



The Place for Young Learners

Become an InvestiGator



Meet

Dilly Gator®

Birthday: October 10

Favorites: Science, exploring,
reading

Strengths: Working together, solving
problems, creativity

Superpower: *I can solve mysteries.*



Gator County Map



Triangle Beach



Inside the Houseboat

Dilly Gator started the InvestiGator Club so she and her friends could explore, discover, and solve problems together. Dilly lives with her little brother JT and her Great Auntie Lu in the Houseboat on Triangle Beach. Dilly is brave, curious, and kind. She loves to read everything, from cereal boxes to books. She also loves to use her imagination.



Welcome to Dilly's Tree House™

Dilly's Tree House™ is the award-winning prekindergarten learning system designed for families, childcare centers, and home-based learning. The program was created by early childhood experts and teachers to strengthen children's development of cognitive, physical, language, and essential life skills. The developmentally appropriate activities are based on the Science of Reading and evidence-based best practices for building foundational skills.

Each of the seven *Dilly's Tree House Guides* presents four weeks of simple, 10–15-minute experiences. All activities use the included resources or ordinary household objects and can be done during daily routines or on the go—in the car, on walks, at the store, or in waiting rooms or lines. You can do one or more activities each day or a few times a week—the choice is yours!

The seven *Dilly's Tree House* themes and weekly topics are:

1. Become an InvestiGator

- We Belong
- We Investigate
- We Explore
- We Are InvestiGators

2. Investigate Building

- Let's Build
- Homes
- Tools and Helpers
- Builders at Work

3. Investigate Health and Safety

- Body and Senses
- Food and Exercise
- I Can Do It!
- Safety and Health

4. Investigate Animals

- Pets
- Farm Animals
- Wild Animals
- Creepie Crawlies

5. Investigate Land and Water

- Fun with Water
- Oceans and Beaches
- Lakes and Shores
- Rivers and Wetlands

6. Investigate Plants

- Trees
- Fruits and Veggies
- Flowers
- To Market, To Market

7. Investigate Weather

- Rain and Snow
- Sun and Clouds
- In the Sky
- Seasons





Become an InvestiGator

Story: *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*, print or digital

Songs: "Dilly's Alphabet Song," "Gone Investigating," and "The InvestiGator Club Theme Song"

You will need: paper, pencil, crayons, scissors, tape, objects that spark curiosity, objects that come in pairs, mirror, sticky notes or small paper squares, blocks or small objects, notebook or journal

Early Learning Foundations, pp. 3–4
Get Started, p. 5

Week 1

pages 6–9

We Belong

Vocabulary: belong, investigate, match

Oral Language: Meet the InvestiGators

Reading: My Own Name

Alphabet Knowledge: Dilly's Alphabet Song

Phonological Awareness: Listening to Words

Science: Investigation Station

Math: Matching Objects

Week 2

pages 10–13

We Investigate

Vocabulary: rhyme, colors, sort

Alphabet Knowledge: The Alphabet

Music: Gone Investigating

Phonological Awareness: Rhyming Words

Science: Colors

Math: Sorting Colors

Early Writing: Investigating



Week 3

pages 14–17

We Explore

Vocabulary: adventure, yesterday, tomorrow

Reading: Adventure in Circle Forest

Dramatic Play: Going on an Adventure

Phonological Awareness: Matching Sounds

Alphabet Knowledge: Alphabet Adventure

Oral Language: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

Math: Name Graph

Week 4

pages 18–21

We Are InvestiGators

Vocabulary: work, count, syllable

Alphabet Knowledge: Finding Letters

Social Studies: Working Together

Music: The InvestiGator Club Theme Song

Math: Counting Objects

Phonological Awareness: Listening for Syllables

Early Writing: Writing to Dilly

Gator Resources

pages 22–32

Meet the InvestiGators, p. 22

"Dilly's Alphabet Song" lyrics, p. 23

The Alphabet, p. 24

"Gone Investigating" lyrics, p. 25

What's Happening? p. 26

"The InvestiGator Club Theme Song" lyrics, p. 27

Counting Pictures, p. 28

Fabulous Words, p. 29

Color Cards, p. 31

Early Learning Foundations

Everyday Routines

Each day offers fun opportunities to build a strong early learning foundation. Use the quick activities in this guide, along with your own daily routines, to spark a love of learning through inquiry, play, and discovery.

The Importance of Play

Allow plenty of time for free play indoors and outdoors. Children need lots of free play to develop physical, language, social, and cognitive skills. Through play, they can use their imaginations, interact with other children and adults, learn independence, solve problems, build language and vocabulary, exercise muscles, and develop spatial awareness.

Oral Language

Oral language is the foundation of literacy. Talk daily with children during routines or events, and make sure you both ask and answer questions. This back-and-forth dialogue leads to meaningful conversations and grows confident listeners, speakers, and readers. To spark ideas, start with the phrase “I wonder . . .” and let children lead the conversation. Pretend play also provides a natural setting for oral language development. Role-play different scenarios depending on children’s interests and encourage conversation by asking open-ended questions that require more than yes or no responses.

Vocabulary

Children’s vocabulary grows with the number and variety of words they see, hear, and speak. A large vocabulary is closely tied to improved lifelong learning and reading comprehension. In *Become an InvestiGator*, children learn to use many new words related to investigating and early learning skills. Look for Dilly’s **Fabulous Words** in the weekly activities. Cut out the words on page 29 and talk about what they mean, use them in sentences, and help children make up stories with the words. They can glue or tape the words to a poster titled **Words of the Week**.



Phonological Awareness

Before children learn to read, they notice sounds in letters and words. They begin to recognize rhyming words in books, songs, and games. In *Become an InvestiGator*, children practice listening for words in sentences, recognizing rhyming words, matching beginning sounds, and listening for syllables in words. The songs in this guide provide a perfect opportunity to practice these important early reading skills. Every day, guide children to listen to sounds in words, sentences, and songs. Focus on recognizing the sound of one letter at a time, such as the first letter in their name or one matching sound in two or more words.

Alphabet Knowledge

Every day, children work with the alphabet and learn to recognize letters. The Alphabet Knowledge activities provide multiple opportunities for children to learn the alphabet and can be spread out over several days. When you see this symbol, /d/, it shows the letter's sound. Have children look for letters in books, signs, and labels. Encourage them to look for the first letter in their names. Have them form the first letter in their names with soft clay or dough, or have them trace it in sand or foam. Build alphabet knowledge throughout the year by singing and dancing to alphabet songs, reading ABC books, and including letters in everyday routines or activities.



Reading

Read books about children's interests every day. Talk about books and have children point to details, retell stories, or draw pictures. As you read, pause two or three times to ask children what they think will happen next. The book, *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*, is read on pages 5 and 14. Children love to hear stories over and over, so you can revisit the book several times throughout *Become an InvestiGator*. After several readings, invite children to act out the book, draw pictures showing the events, and think of new events or endings. Read a variety of books out loud at least two times a day. Have children point to letters they recognize as you read together. Encourage them to handle the books by turning pages, looking at words and pictures, and pretending to read.

Early Writing

You will find shared writing ideas on pages 13 and 21. When you practice writing together, be sure to follow children's lead. They may want to write or scribble independently or they may dictate words to finish a sentence. As children watch you write, point out letters and words. Point out the uppercase letter at the beginning of their names, and let them write their name or just the beginning letter. Create a Picture Journal for children. This can be a notebook, drawing pad, or journal with blank pages. Have children draw or scribble in their Picture Journal every day.



Math

Every day, children learn early math skills such as matching pairs of objects, sorting colors, recognizing more or less, and counting objects. Guide children to match pairs of objects or count items during everyday activities, such as snack or meal time. For example, ask: *Are there more berries in this bowl than that bowl? Let's count out three berries.* Cut out the Color Cards on page 31 and use them to help children identify colors as well as sort objects by color. Encourage children to sort other objects by color, size, or even shape.



Get Started



Grab your magnifying glass and get ready to explore the world of learning with Dilly and the InvestiGators. *Become an InvestiGator* introduces children to many important preschool topics and skills, including the alphabet, awareness of sounds in words, colors, sorting, counting, recognizing their names, and, of course, investigating.

Follow three simple steps before heading out to investigate with the weekly activities. These quick steps can be done at the same time or during two or three separate times depending on individual schedules and ability.

1. Talk about investigating and what children already know about it.

- What do you think Dilly and the InvestiGators like to do?
- What is something you would like to learn more about?
- What is a place you would like to explore?

2. Meet Dilly Gator.

Look at the picture of Dilly Gator. Talk about Dilly, her favorites, her strengths, and her superpower. Discuss children's own favorites and strengths and how they are similar to Dilly's. Point out that Dilly lives with her brother JT and her Great Auntie Lu in a Houseboat at Triangle Beach. Ask children to point to the different areas of Gator County on the map of Gator County. Explain that later they will learn more about Circle Forest and City Square.

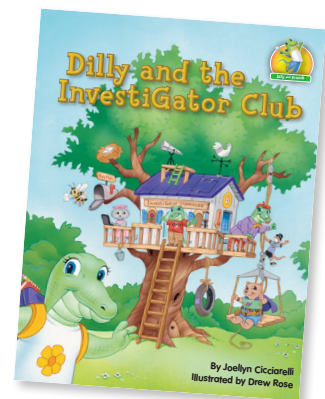


3. Read *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*.

Before reading, talk about the cover and the title of the book, the characters, and what children think the story is about. Let them turn the pages, look at the pictures, and guess what might be happening on each page. Then read the book. After reading, talk about the story. Have children retell it in their own words. Ask: *Where does the story begin? What happens next? What happens last?*

Congratulations!

You are now ready to do the activities together. Each week includes five 10–15 minute activities, which can be done one per day or however you choose.



We Belong



Fabulous Words!

belong investigate match

Meet the InvestiGators

Show the InvestiGator Club characters and read the character information out loud. Talk about each character, where they live, and their favorite things and superpowers. Ask children to say which character they would like to know more about.

Say: Dilly and her friends **belong** to a club called the InvestiGator Club. They **investigate** to learn more about their favorite things and to solve problems. Talk about children's favorite things and what they would investigate if they were in the InvestiGator Club.



ORAL LANGUAGE

You will need: Meet the InvestiGators, p. 22



My Own Name

Show children the Meet the InvestiGators page. Point out each character's name as you read it out loud. Ask: *Which names are fun to say? Which names do you like best?*

Then say: *Let's introduce ourselves to Dilly. We'll tell her our names.* Say the following sentence and complete it with your name: *Hi Dilly, my name is ____.* Then write your name on paper. Guide children to repeat the sentence out loud with their own names as you write their names on the paper.

Read the names out loud as you point to each one. Then help children find their names and say them out loud.



READING

You will need: Meet the InvestiGators, p. 22; paper; pencil or crayon

Dilly's Alphabet Song

Play "Dilly's Alphabet Song" and point to the letters on the lyrics page as you listen to the song. Invite children to sing any other alphabet songs they know.

Write the letters *F*, *M*, *P*, and *S* on separate sheets of paper and tape them to the floor near each other, but in random order. Explain that these same letters are in "Dilly's Alphabet Song." Name each letter and guide children to find the same letter on the lyrics page.

Then play the song again. Ask children to hop on each letter when they hear it in the song. Continue with other letters of the alphabet, such as *A*, *D*, *N*, and *V*.

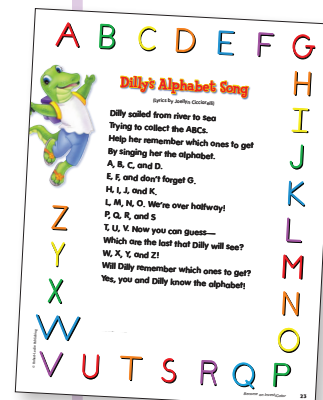
Revisit this activity to help children recognize and name letters in the alphabet. Use the following ideas to modify the game:

- Write letters on paper and place on the floor in a circle with the letters facing out. Play the song and have children march around the letters as they sing. Stop the music and help children name the letter they are standing by.
- Give children a letter written on a sheet of paper. Help them name their letter. Then play the song and have children hold up their letter when they hear it in the song.
- Play the song and stop it after a letter, such as *D*. Have children point to the letter on the lyrics page and then look around the room for the letter in posters or other printed objects.



ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE

You will need: "Dilly's Alphabet Song" from Dilly's Music and Movement; lyrics on p. 23; paper; pencil or crayon; tape



Listening to Words

Tell children they will investigate words and sentences. Say: *A word is a group of sounds that work together to mean something, like Dilly, club, and InvestiGators. When we put words together to share ideas, we make sentences.*

Say the following sentences as you hold up a finger for each word. After each sentence, count the fingers with children.

Dilly has a club.

It is fun.

Tell children they will play a listening game. Say: *Listen carefully as I say a sentence. Hold up one finger for each word in the sentence.* Say the following sentences as children hold up their fingers. Then repeat each sentence as you hold up fingers to count the words. Let children check their fingers against yours.

Dilly is our friend.

We belong to the club.



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

No materials needed.

Investigation Station

Create an Investigation Station. Gather a variety of objects that will spark interest and curiosity, such as rocks, shells, acorns or leaves, pipe cleaners, buttons, and fabric scraps. Include objects that children can touch, hear, smell, and, with supervision, taste. Then choose a few objects throughout the week for children to investigate. Add new objects regularly to allow for more investigating.

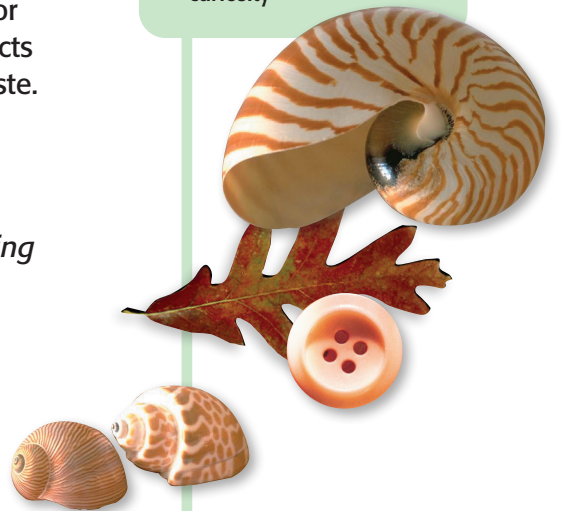
Say: *Each time you investigate, ask yourself: "What am I finding out?"* Offer ideas that encourage children to experiment. For example:

- *What are some things you see?*
- *What are some things you smell?*
- *What are some things you touch?*
- *What are some things you hear?*
- *What are some things you taste?*



SCIENCE

You will need: objects that spark interest and curiosity



Matching Objects

Talk about a time you were not able to find a shoe or sock when getting dressed or when leaving to go somewhere. Invite children to share similar experiences.

Then say: *Some things come in pairs. A pair can mean "a set of two things used together." A pair of shoes or socks or gloves are the same size. They look the same, too. You need to have both to have a pair that **matches**.* Point to children's shoes or socks to help them recognize pairs that match.

Display a collection of objects that includes pairs in various sizes, such as gloves, mittens, socks, shoes, earrings, and bookends. Make sure that the objects are mixed up and pairs are not next to each other. Then let children explore the collected objects. Give them time to look at, touch, and talk about the objects.

Show children how to match a pair of objects. For example, say: *Here is a small sock. I will put it here. I need to find its matching sock to make a pair. Here is another sock, but it's too big. This is a sock that looks like the first sock. They are the same, so now I have a matching pair.* Hold up the matching pair.

Have children make a match by selecting a pair of objects from the collection. Ask them to tell about the objects and why they are a matching pair.



MATH

You will need: objects that come in pairs



We Investigate



Fabulous Words!

rhyme colors sort

The Alphabet

Show children The Alphabet chart. Point to and name each letter and have children repeat. Then sing the alphabet song together while you point to each letter.

Tell children they will investigate letters all around them. Explain that words are everywhere. Say: *We say words, we write words, and we read words. Every word has letters in it. This is why all of the letters of the alphabet are so important.*

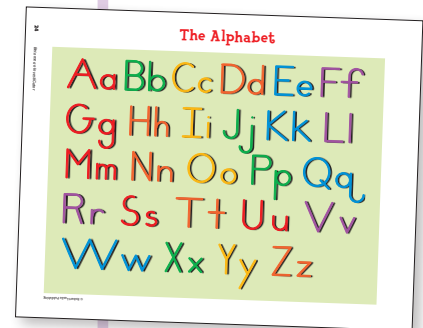
Point out the first letter in your name. Say: *This is the first letter in my name. Listen as I say my name.* Say your name and emphasize the beginning sound.

Have children say their names and guide them to find the first letter of their name on The Alphabet chart. Invite them to point to and name any other letters they know.



ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE

You will need: The Alphabet, p. 24



Gone Investigating

Tell children they will pretend to go investigating with Dilly. Play the song "Gone Investigating" and use the lyrics to learn the words and movements together.

Play the song again and invite children to follow along as you march in place or around the room. After the song, ask children to name which body parts they pointed to. (eyes, ears, nose, feet) Ask: *What are some other body parts we can use when we're investigating?* (mouth, hands, arms, legs, head)



MUSIC

You will need: "Gone Investigating" from Dilly's Music and Movement; lyrics on p. 25



Rhyming Words

Tell children they will use their ears to investigate rhyming words. Say: *Rhyming words are words that end with the same sound, like clock and sock.*

Play the song and have children listen for words that **rhyme**. After the song, read aloud some of the lyrics. Point out two words that rhyme, such as *now* and *how*. Then ask children to name other words from the song that rhyme, such as *nose, toes; feet, street; lose, clues*.

Invite them to think of more words that rhyme with each word pair. For example, for *nose/toes*: *rose, hose, pose, doze, bows, goes*.



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

You will need: "Gone Investigating" from Dilly's Music and Movement; lyrics on p. 25

Colors

Cut out the Color Cards and place them on a table or floor. Talk about **colors** with children. Ask them to name any colors they already know. Then point to each card and name the color.

Say: *Three of these colors are primary colors. All other colors are made with just these three colors. You can mix the primary colors together to get other colors.* Separate the red, yellow, and blue cards from the group. Name the three primary colors and ask children to repeat after you: *red, yellow, and blue.*

Turn all of the Color Cards face down. Tell children they will play a game. Demonstrate by choosing one card, turning it over, saying the color, and naming something with that color. For example, *blue, blue sky*. Challenge children to tell whether the color is a primary color or not.



SCIENCE

You will need: Color Cards, p. 31; scissors



Sorting Colors

Show children the Color Cards and help them name each color. Then say: *Let's **sort** these colors into two groups: Primary Colors and Other Colors. Remember that all other colors are made from just three primary colors.* Help children find the primary colors of red, yellow, and blue and set them aside.

Give children one Color Card: red, yellow, or blue. Have them find objects in the room with that same primary color. When they find an object, they can hold up their Color Card and name the color and the object. For example: *blue book*.

Draw a three-column chart with a primary color at the top of each column. When children find objects, write the objects in the chart in the correct color column. Then read the chart out loud. Help children count how many red, blue, or yellow objects were found.

Repeat with the other Color Cards and a new three-column chart.



MATH

You will need: Color Cards, p. 31; scissors

Investigating

Talk about topics that children would like to investigate, such as wild animals, beaches and oceans, and trees and flowers. Ask: *What would you like to learn more about? Let's write our ideas.* As children suggest ideas, list their names and their ideas on paper. For example:

Maria wants to investigate frogs.

Scott wants to investigate farms.

Read the list out loud as you sweep your finger under each word. Explain that letters are put together to make words. Invite children to point to their names on the list.

Picture Journal Have children draw something they would like to investigate for their Picture Journal.



EARLY WRITING

You will need: paper;
pencil or crayon;
notebook or journal



We Explore



Fabulous Words!

adventure yesterday tomorrow

Adventure in Circle Forest

Show the book cover to children and read the title out loud. Then ask them what they see in the picture. Point to Dilly on the cover and ask: *What do you already know about Dilly?*

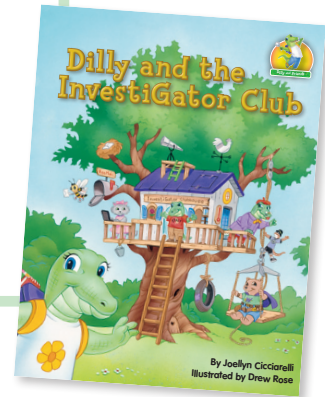
As you read, point to each word. Ask children to follow along and tell you when to turn the page. As you read together, ask these questions:

- *What does Dilly want to build in the tree?*
- *Who will help Dilly build the tree house?*
- *Why do you think Dilly's club is special?*



READING

You will need: print or digital version of *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*



Going on an Adventure

Flip through the pages of *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*. Tell children that Dilly goes on an **adventure** in Circle Forest with Great Auntie Lu and JT. Ask children to retell their favorite parts of the story. Then ask them to act out their favorite parts. Help them start by pretending to do the following actions:

- Go on a hike.
- Find the oak tree.
- Gather friends.
- Build the tree house.
- Climb the ladder to the tree house.
- Look out at the view.



DRAMATIC PLAY

You will need: print or digital version of *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*

Matching Sounds

Have children point to their mouth, teeth, and tongue. Explain that when we say words, our mouth, teeth, and tongue move in different ways. Have children put their hands on their mouth and feel how their mouth moves when they say these words out loud: *fun, cap*.

Say: When we say words with the same sounds, our mouth, teeth, and tongue move in the same ways. We can tell when sounds are the same, or match, when we listen and pay attention to how our mouth, teeth, and tongue move.

Have children look into a mirror and focus on their mouths. Then say the following words slowly and have children repeat them as they look at their mouths: *mop, man*.

Say: In the words mop and man, your mouth moved in the same way when you said /m/. So, mop and man both start with matching sounds.

Have children look into the mirror again. Then say the following words slowly and have children repeat them as they look at their mouths: *sad, sip, tub*.

Say: In the words sad and sip, your mouth moved in the same way when you made the sound /s/. It didn't move in the same way when you made the sound /t/ in tub. So, the words sad and sip have matching sounds, but tub doesn't have a matching sound.

Say sentences with children's names and other words with matching sounds, such as: *MaryElla made a map*. Repeat the matching sounds in each sentence.



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

You will need: hand mirror or hanging mirror



Alphabet Adventure

Show children The Alphabet chart. Point to and name each letter and have children repeat it after you. Then sing the alphabet song together while you point to each letter again.

Then write *Dilly* on paper. Point to the *D* in *Dilly* and say: *Dilly's name starts with the letter D. D makes the /d/ sound in Dilly: /d/-illy, Dilly.*

Write children's and friends' names on paper and read the names out loud, emphasizing the first sound. Say: *Your name begins with the letter _____. It makes the _____ sound.* Then have them repeat the letter and the sound it makes.

Have children find the first letter of their name on The Alphabet chart. Then invite them to go on an Alphabet Adventure. Model first with your own beginning sound. For example, if your name starts with *B*, say: *My name starts with the sound /b/. I see a book, a binder, a bag, a backpack, and binoculars.*



ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE

You will need: The Alphabet, p. 24; paper; pencil or crayon



Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

Show children the What's Happening? page. Point to the word **yesterday**. Explain that *yesterday* means "the day before today." Say: *Things we did yesterday already happened.* Have children think of things they did yesterday. List their ideas on the page next to the *Yesterday* label.

Then say: *Today means "on this day." Things that happen today are happening on this day.* Have children think of things they are doing today. List their ideas on the page next to the *Today* label.

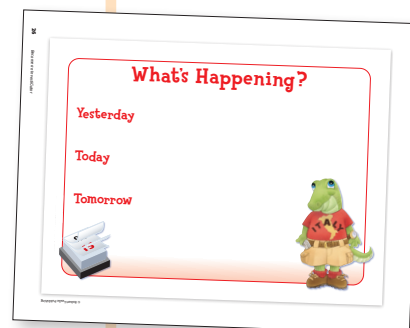
Explain that **tomorrow** means "the day after today." Say: *Things that happen tomorrow haven't happened yet.* Ask children to tell one thing they would like to do tomorrow. List their ideas on the page next to the *Tomorrow* label.

Read the page out loud, putting the ideas into sentences. For example: *Yesterday, we made letters in clay. Today, we are going outside to play. Tomorrow, we may have a special snack.* Ask children to name one thing that happened yesterday, one thing happening today, and one thing that could happen tomorrow.



ORAL LANGUAGE

You will need: What's Happening?, p. 26; pencil or crayon



Name Graph

Write the letters in children's names and two friends' or family members' names on separate squares of paper or sticky notes. Then lay out the squares in rows on a table or floor to spell their names. Count the letters together.

Ask: *Which name has the most letters? Which name has the least letters? Let's find out.* Help children arrange the squares in rows from the shortest names to the longest names.

Talk with children to compare the number of letters in the names, using the words *most*, *least*, *more*, and *less*.



MATH

You will need: sticky notes or small paper squares; pencil or crayon



We Are InvestiGators



Fabulous Words!

work count syllable

Finding Letters

Show children The Alphabet chart. Invite them to sing the alphabet song as you point to each letter.

Then sing the following song to the tune of "Where Is Thumbkin?" and name a letter that children can find in The Alphabet chart. Begin with the first letter in children's names. Have them point to the letter that you name.

You: *Where is letter ____? Where is letter ____?*

Children (pointing): *There is letter ____! There is letter ____!*

You: *Yes, that is letter _____. That is letter _____. Letter _____. Letter _____.*

Then have children play a game of "Name that Letter." Have them close their eyes and put their finger anywhere on The Alphabet chart. Ask them to open their eyes and look at the letter their finger is touching. Help them name the letter and repeat its name several times.



ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE

You will need: The Alphabet, p. 24



Working Together

Look at the Tree House on the cover of *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*. Talk about how the InvestiGators **worked** together to build it. Then talk about a time when children worked together with someone else to clean up or do a project.

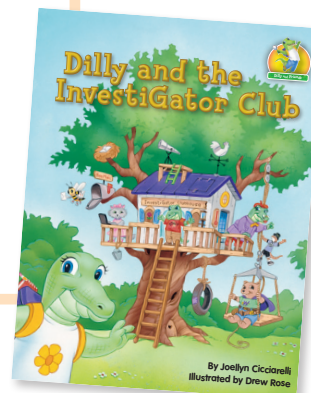
Say: *Think about doing that same chore without any help from someone else. Would the chore be harder to do?* Talk about how doing the chore together makes it quicker and more fun.

Have children think of chores or jobs that are more fun when people work together to do them. List their ideas on paper and read them out loud. Have children draw themselves and others working together on a chore.



SOCIAL STUDIES

You will need: print or digital version of *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*; paper; pencil; crayons



The InvestiGator Club Theme Song

Listen to "The InvestiGator Club Theme Song." Ask children where they have heard these words before. (in the book, *Dilly and the InvestiGator Club*)

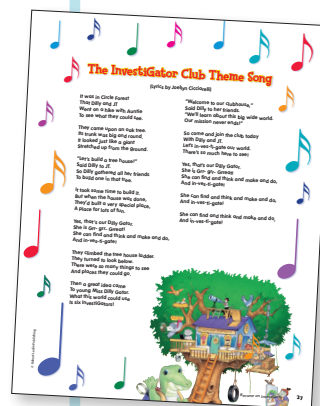
Say: *Let's play a game. I will pretend to be doing something from the song, and you will guess what I'm doing.* Make a movement based on the song, such as marching in place as if hiking. Children may guess hiking or walking through Circle Forest. Then invite children to make their own movements to accompany the song for others to guess. Movements could include:

- climbing a ladder.
- looking up at the tree.
- building the Tree House.
- holding a hand over eyes to see.
- tapping their forehead for Dilly's great idea.



MUSIC

You will need: "The InvestiGator Club Theme Song" from Dilly's Music and Movement; lyrics on p. 27



Counting Objects

Show children the Counting Pictures and read the labels. Have them look at the pair of skates. Model counting each skate by pointing to each one. Say: *Let's count how many skates there are: one, two. There are two skates.* Have children point to and count the skates with you: *one, two.*

Then count out two blocks or other small objects to show the quantity of two. Count and say: *These are two blocks: one, two.* Have children point to and count the blocks.

Repeat with the wheels on the skates. Ask: *How many wheels are on the skates? Let's count to find out. One, two, three, four. There are four wheels on each skate.* Then count out four blocks to show the quantity of four.

Guide children to count other items in the pictures and use blocks or other objects to match the quantities. For example:

- number of swings (six)
- number of things to make the snowman (two buttons for eyes, one carrot for nose, six acorns for mouth, two sticks for arms, one hat, one scarf)
- number of children or hoops (five)



MATH

You will need: Counting Pictures, p. 28; blocks or small objects for counting



Listening for Syllables

Listen to “The InvestiGator Club Theme Song” with children. Have them listen for the word *investigate*. Explain that the song breaks the word up into its parts, which are called **syllables**. Say: *Some words have just one syllable, like the word bat. Other words can have two, three, four or more syllables. Circle and Forest both have two syllables: Cir-cle and For-est.* Clap as you say the two syllables in each word again.

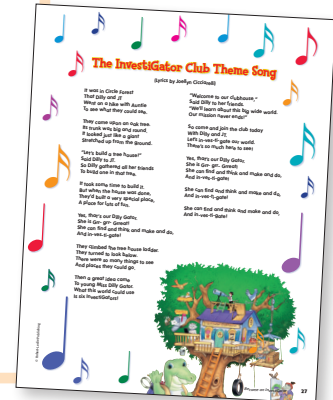
Explain that the word *investigate* has more than two syllables. Say: *Listen carefully as I clap the syllables: in-ves-ti-gate*. Repeat and ask children to count the number of times you clap. Ask: *How many syllables are in the word in-ves-ti-gate?* (four)

Repeat more words from the song and clap the syllables with children. Some examples are *trunk*, *tree*, *Dilly*, *Gator*, *ladder*, *clubhouse*, *today*.



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

You will need: “The InvestiGator Club Theme Song” from Dilly’s Music and Movement; lyrics on p. 27



Writing to Dilly

Say: We have learned a lot about Dilly Gator and the club she created. Now we are members of the InvestiGator Club too! What would you like Dilly to learn about you? Let's write a note to Dilly. Write the following note on paper.

Dear Dilly,
I like to _____.

Ask children to share their ideas for finishing the note. Then complete the note with their ideas. Ask children to say the first letter in their names as you write their names at the bottom of the note.

Read the note out loud as you sweep your finger under each word. Explain that letters are put together to make words. Point to the spaces between the words and say: *The spaces help you see where words begin and end.*

Picture Journal Have children draw something they would like to share about themselves with Dilly for their Picture Journal.



EARLY WRITING

You will need: paper, pencil or crayon; notebook or journal



Meet the InvestiGators

Cordelia "Dilly" Gator®

Birthday: October 10
Home: Houseboat on Triangle Beach
My favorites: Science, exploring, reading, problem solving
Superpower: *I can solve mysteries.*



Great Auntie Lu®

Birthday: May 1
Home: Houseboat on Triangle Beach
My favorites: Painting, sculpting, telling stories, helping little InvestiGators
Superpower: *I can create a masterpiece.*



Rosalita Sausalita®

Birthday: March 21
Home: Miss Lilly's Pads in City Square
My favorites: Museums, ballet, pink, technology
Superpower: *I can dance like the wind.*



Manny Salamander®

Birthday: December 10
Home: Miss Lilly's Pads in City Square
My favorites: Health, sports, soccer, rhyming
Superpower: *I am a good sport.*

JT Gator®

Birthday: January 17
Home: Houseboat on Triangle Beach
My favorites: Music, the blues, playing the harmonica, traveling, languages
Superpower: *I can cheer you up with a bouncy tune.*



Chuck Wood®

Birthday: September 22
Home: Diggery Den in Circle Forest
My favorites: Math, superheroes, gadgets, tools, fixing things, health and safety
Superpower: *I can fix everything, including hurt feelings!*



Bruno Buzzbee®

Birthday: February 16
Home: An old tree stump in Circle Forest
My favorites: Writing, the Internet, finding information, delivering Bee Mail
Superpower: *I can learn about anything on Bruno's Buzz Network.*



A B C D E F G



Dilly's Alphabet Song

(Lyrics by Joellyn Cicciarelli)

Dilly sailed from river to sea
Trying to collect the ABCs.
Help her remember which ones to get
By singing her the alphabet.

A, B, C, and D.

E, F, and don't forget G.

H, I, J, and K.

L, M, N, O. We're over halfway!

P, Q, R, and S

T, U, V. Now you can guess—

Which are the last that Dilly will see?

W, X, Y, and Z!

Will Dilly remember which ones to get?

Yes, you and Dilly know the alphabet!

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Z

Y

X

W

V

U

T

S

R

Q

The Alphabet

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff
Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll
Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv
Ww Xx Yy Zz

Gone Investigating

(Lyrics by Joellyn Cicciarelli)

Chorus:

Let's investigate. (Oh Dilly)

Clap to the beat.

Hurry, don't be late! (Oh Dilly)

Won't you come along? (Oh Dilly)

Where has JT gone? (Oh Dilly)

We're looking now. Yes, we know how.

We'll investigate! (Yeah!)

First you use your eyes.

Point to your eyes.

Look for a surprise.

Now you use your ears.

Point to your ears.

What things can you hear?

We're looking now. Yes, we know how.

We'll investigate! (Yeah!)

Now you use your nose.

Point to your nose.

Sniff for JT's toes.

Now you use your feet.

Point to your feet.

Search on every street.

We're looking now. Yes, we know how.

We'll investigate! (Yeah!)

(Chorus)

There's no time to lose.

Point to a wall clock.

JT left some clues.

Now we're at the tree.

Open arms like branches.

Will we find JT?

We're looking now. Yes, we know how.

We'll investigate! (Yeah!)

The clubhouse is up there.

Point to the sky.

Maybe he's in there.

Now we found JT!

Put hand over eyes like a lookout.

Lots more friends we see.

We're looking now. Yes, we know how.

We'll investigate! (Yeah!)

We're looking now. Yes, we know how.

We'll investigate! (Yeah!)

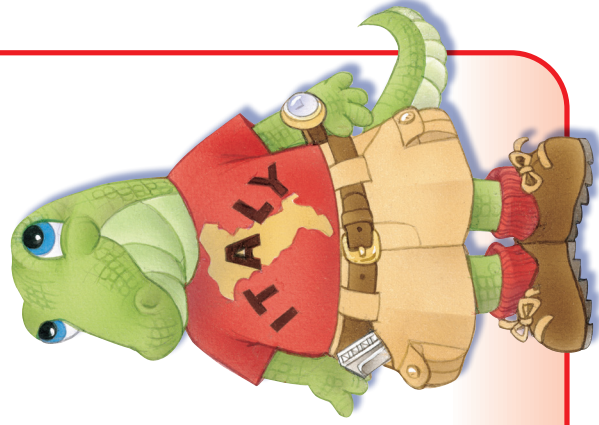


What's Happening?

Yesterday

Today

Tomorrow



The InvestiGator Club Theme Song

(Lyrics by Joellyn Cicciarelli)

It was in Circle Forest
That Dilly and JT
Went on a hike with Auntie
To see what they could see.

They came upon an oak tree.
Its trunk was big and round.
It looked just like a giant
Stretched up from the ground.

"Let's build a tree house!"
Said Dilly to JT.
So Dilly gathered all her friends
To build one in that tree.

It took some time to build it.
But when the house was done,
They'd built a very special place,
A place for lots of fun.

Yes, that's our Dilly Gator.
She is Grr- grr- Grrreat!
She can find and think and make and do,
And in-ves-ti-gate!

They climbed the tree house ladder.
They turned to look below.
There were so many things to see
And places they could go.

Then a great idea came
To young Miss Dilly Gator.
What this world could use
Is six InvestiGators!

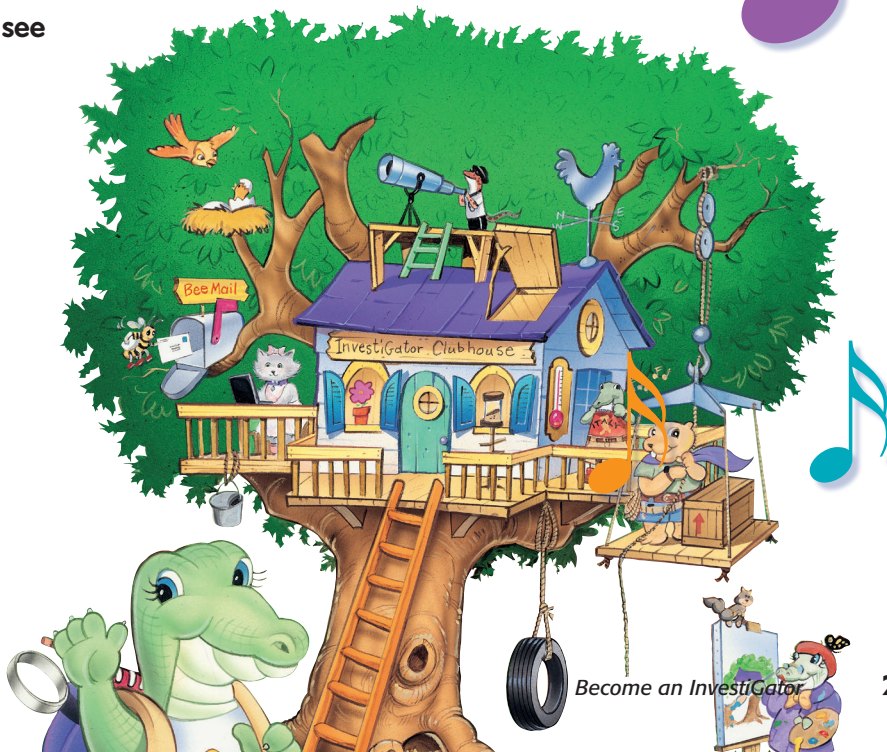
"Welcome to our clubhouse,"
Said Dilly to her friends.
"We'll learn about this big wide world.
Our mission never ends!"

So come and join the club today
With Dilly and JT.
Let's in-ves-ti-gate our world.
There's so much here to see!

Yes, that's our Dilly Gator.
She is Grr- grr- Grrreat!
She can find and think and make and do,
And in-ves-ti-gate!

She can find and think and make and do,
And in-ves-ti-gate!

She can find and think and make and do,
And in-ves-ti-gate!



Counting Pictures



swings



skates



snowman



children

Fabulous Words

belong	rhyme	adventure	work
investigate	colors	yesterday	count
match	sort	tomorrow	syllable



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Color Cards



red



yellow



orange



blue



purple



green



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Become an InvestiGator

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Grab your magnifying glass and get ready to explore the world of learning with Dilly and the InvestiGators. *Become an InvestiGator* introduces important preschool topics and skills, including the alphabet, sounds and words, colors, sorting, counting, and investigating.

