



Five Senses Literature Lessons

Wonderful World Level: Orange

A year-long curriculum of hands-on,
easy-to-use, age-appropriate
learning for children ages 4–8.

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Five Senses Literature Lessons – Wonderful World – Level: Orange
Version 2.1

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Why this curriculum?

Today, many curriculums for small children are not based on childhood development. They skip over the importance of play and move into reading, writing and math despite the fact that those things require brain development that is very individual. Five Senses Literature Lessons will introduce your child to beautiful children's books, some new and some old. It provides a variety of different ideas to play with your child to help them develop both their bodies and minds, whether or not they are ready for reading and writing.

Five Senses Literature Lessons is designed to be used with any child in the 4-8 age range, regardless of where the child stands on academic readiness. How is that possible? Because it is developmentally appropriate. Average children, those with challenges and those who are gifted are all learning about the world around them at this age and need to experience it through play, hands on activities, and fun stories. This is how children are made to learn.

As an occupational therapist I have a unique perspective on child development. I have seen the benefits in therapy settings of using play and activities to help children learn, grow and develop. I have found that even in children who show little interest in academics do like learning about animals, plants and the world around them. So I created a curriculum that teaches those topics. I also added hands on activities that help children develop the motor skills they will need later in their education. Many of the games, activities and art projects are therapy methods I draw on when working with children who need to develop hand strength and control. These activities benefit all children. The children who struggle with them begin developing the skills they need. The children who excel refine existing skills, often doing the activity for longer or with more precision, further solidifying skills needed for adulthood.

I took all that wonderful perspective, and then I put my ideas through the lens of a hard working homeschool mom. I worked to create a curriculum you can use with minimal stress. Homeschooling is not for the faint of heart. Homeschooling multiple children means I don't have time for complicated directions, finding a million go along things myself, or learning a complicated skill like knitting before the next day's lesson. I wanted to create a curriculum that would give kids the most benefit with the least stress on mom, so that's what I've done.

Where did this curriculum come from?

In 2007, my first child became old enough for kindergarten. She was a bright child, but not ready for a long day that looked more like first grade than kindergarten at my local schools. I decided to homeschool her. I experimented with Waldorf, Montessori, Charlotte Mason, classical education, unschooling and literature units. What I found was that my child needed the free space of an unschooler, but we were both happier when we had planned activities to help fill our days. Work books were boring, she hated doing the same thing twice. Yet she really wanted to learn about the world. Thus I began making up my own lessons based around the children's books she enjoyed, the best ideas I had learned from my curriculum research, and my own knowledge of child development.

Over the years I have taught my younger two children, as well as many co-op classes full of children ages 4-8. I realized that these young minds enjoyed activities like graphing and science projects, singing songs and learning about the world around them but without the pressure to read or sit still for a long time. These small children learned best through play. I created go along play activities, ones that developed fine and gross motor skills that help children become coordinated people who can later read and write. I used my knowledge as an occupational therapist to make sure each activity was developmentally appropriate and that we had hands on sensory experiences to help their little minds learn and retain more.

This curriculum is made up of the best activities, books and lessons I have done over the course of teaching my children for the last 10 years.

How do I use this curriculum?

This curriculum is designed to be used at your own pace, and however works best for your child or children. You may use this curriculum with multiple children in the age range at the same time, making your homeschool day easier. Below is my suggestion for a low stress week of using Five Senses Literature Lessons.

Read the lesson plans for the week and obtain the books you will need for the week. For some weeks you need a specific book, for others you can choose from the list or see what your local library has to offer on the topic you will be covering. Collect your supplies and plan ahead of time what you will do each day.

Lesson 1 - Buses



Reading of the week

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de La Pena and Christian Robinson



Additional reading

- *The Wheels on the Bus* by Paul O. Zelinsky
- *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* by Mo Willems



Supplies needed for this week

- Box
- Colored paper- yellow, blue and black
- Crayons and markers
- Paper
- Pencil



Song of the week

The Wheels on the Bus

This is a wonderful, classic children's song with motions and gestures. Using the whole body to perform the song helps your child make brain connections that will be used later for writing, as the language center of the brain connects to the rest of the body. This song is especially fun with a group or the whole family.

The Wheels on the bus go round and round,
Round and round
Round and round,
The wheels on the bus go round and round,
All through the town.


The wipers on the bus go
swish, swish, swish....

The horn on the bus goes
beep, beep, beep....

The coins on the bus go
Ching, ching, ching....

The babies on the bus go
Wha, wha, wha ...

The mommies on the bus go
hush, hush, hush...


 If you don't know this song- here is a link that will also show you the hand motions: https://youtu.be/kLvbJ6e_SdI



Social Studies

Unlike taxis that will take you exactly where you want to go, buses have a set of stops they make in a town; either in a row or on a loop. The places the bus stops are places many people want to go. With your child, make a list of places where they think people in your town might want to go. You may want to include the hospital, the library, the town square, a shopping center, the post office, school, etc. Make pictures of a few of these, drawing them or cutting them out from a magazine. Tape them up around your home to help your child create a bus route. Use a box to make a bus for your child to take their toys around the route, having them get on and off at different stops.

To create a simple bus use yellow paper to cover the sides of the box. Make blue squares to glue on for windows and some black circles make the wheels. You can draw on extra details, like head lights and doors, if you wish. For some children this game is more fun if you or a sibling helps the toys get on the bus or lines them up at your bus stops. Having the child push the box along the route is a wonderful gross motor activity as they will need to push, steer and walk or crawl all at once.



See the Appendix for cut outs for a bus and signs for this activity on pages 95 and 96.



Language Arts

Why do people ride a bus? Discuss with your child the main reasons people take buses; to go somewhere there isn't enough parking, it is further than they want to drive, or because they don't have a car. Discuss with your child; have you ever ridden a bus or tram? Why? Was it fun? Would you want to have to do it every day, for every trip? Why or why not? Make a list of the pros and cons of riding the bus vs. having your own car.



Social Justice

In *The Last Stop on Market Street* the little boy and his grandmother take the bus to serve food at a soup kitchen. Talk about how not everyone has enough to eat and take a donation to your local food bank or shelter. The causes of poverty and the complexity of the issue may be too much for small children. But making the simple connection of how not everyone has enough to eat, and you can share with them, is a wonderful life lesson.



Field Trip


Go ride a bus. If you live in an area with tourism you may be able to take a bus tour. However, even a simple ride around your city can be exciting for a small child. Seeing how one gets on a bus, pays to ride, finds a seat and remembers to get off at the right spot are all useful life skills.



Language Arts

With your child, make up a story about an imaginary bus ride. Your child can just tell the story verbally or you can write it down for them. They may like to add pictures, or not, depending on what the child thinks is fun. Some children may need no more prompting than to be told “Tell me a make believe story about a bus,” to invent a story about a pink bus full of unicorns. However, it is fine if you child sticks closer to reality and mimics one of the books you read this week. Or the child may need a template to fill in. One has been provided here for your convince. Put as many or few words as you like in the blanks provided. There is an additional copy of the story in the appendix to make it easier to fill in.

One day, I went to get on the bus, and it was
not my usual bus. This bus was _____.
The driver was _____, and all the
passengers were _____. I got on the bus anyway. I
had _____ with me for the bus ride. The bus took me
to the _____.

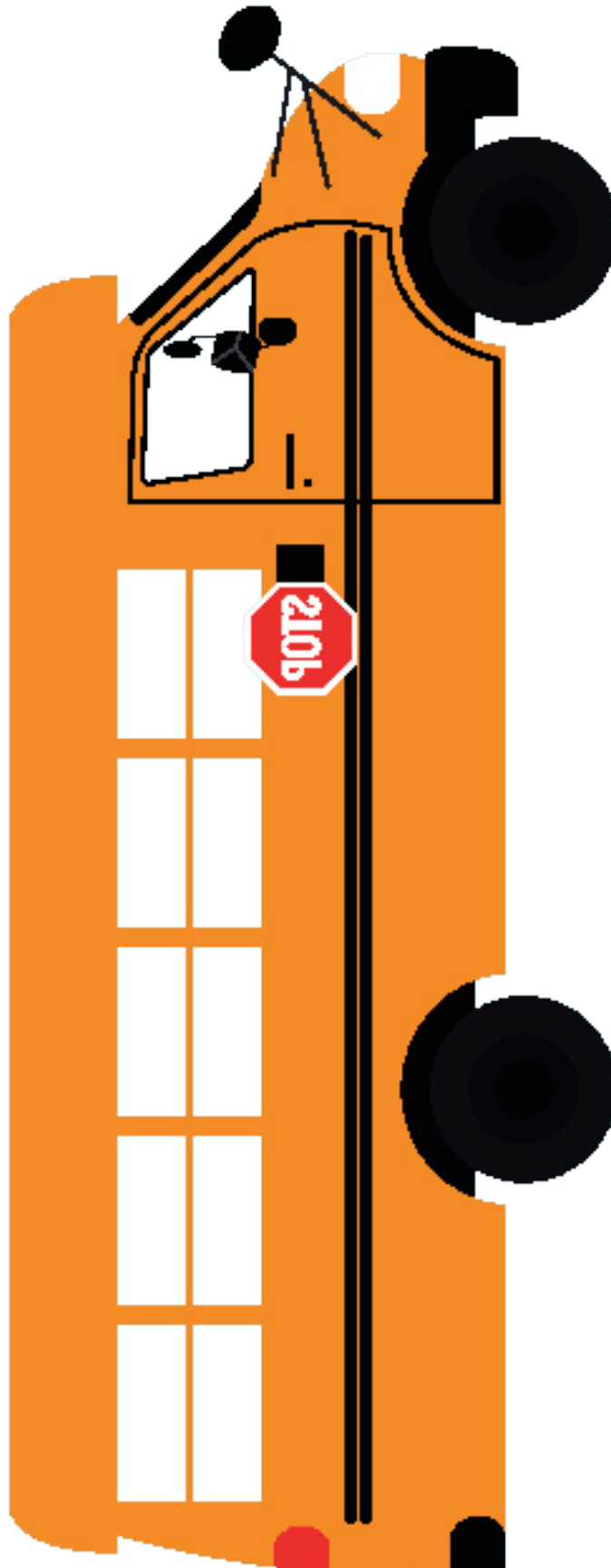
 See the Appendix for a printable/fillable
version of this story on page 97.

Bus cut out and bus stop signs
Unit 3 - Lesson 1: Busses, Social Studies



Bus cut out and bus stop signs

Unit 3 - Lesson 1: Busses, Social Studies



Bus Story

Unit 3 - Lesson 1: Busses, Language Arts

One day, I went to get on the bus and it was not my usual

bus. This bus was _____.

The driver was _____

and all the passengers were _____.

I got on the bus anyway. I had _____ with me for the bus ride

The bus took me to the _____.

