* **Alignment to standards and development**: Infant/toddler guidelines for Mathematical Exploration and learning in line with naming numbers, counting, gross motor skills
* **Student-centered/directed**: Students can use the materials to create whatever they want
* **Vocabulary and language development:** Palette, stamp, fruit names (apple, bell pepper, cucumber), pattern, design, blend, slice, gentle, texture
* **Intentional material selection and introduction**: Introduce each of the fruits and their names—describe the fruit—the cucumber is bumpy, the bell pepper is smooth, Model how to stamp (and not eat!), talk about a couple other ways to use
* **Connecting across content areas:** math, art, and oral language skills, add How Am I Peeling and other books to library!

Think aloud:

Now I will model how I might approach ensuring a play-based opportunity exists in my art center. As I do, take notes in your note catcher if it is useful to you.

Art Center: Students have lots of items they can paint with and create with, and they love to play here! However, sometimes students can sit/stand there all day without interacting with me or others, so I’m using this process to ensure it’s actually purposeful tomorrow (and I’m prepared when I walk around the class to interact!). I’m planning on giving them some cut up fruit to stamp and paint with at the art center.

Standards alignment: I want to ensure my students are getting connections to the infant/toddler guidelines for Mathematical Exploration—once they start stamping/painting, they’ll be able to count the number of each they have on their papers. I also know gross motor skills and naming colors are important leading up to pre-k so this is one way to build that skill with paint and fruits..

Student-directed: While I’ll give them some new materials, this really is up to them! They can use whatever materials they like—and some may not stamp! Some may choose to use other materials and that’s okay.

There’s a LOT of great vocabulary I can infuse here: Palette, stamp, fruit names (apple, bell pepper, cucumber), pattern, design, blend (if they mix colors), slice, gentle (to demonstrate one way to stamp—they probably can contrast how things look when they stamp more aggressively vs. more gently), texture (how does each of the fruits lead to a different texture when stamped, what is the texture/how does it feel holding each piece—the cucumber is bumpier where as the bell pepper is smooth)

Last but not least, with all this in mind, as I consider what the materials are that I have, I know I will want to introduce each of the fruits and their names (apple, bell pepper, cucumber—I think most will know apple, but bell pepper and cucumber may be new), model how to stamp (and not eat!) with the fruit—this is a new way for them to see how to use this material, and then we can see if they have any ideas on other ways to use the fruit and paint. I’m going to have to prepare how I will explain this to them and make sure I’m pushing in that tier 2 vocab!

There’s obviously a lot of connections here across what students are learning—in particular math, art, and oral language skills, but I also see an opportunity to put out my book “How are you peeling?” on fruit emotions and put some books about fruit in the library so students can use the language they have in another area!

ASK: What did you see that I did that made sure this art center was INTENTIONALLLY connected to MATH?