayons/markers to also draw pictures of the flowers they find ... just like scientists!



Sense-a-Tional Spring!

2 Infant Activities

(These work for Toddlers, too!)



Flowers and Water

(Infants - ♥ 🖐️ 🔑 🗣️)

Materials:

- ☐ **Sponge flowers** - To make, trace a flower-shaped cookie cutter on new sponges and cut out.
- ☐ Shallow bowl or plastic tub of warm water, towel

- Infants love to explore water and this activity invites them to also develop fine motor skills by squeezing flower-shaped sponges. In addition, water play is also an excellent sensory experience!
- Place a towel on the infant's highchair tray or a low table...whichever is the most appropriate. Show infant the flower-shaped sponges. Put one in the water and see if the infant will do the same with the others.
- Play with the sponges in the water with the infant, using plenty of language to describe the infant's actions. Talk about how the water feels, looks and sounds as the infant explores.

A Song of Spring

(Infants - ♥ 🎵 🔑 🗣️)

Materials:

- ☐ None needed

- Songs are wonderful tools for helping infants build receptive and expressive language skills. This one also involves an element of movement which makes it even more engaging!
- Sit on the floor and hold the infant so that he/she is standing (if developmentally appropriate). Sing the following song and when you say the word, "popping," gently lift the infant up and put him/her back down.

SPRING IS COMING
(tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

Spring is coming, it is true!
Warm sunshine and flowers, too.
Little buds upon the trees
POPPING out for all to see.
Spring is coming, it is true!
Warm sunshine and flowers, too.



Sense-a-Tional Spring!

2 School-Age Activities

Helping the Birds



Materials:

- ☐ **Suet feeder** (empty)
- ☐ Yarn, scissors, rulers

- This experience provides children with the opportunity to lend a helping hands to birds. It is also a wonderful way for them to practice measuring, using their observation skills and working together toward a common goal.
- Show children the empty suet feeder and see if they know what it is. Explain that it is a special type of bird feeder that can be used to hold a bird food called suet. However, explain to children that they are NOT going to use it in this way. Instead, they are going to fill the feeder with a material birds can use as they build their nests...yarn!
- Provide children with yarn, scissors and rulers. Have children cut lengths of yarn that are approximately 4" long. They will need to cut enough lengths to fill the suet basket. As children cut the yarn, talk with them about how they believe birds might use the yarn to make their nests.

EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY: Once feeder is filled with yarn pieces, have children decide together where to hang it in the backyard. Ideally, it would be good to hang it in a place that children can watch from inside so they can see if birds come to take the yarn. Children can record their observations in a picture or photographic journal.

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What types of materials do birds use to construct their nests?*
- *How might birds use these yarn pieces in their nests?*
- *Where would be a good place to hang yarn-filled feeder so the birds can find it?*
- *What did you observe the birds doing with the yarn?*

Beautiful Blossoms



Materials:

- ☐ **Colored tissue paper**
- ☐ Craft glue
- ☐ Small branch for each child (children will find their own)

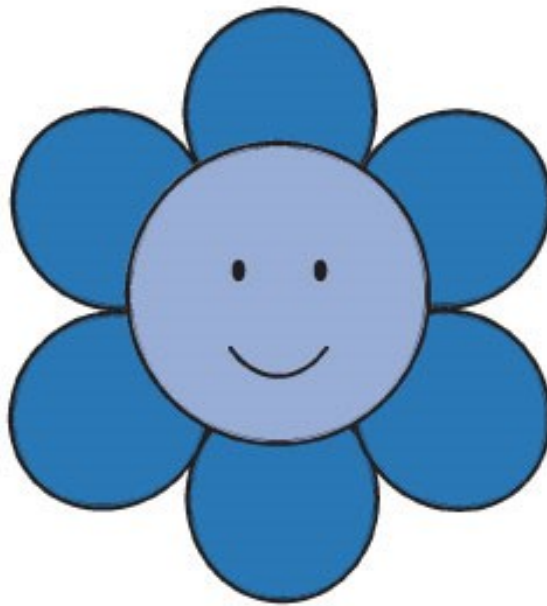
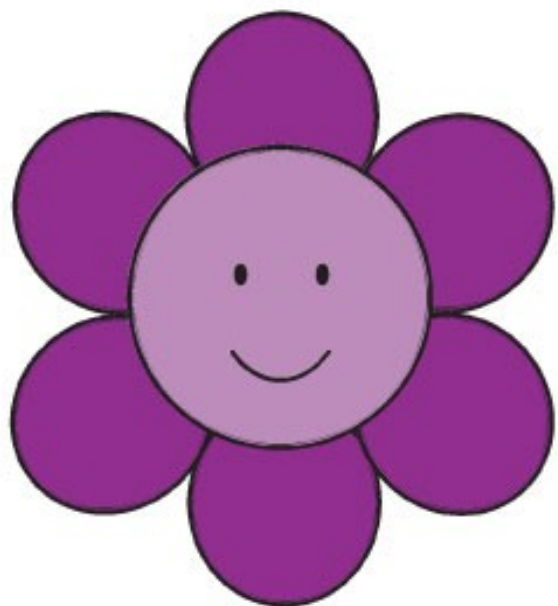
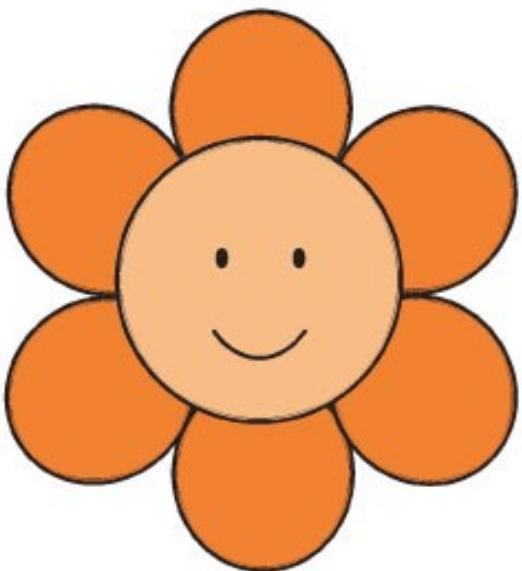
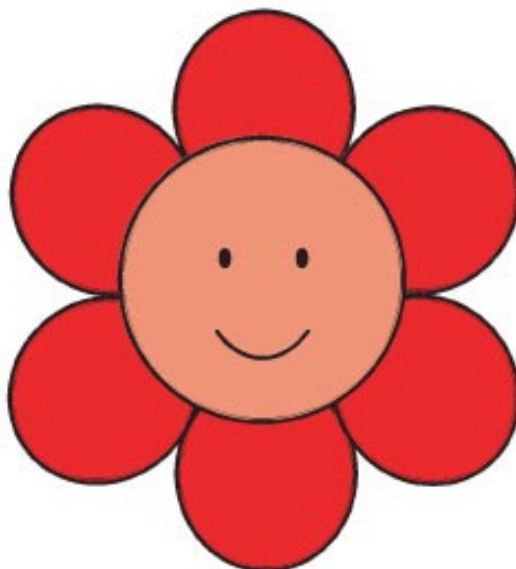
- This open-ended art experience invites children to create using a combination of natural and manmade items. In the process, the children will build fine motor skills, think creatively and then share their ideas through language as well.
- Spring is a time for blossoms! There are so many different types of trees that bloom in the spring. If you have any trees blooming in your area, invite the children to explore them. Then, have each child find a stick/small branch from the ground and take it to your art area. The children can then use the materials you gathered to create their own beautiful blossom branches by tearing/cutting art tissue to glue to the branch/stick. Once the glue dries, the children can display their branches/sticks.

EXTEND FOR ANOTHER DAY: The children can make additional branches/sticks using different colors of art tissue.

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Why do you think some trees make blossoms while others do not?*
- *Where could you go in your community to see trees filled with blossoms?*
- *Tell me about the blossoms you created and how you did it.*





PUT THE FLOWER...

(tune: "If You're Happy & You Know It")

Put the flower on your head... on your head.
Put the flower on your head... on your head.
Put the flower on your head...right up on your head.
Put the flower on your head... on your head.

Put the flower behind your back...behind your back.
Put the flower behind your back...behind your back.
Put the flower behind your back...right behind your back.
Put the flower behind your back...behind your back.

Put the flower between your feet...between your feet.
Put the flower between your feet...between your feet.
Put the flower between your feet...right between your feet.
Put the flower between your feet...between your feet.

Put the flower under your chin...under your chin.
Put the flower under your chin...under your chin.
Put the flower under your chin...right under your chin.
Put the flower under your chin...under your chin.



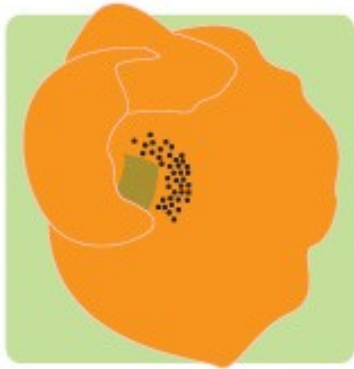
Flower Lotto Game

Lotto is a great game to play with children because it enhances visual discrimination skills, encourages language, promotes comparing/contrasting and so much more. On the next three pages (9, 10 and 11), you will find a printable Flower Lotto Game (3 different playing cards). Here are just a few ideas on how you might want to use this material:

- Print out, mount to heavyweight paper, cut apart and use as a free choice manipulative material.
- Print a copy out for each child to cut apart to use individually.
- Print 2 copies of the pages that contains the individual flowers. Cut apart and mount each flower to an index card. Use the cards to play memory.







Do you want your children to learn through hands-on exploration?



That's what we want, too!

Gee Whiz Education provides high-quality, hands-on, educational experiences for all ages (infants through school-age) in our monthly easy-to-use, digital units

- ☑ *Learning and fun go hand-in-hand with Gee Whiz*
- ☑ *Experiences designed for a home setting*
- ☑ *ALL ages are included ... from babies to school-age*
- ☑ *Need to meet state standards? We've got you covered!*



Monthly Price

\$18.95
per month

Quarterly Price

\$53.95
per quarter

Yearly Price

\$192.95
per year

15% discount

Go to www.geewhizeducation.com to subscribe!

* Offer valid for new or returning Gee Whiz customers only. Cannot be combined with any other discount or offer.
After your first monthly, quarterly or yearly payment, you will be charged the regular rate automatically. See prices above.