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www.roylco.com

Canada:
30 Northland Road, Waterloo, Ontario, N2V 1Y1
USA:
PO Box 13409 Anderson, SC 29624

No. 60310

Crystal Color Stacking Blocks

Turn a simple building experience into a sensory adventure! Our clear, colorful blocks are designed with special wedges on the tops to help students stack them in creative ways. As students stack, they will think consciously about the arrangement of their blocks. In this guide, we will give you suggestions about the types of structures students can make such as buildings, bridges, villages and more! The Stacking Blocks work particularly well with our R59601 Educational Light Cube. Place the Stacking Blocks onto the Light Cube and scroll through the colors. Observe the beautiful effects of color mixing!

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In this guide:

- Build with the Crystal Color Stacking Blocks
- Create a variety of different structures with the blocks
- Develop fine and gross motor skills with sensory exercises
- Mix colors by stacking the blocks

Stacking and Building!

Give students blocks and they will build! Our Clear Color Stacking Blocks inspire students to build. The blocks have an interesting trapezoidal shape that makes them easy to stack. Ask your students to pick a block and describe the shape to you. One response might be that it looks like a triangle and a cube crossed together. Ask students to try and match their block with another student's block. They might stack them side by side or stack one on top of the other. They could even flip the block upside down and stack them into each other. What are some other ways to stack the blocks?

Do a simple exercise to get students more acquainted with the Stacking Blocks. Tell students that the blocks represent houses and that they must arrange the “houses” as they appear in their neighborhoods. If they live in an apartment building, ask them to stack the blocks straight up to make a tower. Draw details of the neighborhood street onto a Bristol board. Place the block neighborhood on top.

You'll notice that the top is made up of special grooves that make it easier to align the corners and edges of the blocks together. Place two blocks side by side, then place a third block across the gap between the two blocks. Use the grooves to align the third block. The grooves allow you to place the blocks at various angles, so try rotating the top block.

The blocks come in 5 colors: purple, blue, green, yellow and pink. While overlapping the colored blocks, notice the formation of new colors! For instance, stacking the blue block inside the yellow block will create green. The blocks are a great way to explore color mixing while building a variety of structures. Not only are you adding a visual aspect to the stacking activities, but you are engaging the students in an important scientific lesson about color mixing.

Our beautiful Crystal Color Stacking Blocks are designed to complement our R59601 Educational Light Cube. Stack the blocks onto the surface of the Light Cube. Build the towers as high as you like! When you have reached the top of your building structure, turn on the Light Cube. Cycle through the light colors and watch as your tower lights up! Alternatively, leave the Light Cube on while students build.

Curriculum Connections

Stack to develop fine motor skills
Explore color combinations
Use for light table play
Stack blocks in different stacking combinations
Engage early learners with color and light
Learn about various structures
Experiment with structure stability
Develop techniques for building

Colorful Stackable Structures

Below, we've detailed several ways to build with the Stacking Blocks. Building is a great way to focus students' attention as they place their blocks and think about building their structures for strength and durability. At the end, encourage students to topple their towers.

Structures are three-dimensional forms that are composed of individual parts. These parts all work together to hold the form together while standing. For instance, the structures that you make with the Stacking Blocks are made of

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individual parts—the blocks themselves. The way these parts are arranged is important to the overall stability of the building. To make the structure more interesting, the Stacking Blocks can be turned at various angles. Use the grooves on the tops as references for positioning the blocks.

The following structures are simple but fun to make! Use a light table or the R59601 Educational Light Cube as the surface on which to build your structures. Keep the light on while students build so they focus on their work. Then, when they are all finished building, cycle through the colors on the Light Cube to watch their creations illuminate beautifully!

Bridge
A bridge is one of the simplest structures to design. It normally consists of two main posts on either side of a long flat platform that is known as the deck. The best way we can visualize this is by drawing it on paper. Encourage your students to research famous bridges such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, the Tower Bridge in London, England or the Harbour Bridge in Sydney, Australia. Look at the pictures and try to find similarities and differences between each. Most bridges have some form of posts and a deck even if they are shaped differently. Challenge your students to design their bridges based on the images they see.

Form posts by stacking the blocks on top of each other so that every second block is inverted. This will allow the blocks to be stacked in a single column.

To form the deck, place the blocks side-by-side in a row. Make a second row beside it. Tip: You can add a layer of blocks on top of the deck to make it look sturdier.

Tower
Towers are freestanding buildings that come in all shapes and sizes. Architects and engineers are people who design buildings and ensure that the internal structure of the building is sturdy. To make a tower secure, you need to create a strong base or foundation. The weight at the bottom of the tower must support the weight at the top. Ask students to consider how big the base of the tower has to be in order to support the desired height.

Start with a building challenge. Make a base with the Stacking Blocks. Place them groove-sides up in a 5 x 5 square formation. Use the grooves as guides for placing blocks on top of the square formation. You will need to bridge the gaps in between each set of two blocks with a third block. Use the grooves as guides for placing the blocks. Continue adding blocks on top of each layer until you reach the top. Tip: You can turn the blocks upside down to make column-like structures in your tower.

If you are building a column, start with one block grooved-side facing down. For your second block, turn it groove side up and rotate it 45°. Place it on top of the first block. Turn the third block grooved-side down and place on top of the second block. Repeat the process all the way to the desired height.

Combine columns with pyramid-style structures to make interesting tower designs!

Pyramid
The pyramid uses the same concept as the base for the tower. To make your pyramid, don't add any columns or posts to the sculpture. As you add blocks on top of each other, you will notice that the width of the original base becomes smaller and smaller until it finishes with a single block at the top. To change the appearance of your pyramid, experiment with the type of base that you make.

For instance, you can make the base 5 blocks by 5 blocks to make a perfect square. This will make a square-based pyramid. Make a different kind of pyramid with a triangle base! Place the Stacking Blocks in a triangle formation and build on top of that arrangement.

You can experiment with all different types of formations and shapes for building beautiful crystal color sculptures!