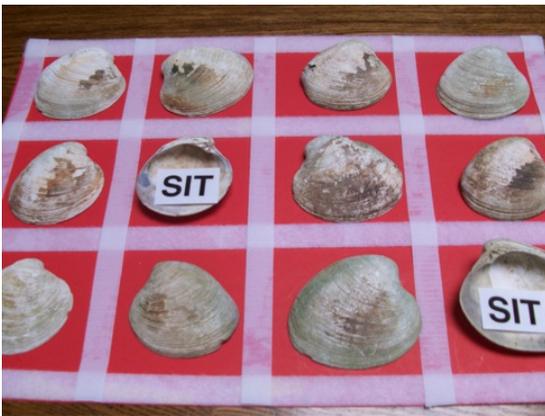




Cindy's Corner

Shell Matching Game



Everyone has collections of shells they bring back from summer vacation. Here is a fun way to use them from Family Fun Magazine, with simple adaptations for children with visual and multiple impairments. Bring back memories of the beach as you develop *memory skills* and work on *basic concepts*, such as, matching, discrimination and same/different. Reinforce *reading and math skills* by incorporating matching pairs of letters, words, pictures,

numbers, colors, or textures into the game. Use common objects, or Mayer Johnson Pictures to develop object identification (*language*). Work on building appropriate peer interactions, turn taking and patient waiting in a meaningful setting (*social skills and communication*).

You will need:

- 12 - 16 large shells (clam, oyster, or scallop shells work best)
- 6 to 8 sets of matching pairs from one of the following categories:
 - Small tangible objects (e.g., toy cars, keys, coins)
 - Braille, or large print words, letters, or numbers
 - Mayer-Johnson pictures
 - Colors, patterns, textures, or shapes
 - Scratch and sniff stickers
- Glue, Velcro, or tape
- Laminating sheets, or Mod Podge if you want to form a protective coating (optional)
- Enough Velcro strips to make a grid (optional)
- A square of cardboard, or a tray big enough to hold all 12 shells in a grid pattern (optional)

Making the game is easy. Choose the medium and category that best meets the needs of your students. Make matching sets of words, letters, numbers, Mayer-

Johnson pictures, common objects, textures, colors or patterns. Fasten the sets of matching pairs to the inside of the shells, using Velcro, tape, or glue. Use the Velcro strips to make a simple grid pattern on a tray, on the desk, or on a sturdy piece of cardboard. The Velcro will help to keep the shells from slipping around and will serve to provide each shell with a designated place (this is optional, you can always just set the shells up in rows and columns).



Let your students assist you in the games construction. It can be a fun way to work on scanning, matching and following directions. It is also a good opportunity to work on functional hand skills. Let students match pairs for you to fasten onto the shells, or peel off Velcro circles and press them onto the shells. For students working to follow simple, repetitive directions, encourage them to reach out and pick up the cards one at a time (picking cards up off the desk is also a good way to work on thumb and finger use and developing a pincer grasp).

Playing the game is simple. Place the shells facedown in the squares formed by the grid. Players take turns turning over any two shells (let them pick them up to explore them). If they match, the player gets to keep them. If they don't match, they are returned to the board face down for the next player. Assist with returning shells back to their original place on the board and re-orientating them if needed. The player that has the most shells at the end of the game is the winner (*counting skills, more/less/most*). Work on emerging number concepts as you play the game. Reinforce number concepts to two and simple addition (one shell plus one more shell equals two shells). If the game is a hit, keep it current; adapt it to reflect new skills and concepts.



Use switches and personal communication devices to encourage interaction and participation. For example, program a switch to say, "my turn" or "your turn now." If your student benefits from a visual or tactile cue to use patient waiting, use a Mayer-Johnson picture, or a tangible symbol as a reminder. Try working in pairs. Pair a nonverbal student up with a verbal student, or a sighted student with a non-sighted student. A student working on simple grasp and release can be in

charge of reaching out to pick up the shells and handing them to his partner. His partner can see if the shells match.

Make shells your theme of the week. Use shells as concrete manipulatives to teach mathematics. Make sets with them, count them, and use them to demonstrate beginning addition and subtraction concepts. Explore a collection of shells.

Identify them, match them, and sort them into like-groups ((*Patterns, Relations and Algebra*). Find all the shells in a group of dissimilar objects, or locate all the things you can find at the beach from a collection of familiar objects (*classification & discrimination*).

Research shellfish and learn facts about them. Read supplementary stories. Use shell-related words as your spelling words for the week. Make up a simple shellfish trivia game. Make an informational book about shells; attach real shells in place of illustrations (composition). Visit a beach (*community experience*). Use shells to make shell prints, collages, and jewelry (*following directions and hand skills*).



Enjoy the last days of summer!