

2 Facts in the Mail

Students write letters to communicate information.

Materials

- **reproducible 1**, page 36 (one per student)

- pens and pencils

- 1 Share books such as *Postcards from Pluto* by Loreen Leedy (Holiday House, 1993) and *Your Best Friend, Kate* by Pat Brisson (Bradbury Press, 1989). These books are good examples of how to put factual information into letter format.
- 2 Ask students to think about the “where” in their research. Students may be researching a state, a time period, a habitat or environment, and so on. Invite them to imagine they are writing a letter home from one of these locations.
- 3 Remind students to incorporate facts by including them in their letters as observations. For instance, “I just stepped on the moon’s surface with my new sneakers. My footprints will be here forever because there is no wind on the moon!” Have them write letters on their reproducibles, including their own personal touches. (For example, “Greetings from Ancient Egypt. I hope my writing doesn’t look like hieroglyphics to you!”)

12 Penny Lane
Anytown, U.S.A.
October 16
Date

Dear Mom and Dad,

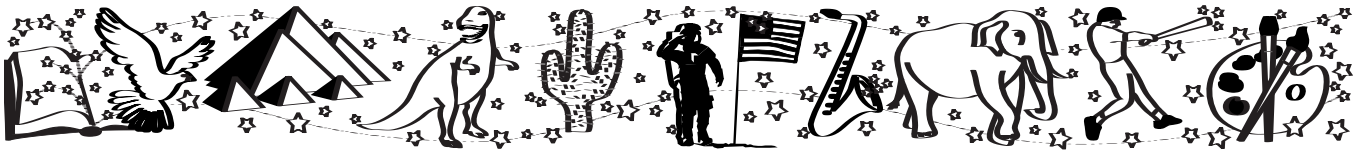
The trees are tall here in the rain forest. I can see many colorful birds in the forest canopy.

My favorite animal is the howler monkey because he makes so much noise! My second favorite is the sloth because she sleeps so much.

Mom, you would not like it here. I saw a big snake! But you would like to see the beautiful orchids. Some smell like chocolate.

Your daughter,
Kama
Name

>36<
Reproducible 1 Facts in the Mail

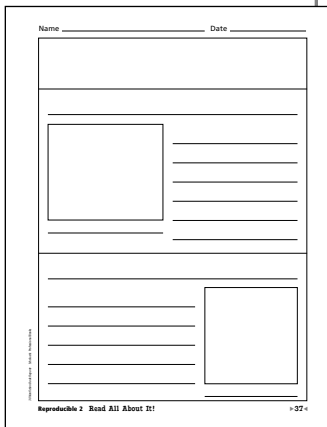


3 Read All About It!

Students write a newspaper article.

Materials

- newspapers
- **reproducible 2**, page 37 (one per student)



- pens and pencils
- crayons or colored pencils

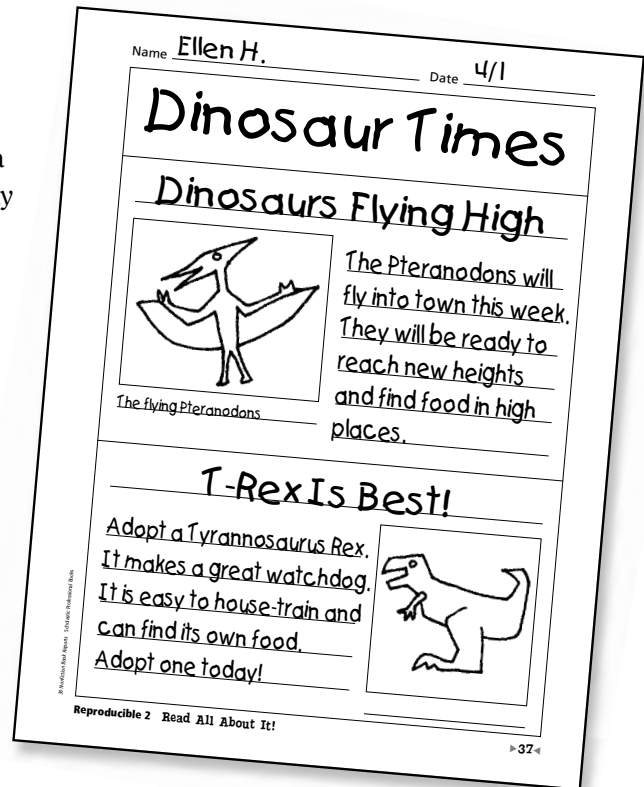
1 Discuss with students the six questions reporters ask when covering a story (*Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?*). Share local newspapers as examples of newspaper-style writing and features. Make a list of what they find on the board (headlines, advertisements, help wanted, comics, and so on).

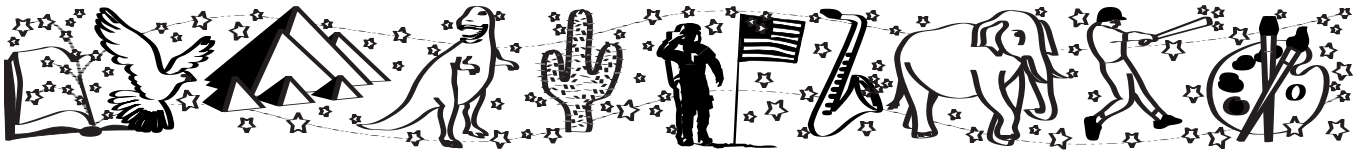
2 Have students write down several interesting facts about their topic on a piece of blank paper. Next to each fact, students can write how they want to include that fact in their newspaper. Examples could be:

- The Tyrannosaurus Rex was a fierce dinosaur.
Advertisement for T-Rex as a watchdog.
- Scientists who research dinosaurs are called Paleontologists.
"Help Wanted" Ad.
- The Pteranodon was a dinosaur that could fly.
Article.

3 Have students write and illustrate their stories.

4 Bind all pages into a class book, or display on a bulletin board.





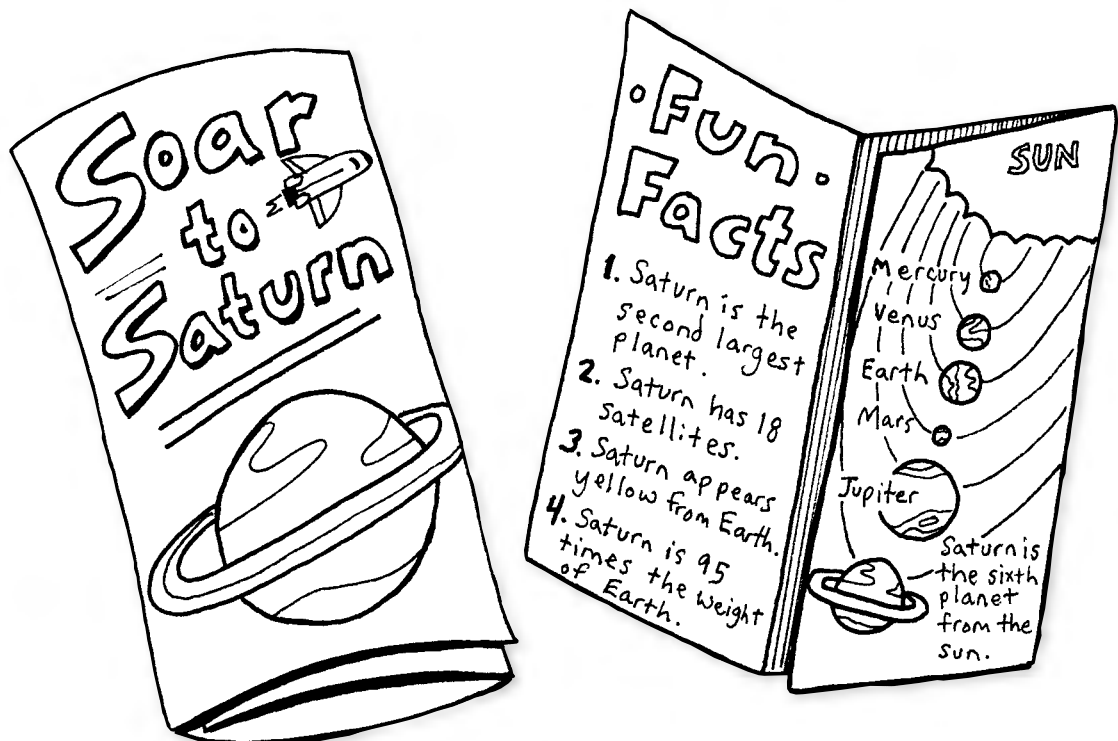
5 Travel Brochure

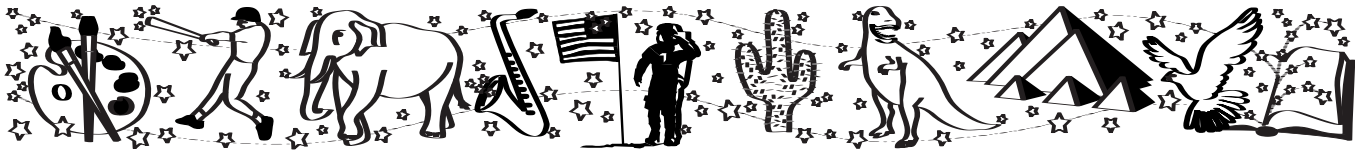
Students create a brochure to display facts.

Materials

- oaktag
- drawing supplies

- 1 Show students samples of brochures from different countries, states, museums, historical places, and events. Explain that brochures are made to entice people to learn more about a certain place or topic.
- 2 Have students take the piece of oaktag and fold each edge toward the middle to make three sections.
- 3 First, have students create an eye-pleasing cover by making a catchy title such as “Soar to Saturn.” Next, have students create a page with interesting facts. Then they can create a page that highlights a particular part of the area. Last, students can create a page using persuasive language and slogans such “Like the heat? Spend your next vacation on Mercury! “
- 4 Have students use photos, drawings, and diagrams to decorate their brochures. Display on a table or bulletin board.



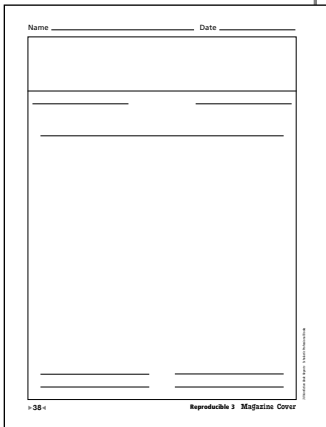


9 Magazine Covers

Students create the cover of a magazine that focuses on their topic.

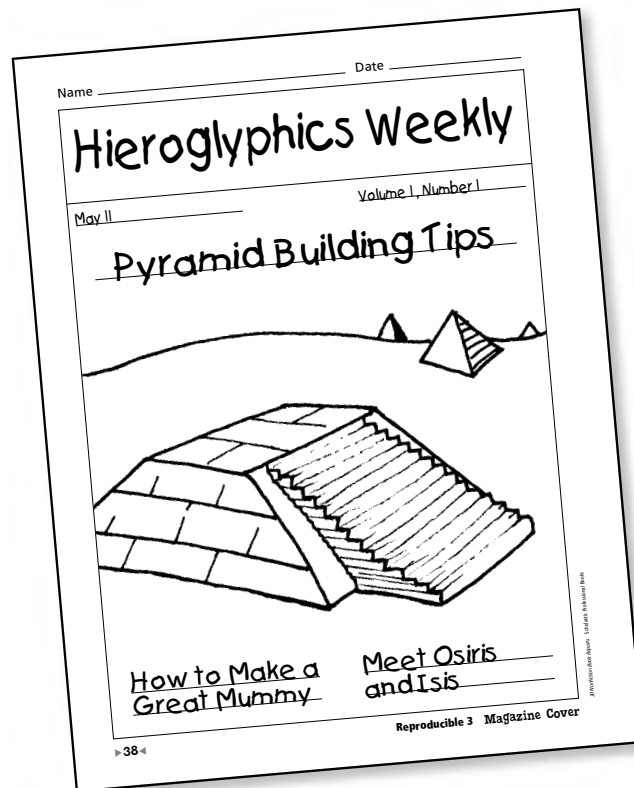
Materials

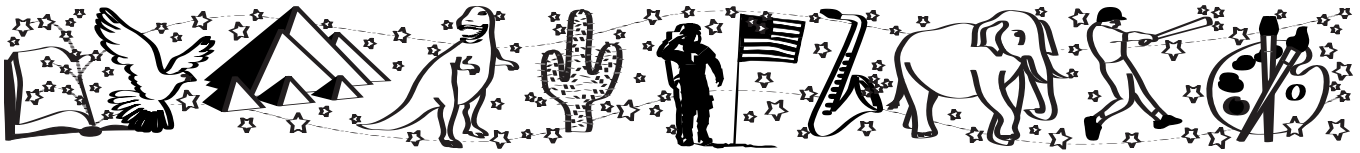
- reproducible 3, page 38 (several per student)



- pens and pencils
- drawing supplies

- 1 Show students various magazines that focus on a particular topic. Discuss with students the catchy names of the magazines as well as the attention-grabbing pictures and text on the covers.
- 2 Have students come up with a name for a magazine related to their topic. Next, have students use the smaller lines on the sides of the cover to create catchy article names. For instance, for the topic of ancient Egypt, the title might be *Hieroglyphics Weekly*, with an article called “10 Tips for Building a Lasting Pyramid.”
- 3 As an extension, have students write one of the articles they’ve mentioned on their cover.





10 Getting Mathematical

Help students integrate math into their research.

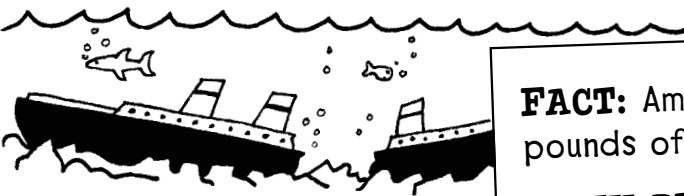
Materials

- pens and pencils
- paper

- 1 Discuss with students the fact that math is connected to all of their research topics. Some examples are: the size of the planets, the life span of different animals, timelines, sport statistics, and so on. Invite students to generate five math-related facts related to their topics.
- 2 Students then use these facts as a starting point for math word problems. You might use the examples shown below.
- 3 Have students trade cards and solve each others' problems.

FACT: The Titanic sank in 1912. Its location was discovered in 1985.

MATH PROBLEM: How long did it take for the Titanic to be discovered on the ocean floor?



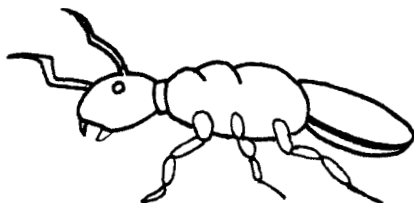
FACT: Americans eat about 500,000,000 pounds of popcorn each year.

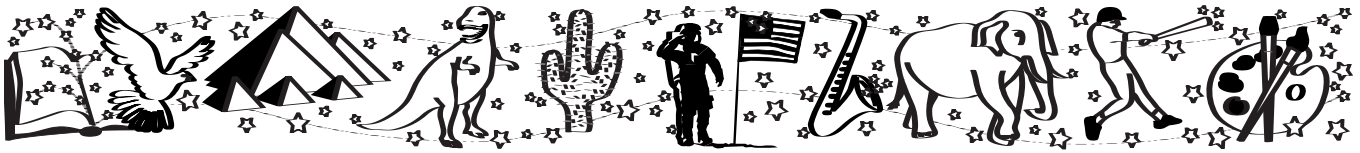
MATH PROBLEM: How much popcorn would be eaten in 5 years?



FACT: Insects have 6 legs, 3 body parts and 2 antennae.

MATH PROBLEM: There are 4 insects. How many legs, body parts, and antennae are there altogether?





12 Made to Order

Students create a catalog page related to their topics.

Materials







- reproducible 5, page 40 (one per student)

- drawing supplies
- pens and pencils

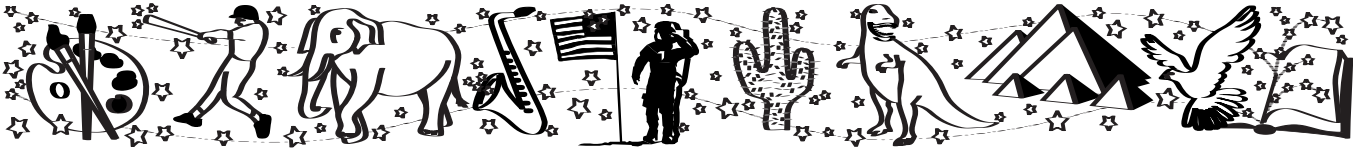
- 1 Bring in mail-order catalogs for students to look through for inspiration. Point out how items are shown and described.
- 2 Using the reproducible, have students choose six “products” related to their subject and write a short description.
- 3 Have students draw a picture of each product in the box provided. For instance, if the student is researching the Arctic, the items pictured might be ice blocks to build an igloo, sealskin clothing for protection from the cold, dogsled for traveling on the ice and snow, and Northern Lights postcards.

Name _____ Date _____

Catalog Name **ARCTIC ADVENTURE**

 <p>Ice Blocks Build your own ice shelter quickly and easily with these handy ice blocks.</p>	 <p>Weather Station This compact device will give temperature readings to -40 degrees F.</p>
 <p>Dogsled For trips far into the wilderness, this dogsled is the best choice! Dogs sold separately.</p>	 <p>Thermal Boots Thick treads make walking on snow and ice safer. The lining keeps feet warm.</p>
 <p>Sealskin Clothing These comfy clothes are warm and dry in the coldest weather.</p>	 <p>Binoculars Observe nature with these handy waterproof binoculars.</p>

Reproducible 5 Made to Order

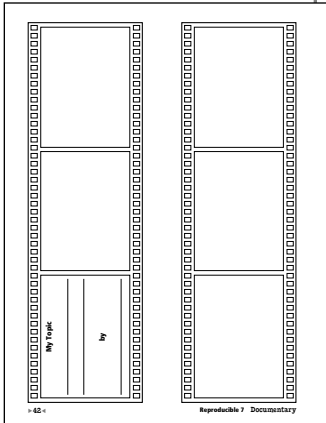


15 Documentaries

Students make and narrate a filmstrip about their topic.

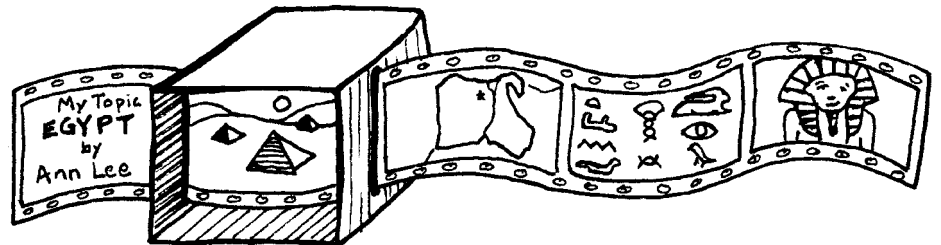
Materials

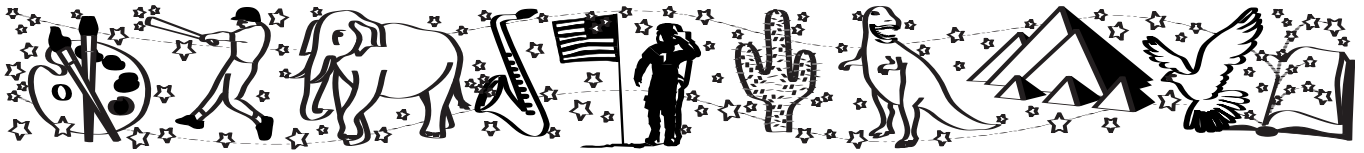
- cube-shaped tissue box (one per student)
- wrapping or construction paper
- drawing supplies
- **reproducible 7**, page 42 (one per student)



- tape

- 1 Have students cut the tops off tissue boxes. Then, wrap the box in wrapping or construction paper, leaving the cut side open.
- 2 Have students cut 3-inch slits opposite each other on two sides of the box, for pulling the filmstrip through.
- 3 On the reproducible, students draw five diagrams, illustrations, or maps. On a separate piece of paper, students number 1 to 5 and write a script to go along with each of the filmstrip panels.
- 4 Students cut out the filmstrips, tape them end to end, and pull them through the slits as they narrate their documentaries for the group.





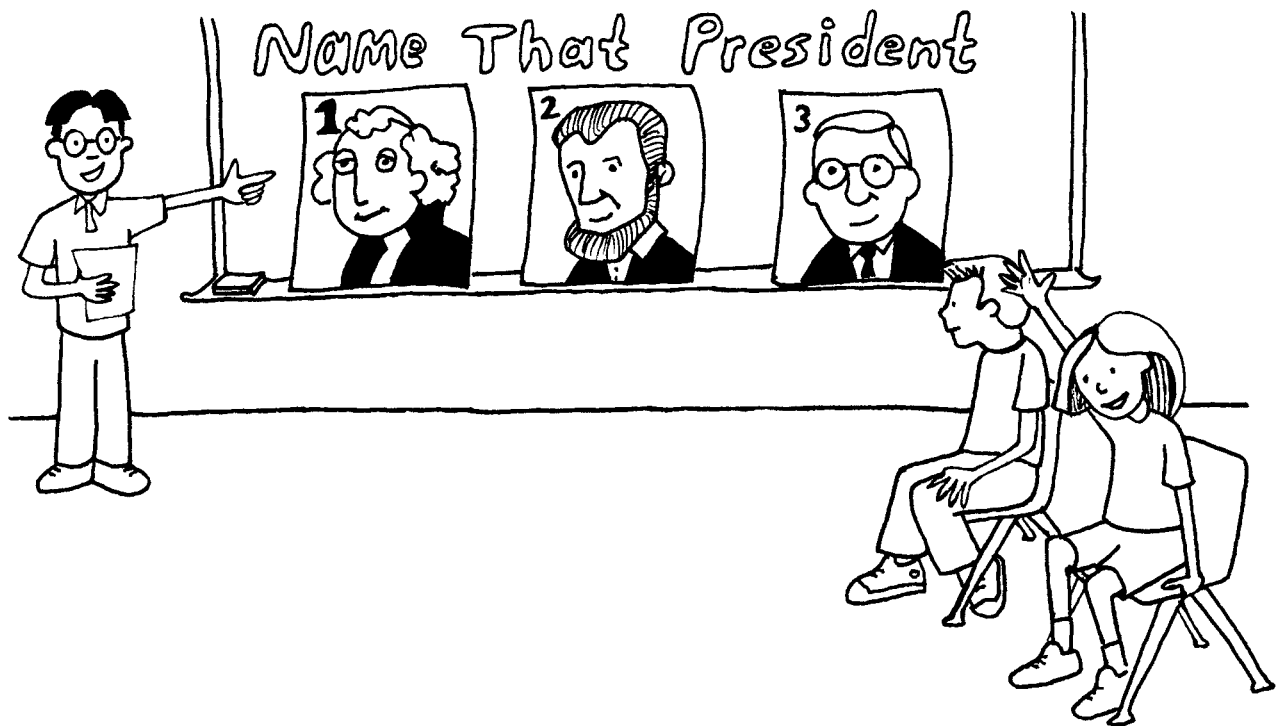
22 Topic TV Game Shows

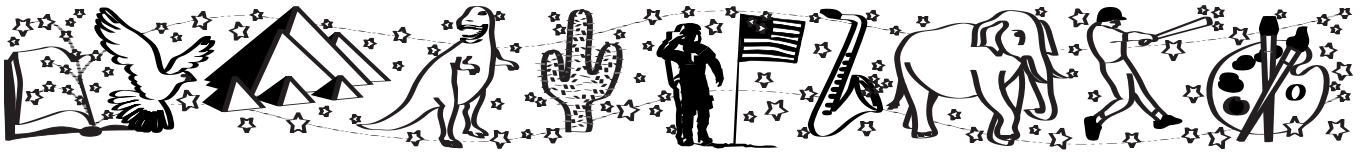
Students use information about their topics to create a game show.

Materials

- classroom furniture such as desks, chairs, and bulletin boards
- posterboard
- drawing materials
- pens and pencils
- index cards
- play money
- video camera (optional)

- 1 Ask students to name some game shows they have seen on TV. Make a list on the board. Ideas might include: *Jeopardy*, *Wheel of Fortune*, *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?*, and *The Price Is Right*.
- 2 Discuss the rules of each game.
- 3 Organize students into small groups to create a game show for their topics. Students may use posters, props, illustrations, and flash cards, for authenticity.
- 4 Pick one group a day (a week) to present their games (with their format of choice), using the class as the contestants and/or audience.





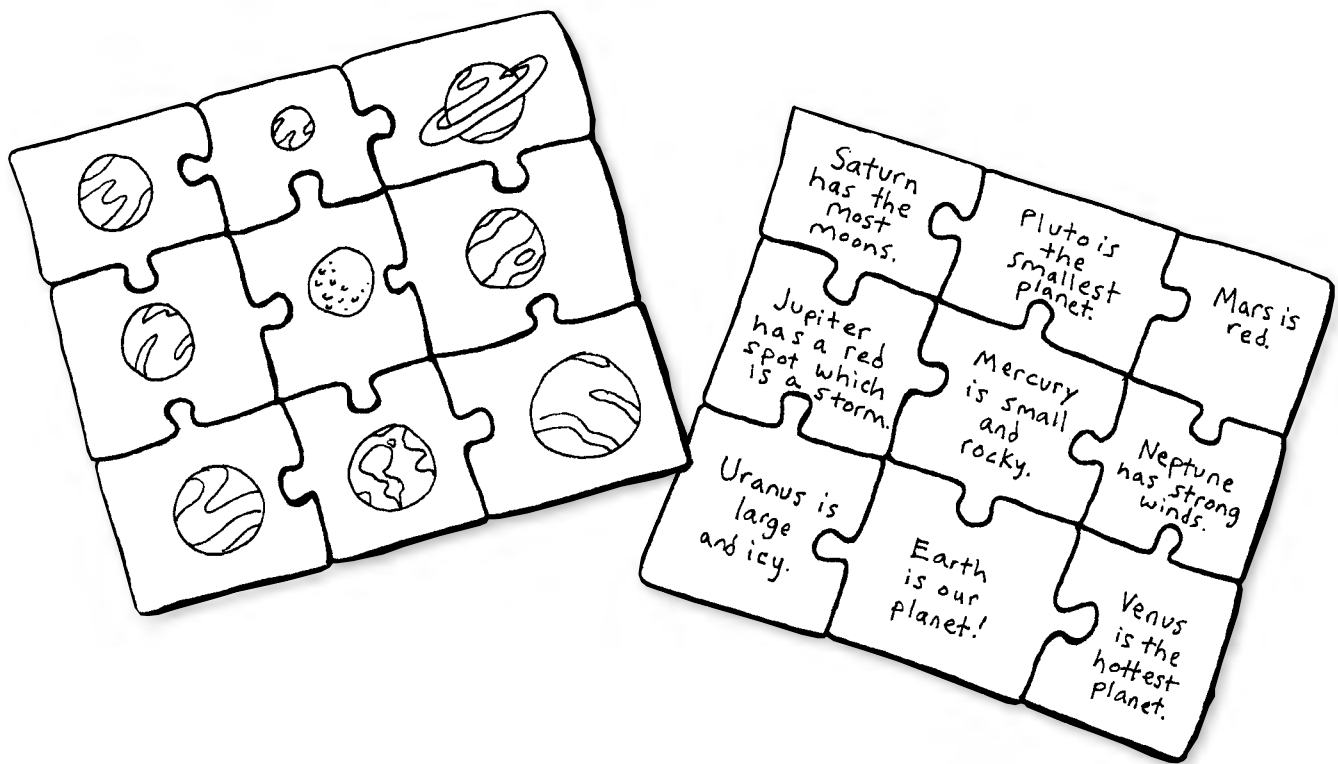
23 Puzzling Topics

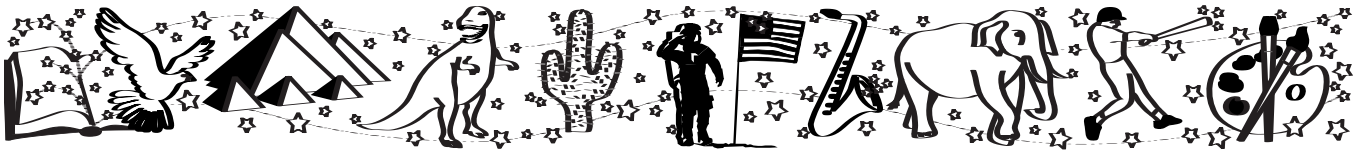
Students create puzzles with pictures on front and facts on back.

Materials

- large poster board (one per student)
- scissors
- drawing supplies
- pens and pencils

- 1 Have students cut the posterboard into nine puzzle pieces.
- 2 On one side of each puzzle piece, have students write a fact related to their topic. On the flip side, they draw a picture related to the fact.
- 3 Laminate pieces and place in plastic bags at a center. Students read each piece and then put the puzzle together.



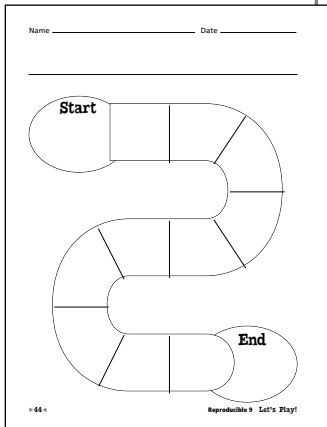


25 Let's Play!

Students create a game based on facts from their research.

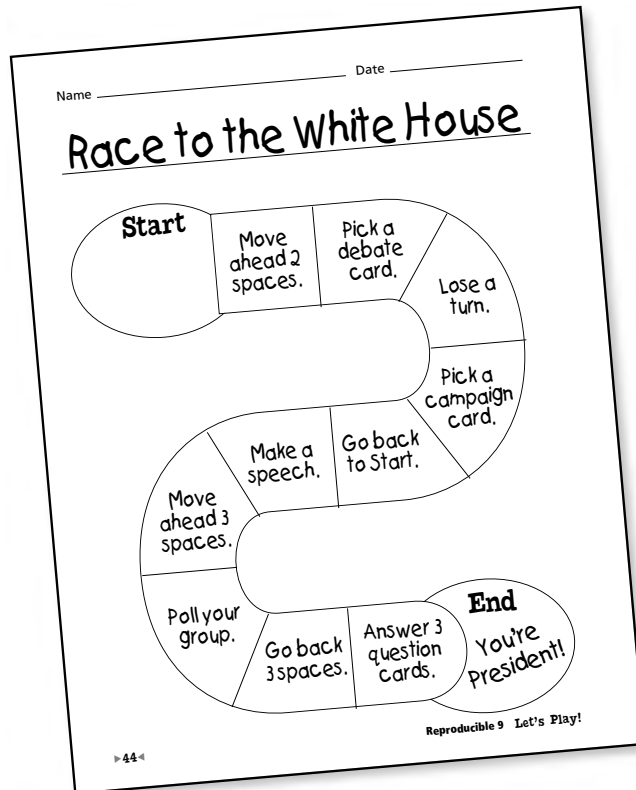
Materials

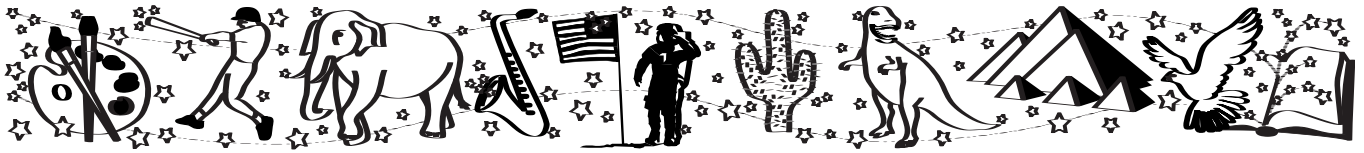
- reproducible 9, page 44 (one per student)



- small index cards
- drawing materials
- pens and pencils
- small game pieces
- number cubes

- 1 Display several board games for students to examine. As a group, make a list of game features on the board. Make another list of the objects of each game.
- 2 Using the reproducible, have students complete a gameboard that relates to their topic. For example, "Race to the White House," "Find That Koala," or "Journey Through the Universe." Encourage them to think of a title, create rules, and add special steps on the board such as "Get lost in the bamboo jungle! Lose one turn."
- 3 Have students write questions about their topics on index cards to be used during the game.
- 4 Students may bring in and decorate shirt boxes to use as containers for their games.





28 Cereal Box Reports

Students decorate cereal boxes with facts and pictures representing their topics.

Materials

- empty, clean cereal boxes (one per student)
- white drawing paper
- drawing supplies
- scissors
- glue

- 1** Have students trace around each of the four upright sides of the box on drawing paper and cut them out.
- 2** Have students label one large side with the name of their topic. Then have them decorate the remaining sides with illustrations, facts, vocabulary, photos, diagrams, and so on. For example, students may list vocabulary words on one of the thin sides of the box and make a timeline on the other. Students might create a catchy phrase to cover the front of the box along with a colorful picture or drawing. If desired, students may leave the top of the cereal box open to store research information inside the box.
- 3** Have students glue the decorated sheets to the sides of the cereal box and display.

