

## **Ideas and Lesson Plans from The Land of Zoot** Helping to Build a Strong Foundation for a Happy Life

Welcome to the Land of Zoot, where learning is fun and limited only by our imaginations!

### **SUMMARY**

*From A to Zoot* is designed to introduce children to interactive and imaginative learning, engaging mind, body and spirit. The learning program is designed to easily adapt to individual, small group, or large group discussion and learning, and it can be easily tailored to the maturity and skill level of an individual child or grouping. Motivation and interest can be sparked by catering to the individual child or grouping's favorite characters. Positive messaging and positive reinforcement are used to anchor the learning experience, bolstering self-esteem and self-confidence.

**Age Group** – *From A to Zoot* was created with early childhood education in mind – from toddlers to pre-K, Kindergarten and early elementary school students. However, the zootsnoot and other characters in *From A to Zoot* can be carried forward as children mature. The approach used is designed to be flexible and easily adaptable, to allow a learning experience tailored to the unique interests of your child or class, to engage and motivate, to promote a feeling of accomplishment, to build self-esteem, and to allow for growth and development. The program is designed to grow and evolve along with your child or class and to provide a nurturing environment in the company of familiar characters selected by your child or class to personalize the positive learning experience.

**Positive reinforcement** – Positive reinforcement is used to anchor the learning experience to encourage ever-expanding learning, providing a positive sense of accomplishment and building self-esteem.

**The Program** – The program provides a template that is easily employed to the specific needs, environment, and interests of your child or class, and allows flexible adaptation.

**The General Ideas/Lesson Plans** – The general ideas/lesson plans are designed to be a guide for the parent, teacher, or other caregiver and can be found on the Land of Zoot website – [landofzoot.com](http://landofzoot.com) – which also provides a venue to share innovative adaptation and related activities. The Land of Zoot website is to launch along with the book on October 2, 1018.

### **GENERAL IDEAS/LESSON PLANS TEMPLATE**

**Goal:** To provide a solid foundation for the ongoing learning and educational experiences of your child or class:

- To establish positive associations with learning
- To strengthen, build, and nurture healthy self-esteem and self-confidence
- To introduce and promote positive social skills and spiritual development
- To provide an early intervention for any child that can be carried with him or her throughout his or her educational experience and life

### **Objectives:**

- Introduce and strengthen focus and task accomplishment
- Introduce the letters of the alphabet, their recognition, sound and use
- Introduce numbers and their use
- Introduce colors by identification and use
- Introduce word recognition through repetition and use
- Introduce positive social and spiritual concepts
- Introduce imaginative creativity by tapping the unique interests of your child or class to expand, integrate the concepts presented

**Activities:** Activities can be tailored to the age, maturity, skill level, and interest of your child or class. The activities suggested are designed merely as a starting point for the learning experience:

- Reading with your child or class. Reading familiarizes children with the rhythm, syntax, and sounds of learning, and it associates reading with the positive experience created between parent/teacher and child when sharing time together in a caring and nurturing environment. *From A to Zoot* is designed to engage your child or class and to be interactive. Tailor the approach to the degree and capacity for interaction of the child or class.
  1. Use *From A to Zoot* to introduce the “zootsnoot” and invite your child or class to enter the Land of Zoot through the apple – read corresponding portion and point to the apple.
  2. Introduce the game to be played with the zootsnoot – “try to find me on every page”
  3. Immediately engage your child or class – ask your child or class to find the zootsnoot on this page
  4. Provide gentle help if needed but allow the child or class to find the zootsnoot
  5. Praise your child or class once the zootsnoot is found
  6. For the younger child/children, it is best to allow the child/children to dictate the progression, pace, duration, and order of the interaction and presentation. For, example: younger children often want to immediately find the zootsnoot on each double page--allow them to do this and praise them for a job well done, and then move to introduce the character as a friend of the zootsnoot's, and thereafter move to the letter, color, or textual lesson. Depending upon the child's/children's maturity level and attention span, the number of concepts that can be introduced at one sitting or "visit" will vary, with 3-4 often being optimum. Additionally, with the younger ones, rarely will they remain engaged, beyond finding the zootsnoot, for the entire book at one sitting or "visit". Using a colorful Zootsnoot bookmark to "hold their place" until the next visit works well, and the next day, the adventure can pick up where it left off! With some little ones, the idea of the continuing visits is in and of itself an adventure!
- Additional suggestive focus activities:
  1. Hearts have been drawn into all of the illustrations. All of the illustrations have at least one heart – as the zootsnoot's nose is a heart. Ask your child or class to

- point out the hearts on the page. Count the number of hearts with your child or class. Praise your child or class for finding the hearts.
2. The illustrations incorporate and reinforce the concept introduced by the character; ask your child or class to find those reflected ideas. Example – the alligator introduces the concept of friendship – ask your child or class to find the alligator’s friends in the illustration – i.e., the other animals, etc. found in the picture.
  3. Each illustration and concept presents multiple opportunities for focus and task completion. Ask your child or class to find a particular thing, point to the thing, say the word for the thing. Praise your child or class for accomplishing these tasks. [This pattern can be repeated with each character and illustration. The parent, teacher, facilitator should tie the selections to the concept when appropriate.]
- Alphabet:
    1. Point to the letter and direct the attention of your child or class to the letter.
    2. Say the letter as your child or class points to the upper case letter. Say the letter again as they point to the lower case letter.
    3. Ask your child or class, “Can you say, [A or B or C ...], having them say the letter.
    4. Praise your child or class for saying the letter.
    5. Introduce the use of the letter in the character – Example – say A is for alligator.
    6. Ask your child or class if he/she can say “alligator” and point to the alligator. Praise your child or class for saying alligator and pointing to the alligator
  - Colors:
    1. Ask your child or class what color is the letter, or, for the very young, say the “A” is yellow.
    2. Ask – Can you say “yellow”? Give praise when the child or class says “yellow”.
    3. Ask – Can you point to the color “yellow”? Give praise when the child or class points to the color “yellow”.
    4. Additional suggested activities - draw and color the letter or the character using identified colors
  - Numbers/Counting:
    1. Ask your child or class to find the hearts on the page. Count the number of hearts on the page with your child or class. Remember each page will have a heart, as the zootsnoot’s nose is always a heart, and the zootsnoot is hiding on every page.
    2. Additional activities – Count the hearts on one identified page. Say the number, write the number, color the number the identified color. Count the number of hearts on another identified character’s page. Say the number, write the number. Add the two numbers together with your child or class, or count the total with your child or class. Example – say “4 hearts plus 3 hearts equals 7 hearts. Write the number 7.
  - Word Recognition:
    1. Select and identify items in an illustration. Ask the child or class to find that item. Praise the child or class. Ask the child or class to point it out. Praise the child or

- class. Ask the child or class “Can you say (cloud)? Praise the child or class for saying the word. Repeat the process with other selected words.
2. Additional activities – use the item/word in a sentence. Incorporate the item/word into a story.
- Positive Social and Spiritual Concepts:
    1. As your child or class identifies with the characters and positive experiences incorporated, the foundation will be laid for them to accept and embrace the positive life lesson presented by each character. Example – “S” seahorse – helping others. Point out to your child or class that the seahorse is giving a ride to the starfish. Ask your child or class – Would you like to help others? Do you like it when others help you? How does it make you feel when you help others? How does it make you feel when others help you?
    2. Additional suggested activities – draw a picture of someone helping someone else; tell a story about someone helping someone else; record your child or the children in your class telling their stories and play the recording back for them.
  - Imaginative Creativity:
    1. Have a discussion incorporating the concepts introduced and expand upon them. Example – the “T” turtle goes new places, meets new people, eats new food, learns new things. If you go to \_\_\_\_\_, what would you see? Who might you meet? What new things might you learn? This can be tailored to the age and experience of your child or class, from going outside the room [in the house, classroom, hospital, etc.] to going to another person’s house or going to another city or country.
    2. Physical Activities – you can introduce physical activities as well – dance movements from the turtle’s travels or the king’s ball, sing a song with the cricket and create a dance to go with the song, look about like the elf, flutter like the butterfly, jump up toward the sky like the dolphin, etc.

### **BULLETPOINT GENERAL SUGGESTIONS**

- A – friends – incorporate what and how to be a good friend
- B – fun each day – incorporate days of the week and what can do each day
- C – creativity, songs and music – introduce music and song
- D - looking for gems – what is a gem – something wonderful; reach for the sky – what do you want to be? what do you want to do? what do you want to see?
- E – what is around you? – how to notice and explore our surroundings.
- F – having fun - favorite things to do with others – introduce appropriate social interaction – what to do when you feel angry? What fun things you can do with friends. How to be a member of a team.
- G – has anyone (mother, father, teacher, friend) helped you? How can you help others? Are you courteous to others? How can you be courteous to others? How does it make you feel when others are courteous to you?
- H – what are you thankful for? How do you express your thanks?
- I – what do you like to do? How do you do it? Step by step explanation. Where do you like to go? How do you get there? How does it feel when you smile? What makes you smile? How does it make you feel when others smile at you?

- J – what do you do when things don't happen the way you want? Life has “ups and downs” – can incorporate physical activity of movement up and down much like musical chairs.
- K - respect, care and appreciation for animals – Do you have a pet? How do you treat your pet? What does it eat? etc.
- L – wishes/good intentions – make a wish, what can you do to make your wish come true?
- M – do you have a sister or brother, cousin, friend? How can you be a good sister, brother, cousin, friend? – share, help, etc.
- N – what is “magic” – the result of doing loving things for others – how can you create magic by loving others?
- O - what interesting thing do you want to tell others? Or – What sounds does an owl make? Where does an owl live? When does an owl come out? etc.
- P – what is inner beauty? – being kind and gentle and loving. How can we show our inner beauty?
- Q - what do you like? Who do you like? How can you help them? What is important to you?
- R –we can be strong and gentle. What is pretty around us? How do we care for plants or a given plant or flower?
- S – have you ever helped someone who needed help? How? When? Who? Who has helped you? How? When? Who? Did/do you thank those who help you? How? How can we help others?
- T – where have you been? – to friend's house, church, store, grandparent's, etc. What did you see? Who did you meet? What did you eat/taste? What did you smell? How did you feel? What did you learn? Where would you like to go? What would you see, smell, etc. if you went there?
- U – what is a star? Have you seen a star at night? What do you see in the sky at night? – moon, stars. What do you see during the day? – sun, clouds. Caution not to look directly at the sun. Rain comes from clouds in the sky. For more mature children can introduce concepts of planets, solar system, telescopes, space travel, etc.
- V - who do you love? How do you show them you love them? – tell them, hug, kiss, help them, etc. Who loves you? How do they show it? How does it make you feel when someone shows you they love you? How does it make you feel when you show someone else that you love them?
- W – how do you make others happy? How do others make you happy? What can you do to help make others happy?
- X – what is a treasure? How can you find a treasure. You can hide a “treasure” and then play game to find. Or draw a map, etc.
- Y – who did you see/meet today? How did you greet them? – said hello, said good morning, etc.
- Z – thank the zootsnoot for introducing you to new friends. Which one is your favorite character? Why? What did you learn?

As noted above, *From A to Zoot* is designed to educate while promoting optimism, positivity, civility and goodwill.

Remember to give praise at every opportunity, and –  
Enjoy the Joy of Learning!