



The InvestiGator Club™ Prekindergarten Learning System

Investigations

TEACHER'S
EDITION

Integrated Activities for Exploring, Experimenting,
and Making Discoveries



Marvelous Me!



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Part 2

Special Me!

Tell children: *Now that you have been investigating what makes your body special and how you use your five senses, it's time to discover what makes you special and different from others. We'll do lots of thinking, exploring, and creating together. If you are ready, let's start investigating!*

Literacy/Fine Motor Skills/ Oral Language

Children engage in name-recognition activities including tracing and writing letters.

Materials

- tagboard
- black marker
- tracing paper
- modeling clay, chenille sticks, buttons, dried beans (optional)
- letter cards
- crayons or pencils
- [My Name Activity Sheet](#) for each child

For 3-year-olds

To help with name recognition, place a photo of each child on the card with their name. On the back side of the card, just write the name. As the year progresses, use the name side for identification. When using letter cards, some children might need help with correct letter orientation. Provide this help by placing a small red dot in the upper right-hand corner of each letter card.

My Name

Beforehand write each child's name in black marker on a four-by-eleven-inch (or larger) piece of tagboard. Call each child by name to collect the name card and then be seated in a circle. Explain: *Everyone's name is special. Your name tells who you are. Sometimes we go by different names. Dilly Gator's real name is Cordelia Gator, but everyone calls her Dilly. Some of you might have special nicknames too.* Have children look at the name on their card. Say: *Your name is made up of letters.* Ask children to touch each letter in their name. Point out that some names have a few letters and others have many. Invite each child to stand, hold up their name card, and say their name aloud.

Pattern an oral language activity after the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Begin by naming a child and asking the child to respond by naming the child seated next to him or her.

(Magda), (Magda), who do you see?

I see (Darrell) looking back at me.

Continue around the circle until all the children have been named.

My Name (continued)

The following activities offer practice in name recognition:

- Provide letter cards for children to build their names using the name card as a model.
- Have children use modeling clay, chenille sticks, buttons, or dried beans to form the first letter in their names.
- Print a child's name as he or she watches. Make a slow demonstration for each letter. Help children use a finger to trace over your printed example. Then cut sheets of tracing paper the same size as the name card, place them on top of the name, and staple on one side. Children can see their name in black under the tracing paper. Have them practice tracing the letters. Make these tracing tags accessible for children to practice on a regular basis. Additional tracing paper can be added as needed.
- Display the names, and see how many children can recognize them.
- Give each child a My Name Activity Sheet. Observe children as they trace their names. Then encourage them to try writing their own names.

My name is
Rosalita
Sausalita!



**Literacy/Fine Motor Skills/
Social and Emotional/Oral
Language**

Children label a bag with their name and fill it with special treasures for "Show and Tell."

Materials

- paper bags with handles (1 per child)
- name cards
- crayons or markers
- art scraps, stickers (optional)
- glue

My Own Bag

Explain: *Dilly often carries around a backpack filled with special things she likes to use. Inside you might find Dilly's notebook and pencil so she can write down things she investigates. Today you are going to decorate a bag to fill with things from home that are special to you. Then everyone will have a turn to bring the bag back to school and share what is inside.*

- Provide each child with a paper bag with handles. Provide children's name cards for models as children label the bags with their names. Offer help to children who ask. Suggest that children decorate the bags any way they like.
- Send home the bags along with a note explaining the activity. Children can put anything inside that is special to them—a toy, article of clothing, photograph, book, movie, and so on. Include in the note a schedule of when each child is to bring the bag to school for sharing. Remind each child the day before.
- As sharing begins, explain: *When you share things that are special to you, we can discover a lot about you and what you like. What special things did you bring to share with us today?*
- Encourage children to describe each item and tell how it is used and why they like it so much.



Children experiment with shadows and learn to play "Shadow Tag."

Materials

- bright light source
- white butcher paper
- crayons or markers
- construction paper
- scissors
- drinking straws
- tape

Me and My Shadow

Explain: *One thing that is special about you is that you have your very own shadow. All the InvestiGators look forward to sunny days when they can make their shadows move in different ways. They like to chase each other's shadows too.*

Demonstrate playing with shadows using your hands and a bright light. Show how each time you change your hand position, your shadow does the same. Invite children to move their hands in the light so the shadows fall on a wall.

Children can investigate what happens when they move closer or farther from the wall. Ask: *What do you see? How does your shadow change?*

Tape white butcher paper to the wall. Have children trace each other's hand shadows. Then have children hold their hands at different distances from the paper. Ask: *How can you make your shadow smaller? bigger?*

Try these shadow activities too:

- Children can help cut shapes from construction paper and tape them to drinking straws to make shadow puppets. Have them investigate what happens when they hold up a puppet in front of the light and move it about.
- Play "Shadow Tag" outdoors on a sunny day. Have children pair up and find a good space where they will play. One child is the "walker" and the other child is the "tagger." On a *go* signal, the tagger tries to tag the walker by stepping on his or her shadow. Children then switch roles and play again. Stress the importance of honesty and fairness while playing so the game remains fun for everyone.

**Science/Oral Language/
Creative Arts/Fine Motor
Skills**

Children learn about reflections using mirrors and then draw self-portraits.

Materials

- unbreakable hand mirrors
- [Mirror, Mirror Activity Sheet](#) for each child
- crayons or markers



Mirror, Mirror

Tell children that Rosalita Sausalita uses a mirror when she practices her dance steps. She can see herself dancing. This helps her to know how she is moving. Provide hand mirrors. Have children look in the mirror to observe themselves as they examine their features, make faces, and change expressions to show happy, sad, excited, and mad. Explain: *When you look in a mirror, you see a copy of yourself. This is called a "reflection."* Invite children to talk with a partner, telling what they see in their reflection.

- Hold up one mirror and turn your back to a second mirror. Show children how to position the mirror so they can also see the one behind them. Ask what they see now.
- Children can walk around the classroom to investigate other reflective surfaces, checking windows, doors, tables, walls, and shiny things. Have them identify which surfaces are reflective and which are not. Ask: *How are these reflections different from the one in the mirror?*
- As children look at themselves again in the mirrors, ask them to describe their faces. Then have them draw self-portraits using their reflection as a model. Give each child a [Mirror, Mirror Activity Sheet](#) to make his or her drawing inside the frame.

**Social and Emotional/
Dramatic Play**

Children recognize and acknowledge things they are good at doing and demonstrate for others to guess.

I Can Do It!

Tell children that we are all good at doing something. Dilly is a good reader, and JT is good at playing the harmonica. Chuck Wood is great at building things while Rosalita is a computer whiz. Then there is Manny Salamander who is quite a soccer player while Bruno Buzzbee gives out good advice to everyone. Discuss with children things they can do, including routines such as washing hands, brushing teeth, and picking out clothes; physical activities such as running, jumping, hopping, and playing games; and caring activities such as being a good friend, helping, loving, and taking care of a pet.

- Ask: *What are some things you can do now but could not do when you were a baby? What are some things you want to learn to do when you get older?*
- Invite children to choose an activity they do well and act it out for the others to guess. After pantomiming, the child can ask: *What do I do well?* Once the activity is identified, ask the others to raise their hands if they do the activity well too. Caution children to listen and watch carefully so when it is their turn they will not repeat an activity someone already chose.

Children discover just how unique their fingerprints are and then turn their prints into art creations.

Materials

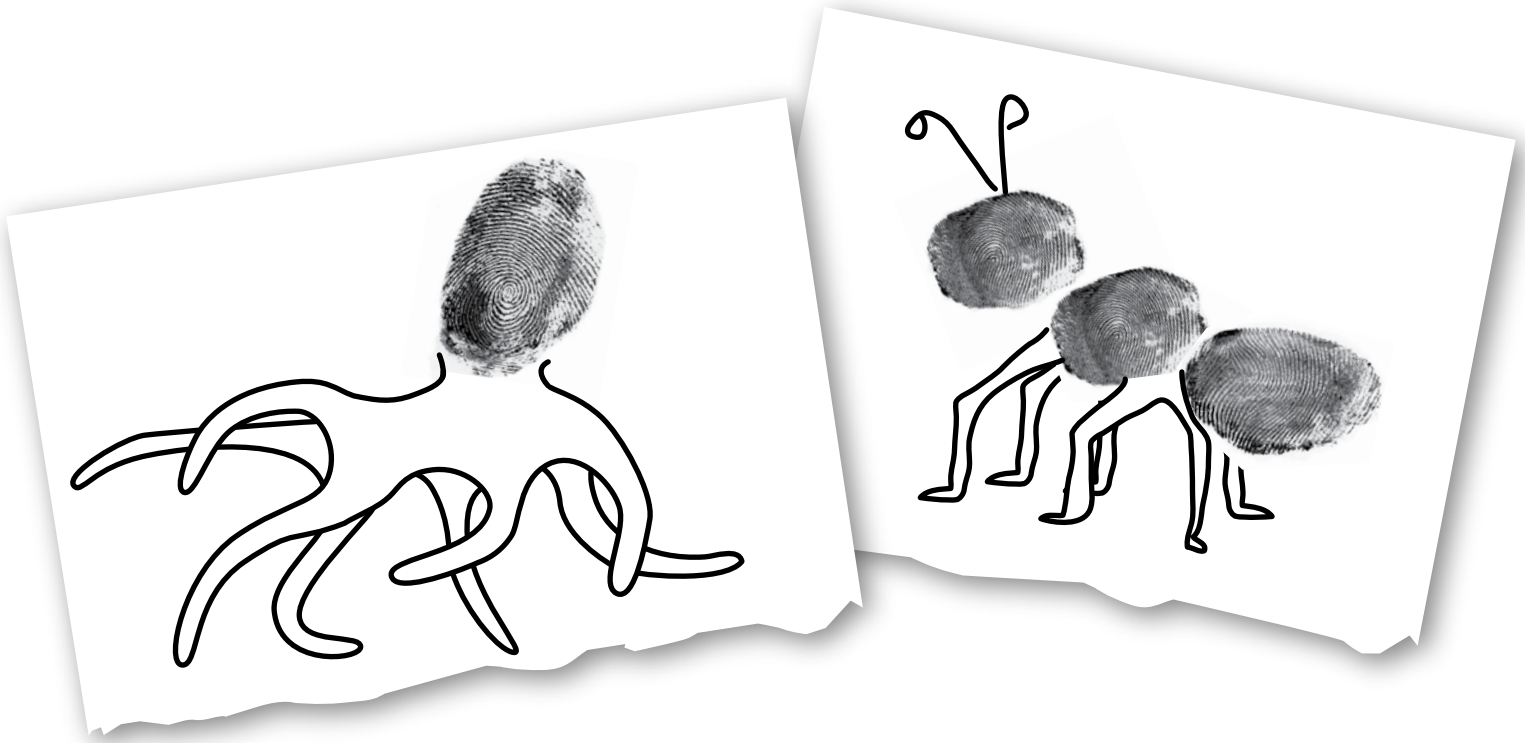
- stamp pads
- white art paper
- magnifying lens
- fine-tip markers

Fingerprint Critters



Remind children: *We have been learning how there are things about us that make us special and not like anyone else. Who can name some of these things?* Invite children to name things that make them one of a kind. Then tell them there is something else about them that nobody else has—their fingerprints! Explain: *Your fingerprints identify who you are. No two people's prints are exactly the same. The prints made by each of your fingers are different too!* Tell children that sometimes Dilly uses a magnifying lens to investigate things up close. Children will make their own fingerprints and then use a magnifying lens to look at them up close.

- Provide stamp pads and white paper for children to make their fingerprints. They can then use a magnifying lens to examine them closely. Have partners share their prints with one another to see the differences.
- Show children how to turn their fingerprints into little critters by adding details with a fine-tip marker. The prints can easily become a sun or the bodies for a cat, dog, fish, rabbit, octopus, or butterfly. Show children how to stamp two prints for the body of a spider and add eight legs or three prints for an ant with six legs. Several little prints in a row become a caterpillar.



Note: You might want to use fingerprints to create IDs for children. Place a photo of each child on an index card. Write the child's name and have him or her make a fingerprint on the card. Add pertinent information such as home address, telephone number, name of parent or guardian, and name of school. Laminate the cards, attach yarn, and have children wear them on field trips.

Children focus on special birthday traditions to do some problem solving.

Materials

- several rectangles cut from colored construction paper
- modeling clay
- birthday candles
- Happy Birthday! Activity Sheet for each child
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- glue

Happy Birthday!

Use a birthday focus to teach children about sharing. Begin by singing together the "Happy Birthday" song. In place of someone's name, sing *us*. Remind children: *Birthdays are special days when we celebrate the day we were born. Everyone has a birthday!* Tell children that when one of the InvestiGators has a birthday, they all celebrate with a little party. Encourage children to share a memorable birthday they have had. Talk about special traditions like singing, having a birthday cake, blowing out candles, wearing party hats, and receiving gifts. Say: *The activities we will do today are all about birthdays.*

- Share a birthday-themed story with children. Some suggestions are *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams, *Happy Birthday, Moon* by Frank Asch, or *Happy Birthday to You!* by Dr. Seuss.
- During group time, invite three children to come forward. Display three colored rectangles and tell children to pretend they are birthday gifts. Tell children that each child will get the same number of gifts. Ask: *How many children do you see? How many gifts do you see? How many gifts do you think each child will get?* Encourage children to guess. Then show how they can check by giving each child a gift one at a time until they are gone. Have a child distribute the gifts. Repeat the procedure with a different set of children using six and then nine gifts.
- Have children work in groups of three. Give each child modeling clay to form a small cake. Provide each group with 12 birthday candles. Tell children to figure out how to share the candles so each cake has the same amount. After the candles have been inserted, ask each of the children to count the candles in their cake to verify. Observe as children work together.
- Give each child a Happy Birthday! Activity Sheet. Ask children to figure out how many candles will go on each cake by coloring and cutting out the candles and then gluing them on the cakes.

All Sorts of Clothing

Children notice different types of clothing they wear by sorting themselves into groups and recording information on a graph.

Materials

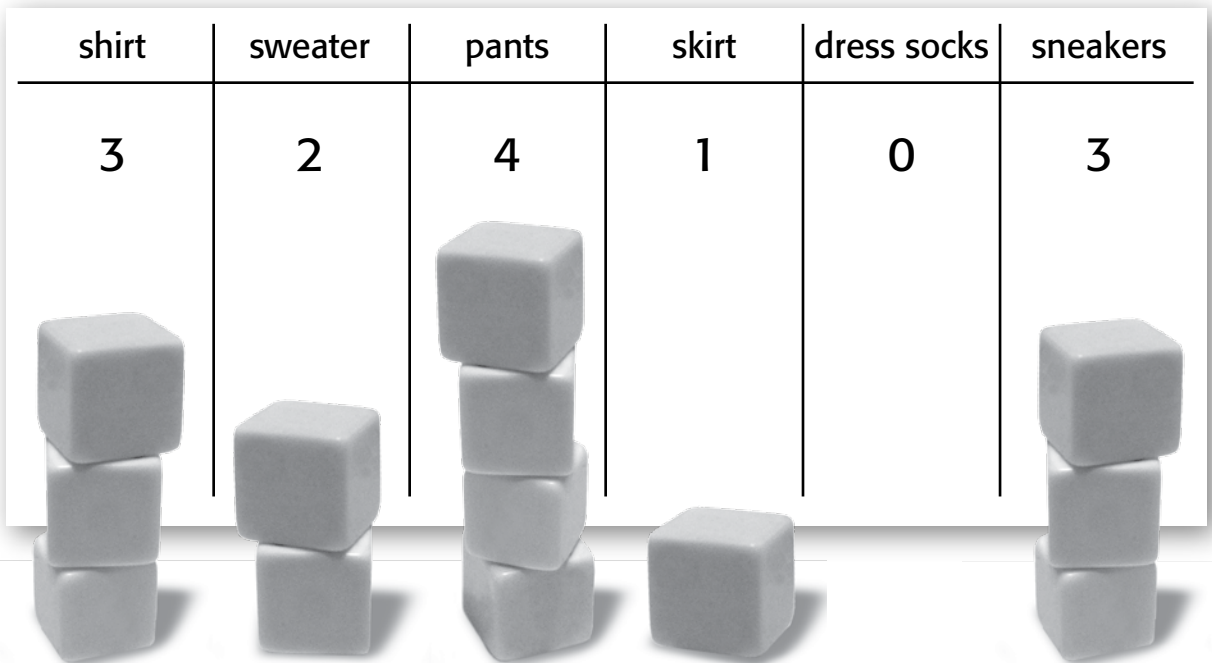
- chart paper
- marker
- tape
- small blocks

ELL

Name each article of clothing a child is wearing as you point to it. Then repeat the names in random order and have the child point to the matching article.

Engage children in an activity that helps them recognize different kinds of clothing while learning basic math concepts. Say: *If you were visiting Dilly's World, you would notice the clothes the characters wear. Dilly loves her sandals while Rosalita wears special shoes for dancing. And did you notice that Bruno Buzzbee wears four sneakers! JT has many different T-shirts from places around the world. What kind of clothes do you think Chuck Wood will have on? (shorts, shirt, a superhero cape, his special belt with tools in it). Now let's talk about the clothing you wore to school today to find out how many of you have worn the same thing.*

- Ask children to name different kinds of clothing they are wearing. Use their words to create a chart. Form columns on the chart, and head each column with a clothing word. Tape the chart to a wall or against a cupboard so blocks can be stacked in front of it.
- Point to each word on the chart. Read the word and ask: *Who wore a shirt today?* Have these children stand to form a group. Say: *Help me count the number.* Count aloud with children. Then ask each member of this group to collect a block to stack in front of the chart under the word *shirt*. Write the numeral on the chart. Continue with the next article of clothing.
- Your chart might look something like this:



- When the graph has been completed, ask questions: *Which stack is the tallest? Which types of clothing are worn by the most children? Which is the shortest? Which stacks are the same?*
- Make the chart and blocks accessible in the Math Center for children to count and restack on their own.

**Oral Language/Social
and Emotional**

Children recognize themselves and one another by their voices.

Materials

- unbreakable hand mirror
- tape recorder and tape

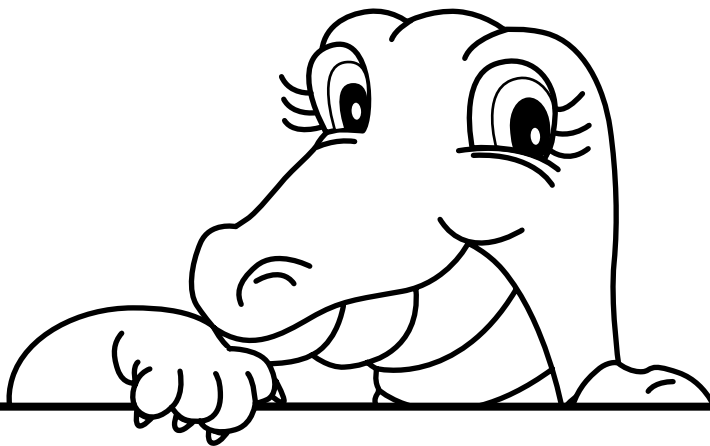
Is It Me?

Say: Once Manny Salamander used a tape recorder to record himself rapping and rhyming. He played the recording to hear how he sounded. Today while you are busy with different classroom activities, each of you will take a turn recording your voice on our classroom tape recorder. Make available a hand mirror and a tape recorder. Take children aside for a few moments to look in the mirror and talk about themselves without using names. Record on tape what children say.

- Once all the children have had an opportunity to record their voices, play the tape during group time. Begin by talking about how special each person's voice is. *Say: As we get to know family and friends more and more, we can tell who someone is just by hearing his or her voice.*
- Play the tape, pausing after each child speaks to ask: *Who is speaking? How can you tell?* After children make guesses, have the speaker reveal himself or herself.



Name _____



My Name

Trace your name.
(Write child's name here.)

Write your name.

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Name _____

Mirror, Mirror

Look in the mirror. Can you see yourself?
Draw what you see.



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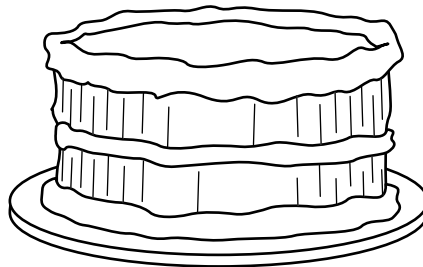
Name _____

Happy Birthday!

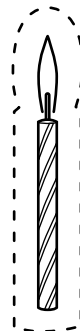
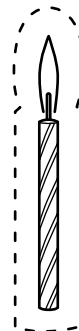
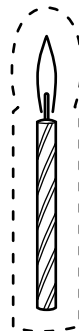
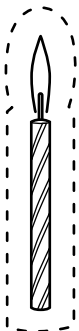
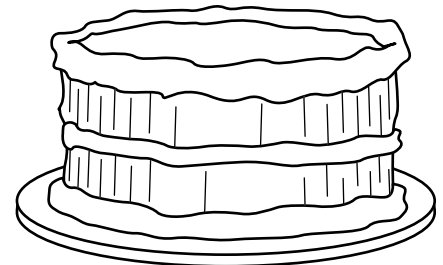
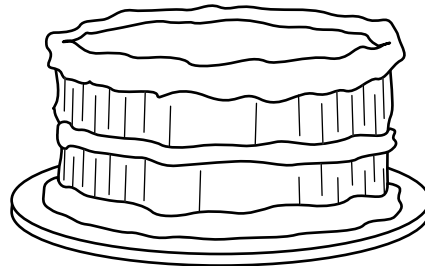
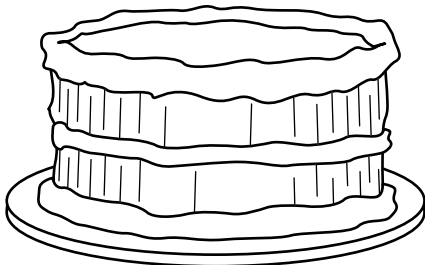
How many



for each



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