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## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### Language Arts:

Discuss other things that are built/created beginning with something very small. For example: seed/plant/tree, thread/cloth/shirt, flour/dough/bread, line/shape/picture, etc. Students may think of others.

Students can do a simple writing activity following the book's premise using simple words. Words such as car, family, dog, lion, (or any animal,) ball (or any toy,) beach, (or any place,) skyscraper, etc. can be written on individual slips of paper for students to pick randomly from a box. They can then: 1) start with one word; 2) create a sentence around it; 3) write a paragraph. They can read their paragraphs aloud to the class.

The idea of *Word Builder* can be expanded to include all of the parts that make up a book. Students can learn to identify the following parts of a book: page, paragraph, chapter, table of contents, index, title page, dedication, preface, epilogue, copyright, etc.

### Literature:

Students may be interested in finding, reading, memorizing, and reciting other poems about building or about words and writing. (See "For Further Reading" below for some suggestions.)

### Art:

Students can explore various types of building and construction machines. They can create a class glossary with an illustration of the machine, its name, and what it does. Some examples could be: steam drill, tractor, crane, bulldozer. They can explore encyclopedias or the 620 and 690 sections in their school or public library for more suggestions.

Students can begin enhancing their observation skills by trying to pick out individual letters in the illustrations in *Word Builder*. They can read *Alphabet City* (see below) or other books about architecture, and then look for “hidden” letters throughout the classroom, school, or on their way home, and report about what they saw. They can create illustrations showing how letterforms are incorporated into architecture.

Students can also look at different types of buildings either in books or in their own surroundings and try to determine the smallest building element; for example, brick, board, cement block, steel cable, etc. This can reinforce the concept that a story, like a building, begins with something small: a letter, a word, an idea.

### **For Further Reading:**

#### **ARCHITECTURE:**

Hayden, Kate. *Amazing Buildings*. DK Publishing, 2003.  
Johnson, Stephen, *Alphabet City*. Viking, 1995.  
Komatsu, Yoshio, *Wonderful Houses Around the World*. Shelter Publications, 2004.  
Slaymaker, Melissa Eskridge, *Bottle Houses*. Henry Holt, 2004.  
Weaver, Janice, *Building America*. Tundra Books, 2002.

#### **BUILDING MACHINES:**

Berendes, Mary, *Machines/Las maquinas*. Child’s World, 2008.  
Kelly, Thomas, *Empire Rising*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.  
Nakagawa, Chihiro, *Who Made This Cake?* Front Street, 2008.  
Nevius, Carol, *Building With Dad*. Marshall Cavendish, 2006.  
Pallotta, Jerry, *The Construction Alphabet Book*. Charlesbridge, 2006.  
Roth, Susan L., *Hard Hat Area*. Bloomsbury, 2004.

#### **POETRY – Building:**

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, *City I Love*. Abrams, 2009  
Merriam, Eve. *Bam, Zam, Boom*. Walker, 1972.

#### **POETRY – Writing:**

De la Mare, Walter, *Rhymes and Verses: Collected Poems for Children*. Henry Holt, 2002. (see “Books and Stories” section.)  
Fletcher, Ralph J., *A Writing Kind of Day: Poems for Young Poets*. Boyds Mills, 2005.  
Hopkins, Lee Bennett, *Been to Yesterdays*. Boyds Mills, 1995.  
Hopkins, Lee Bennett, *Wonderful Words*. Simon & Schuster, 2004.  
Livingston, Myra Cohn, *Poem-Making: Ways to Begin Writing Poetry*. HarperCollins, 1991.  
Prelutsky, Jack, *Pizza, Pigs, and Poetry: How to Write a Poem*. Greenwillow, 2008.