

I Spy Quilt – Family Literacy Resource

Guide for Program Staff

The I Spy Quilt is an effective and fun learning resource that helps to encourage language development and increase vocabulary in children.

The I Spy Quilt Kit includes:

1. One I Spy Quilt
2. 64 word cards (some kits may have one or two extra)
3. Guide for Caregivers
4. Zip Lock plastic bag to hold the quilt.

Why should caregivers use this quilt with their children?

- The patterns, shapes and colours in the quilts provide the chance for children to name and count objects, and learn their colours. Older children can match words to pictures.
- The pictures also give children a chance to practice saying words and sentences by storytelling. Children like to tell others about what they do – and share their imagination through storytelling!

Suggestions for using the quilt:

- Play the “I Spy” game. For example, “I spy with my little eye”
 - an animal
 - a truck
 - something blue, green, ...
 - something that lives in the woods
 - something that has wheels
 - a vegetable
 - a fruit
 - something that can fly
 - something that you can eat
- Match the words on the cards to the pictures on the quilt squares. If a child can read, they can do this themselves. If not, the caregiver reads the card and then the child finds the picture. Caregivers may want to help with this to encourage the child to play and so the child does not get too frustrated searching.



The “I Spy Quilt” Literacy Project contributors include Connie Harrison, Nancy Klein, Grace Klein, Marion Kobayashi, Shannon Marquette, Marg Mitchell, and Eileen Passmore. Questions or suggestions can be directed to Eileen at (587) 982-5122 or epassmore@telus.net



COMMUNITY ADULT LEARNING PROGRAM

- Ask the child to pick their favourite square – What is pictured in the square? What do they like about it?
- Use an item on a quilt square in a sentence. For example, “The cow is eating grass.” You could also combine two squares for a sentence. For example, “The snowflakes are falling on the horses.” Encourage your child to make sentences, which can also be funny. For example, “The dogs are riding on the horses to go to the soccer game.” (uses three squares)
- Count the number of squares that have a similar colour.
- Some squares have pictures of animals. What sound does the animal make that is on that square?
- The amount of time playing with the quilt will depend on the age of the child. Remember, 15 minutes can be a long time for some children. When using the word cards included, limit the amount to about 10 cards unless the child wants to continue.

Literacy Extenders:

- Encourage Caregivers to cut pictures out of magazines, flyers, etc., and make their own word books for their children.
- Caregivers can also make a colour book. For example, in a red book, they would glue in all pictures of red things found in magazines or flyers.
- Find blue, yellow, etc. objects and put them on the correct colour square on the quilt.
- Sing some songs, like Old McDonald had a farm. (choose animals from the quilt)

Program Hints:

- Lend the I Spy Quilt to families in your programs – it’s what they’re for!
- Families may be more comfortable taking the quilt home to use with children once you have demonstrated how to use it. Take the quilt out on a home visit and demonstrate a couple of uses while you are there.
- Offer a child’s book and a book for caregivers (let them choose from several books) as prizes for the families that bring the quilt back on time.
- The quilt is machine washable. Take the cards out of the zippered pouch before washing! Use the cold cycle to wash and dry on a low heat setting. Wash the quilt after each family uses it. Be sure to use scent-free laundry soap and fabric softener.

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