



Going on a Paper Hunt

ELA: Nouns, Adjectives, Letter Writing and Science: Properties of Paper



Patricia Turner

Published by *Oklahoma Young Scholars/Javits*

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

Grade Level	1st – Preschool Grade	Time Frame	3-4 class periods
Subject	English/Language Arts, Science	Duration	25 minutes

Essential Question

What are the observable properties of objects? How can knowing the properties of materials help us describe them? Why is it important to be able to communicate and share information with others?

Summary

Whether your students are just starting to read and write or can already do so, they will enjoy this lesson. It combines elements of science with reading and writing. It begins with a story, *The Surprise Package*, that could very well happen to them. Students work on an animal card toy sort. They will use adjectives to describe the toys (nouns) found in Carter's toy box. One of the goals in this lesson is for the children to write, or dictate to the teacher, a personal letter to someone important to them. They also draw a picture to accompany the letter. This leads us to the "paper hunt" where they will participate in a science activity to help them find the types of paper that are best for writing and drawing.

Snapshot

Engage

Students listen to the story *The Surprise Package*. The story is then used to introduce the students to nouns and adjectives.

Explore

Using the story and card sort, students practice creating adjectives. The card sort is then used for a variety of partnered activities.

Explain

Students go on a paper hunt to discover the properties of different types of paper. They name the type of paper and discover that the label is an adjective that describes that kind of paper. They create a chart to keep track of their findings and use the data to determine the best papers for writing and drawing.

Extend

Students write or dictate letters and create a drawing that accompanies their letter.

Evaluate

Students write or tell about the properties of one kind of paper and how those properties determine the

uses for that paper. Students go back to the original story about Carter and write or tell what Carter's room looked like making sure to use adjectives to describe.

Parent Guide and PreK Extension: This lesson has a parent guide attached for at home use for grades PreK-2nd. It also has an additional activity using a paper cut out of Boomer, the OU Mascot Horse, for storytelling and language development.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (2nd Grade)

2.PS1.2: Analyze data obtained from testing different materials to determine which materials have the properties that are best suited for the intended purpose. *

2.PS1.2.1: Different properties are suited to different purposes.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 1)

1.5.R.1: Students will recognize nouns as concrete objects (i.e., people persons, places, and things) and use the pronoun "I".

1.5.R.3: Students will recognize color and number adjectives.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 1)

2.5.R.3: Students will recognize adjectives.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 1)

K.5.R.2: Students will recognize concrete objects as persons, places or things (i.e., nouns) with guidance and support.

K.8.W: Students will express their ideas through a combination of drawing and emergent writing with guidance and support.

Attachments

- [Animal-Toy-Card-Sort-Going On a Paper Hunt.docx](#)
- [Animal-Toy-Card-Sort-Going On a Paper Hunt.pdf](#)
- [Data-Collection-Table-Going On a Paper Hunt.docx](#)
- [Data-Collection-Table-Going On a Paper Hunt.pdf](#)
- [Parent-Guide-and-at-Home-Lesson-Going On a Paper Hunt.pdf](#)
- [Question Sheet—Going On a Paper Hunt.docx](#)
- [Question Sheet—Going On a Paper Hunt.pdf](#)
- [The-Surprise-Package-Story-Going On a Paper Hunt.docx](#)
- [The-Surprise-Package-Story-Going On a Paper Hunt.pdf](#)
- [Thinking Questions—Going On a Paper Hunt.docx](#)
- [Thinking Questions—Going On a Paper Hunt.pdf](#)

Materials

- *The Surprise Package* story (attached; 1 per student)
- Animal Toy Card Sort (attached; 1 per student)
- Data Collection Table (attached; 1 per student)
- Question Sheet (attached; 1 per student)
- Properties Thinking Questions (attached; 1 per student)
- Pencil, crayons, colored pencils, or markers, scissors
- Assortment of papers (wax paper, paper grocery bag, tissue, paper towel, cardboard, toilet paper, notebook, colored, lined, construction)
- Parent Guide with student handouts (attached; at least 1 per family)

Engage

Teacher Prep

Have the story visible to your students so you can work with the words in the story. This can be done by projecting the lesson on the board or printing copies for the students. The story can be found attached in Learner Handouts and also below in this narrative.

Begin the lesson by reading the story, *The Surprise Package*, to your students.

The Surprise Package

A package arrived in the mail one day! What could it be, they wondered? Who is it from? Who is it for? The package is for "Carter," it said in big bold letters. And up in the corner in teeny, tiny print was the name of the sender, "Mrs. Grandma Gayle!"

"Hooray, hooray," Carter said with glee. "My very own package, just for me!"

Carter ripped off the tape, popped open the box, and lots of toys came tumbling out. It was a complete zoo, full of all kinds of fun, from little stuffed animals to big giant puffs! There was a tiger, a bear, a reindeer, a cow, some unicorns, an elephant, a dalmatian, a clownfish, a snake, and even a T-Rex. But last to come out was a horse named Boomer, with a helmet of course.

Carter circled the room, threw toys in the air, then ran to tell baby sister the tale. "Let's sort them, and group them, and make them a home. We can feed them and dress them. We need them to love—let's give them all names, and make sure they are hugged."

Just then Carter took one final glance in the box. He found a big shiny note that said, "From Grandma to Carter." He opened it up and read, "Write to me soon, and draw me a picture of all that you do." So, Carter called Mom and asked for some help, to thank Grandma Gayle for all that she'd done.

Introduce the word *noun* by focusing on the title of the story, *The Surprise Package*, and asking students which of the three words names a person, place or thing. Circle the word package.

Continue this activity by working together as a whole class. Use a document camera or printed copies of the story to circle or highlight nouns found in the story. There are plenty of nouns in this story, so the class may not circle all of them. Focus on the following nouns: *letters, animals, puff, toys, package, Carter, Grandma Gayle, tiger, bear, reindeer, cow, unicorns, elephant, dalmatian, clownfish, snake, T-rex, horse*.

Next, introduce the word *adjective* by focusing students' attention on the title of the story again and asking students what word in the title describes the kind of package. They should tell you it is a surprise package. Tell students that words that describe a noun (person, place or thing) are called adjectives. For more practice, find the noun *puff* in the story and discuss how the adjective *giant* tells us the size of the puff. Practice finding adjectives that describe a few more nouns. *Suggested nouns: letters, print, animals, and note.*

Explore

Teacher's Note: Animal Toy Card Sort Activity

Don't cut out the cards yet! First, help students come up with adjectives to write in the boxes. Do this in small groups to allow students to dictate to you if they do not write yet. If they are writing, focus less on correct spelling. The blank boxes are for students to draw and describe additional toys. After coming up with adjectives to describe each toy, have students color the toys. *If you want to use the cards to play the memory game later, this would be a good time to make an additional copy of their sheets.*

Say to students, "Carter didn't tell us what the stuffed toys looked like so let's make the story better by adding some words that describe the toys. Look at your picture page of toys. What word could we write to describe the cow? Spotted is one adjective we could write that describes the cow. Write adjectives that describe the other toys." Encourage students not to use the same adjective more than once.

After students finish writing, have them cut out the cards themselves if possible. This is a fine motor skill that young children need to practice, even if the cards don't come out perfectly. After the cards are cut out, follow the list of activities provided below or create activities of your own.

Suggested Activities with Cards

1. Sort the cards any way you want. Have your partner guess how you sorted them.
2. Have your partner sort the cards. Then, guess how they are sorted.
3. Put cards in alphabetical order using the first letter of the noun, which is the name of the animal toy. Example: Cow
4. Put cards in alphabetical order but this time use the first letter of the adjective you wrote. Example: Spotted
5. Make two sets of cards and play the "memory game," by finding matching cards.

Explain

Teacher's Note: Prep

One of the goals in this lesson is for students to write (or dictate) a personal letter to someone important to them. They will also draw a picture to accompany the letter. This leads to the "paper hunt" and to finding the perfect papers for writing and drawing.

Have different types of paper available in the room. The pieces can be just big enough to write their name and draw something. Decide if you want to do this as a center or as a whole group. If you don't want to have the students hunt around the room, have samples ready for them to use. *Suggested papers: wax paper, paper towel, corrugated cardboard, notebook paper, construction paper, toilet paper, paper grocery bag, copy paper.*

There is an attached handout with a data table where students mark how well they were able to write and color on each type of paper. The empty boxes on the data table are for additional types of paper you might use such as wrapping paper, wallpaper, or crepe paper.

Say to students, "In the story, Carter wants to send a thank-you letter and a drawing to his grandma. The first thing he needs to do is find the right kind of paper to write and draw on. We are going to do something like Carter is doing. You are going to write a letter and draw a picture for someone you know. The first thing we need to do is find the right papers for writing and drawing!"

The next step depends on how you choose to facilitate the paper hunt: as a whole class, centers, or in pairs.

Students should write and draw on each kind of paper with their pencil and crayon. They record their results on the attached **Data Collection Table** handout.

Discussion Questions

1. Which paper or papers were best for writing with the pencil? Why? *These answers vary but you are really interested in what they noticed. Possible responses: it was hard to write on some, there were bumps, the paper tore, the pencil poked a hole in it, the paper moved around*
2. Which paper or papers were the best for drawing with the crayons? Why? *Possible responses: the color would not stay on the paper, you can't see it, tore the paper, moved around, color changed, color was not bright, it left pieces of the crayon on the paper.*

Introduce the Word and Concept of Properties

Properties is a science word that is first introduced in kindergarten science. Tell students that there are over 40 commonly used paper types. Ask if they noticed that each paper had different properties. A physical property is anything that can be observed using the five senses or that can be measured without changing. Scientists use properties as their starting point for learning about and describing materials. Measure, see, smell or feel. Knowing these properties of paper helps us decide which kinds of papers are best for certain things. If you didn't observe all of these things while you were testing, let's take a few minutes and go back and smell, touch, and bend the papers. Have the students look at the paper samples they explored and work with them again to discover more properties about their papers. You can ask these questions about whatever papers you want to work with.

1. What are the properties of wax paper? *Possible responses: waxy, slick, smooth, sticky feeling, you can see through it, thin, water stays on it*
2. What are the properties of paper towels? *Possible responses: bumps, not smooth, soaks up water, you can't see through it, it's white, doesn't tear easily, can't write on it well*
3. What are the properties of cardboard? *Possible responses: hard to bend, brown, can write on it, smooth or has grooves, can't see through it, thick*

Extend

Using data from their chart and class discussion, students should get two full sheets of the papers determined to be best for writing and drawing.

Discuss with students who they would like to write to and what they would like to tell them. The letters can be short, just a couple of sentences. Students should do as much of the writing as they can with the focus on writing rather than on spelling. First or second graders should spell some common words such as *the*, *it*, *said*, and *done*, then use inventive spelling for more complex words. Placing too much focus on spelling can overwhelm students alongside all of the processes involved in writing a letter.

Here is a simple format for a letter you can use.

Date

Dear,

Write what you want
to say.

Closing,

Write your name

After writing or dictating their letters, have students create a drawing that accompanies their letter. Consider sending the letters and drawings home for parents to mail or have an alternate plan for delivering the letters.

Returning to the Explain: Part II

Make a list of all of the papers that students explored or that you want to show them. Have them help you create a list like the one below.

Example of possible list:

- construction paper
- lined paper
- thin paper
- colored paper
- wax paper
- tissue paper
- notebook paper
- toilet paper
- paper towel**

Using what students now know about how properties of the papers can describe the papers, have students identify the describing word (*adjective*) that tells something about the papers. ***Paper towel is a challenge option because the word paper describes the word towel. This makes the word paper the adjective and towel the noun.*

Evaluate

Option 1: Using an assortment of papers, give each student a small piece of one paper type. Have students write or dictate the properties for the type of paper. Next, have them write a describing word (adjective) that they would use for this paper and provide an example of what it is used for. Observe whether students can describe the properties of one kind of paper as well as how those properties determine its use.

Option 2: Students go back to the original story about Carter and draw what they think his room looked like after he opened the box. Some students can also tell or write 1-2 sentences describing Carter's room making sure to use adjectives in their writing.

Extensions for Gifted Students

Students compare a gift box they received to the box that Carter received. They should write and draw to show this comparison.

Students take the drawing of what the room looked like after Carter opened his box and compare it to what their room would like if they received the same box. Encourage students to focus on how they would organize, sort, or display the toys?

Resources