SPARK: Simple Play Adaptations to Reference for Kids

Grippies Stackers

(Small Muscle Development Kit – EC COE)

Description:	Image:
Grippies Stackers are colorful (green, yellow, orange, and blue) interlocking magnetic 2D and 3D cylinders and textured X-shaped blocks. Cylinders are textured on one side and have simple facial expressions on the other side. Adding a cylinder to an X-shaped block creates a "figure". Tactile grips and over-molded plastic make these secure magnetic construction toys soft to touch and easy for little hands to hold, stack, and assemble.	 Purchasing Information Demo Video

Who Might Benefit?

Those who…

- Need to develop grip and finger strength in order to use other learning materials such as writing tools.
- Enjoy exploring textures.
- Are working on using both hands to complete an activity.
- Are developing the ability to maintain focus on an activity to complete it.
- Enjoy quiet, self-directed activities.

Why Use?

Provides an opportunity to…

- Explore the feel of the textured shapes on each block and cylinder.
- Practice using both hands together to stack and assemble using blocks and cylinders.
- Strengthen fine motor skills.
- Match colors and textures.
- Fidget quietly to help maintain focus.

Instructions for Use:	Adaptation Ideas:
Environmental Considerations • As the children grip and manipulate the Cylinders and X-shaped blocks, they are strengthening the muscles in their hands and	**Optional Additional Materials/Supplies** • Cookie Sheet **Stabilize It** • Blocks are magnetic, so could be used with a cookie sheet as a stabilizer.

fingers. This is helpful for those who may be developing their grip and dexterity.
- Can be used at home or in school.

Positioning
- Grippies Stackers can be used in any position; seated, standing, on the floor, etc.
- Grippies Stackers should be placed on a flat surface.

Basic Play/Use
- Open ended exploration.
- Match color or texture of the cylinder to the color or texture of the X-shaped block.
- Place cylinders into the curve of the X-shaped block to form a figure.

Extended Play/Use
- Create pattern cards by taking pictures of cylinders and X-shaped blocks and encourage children to reproduce the patterns

Play/Use with Others
- Building and stacking with Grippies Stackers can easily be turned into a group activity, promoting social skills and teamwork. As children work together, they develop communication skills, turn-taking and learn how to collaborate effectively.
- Create single picture cards of the cylinders and X-shaped blocks. Children take turns drawing cards, selecting the cylinder or X-shaped block pictured, and begin creating with the shapes they have drawn.

Simplify It
- Reduce the number of cylinders and X-shaped blocks initially.
- Introduce the blocks by shape, color, or texture.

Contain it
- Contain blocks on a (magnetic) cookie sheet with a rim.

Add Sensory Cues
- Use Grippies Stackers on a high contrast color mat.

Communication Support
- Guide possible selections with pointing; use vocabulary such as “push” “pick up”, “put in”, “find (insert names of colors)”.

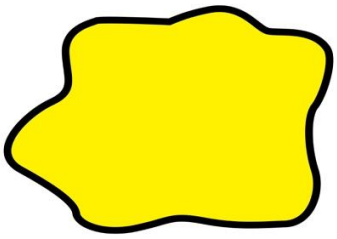
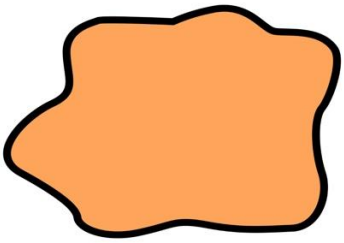
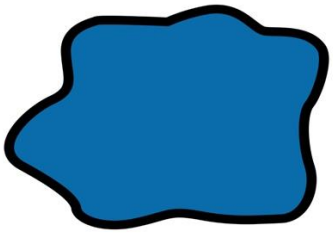
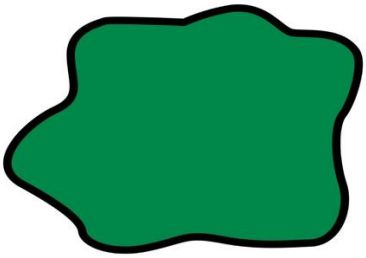
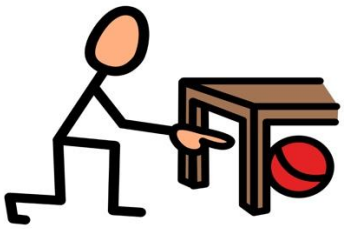
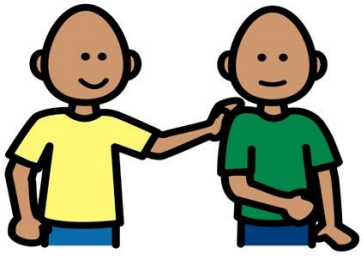
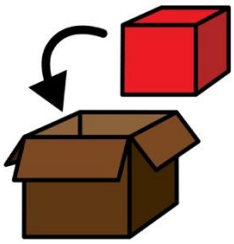
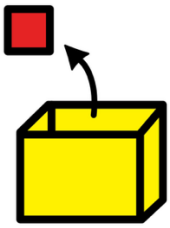
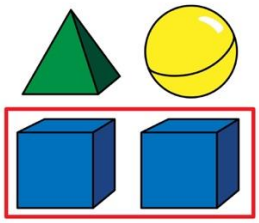
Alternative Uses
- Play a bowling game with the Grippie figures.
- Play Tic Tac Toe with the cylinders and X-shaped blocks.

DIY Alternatives
- Assemble a collection of colored cups to stack.

Additional Considerations:
- Benefits of cup stacking

Ohio Early Learning Standards
- PW: Motor Development: Demonstrates developing control of fundamental fine motor skills, including hand-eye coordination (1.b.).
- AL: Engagement and Persistence: Persists in completing a task with increasing concentration (1.c.).
- CD: Problem-Solving and Development: Uses increasingly complex strategies to solve problems (3.a.).

Words to Encourage Play/Use

Yellow 	Orange 	Blue 
Green 	Find 	Touch 
Push 	Put in 	Take out 
Up 	Down 	Make 
Match 		

Adapted from: Haugen's Modes for Adapting Toys based on materials from the "Let's Play" Project at the University of Buffalo. PCS is a trademark of Tobii Dynavox, LLC. All rights reserved. Used with permission.