

The Super Supply Shelf Project: Design Your Dream Nook

Materials Needed

- Bookshelf, book bin, or designated storage area
- All the supplies to be organized (markers, tape, paint pens, pencils, etc.)
- Books
- Pencil sharpener
- Cardstock or sturdy paper for making labels
- Scissors (child-safe)
- Art supplies for decorating labels: markers, paint pens, stencils, stickers, etc.
- Tape or glue to attach labels
- Optional: Small cups, jars, or boxes for containing smaller items like pencils

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Categorize & Sort:** Group similar items together based on their function, size, or color.
- **Design & Create:** Plan and produce creative, functional labels for their supplies.
- **Organize a Space:** Arrange items on a shelf in a logical and accessible way.
- **Communicate a Plan:** Explain their organizational system and the reasoning behind their choices.

Lesson Procedure

Part 1: The Great Supply Exploration & Sort (15-20 minutes)

1. **Introduction (The Mission):** Start by saying, "Today, we have a very important mission! We are going to turn this shelf (or bin) into the most amazing, organized, and creative supply station ever. You will be the Head Designer and Organizer. Your job is to make a space where you can find exactly what you need for your next great project."
2. **Gather the Goods:** Have the student gather all the supplies listed and pile them up in a clear workspace on the floor. Make it fun, like a treasure hunt.
3. **The Sorting Game:** Ask guiding questions to get the student thinking about categories. "How can we put these into families? What things belong together?" Let the student lead. Possible sorting categories could be:
 - Things we write with (pencils, markers)
 - Things that stick (tape, glue)
 - Things for coloring (paint pens, markers)
 - Things for reading (books)

Encourage them to make piles. Don't correct their logic; instead, ask them to explain it. "Oh, that's interesting! Why did you put the tape and the stencils together?" This promotes critical thinking.

Part 2: Design-a-Label Workshop (20-30 minutes)

1. **Plan the Labels:** Once everything is sorted into piles, say, "Great! Now, how will we remember where everything goes? We need signs!" Together, make a list of the labels needed for each pile (e.g., "Markers," "Pencils," "Tape," "Books").
2. **Creative Time:** Set out the cardstock, scissors, stencils, and decorating supplies. Explain,

"Now you get to be the artist! Design a label for each group of supplies."

- Help with spelling if needed, or let them draw a picture of the item on the label instead of (or in addition to) the word. For example, the "Markers" label could have the word and also a drawing of a colorful marker.
- Encourage the use of stencils for neat lettering and fun shapes. This is a great way to practice fine motor skills.

3. **Final Touches:** Let the labels dry completely if paint pens were used. This is a good time for a short break or to read a book together.

Part 3: The Grand Arrangement (15-20 minutes)

1. **Think Like a Designer:** Move over to the empty bookshelf or bin. Ask, "Now for the final step: arranging our new station. What should be easiest to reach? What do you use the most?" This encourages planning and spatial reasoning.
2. **Place and Label:** One by one, have the student place a category of items onto the shelf or into the bin. If using small containers like jars for pencils, they can place those first.
3. **Attach the Labels:** After each category is placed, the student can tape or glue their beautiful, custom-made label onto the shelf edge, bin, or jar. Celebrate each placement!

Assessment & Wrap-Up

The Grand Tour (5 minutes): To assess if the objectives were met, ask the student to give you a "tour" of their newly organized space.

Ask questions like:

- "Can you show me where you would find a pencil?"
- "Tell me about this label you made. Why did you choose these colors?"
- "Why did you decide to put the books on the top shelf?"

The true assessment is observing the student's ability to use their own system in the following days. Praise their hard work, creativity, and excellent design skills.

Extensions & Adaptations

- **For Extra Support:** Pre-cut the labels into uniform shapes. Write the words lightly in pencil for the student to trace with a marker. Focus more on the physical sorting and placing than on perfect label design.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Ask the student to create sub-categories. For instance, instead of one bin for "Markers," they could make labels for "Fat Markers" and "Skinny Markers," or sort them by color. They could also write a sentence on the back of each label explaining what the items are used for.
- **Math Connection:** Before sorting, have the student estimate how many pencils or markers they have. Then, count them to check the estimate.