

Unit 1: Our Community

WEEK 1

Launching Stations

To set up smooth running of Stations for the school year, the first three weeks are dedicated to slowly and intentionally establishing the mechanics and routines of the component and introducing some of the regular station activities. Before the first day:

- Determine how Stations work will be organized, such as in color-coded folders and bins.
- Determine where in the classroom each station will consistently be set up.
- Prepare each station's bin with its sign, materials, folders, writing tools, and any additional visual cues or organizational supports. Add materials listed in Day 1, below.
- Establish children's small groups for the first three weeks.
- Set up and make visuals for the system by which children will move from one station to the next (such as a work board).
- Choose a signal to use for Stations transitions (chime, music, word or phrase, gesture, light).
- Read through this document and note any adjustments needed for the particular group of children.

In Weeks 1, 2, and 3, the beginning of Stations time is dedicated to the introduction of one particular routine or station activity (see the following details and in Launching Stations Weeks 2 and 3). While children work, teachers circulate to answer their questions, reinforce productive and cooperative behaviors, support children's access, use, management, and care of materials, and facilitate children's movement between stations.

In Week 4, one new activity is introduced in the Listening and Speaking Station: Listen and Respond. Otherwise, introductions to each station are no longer needed, as the same activity structures continue going forward. As needed, at the beginning, mid point, or end of Stations, teachers might hold five-minute Community Conversations to check in with children about how the Stations time is running and collaboratively address any challenges as they arise. Teachers might also use this time to clarify directions, review specific materials, and offer reminders. As children settle into Stations work, teachers use some of the time to work with children individually, assessing their skills and needs and forming initial small groups. Once children can work productively and independently in all stations, teachers dedicate most of the time during the Stations block to targeted small group instruction.

Stations U1 W1

Week 1, Day 1

Introduce Stations Systems: Scavenger Hunt

Materials and Preparation

Assign partners within each small group.

- Stations Scavenger Hunt, one copy for each child
- pencils

Place in each station’s bin or area the following materials. Note that these materials may differ from those children use as the stations are introduced; these are to give children a sense of what kinds of materials they will use in each station over time.

Reading

- Reading Station conversation image
- collection of high-interest picture books
- decodable texts

Listening and Speaking

- Listening and Speaking Station conversation image
- Talk Time image and prompt, printed and cut in half: children running
- 1-minute sand timers, optional

Word Work

- Word Work Station conversation image
- letter tiles
- dry erase boards
- dry erase markers

Introduction
10 minutes

Each day we will work in Stations. This is a time for you to practice some of the skills you are each developing. Stations will come at this time in our schedule, right after [____] each day.

Today, we’ll practice how Stations will work, and you will explore what kinds of materials you might find in each station.

Indicate each station as it is named, pointing or walking to where it is located in the classroom and showing its sign.

You’ll know which station you are in by its sign, and by the activities you find there.

Each day you will visit at least one station. How will you know where

	<p><i>to go and who you will work with?</i></p> <p>Describe the classroom management system, whether a work board, passport, or other way for children to know in which station to work and when. Walk through and practice “reading” the system together.</p> <p>List the groups for the week by color, letter, animal, or other designation, and name the children in each group. Let children know that these groups will change based on the kinds of practice each child needs at different times during the year. Encourage children to help each other find their way in reading the schedule and locating the stations where they each belong.</p> <p><i>Today, you’ll be working with your small group.</i></p> <p><i>At each station you will find things that tell you a little bit about the kind of work you will do there. When you arrive at your first station, make sure everyone in your group is in the right place.</i></p> <p><i>Then, look at what you find in the bin and talk about it for a few minutes. One thing you’ll find is an image, or picture. Look at it carefully and talk together about what you notice.</i></p> <p>Show the Stations Scavenger Hunt.</p> <p><i>Here’s a Stations Scavenger Hunt. It shows things to look for in the stations. When you and your group members find something on this sheet, mark it with an x. You won’t find everything on the scavenger hunt today, and that’s fine.</i></p> <p><i>When you hear the signal, you’ll move with your group to your next station. [Demonstrate the signal.] Let’s try it!</i></p> <p>Distribute a Stations Scavenger Hunt sheet and a pencil to each child.</p>
15 minutes	<p>Remind children of their tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● make sure all the children in the group are present at the station, ● look at and talk about the materials at the station, ● mark things found on the Stations Scavenger Hunt sheets, and ● move at the signal to the next station assigned for the group. <p>Signal for groups of children to move from the rug to their first stations. Help children get oriented and encourage them to help each other.</p> <p>Monitor children’s activity. After about four minutes, give a one-minute warning. Then signal the transition to the second station.</p> <p>Depending on how smoothly the group is managing, the children may visit</p>

	one, two, or three stations.
5 minutes	Bring the group back together to share discoveries and answer questions about how this component works.

Week 1, Day 2 Reintroduce Stations Systems: Scavenger Hunt	
Materials and Preparation	<p>Maintain groups established for Day 1. Plan each group’s Stations rotation and indicate these on the visual system (work board, passport, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● children’s Stations Scavenger Hunt sheets, from Day 1 ● pencils ● materials from Day 1, plus those listed below <p><u>Pocket Chart</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pocket Chart conversation image ● pocket chart ● sentence strips or index cards with children’s names and photos <p><u>Writing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● variety of paper ● variety of writing and drawing tools <p><u>Word Work</u></p> <p>Keep materials from Day 1 and add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● grid for playing Memory, drawn on large paper or created with tape on a tray or tabletop ● cards with children’s names (see description on Stations cover page) ● cards with children’s photos (see description on Stations cover page)
Introduction 5 minutes	<p><i>Remember, that Stations will come at this time in our schedule, right after [____] each day.</i></p> <p><i>Yesterday we began figuring out how we will work in stations. Today you have more time to continue your scavenger hunts, but with a few more stations to explore. There are also new materials in the Word Work Station!</i></p> <p>Indicate each station as it is named, pointing or walking to where it is located in the classroom and showing its sign.</p>

	<p>Review the classroom management system. As on Day 1, walk through and practice “reading” the system together. Invite children to recall and describe how Stations time will work. Encourage children to help each other find their way in reading the schedule and locating the stations where they belong.</p> <p><i>Like yesterday, when you arrive at your station, make sure everyone in your group is in the right place. Look at what you find in the bin and talk about it for a few minutes. Then mark your Scavenger Hunt papers.</i></p> <p><i>Remember, when you hear the signal, your group will move to your next station. [Demonstrate signal.] Let’s try it!</i></p> <p>Distribute children’s Stations Scavenger Hunt sheets and pencils.</p>
20 minutes	<p>Remind children of their tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● make sure all the children in the group are present at the station, ● look at and talk about the materials at the station, ● mark things found on the Stations Scavenger Hunt sheets, and ● move at the signal to the next station assigned for the group. <p>Signal for groups of children to move from the rug to their first stations. Help children get oriented and encourage them to help each other.</p> <p>Monitor children’s activity. After about four minutes, give a one-minute warning. Then signal the transition to the second station.</p> <p>Depending on how smoothly the group is managing, the children may visit one, two, or three stations.</p>
5 minutes	<p>Bring the group back together to share discoveries and answer questions about how this component works.</p>

<p>Week 1, Day 3 Introduce the Word Work Station: Name Puzzles</p> <p>Note: Stations time will be shorter on Days 3 and 4. Use the extra time for reinforcing Stations routines and for continuing to orient to the new school year.</p>	
<p>Materials and Preparation</p>	<p>All children will practice the Word Work Station. Create as many sets of the materials as needed for all children to work simultaneously.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● blank Scavenger Hunt sheet ● names of children in the class, on a list or on a ring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children’s names written on sentence strips with a photo attached, then the photo and each letter cut apart, to create puzzles: <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin: 10px 0;"> <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">child’s photo</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">J</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">a</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">y</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">d</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">e</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">n</td> </tr> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> envelopes, one for each child <p>Place each puzzle in a separate envelope. Write the corresponding names on the outside of the envelopes.</p>	child’s photo	J	a	y	d	e	n
child’s photo	J	a	y	d	e	n		
10 minutes	<p><i>What did you discover in the Word Work Station during the Scavenger Hunt?</i></p> <p>Show the blank Stations Scavenger Hunt sheet for children to reference.</p> <p><i>Today you will practice one activity from the Word Work Station: Name Puzzles.</i></p> <p>Model the activity.</p> <p><i>Usually, the Word Work Station will be here [____]. Today, since we are all practicing together, this activity will be spread out on all of the tables.</i></p>							
10 minutes	<p>Dismiss children to tables by group.</p> <p>As they work, circulate to observe their efforts, provide support, and monitor expectations for Stations work habits.</p>							
5 minutes	<p>Bring the group back together to share discoveries and answer questions about the Word Work Station.</p>							

<p>Week 1, Day 4</p> <p>Introduce the Word Work Station: Faces Memory</p> <p>Note: Stations time will be shorter on Days 3 and 4. Use the extra time for reinforcing Stations routines and for continuing to orient to the new school year.</p>	
<p>Materials and Preparation</p>	<p>All children will practice this one station. Create as many Faces Memory sets as needed for children to work in their established small groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> large grids, drawn on paper or taped out on a tray or tabletop, 1 for each small group index cards, 3 x 5, cut in half 8 photographs of each child, 3 x 2.5” or smaller glue

	<p>Prepare 4 sets of cards with children’s photos. Divide the cards into smaller sets so that all small groups can play simultaneously.</p> <p>To play, shuffle cards and arrange them in a grid, face down. Each player turns over two cards at a time and says the names of the children in the photos. If the two cards match, the player sets the cards aside as a pair. If they do not, the player turns them back over. Play continues until all cards are matched. The goal is to cooperatively pair and identify all of the photo cards (rather than to collect the most cards).</p>
10 minutes	<p><i>The Word Work Station will have different kinds of activities to help you practice letters, sounds, and words. Yesterday you learned how to do Name Puzzles. Today you’ll learn a new activity: Faces Memory. Memory is a game you will play in different ways this year. Today we’re playing with pictures of you!</i></p> <p>Model the activity.</p> <p><i>As we said yesterday, the Word Work Station will usually be here [____], in this space. Today, since we are all practicing together, this game of Faces Memory will be on all of the tables.</i></p>
10 minutes	<p>Dismiss children to tables by group. As they work, circulate to observe their efforts, provide support, and monitor expectations for Stations work habits.</p>
5 minutes	<p>Bring the group back together to share discoveries and answer questions about the Word Work Station.</p>

<p>Week 1, Day 5 Introduce the Reading Station Word Work Station open (2 activities) Community Conversation</p>	
Materials and Preparation	<p>Plan for two Stations rotations so that all children visit the Reading Station and one Word Work activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● blank Scavenger Hunt sheet ● collection of high-interest picture books, organized on a bookshelf and in bins
5 minutes	<p><i>What did you discover in the Reading Station?</i> Show the blank Stations Scavenger Hunt sheet for children to reference.</p>

	<p><i>Today you will practice what you'll do in the Reading Station: looking carefully at books!</i></p> <p>Describe how the books are arranged and hold up a few books to entice children. Invite children to describe how they handle books with care and how they find out what a book is about.</p> <p><i>The Word Work Station is also open today. Everyone will go to both the Reading Station and to one Word Work activity today. This will give us a chance to practice visiting different stations.</i></p> <p>Offer reminders about signals, review expectations for finishing work, and suggest tips for moving safely and efficiently from one station to another.</p>
8 minutes	<p>Rotation 1</p> <p>Dismiss children by group: some to the Reading Station and others to tables for Word Work.</p> <p>As children work, circulate to observe their efforts, provide support, and monitor expectations for Stations work habits.</p>
4 minutes	<p>Signal clean up and transition; help children get settled in new stations.</p>
8 minutes	<p>Rotation 2</p> <p>Children move to the station they have not yet visited. Continue to circulate, observe, and support children's work.</p>
5 minutes	<p>Bring the group back together for a Community Conversation. Invite children to share discoveries and resolve questions together about the Reading Station and about how Stations work generally.</p>