







Heart Activities

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### Background:

Whenever there was something special going on during a particular month, my 1<sup>st</sup> graders used to ask everyday: *"When is our Halloween party?" "When's the fieldtrip?" "How long before we can open our Valentines?" etc.*

Sound familiar? I decided to put up a seasonally- colored paper chain, for however many days in that month.

I'd link them in a pattern so that I'd have a quick teachable moment in full view.

Whatever we were doing that was extra special: parties, trips, visitors, I'd put an appropriate sticker on that link, so when a student asked a question like the above, I could say, *"Well let's figure that out,"* and I'd refer them to the paper chain.

If you like this idea you can get the **pattern** for a cute dangler, that you can change each month. Hang the paper chains from that.

### Heart Paper Chain:

I wanted to make a special paper chain for February, so I made the links in a shape.

This is easy to do. Simply cut strips of colored paper on the paper cutter that are 1 inch wide, and as long as the paper.

Construction paper works fine, but cardstock paper holds the heart shape better, and is much more durable.

Fold a strip in half. Bend the open ends in 'til you have a rounded top heart, and staple them together. (See photo.)

As you can see, I made my strips white, red and pink and will have an ABC-ABC pattern going.



Fold as many strips as you need, but don't staple them until you have looped them through each other to make the chain.

You can make this even more interesting, by writing a "secret message" on the paper strips before you put them together.

Dream up your own, or use some from my list.

I did the paper chain activity during my calendar time, or before story time, as I hung the chain by my rocking chair.

After students have counted, recognized the colors and pattern, and you've done whatever else math-wise, you want to do with the paper chain call on a quiet child to gently tear the end strip off and read the secret message.

### **Valentines:**

Because these hearts are so simply and fun to make, I set up a variety of colored strips at a center for students to make 1 or 2 of their own to give as a Valentine to their families.

I had older students write their own secret message on it as well.

### **Valentine gifts: A Special Pencil.**

When school supplies are on super sale during August, I buy packs of pencils for about a dollar.

I save them to decorate and pass out to my students during special times of the year.

You can make a class set of hearts and attach one to the end of a pencil, with a thick glue dot, in about 20 minutes.

Print a copy of the owl valentine I've designed to go with them. Cut 2 slits on the lines, insert the pencil and you're set!

What a nice Valentine surprise left on their desk.

### Valentine Gifts: A Bouquet of Love

As I was fooling around making the hearts, it occurred to me that they would be cute flowers if I stuck them to the top of a green Popsicle stick.

I LOVE how more ideas pop into my head as I'm "playing."

Students can make 1, 2, or even 3 flowers for their Dixie cup vase.

I folded a green strip in half and then in half again and cut the smaller strips, to make leaves.

You might want to make these strips skinnier so they look a bit different and fit on the Popsicle stick better.

I used glue dots to adhere everything to the stick.

I looked for Dixie cups that were a solid color, or had a nice pattern that would look like a vase.

Tip the cup upside down; using a knife, make as many slits as you need and then insert the assembled heart flowers.

Adjust the height 'til you have an appealing arrangement.

I've also made a little card students can include with their bouquet.

Whatever paper love you're doing with your kiddo's I hope you have heartfelt moments!





## Ideas For "Secret Messages" For Your Valentine Paper Chain

If you want, you can cut them into strips and glue them on your paper strips.



Count all of the children who are wearing red.

Think of words that rhyme with Valentine.

Think of words that rhyme with love.

Hug yourself and say, "I am special!"



Turn to the person on your left and wish them a happy day.

Think of words that rhyme with pink.

Name another pattern that we could have made with the paper chain.

Using your pointer finger, draw a heart in the air.

Turn to the person on your right and give them a compliment

Think of words that rhyme with red.

Unscramble this word: ather. (heart)

How many Valentines are you going to make?

Think of words that rhyme with white.



How many days 'til we celebrate Valentine's Day?

What day of the week does Valentine's Day fall on?

Count the paper chain by 2's.

Count all of the children who are wearing pink.

Happy Valentine's Day!











This Valentine bouquet,  
comes to say,  
I hope you have a Happy  
Valentine's Day!



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## Valentine Pencil Holders

Cut slits and insert pencil.

