

Question Prompts for Interacting in Centers

These cards are a great resource to laminate and place on a lanyard, tape up in each center, and place in your substitute teacher plans. These are guiding statements and questions based on each center that can help adults to have extended conversations with students, help students practice language skills, and gauge students to use critical thinking skills during their play. These questions and statements may be added to or altered based on specific materials placed in centers.

The question prompts are organized in two formats: cards for a lanyard, and half pages for centers or substitute plans.

Interacting in Music and Movement

Can you think of a word that rhymes with...?
What happens in this song?
Can you make up some silly words for this song?
Can you sing the ABC song to a different tune?
How can we move the scarf around to make a shape or letter?
How should I play this instrument to show when we are happy?... sad?...mad?...scared?
In what ways can we make a drum pattern?
What is your favorite song? Why?
What does slow beat or fast beat sound like?
Show me how you would dance forward?... backward?... sideways?
You made up new words to that song. Would you like to record it?
What shapes do you see in our instruments?
Can you count how many times I tap the drum?
How does this song make you feel?
Can we create a pattern with our bodies while we dance?

Interacting in Sand and Water

Which letters/numbers/shapes can you make in the sand?
What animals do you know that live in the sand/water?
Where else might you see sand or water?
How does the sand and water feel?
Tell me about what you are building.
Would you like to predict which of these toys will sink and which will float?
How many scoops of sand would you need to hide the animals?
Which container did not make this shape? How do you know?
Tell me what you think about the water tower.
Tell me what you discovered.
What caused _____?
Why is _____?
What would happen if _____?
Which of these measuring cups will hold more/less?

Interacting in Discovery

These X-rays are very interesting. How many ribs did you count?
How many more small rocks are there than large rocks? How do you know?
How are these shells alike? How are they different?
Tell me what you are working on.
Would you like to draw a picture or make a sign about that?
Write your name or a letter on this card and hold it up to a mirror. What do you notice?
What do you notice when you use binoculars?
Why did you choose to look with that tool?
What are some ways we can use the magnifier?
How does _____ feel? smell? sound like? look like?
What could you have done instead?
What experiments can we do with these materials?

Interacting in the Library

What are you reading?
What do the pictures say?
What happens at the end?
How did the story start?
What are your plans for _____?
Tell me about your story.
What do you think will happen next?
Why did that happen?
What caused _____?
How would you feel if you _____?
Why do you think _____?
Where are they in this story?
Can you think of another ending for this story?
How do you think _____ felt when _____ happened?
Can you retell your story to me?
I wonder how we can use our puppets to make a puppet show of this story or a pretend story?
Can we make a book of our own with this paper?
What does an author/illustrator do?
Can you find these shapes/numbers/letters in your book?
What do you think this book will be about?

Interacting in Art

What shapes did you use in your picture?
Tell me about your sculpture. How did you decide which shapes to use?
Tell me where you plan to place that piece on your collage?
How did you make that pattern?
You used the same materials but your pictures are different. Can you explain how you made them different?
Tell me about your picture.
What could you create with this ____?
Would you like me to write about your picture or sculpture on your paper so we can share it with others?
Why did you choose that tool?
Why did you choose those colors to mix?
How does that feel?
What are you creating?
I wonder what we could make from these materials...
What could we write to describe this art piece?

Interacting in Toys and Games

How many are there? Are you sure?
How do you know?
Which is first? Which is second?
Tell me about these. How would you describe them?
Which one is the biggest (smallest, tallest, or shortest)?
Can you finish this pattern?
How could we sort these? Is there another way?
What do you think would happen if you...?
Can you find a letter like this somewhere else in the classroom?
Can we place add ____ blocks to the tower?
Which has more? Which has less?
Can we line this up from least to most?
What would happen if ____?
Can you think of another way to do it?
How many would you have left if you gave a friend ____ of them?
Which of you has more or less?

Interacting in Dramatic Play

Where are you going with your bag?
You look like you are getting ready to do some work. What will you work on? What tools do you need?
What did you write on your shopping list?
What do you call the things you are using?
What made you choose ____?
May I come in and ____?
What are your plans for ____?
Tell me about your ____.
What happened when ____?
What can I do to help ____?
I see a pattern can you describe it?
If you shared with a friend how many will you have left?
Who are you going to call on the phone? Why?
What are you dressing up as with the play clothes?
What do we need to do to take care of the baby/pet?
What are the steps we need to do first, next, and last to cook ____?
What ingredients do we need to make ____?
I see you have money in your bag. What are you planning to buy with it?

Interacting in Block Area

This is an interesting construction. Will you tell me about it?
What are you building?
How could you do this differently?
What other materials could we add?
Would you like to make a sign for your construction?
That is a tall tower. How many blocks did you use? Tell me how you built it.
How did you figure that out?
Which one do you have more of?
Is there anything else you could do/use?
Can you make a road that is the same length using blocks of a different size?
What other objects are about the same size as your building?
What shapes did you use to build?
What letters do you see on these building signs?
How many cars are in your traffic jam?
How can we sort the animals/people?
Why did you choose to build ____?
How many animals/people can fit inside of your structure?
What did you build first, next, last to create this?
How did you plan your drawing?
What are you doing to assure your structure is sturdy and safe?
How are you using these tools to help you build?

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