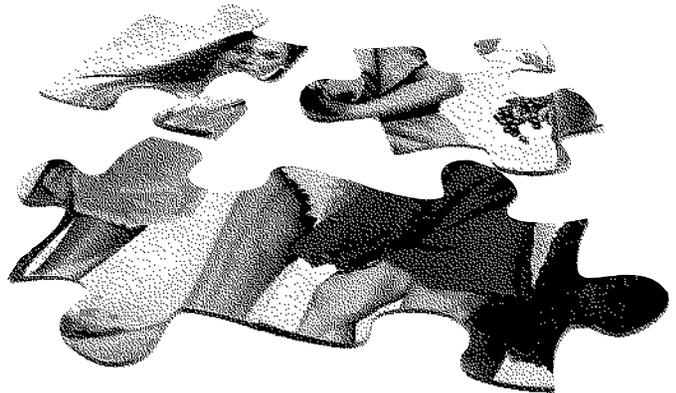


# THROUGH PUZZLES, *a child . . .*

- *develops fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination.*
- *develops thinking, matching, and recognition skills.*
- *develops problem-solving skills.*
- *learns to associate, match, classify, and sequence.*
- *can be encouraged to work together and make choices.*
- *can develop feelings of satisfaction and competence.*
- *can hear Bible story conversation, verses, and songs.*



*When choosing wooden inlay puzzles,*  
**KEEP THESE CRITERIA IN MIND:**

Age of Child	Number of Pieces
<i>Ones – Twos</i>	<i>2-6 pieces</i>
<i>Older Twos – Threes</i>	<i>2-11 pieces</i>
<i>Older Threes, Fours, Pre-K's</i>	<i>10-24 pieces</i>
<i>Kindergartners</i>	<i>11-30 pieces</i>

## TYPES OF PUZZLES & *Manipulatives to consider:*

- » Pull apart, put together, reactive manipulatives.
- » Fill-and-dump, nesting, shape sorting.
- » Matching pictures (concentration), sequencing.
- » Floor puzzles.
- » Pattern cards, stringing.
- » Wooden inlay.
- » Homemade puzzles (cardboard puzzle pieces with magnetic strips on a cookie sheet, puzzles made out of photos, matching nuts and bolts, colored cotton ball sorting, listening games (sounds in film canisters), card/envelope matching, cube matching, toothbrush holders in a pencil box).



# Setting Up the PUZZLES/MANIPULATIVES Center

1. Place puzzles in a quiet area of the room, out of the main traffic area.
2. Offer two or three puzzles per session. Enhance the puzzle center by placing each puzzle on a sheet of construction paper, place mat, or carpet square.
3. Store manipulatives such as beads and put-together blocks in their own dishpan/plastic container. For kindergartners, place a picture or word label on the container showing the toy and its name.
4. Provide more than one set of the most popular manipulatives.
5. Use puzzles and manipulatives in other learning centers when appropriate.
6. Check to be sure wooden puzzles are free of splinters, sharp edges, toxic paint, and small pieces that could be swallowed.
7. Print a word or number on the back of each puzzle piece that matches a word or number on the back of the corresponding puzzle board. Stray or mixed-up pieces can then be easily returned to the correct board.
8. Use puzzles that depict realistic objects, animals, and people instead of fantasy figures. Realistic pictures help reinforce Bible truths.
9. Store puzzles in large zip-lock bags to keep the pieces together.

## GUIDELINES for Puzzle and Manipulative EXPERIENCES

*Guide preschoolers to remove puzzle pieces one at a time and place them to the left of the board. Working puzzles from left to right helps develop reading readiness.*

*Allow preschoolers to work at their own speed.*

*Make puzzles and manipulatives available for children of differing abilities.*

*Use Bible story conversation, Bible phrases and verses, and songs in the center.*

*Remind preschoolers to complete the puzzle or put manipulatives back in their containers before moving to another activity.*

*Help or encourage another preschooler to give assistance if a child becomes frustrated with a puzzle.*

*Change the puzzles and manipulatives often.*

*Help children work puzzles with questions such as: "What is missing?" and "Where does the largest piece go?"*