

# Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

## Theme-Based Therapy A Way to Keep Learning Fun!

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Do you and your students get tired of doing the “same old thing”? Do you find yourself spending too much time planning and less time enjoying your work? Then theme-based therapy might work for you! With good initial planning and fun activities, you can start developing themes relevant to all subject matter that last all week long!

Theme-based therapy works well for children with language and articulation disorders. This type of therapy works great with groups, especially mixed groups, and is functional because it transfers to the “real world.” Meet each child’s individual needs by personalizing each lesson. Themes provide a great opportunity for collaboration between teachers and speech therapists!

### Some themes to consider for therapy include:



1. Locations: desert, ocean, arctic, farm, etc.



2. Nature: seasons, plant cycles, weather, planets, etc.



3. Food: restaurants, cooking, fruits, vegetables, desserts, etc.

4. Community: community places, jobs, etc.

5. Back to school

6. Animals: jungle, farm, zoo, dinosaurs, ocean, pets, etc.

### Activities:

When you have decided on your theme, it’s time to plan the activities.



**Books-** Find books related to the theme. You can use fiction and non-fiction books. Books provide ample opportunity for articulation and language.

Have students listen for their speech sounds in the story and make a list of words to practice, or read the story using correct articulation. For language, answer wh- questions, make inferences, complete vocabulary tasks, and sequence/retell the story.



**Sensory bins-** Create a sensory bin related to the theme. For example, if you are doing a food theme, fill a sensory bin with pictures of food or play food

and have the students sort the food into categories.



**Songs-** Find songs related to the theme. These are great for teaching vocabulary and concepts. For example, if you are doing a season theme, a quick online

search will find children’s songs related to each season.



**Art/Crafts-** Crafts are a fun way to incorporate hands-on activities into therapy. You can make them as simple or complicated as you like. For example, if you’re doing an



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ocean theme, provide students with a blue sheet of paper. They can draw or cut out fish and other ocean animals to put in their “water.” Students working on articulation can write a target word on each fish. Students working on language can answer a question or complete a task before adding a fish.

Theme-based lessons adapt easily for children of all ages and levels. You can scaffold activities to make them easier or harder depending on the level of the child. Reuse them yearly! Simply store lesson plans, materials, books, and notes away in plastic tubs to pull out next year.

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