

Beep, Beep! Bubble, Bubble!

Car Wash Centers for Your Classroom

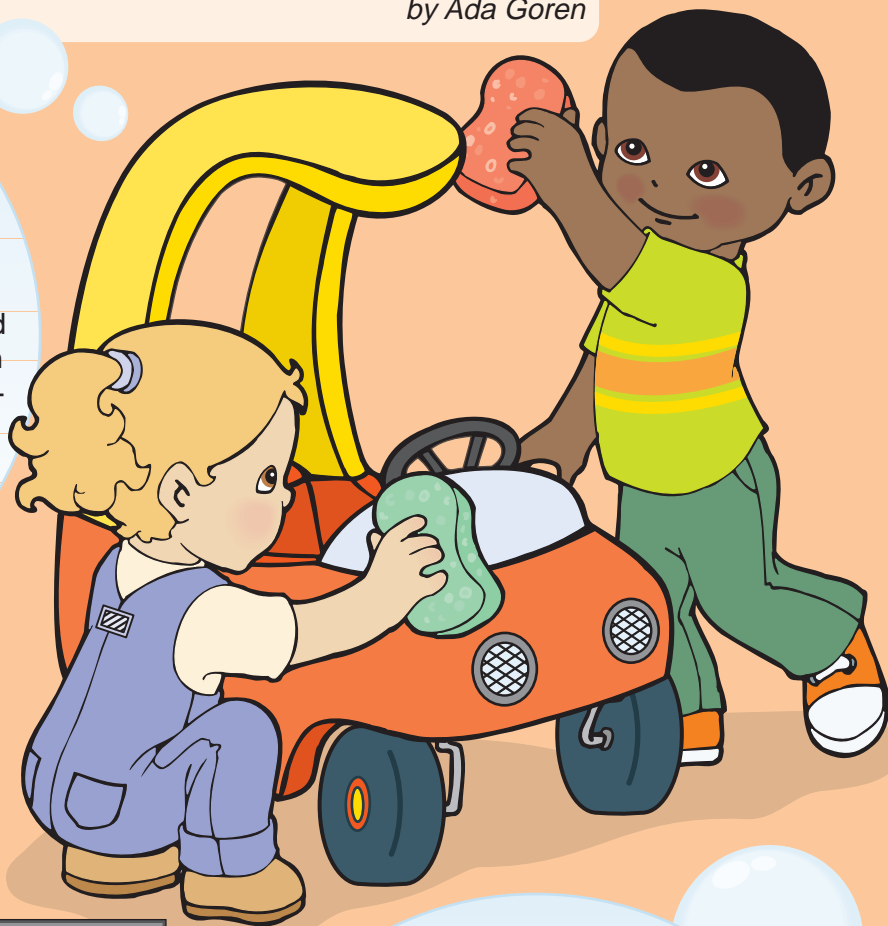
Got some spare sponges and a bevy of buckets? Then you're ready to give your classroom centers a car wash theme! From math to painting, these centers are bubbling over with squeaky-clean fun!

by Ada Goren

Dramatic-Play Center

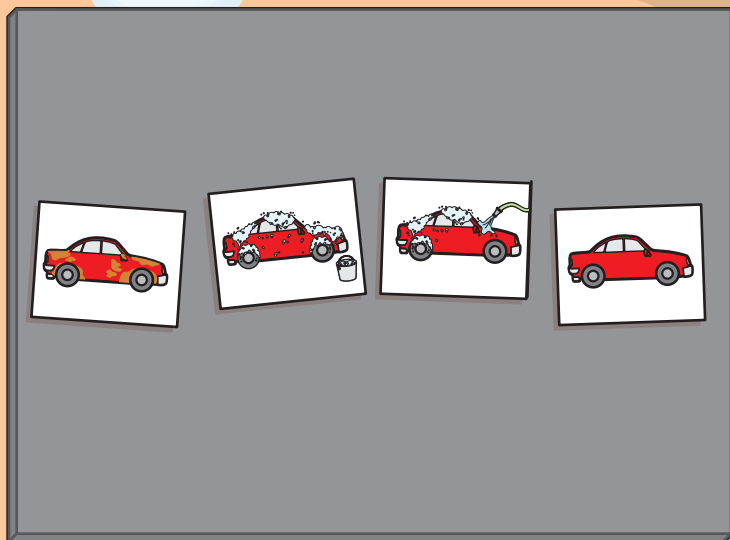
Our Own Car Wash

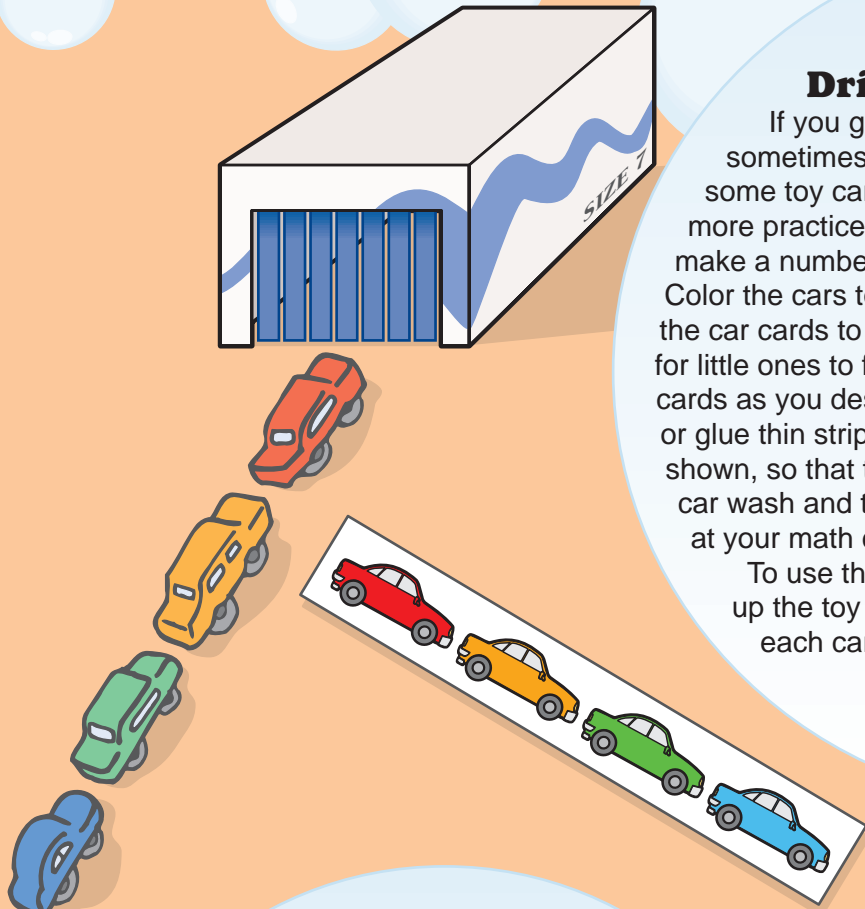
Mix things up a bit by moving your dramatic-play area *outdoors* for this unit. Turn an area adjacent to your classroom into a class car wash, servicing ride-ons and play cars usually used at playground time. Just add a few buckets and big sponges, an old garden hose, some chamois cloths, and a few squeegees. Nearby, set up a table with a toy cash register where customers can pay for their car washes. Encourage little ones to use pretend water to keep things neat and tidy!



Flannelboard Center Dirty, Clean, and in Between

Have youngsters practice sequencing with the car cards on page 8. Simply photocopy the page, color the pictures, and then cut the cards apart. Prepare the cards for use on your flannelboard by attaching a piece of self-adhesive felt to the back of each one. Ask a child at this center to put the cards in the correct sequence from left to right, showing the progression of a car being washed. 📄





Math Center

Drive-Through Sequencing

If you go through an automated car wash, you sometimes have to wait in line for your turn. Line up some toy cars at your math center to give youngsters more practice with their sequencing skills. To prepare, make a number of copies of the clean car card on page 8. Color the cars to match the colors of your toy cars. Then glue the car cards to a strip of tagboard to make a sequencing card for little ones to follow. (Make as many different sequencing cards as you desire.) Next, cut the ends from a shoebox. Tape or glue thin strips of crepe paper over the cutout ends, as shown, so that the box resembles a car wash. Then put the car wash and the toy cars along with the sequencing cards at your math center.

To use the center, have a child choose a card, line up the toy cars to match the order shown, and drive each car through the car wash in sequence. 🚗

Painting Center

Squeegee, Please

Which is more fun, painting or “un-painting”? It’s hard to tell in this activity, which involves an important car wash tool—the squeegee! To prepare, purchase one or two clear Plexiglas acrylic sheets at your local home-improvement store. Invite youngsters to fingerprint on the surface of the acrylic sheet using fingerprint that’s had a bit of dish soap added to it. Give each child her own squeegee and encourage her to use it to “erase” her painting whenever she wishes. When the surface is clean, she can start all over again!

