VPK Curriculum Enhancement Activities
Circle Time
Theme: The Zoo

1. **We're Going to the Zoo**:

   **Materials**: Chart paper, markers, pictures of lions, elephants, and Monkeys

   **Directions**:
   1. Write the song on chart paper. Draw a few zoo animals around the text.
   2. Discuss zoo information with students. “Has anyone ever visited the zoo?” “What animals did you see there?” “Which animal was your favorite?”
   3. Show students the pictures you have and ask them what they know about these animals.
   4. As you sing the first stanza with the students, invite them to march in place and swing their arms as if they were heading off to the zoo. Encourage students to pretend to be lions, monkeys, and elephants as you sing.
   5. Ask students how the song describes lions, elephants, and monkeys. Invite them to think of other ways to describe what these animals look like, how they move, etc. Ask students to recall which animal they sang about first, second, and third. Review the song if necessary.

   **We’re Going to the Zoo**
   (sung to "A Hunting We Will Go")
   
   We’re going to the zoo.
   We’re going to the zoo,
   To see some friends; I wonder who?
   We’re going to the zoo!
   The lions will be there.
   The lions will be there,
   With the golden manes they were.
   The lions will be there!
   The elephants will be there.
The elephants will be there,
With the wrinkled skin they were.
The elephants will be there!
The monkeys will be there.
The monkeys will be there,
With the curling tails they were.
The monkeys will be there!

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I. A.3 Demonstrates auditory ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
II. A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
III.B.c.1 Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading
IV.F.4 Demonstrates comprehension of text read aloud
V.A.a.6 Shows understanding of and uses appropriate terms to describe ordinal positions
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons

2. Dear Zoo Keeper Letter:

Materials: Good Night Gorilla, by Peggy Rathmann, chart paper, markers

Directions:
1. Introduce the story by reading the title and showing students the book cover and asking them what they think the book might be about.
2. Read the story.
3. Discuss the events and sequence of the story and encourage students comments.
4. Explain that you would like to write the zoo keeper a letter telling him what happened at the zoo and giving him suggestions about what he should do.
5. Ask the students to help you write the letter, include their comments and ideas in the letter.
6. Once the letter is completed read it to the students and ask them each to sign their name at the bottom.
7. Post the letter near the book so students can refer to it.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.3 Demonstrates auditory ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.D.3 Shows beginning control of writing by using various drawing and art tools with increasing coordination
II.C.1. Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationship with peers
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many actions and events
IV.D.2 Connects phrases and sentences to build ideas
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading
IV.F.4 Demonstrates comprehension of text read aloud
IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression
IV.G.2 Uses scribbling, letter like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas
IV.G.4 Demonstrates knowledge of purpose, function, and structure of written composition
V.C.a.3 Shows awareness and describes some social roles and jobs that people do

3. **Head to Toe:**

   **Materials:** Head to Toe, by Eric Carle

   **Directions:**
1. Ask students to recall what animals they have been learning about and encourage them to demonstrate how they might move.
2. Introduce the book.
3. Read the book.
4. Ask students if they recall the animals and actions. Invite students to act out each motion as you review each page of the book. Encourage them to make animal noises to go along with each page/action.
5. Allow students to re-visit the book during free time.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**
I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.A.3 Demonstrates auditory ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.C.1 Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationship with peers
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.A.2 Follows multi-step directions
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions, and events
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading
IV.F.4 Demonstrates comprehension of text read aloud
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance

4. **Wild Words:**

**Materials:** animal pictures, index cards with alphabet letters written on them (one letter per card)

**Directions:**
1. Explain that you are going to play a game and make up some "wild words"  
2. Ask a student to select an animal picture and hold it up for the class to see.  
3. Ask students to name the animal on the card.
4. Now have a student select a letter card and ask the class to substitute that letter sound for the first sound in the animal name (monkey picture + "B" card becomes “bonkey”)
5. Ask another student to select another letter card and repeat the above process. Continue with 3 or 4 more letter cards.
6. Continue to pick new animal pictures and letter cards.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**
I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.A.3 Demonstrates auditory ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.A.2 Follows multi-step directions
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.F.2 Shows age-appropriate phonological awareness
IV.F.3 Shows alphabetic knowledge

5. **Animal Patterns:**

**Materials:** pictures of zebras and tigers, strips of black, white, and orange construction paper.

**Directions:**
1. Show students zebra and tiger pictures and ask what they notice about them? How are they alike? How are they different? If necessary, point out that both animals have stripes.
2. Explain that both animals have patterns on their skin (white, black, white, black, etc.)
3. Explain that each student will have the opportunity to make their own pattern with paper strips.
4. Review the concept of patterning once again (it has to happen over & over again).
5. Pass around the container of paper strips and ask each student to pick out 8 pieces (hint: having more than one container is helpful & cuts down on “wait” time).
6. Invite each student to create their own pattern and explain how they have done so. Assist them as needed.
7. Allow students to take their “stripes” home and create patterns with their family.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
III.B.c.1 Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.A.c.1 Understands characteristics of patterns and non-patterns and begins to reproduce them with at least 2 elements
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons

VPK Curriculum Enhancement Activities
Dramatic Play
Theme: The Zoo

1. Veterinarian at the Zoo:

Materials: a variety of stuffed animals, large plastic animal figures, pictures of zoo animals, white coats or button down shirts, cotton balls, ace bandages, band aids, milk crates (for cages), animal carriers, baby bottles, towels or small blankets, food bowls, gauze, rubber gloves, stethoscope, small flashlight, eyedroppers, empty containers, medicine syringes, measuring spoons, memo pads, pens, etc.

Directions:
1. Discuss what students think happens when zoo animals get sick, who helps them stay well, etc.
2. Ask if students know what a veterinarian is/does. If necessary explain that a veterinarian, sometimes called a vet, is an animal doctor. Discuss the role a veterinarian might play in a zoo. What kinds of services might a vet have to provide.
3. Introduce the materials you have placed in the dramatic play center and invite students to pretend to be veterinarians at the zoo.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.A.a.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
III.B.b.3 Shows care and concern for others
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.C.a.3 Shows awareness and describes some social roles and jobs that people do
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance

2. **Classroom Zoo:**

**Materials:** milk crates, animal carriers and cardboard boxes (cages), stuffed animals and large plastic zoo animals, pails, food bowls, paper, markers, pictures of zoo animals, binoculars, brown lunch bags labeled “animal feed”, “monkey food” etc.

**Directions:**
1. Invite students to create their own zoo.
2. Encourage them to make signs for the animal cages, maps of the zoo, etc.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.A.a.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression
IV.G.2 Uses scribbling, letter-like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
V.D.d.1 Explores dramatic play and theatre

3. **Zoo Keeper Zaniness:**

**Materials:** overalls, rubber boots and gloves, aprons, work gloves, pails, shovels, scrub brushes, hats, zoo props as listed above, list & sign paper, pencils, etc.

**Directions:**
1. Ask students to tell you what they know about zoo keepers (what do they do, how do they do it, what tools do they need, what do they wear, what would happen without them? Etc.
2. Introduce the props you have placed in the dramatic play center and invite them to “be” zoo keepers.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.A.a.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
III.B.b.3 Shows care and concern for others
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.C.a.3 Shows awareness and describes some social roles and jobs that people do
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
V.D.d.1 Explores dramatic play and theatre

4. **Pretend Zoo Animals:**

**Materials:** animal masks (you can make them from magazine pictures and plates or popsicle sticks, zoo paper plates, animal print material (optional)

**Directions:**
1. Invite students to pretend to be their favorite zoo animal.
2. Ask thinking questions (How will you move, what will you eat, what will you sound like, etc)

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.C.1 Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.A.a.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
V.D.d.1 Explores dramatic play and theatre
5. **Block Area Zoo:**

**Materials:** assorted unit blocks, berry baskets, micro-dramatic play Animals and people, fences, construction paper (green, black, brown, to be used for surfaces), assorted zoo books, etc.

**Directions:**
1. Ask students to tell you what they know about zoos.
2. Discuss the different habitats, animals, and structures.
3. Invite students to build their own zoo.
4. Ask students thinking questions as they build (remember...it is o.k. to allow students to keep their structure up for more than one day. They may want to add to it another time.)

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**

I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.A.a.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
V.D.d.1 Explores dramatic play and theatre
VPK Curriculum Enhancement Activities
Outdoor
Theme: Zoo

1. Penguin Waddle:

**Materials:** Pictures of penguins, medium size balls, paper and marker.

**Directions:**
1. Show children pictures of penguins.
2. Ask children questions about penguins. For example: Where do penguins live? Explain that some penguins live at the zoo. What color are penguins? Have they ever seen a penguin? How do they walk/run? Describe the word **waddle**. Why do they think the penguins walk/run the way they do?
3. Explain that in this activity the children will be moving like penguins.
4. Demonstrate the activity by placing the ball between your knees and walking.
5. Ask children to predict which will be easier for them, waddling or walking.
6. Write down the children's names and their predictions.
7. Allow children to take turns placing the balls between their knees and attempting to waddle like a penguin.
8. Refer back to predictions chart to see if the children's predictions were correct.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.C.1 Demonstrated increasing motor control and balance
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, action and events
IV.E.1 Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes and solve problems
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading

2. **Zookeeper May I?**

**Materials:** Paper and marker.

**Directions:**
1. This game is played like Mother May I?
2. Explain to children that a **zookeeper** is person, whose **occupation** is to oversee the zoo, taking care of the animals and their **habitats** (where they live). Ask children what kinds of tools, equipment and/or materials a zookeeper might need to perform his/her job. Record their thoughts on paper.
3. Then have the Zookeeper stand approximately ten feet in front of the children. The teacher should be the first “Zookeeper” in order to give children an idea of the types of movements and number of movements for the game. Demonstrate movements as you call them out.
4. Remind children to ask, zookeeper may I, before they perform the movements.
5. If you are playing this game with a large group of children, have children ask “Zookeeper may I?” and perform movements as a group in order to cut down on waiting time.
6. Continue movements until someone reaches the zookeeper. Repeat as wanted allowing children to become the zookeeper.

**Suggested movements:** Invite children to create more

3- Elephant stomps
2- Kangaroo hops
4- Penguin waddles
2- Snake slithers
1- Giraffe stretches
3- Alligator glides
2- Bear crawls
5- Peacock flaps
VPK Standards Addressed:
I.A.3 Demonstrated auditory to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.C.1 Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.A.a.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.B.c.1 Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.A.2 Follows multi-step directions
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.A.a.1 Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence
V.A.a.3 Shows an understanding by participating in comparison of quantities
V.A.a.4 Uses directions to move through space and find places in space
V.C.a.3 Shows awareness and describes some social roles and jobs that people do
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
V.D.d.1 Explores dramatic play and theatre

3. **Feed the Bear:**

**Materials:** Cardboard box (the size of a copy paper box or larger), scissors, markers, glue, construction paper and several bean bags.
Before beginning this activity; cut a hole in the box to serve as the bear's mouth. The hole should be quite a bit larger than the bean bags you will be using and the hole positioned so that it will be facing the children. After the mouth has been cut out, decorate the of the front of the box to resemble a bear's face.

**Directions:**
1. Place box on the ground with the mouth facing the child. (Box should be just a few feet in front of the child)
2. Invite the child to feed the bear by tossing the bean bags into the bear's mouth.
3. Encourage children to describe where the bean bag landed in relation to the bear's mouth. For example: “Inside the bear's mouth.” “That one landed in front of the bear's mouth.” “That one landed on top of the bear.”

4. After the child has tossed the bean bags, have the child count the number of bean bags they fed the bear and the number that did not get into the bear's mouth.

5. Ask child which number was larger, the number they fed the bear or the number they did not feed the bear.

6. Have child record his/her name and feeding results on a piece of paper.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:

I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development

I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks

I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks

IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult

IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression

IV.G.2 Uses scribbling, letter-like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas

IV.G.3 Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters

V.A.a.1 Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence

V.A.a.3 Shows understanding by participating in the comparisons of quantities

V.A.e.1 Shows understanding of special relationships and uses position words

V.A.e.2 Describes relative positions from different perspectives

4. Wash the Animals:

Materials: Sand/water table (or container for water) plastic zoo animals, water, dishwashing liquid, scrub brushes.

Directions:

1. Introduce this activity by informing children that they will be performing one of the duties of a zookeeper. They will be washing animals.
2. Explain to children that some animals clean themselves but other animals need help in order to become clean. For example: Members of the cat family clean themselves.
3. Ask children how they keep themselves clean and if they are able to perform these actions alone or if they need help.
4. Invite children to use the scrub brushes to give the animals a bath.
5. Encourage children to talk about the animals they are bathing.
6. Add more water and soap as needed.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.B.1 Actively participates self-care
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B.a.1 Shows increasing confidence in their own abilities
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.C.a.3 Shows awareness and describes some social roles and jobs that people do

5. Feeding Pail Toss

Materials: 3 small pails/buckets, construction paper, glue, scissors, chart paper and markers.

Before beginning this activity: Create animal fur patterns out of construction paper. Zebra pattern-black and white stripes. Tiger pattern-brown and orange stripes. Giraffe print- Large brown spots on tan paper. Glue animal print/patterns on pails. One print/pattern per pail. Crumple 5-10 pieces of brown construction paper to create the animal’s food. Write the words zebra, tiger and giraffe on chart paper and glue pictures of each animal under the word, if possible.

Directions:
1. Explain to children that in this activity they will be pretending to feed three zoo animals by tossing the crumpled paper into the buckets.
2. Have children look at the pails and see if they can predict what animals the pails represent.
3. Point out to children that the black and white stripes and the brown and orange stripes represent a pattern. (A pattern repeats itself)
4. Inform children that the pail with the black and white pattern represents a zebra, the pail with the brown and orange pattern represents a tiger and the pail with the brown spots represents a giraffe. Note: Giraffe spots on the pail are not a pattern.
5. Line pails up either vertically or horizontally approximately 2 feet in front of the child who will be feeding the animals.
6. Invite the child to toss the “food” (crumpled paper) into the pails.
7. After the child has tossed all of the food. Allow them time to count how many pieces of food are in each pail. Encourage them to determine which animal received the most food and which animals received the least food.
8. Allow the child to write their name, on the chart, under the animal that received the most food.
9. Continue by allowing other children to take turns tossing, counting and recording.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.D.3 Shows beginning control of writing by using various drawing and art tools with increasing coordination
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
IV.D.2 Connects phrases and sentences to build ideas
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading
IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression
IV.G.2 Uses scribbling, letter-like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas
IV.G.3 Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters
V.A.a.1 Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence
V.A.a.3 Shows understanding by participating in the comparisons of quantities
V.A.c.1 Understands characteristics of patterns and non-patterns and begins to reproduce them with at least two elements
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
VPK Curriculum Enhancement Activities  
Music & Movement/Gross Motor  
Theme: Zoo

1. Zoo Animal Poem:

Materials: Chart paper and markers.

Before beginning this activity: write poems using words and pictures.

**Zoo Animals**

*This is the way the elephant goes*  
*(clasp hands together, extend arms, move back and forth)*

*With a curly truck instead of a nose.*  
*The buffalo, all shaggy and fat,*  
*Has two sharp horns in place of a hat.*  
*(point to forehead)*  
*The hippo with his mouth so wide-*  
*Let's see what's inside.*  
*(hands together open and close them)*  
*The wiggly snake upon the ground*  
*Crawls along without a sound.*  
*(weave hands back and forth)*  
*But the monkey see monkey do*  
*is the funniest animal in the zoo*  
*(place thumbs in ears and wiggle fingers)*

Directions:

1. Read poem using the **crisp pointing** technique. The crisp pointing technique is when the teacher points to the first letter of each word as she/he reads the word. This allows children to see the breaks in the sentence structure.
2. Define/explain any words that may be unfamiliar to children.
3. Demonstrate actions as you read them.
4. Invite children to repeat poem and perform actions.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**

I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.C.1 Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with curiosity
III.B.c.1 Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions and events
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading
IV.F.4 Demonstrates comprehension of text read aloud
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance

2. **If I Were:**

**Materials:** Chart paper and markers

**Before beginning this activity:** write words to song on chart paper using words and pictures.

**If I Were- Sung to "The Mulberry Bush"

Oh, if I were a tiny snake
a tiny snake, a tiny snake,
Oh, if I were a tiny snake
I'd slither around the zoo

Oh, if I were an elephant
an elephant, an elephant
Oh, if I were an elephant
I'd march around the zoo

Oh, if I were a kangaroo
a kangaroo, a kangaroo
Oh, if I were a kangaroo
I'd hop around the zoo

**Directions:**
1. Read poem using the crisp pointing technique.
2. Encourage children to tell you some characteristics of the animals in the song.

3. Use a ven diagram to illustrate the similarities and differences in the animals. For example: Kangaroos and elephants have 2 ears. Snakes slither, elephants walk and kangaroos hop. All 3 are animals that you might see at the zoo. Elephants and kangaroos are tall, snakes are long.

4. After comparing the animals in the song, sing song and perform the actions.

5. Ask children for their input for adding versus to the song.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:

I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.C.1 Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B.c.1 Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions and events
IV.F.1 Shows motivation for reading
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons

3. **Syllable Stomp/Hop:**

   **Materials:** Chart paper and markers

   **Directions:**
   1. Ask children’s help in creating a list of zoo animals.
   2. Write the zoo animals on the chart paper, saying each letter as you write it.
   3. After your list is complete, inform children that they will be stomping and/or hopping for each syllable of the listed animals.
For example: Ze-bra= 2 stomps ti-ger= 2 hops hip-po=2 stomps
El-e-phant= 3 hops etc.
4. Write the number of syllables beside each animal’s name.
5. After all the animals have been stomped and the syllables have been counted, ask children if they can recall which one of the listed animals had the most syllables. Point out the numerals that were written by each animal’s name, explaining that 3 is more than 2 etc.
6. Continue activity by having children clap (or other action) for each animals syllables.

4. *Monkey See, Monkey Do:*

*Materials:* none needed

*Directions:*
1. In this activity one person is chosen to be the “monkey”.
2. The “monkey” will determine the zoo animal sounds and actions for the group.
3. Encourage the “monkey” to describe to the group what kind of actions he/she will be performing.
4. Invite group to predict the animal that the “monkey” is describing.
5. Allow “monkey” to tell the group if their predictions were correct.
6. Ask the “monkey” if he/she can tell the group what sound or letter his/her animal begins with. Encourage children to clap out the
syllables in the “monkey’s” choice.
7. Then have “monkey” act out the zoo animal that he/she described.
8. The group should follow the “monkeys” actions and sounds.
9. Continue activity allowing each child to be the “monkey”.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.A.2 Shows visual ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.C.1 Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B.a.1 Shows increasing confidence in their own abilities
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions and events
IV.E.1 Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes and solve problems
IV.F.2 Shows age appropriate phonological awareness
V.A.e.2 Describes relative positions from different perspectives
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
V.D.d.1 Explores dramatic play and theatre

5. The Zoo Crew:

Materials: Chart paper, markers and words to song

Before beginning this activity; write song on chart paper.

Let’s All Go to the City (Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush)
Let’s all go to the city zoo, the city zoo, the city zoo
Let’s all go to the city zoo to see what the animals do
The kangaroo goes hop, hop, hop, hop, hop, hop
Hop, hop, hop
The kangaroo goes hop, hop, hop. And we can do it too!
Each time you repeat the song, replace the animal name and action with one of the following or make up your own animals and actions
to insert into the song
The elephant swings his trunk up high...
The monkey swings from tree to tree...
The loin roars and walks on fours...
The giraffe stretches his neck to eat...
The brown bear prances on two feet...

Directions:
1. Read through song using the crisp pointing technique.
2. Sing song and perform animal actions.
3. Ask children if they can recall which animal action they performed first, second etc.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.9 Participates in physical fitness activities
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.B.c.1 Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
V.A.a.6 Shows an understanding of and uses appropriate terms to describe ordinal positions
V.A.e.4 Uses directions to move through space and find places in space
V.D.b.1 Explores music
V.D.c.1 Explores creative movement and dance
VPK Curriculum Enhancement Activities
Sensory
Theme: Zoo

1. **Zoo Animals in the Dirt:**

   **Materials:** Potting soil/dirt, sand/water table or container for dirt, squirt bottles filled with water, plastic zoo animals.

   **Directions:**
   1. Provide children with plastic zoo animals and container of potting soil/dirt.
   2. Encourage children to create mud by squirting water into the dirt. Ask them to explain how the **consistency** (look and feel) of the dirt changed as the water was added.
   3. As animals get dirty/muddy remind children that they can clean the animals by squirting them with water.
   4. Encourage children to create sets of alike of animals. (2 zebras, 3 tigers) and to count the number of animals in each set. Ask children if they can tell you which one of their sets has the most/least or if the sets are equal (have the same number).

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
III.A.b.2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions and events
IV.E.2 Initiates, asks questions, and responds to adults and peers in a variety of settings
V.A.a.1 Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence
V.A.a.3 Shows an understanding by participating in the comparison of quantities
V.A.b.2 Shows an understanding of addition and subtraction using a concrete set of objects or story problems found in everyday classroom activities
2. **Zoo Animal Habitats:**

**Materials:** Chart paper, markers, plastic zoo animals, 2 trays (or cookie sheets), 1 bowl, water, hay or grass and dirt.

Before beginning this activity; place dirt on one tray, hay or grass on one tray and water in the bowl. Write words and draw pictures of water, dirt and hay/grass on chart paper.

**Directions:**
1. Explain to children that for this activity they will be learning about habitats of zoo animals. A **habitat** is where an animal lives.
2. Explain that although some zoo animals are kept in cages, the animals do have **natural habitats**. This is where they would live if they were not in a zoo.
3. Show children the zoo animals that you have provided for this activity.
4. Show children the 3 types of **habitats** they will be using for this activity.
5. Next ask children if they can match the animals to their habitats. 
   For example:
   
   - alligator-water
   - tiger-grass kangaroo-grass
   - lion-grass elephant-grass/dirt
   - pig-dirt
   - turtle-water
   - zebra-grass

   **Encourage children to explain the reasoning behind their choices.**

   For example:
   
   "I saw an alligator on TV and it was in the water."
   "Zebras eat grass like horses."

6. Graph results of the animals and their habitats. Analyze graph in order to determine which habitat had was home to the most animals; water, dirt or grass.
7. Allow children to spend time matching animals to their habitats.
4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their own experiences
III.B.a.1 Shows increasing confidence in their own abilities
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meaning
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions and events
IV.D.2 Connects phrases and sentences to build ideas
V.A.a.3 Shows understanding by participating in comparison of quantities
V.A.f.3 Represents and analyzes data
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons

3. Habitat Snacks:

Materials: Graham crackers, peanut butter (ALLERGY ALERT), cream cheese, green food coloring, animal crackers, bowls, paper plates and plastic knives.

Before beginning this activity: mix green food coloring with cream cheese.

Directions: This activity should be done in a small group.
1. Explain that for this activity children will be “eating” zoo animals and their habitats.
2. Give each child 4 graham crackers and 4 animal crackers. Remember to point out that the graham cracker’s shape is a rectangle no matter how it is moved in space.
3. Have children determine if the natural habitat animals they choose would be dirt or grass.
4. After the children determined their animal’s habitats, allow them to create habitats by spreading peanut butter (for dirt) or green cream cheese (for grass) on the correct number of graham crackers.
5. When habitats have been prepared have children place their animals on top of either the grass or the dirt.
6. Have children place their habitats in a line according to type. Dirt in one row and grass in a row underneath or in a row on top of dirt row.
7. Ask children to measure which row is the longest. Explain that is the row with the most.
8. Add another graham cracker and animal cracker to the children’s plates and ask them to determine which habitat the animal should be placed.
9. Have children place that habitat in the corresponding row.
10. Then have children re-measure to see which habitat is the longest, has the most.
11. EAT-ENJOY

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.8 Actively takes part in basic health and safety routines
I.B.1 Actively participates in self-care
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
III.B.b.1 Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
IV.E.1 Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes and solve problems
V.A.a.1 Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence
V.A.d.1 Understands various two-dimensional shapes including circle, triangle, square, rectangle, oval and other less common shapes
V.A.d.2 Shows an understanding that two-dimensional shapes are equivalent in different orientations
V.A.e.1 Shows understanding of spatial relationships and uses position words
V.A.f.2 Compares continuous quantities using length, weight and height
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons

4. Painting the Animals:

Materials: Q-tips, animal crackers, corn syrup, food coloring, small bowls or cups and paper plates.
Before beginning this activity: create paint by combining corn syrup and food coloring. Create several colors of “paint”.

Directions:
1. Explain that in this activity the children will be decorating the animal crackers with special eatable paint.
2. Allow children to choose 4 (or number or your choosing) animal cracker they want to paint and then eat.
3. Explain that children will be using the Q-tips as paintbrushes for this activity.
4. Provide children with several choices of paint colors for their animal crackers.
5. Encourage children to describe which part of their animals they are painting. For example: The lion’s mane, the zebra’s stripes, the giraffe’s spots, the alligator’s scales, the elephant’s truck etc.
6. After children have finished painting- it’s time to EAT.

4 Year Old Standards Addressed:
I.A.2 Shows visual ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.D.3 Shows beginning control of writing by using various drawing and art tools with increasing coordination
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions and events
V.A.a.1 Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence
V.B.a.2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.D.a.1 Explores visual arts

5. Bird Seed Weigh Station:

Materials: Large container, bird seed, different size small containers (cleaned-yogurt, sour cream, butter tubs etc.) and balance scale.

Before beginning this activity: draw pictures of small containers on chart paper in order to record children’s prediction.
Directions:
1. Explain to children that in this activity they will be weighing bird seed that they place into different containers.
2. Allow children to scoop bird seed from large container into small containers. Have children fill two containers and predict which container will weigh more or be the heaviest. Ask children why they predicted the container that they did.
3. Allow children to record their predictions by writing their name under the picture of the appropriate container.
4. Have children pour bird seed from containers into balance scale.
5. Explain to children that the side of the scale that is lowest is the side that weighs the most or is the heaviest.
6. Clear bird seed off scale and continue activity.
7. After a few children have weighed their bird seed, help them to analyze their predictions. Did most of the children predict the same container of bird seed to be the heaviest?

4 Year old Standards Addressed:
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
III.B (a).1 Shows increasing confidence in their own abilities
III.C.1 Shows developing ability to solve social problems with support from familiar adults
IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and their meanings
V.A.(f)2 Compares continuous quantities using length, weight, and height
V.A.(f)3 Represents and analyzes data
IV. G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression
IV. G.2 Uses scribbling, letter-like, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas
IV.G.3 Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters.
V. B.(a)2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V. B (a) 1 Demonstrates the use of simple tools and equipment for observing and investigating
V. B (a)2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
I. D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform simple tasks
1. **Coffee Bear:**

   **Materials:** Glue, water, paintbrushes, small bowls or containers, coffee grounds, construction paper/ tagboard, chart paper and markers.

   Before beginning this activity: Cut construction paper or tagboard into circles/oval to resemble a bear’s face. Dilute glue by adding water so it can be spread easily with a paintbrush.

   **Directions:**
   1. Introduce this activity by informing children that they will be creating bear’s faces and that the shape of the bear’s face is a circle/oval. Remind children that the circle/oval remains the same in different orientations. (flipped or up-side down)
   2. Inform children that they will be using something that may have a familiar scent to create the bear’s fur.
   3. Allow children to smell the coffee grounds before you tell the children that what they are.
   4. Write down children’s predictions of what they think they are smelling. Have children write their name and you write their predictions. This technique is called shared writing.
   5. Tell children that the smell was that of coffee grounds. Discuss how the grounds are used to make coffee and that the grounds are now dry. Extended conversation and language by asking children if anyone in their house drinks coffee etc.
   6. Have children spread glue over tagboard/construction paper.
   7. Have children sprinkle coffee grounds over glue.
   8. Allow children to add other features to bear’s face with markers or additional construction paper/tag board etc.

**4 Year Old Standards Addressed:**
I.A.2 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.B (a) 1 Shows increasing confidence in their own abilities
IV.C.1 Shows an understanding of words and they meaning
IV. C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions, and events
IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression
IV.G.2 Uses scribbling, letter-like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas
IV.G.3 Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters
VA.(d)1 Understands various two-dimensional shapes, including circle, triangle, square, rectangle, oval, and other less common shapes (e.g. trapezoid, rhombus)
V.A.(d)2 Shows an understanding that two-dimensional shapes are equivalent in different orientations
V.B. (a)2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.D. (a)1 Explores visual arts
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform tasks

2. **Texture Zoo:**

   **Materials:** Materials of different textures such as: fake fur, corrugated cardboard, satin, cotton batting, sandpaper, felt and cordoury etc. Glue, scissors, markers, pipe cleaners, wiggle eyes, buttons, pom-poms, construction paper and tagboard.

   **Directions:**
   1. Show children some of the textured materials they will be using for this activity. Allow children to touch the textured materials.
   2. Encourage language development by asking children to describe the textured materials. For example: tough, smooth, soft, hard and furry etc.
   3. After children have discussed the different textures, explain to them that in this activity they will be using this materials to create their own zoo animals.
   4. They can model their animal after a "real" zoo animal or create a "new" zoo animal.
   5. When children are finished with their creations have them glue the animals on a piece of tagboard or cardboard.
6. Have children label that paper with their name and their animal’s name. Ask children if they can tell you what sound or letter is at the beginning of their animal’s name. If a child is unable to write their name or their animal’s name, write it for them naming each letter as you write it.

4 Year old Standards Addressed:
I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
III.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
III.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.A.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions, and events
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression
IV.F.3 Shows alphabetic knowledge
IV.G.2 Uses letter-like shapes, symbols and letters to convey meaning
IV.G.3 Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters
V.B (a)2 Examines objects and makes comparisons
V.D (a)1 Explores visual arts
I.D.1 Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks
I.D.3 Shows beginning control of writing by using various drawing and art tools with increasing coordination

3. Inspired Zoo Animal Paintings:

Materials: Paint (8 colors) containers for paint, paintbrushes, paper, easel, paint smocks/shirts and realistic pictures of zoo animals (download form computer, from books and/or magazines).

Directions:
1. Provide realistic pictures of zoo animals for children to use as inspiration for their paintings.
2. After children have decided which animal to paint, have children put on a paint shirt or smock.
3. Encourage children to write their name on their paper before they begin painting.
4. Allow children to paint a zoo animal.
5. When children's paintings are completed ask them to tell you about their picture.

4 Year old Standards Addressed:
I.A.1 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning
I.B.1 Actively participates in self-care
II.A.1 Shows curiosity and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences.
III.B.(a)1 Follows simple rules, agreements, and familiar routines with teacher support
III. A.(a)1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
V.D(a).1 Explores visual arts
V. D.(a)3 Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by an artwork
I.D.3 Shows beginning control of writing by using various drawing and art tools with increasing coordination

4. Feather Painting:

Materials: Paper, a variety of feathers, paint (8 colors) containers for paint and paint smocks/shirts, paint easel or tabletop.
If feathers are not store bought; sanitize them with bleach and dry.

Directions:
1. Inform children that in this activity their will be painting with feathers instead of paintbrushes. Show children the feathers that they will use to paint.
2. Ask children if they know where feathers come from. Ask children to describe the feathers. Discuss the similarities and differences between the feathers. Line feathers up on order to determine which one is the longest, shortest etc.
3. Ask children to name zoo animals that have feathers.
4. Allow children to put on paint smocks/shirts and begin to paint using the feathers instead of paintbrushes.
5. While children are painting with the feathers; encourage language by asking them how using to feathers to paint is different from using a paintbrush.

4 Year old Standards Addressed:
I.A.2 Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development
I.B.1 Actively participates in self-care
II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity
II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences
III.A.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment
III.A.(b)2 Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety
IV.B.1 Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult
IV.C.2 Shows increased vocabulary to describe many objects, actions, and events
IV.E.1 Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes and solve problems
V.A(b)2 Shows understanding of addition and subtraction using a concrete set of objects (expressive knowledge) or story problems found in everyday classroom activities.
V. B(a)2 Examines objects and makes comparisons materials and natural phenomena
V.D.1 Explores visual arts
I. D.3 Shows beginning control of writing, drawing and art tools

5. Animal Cages:

Materials: Popsicle sticks or craft sticks, glue, construction paper, scissors, markers, index cards and small plastic zoo animals.

Before beginning this activity: print names of each zoo animal available on index cards.

Directions:
1. Explain that in this activity the children will be allowed to build cages
for the plastic zoo animals provided. Remind children that although zoo animals may often be kept in cages that all animals have natural habitats and now most zoos provide spaces for animals that are similar to their natural habitats.

2. Allow children to use materials in order to create cages for the animals you have provided.

3. Encourage children to build cages based on the size of their animals.

4. As children complete their cages, ask them which animal they built their cage for. Help children find the index card with the matching animal’s name printed on it. Using the animal name card as the example encourage children to write the matching animals name on the card.

5. Invite children to then place the animal name card somewhere on the cage.

**4 Year old Standards Addressed:**

I.A.2 Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning

II.B.1 Attends to tasks for a brief period and seeks to help when needed

II.C.1 Approaches daily activities with creativity

II.D.1 Shows initial signs of planning and learning from their experiences

III.A.1 Demonstrates growing autonomy and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment

IV.A.1 Increases knowledge through listening

IV.E.1 Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences predict outcomes and solve problems

IV.G.1 Shows motivation to engage in written expression

IV. G. 2 Uses scribbling, letter-like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas

IV.G.3 Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters

V.D.(a)1 Explores visual arts

I.D.2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks