



W H A L E C L A S S

Circle Time Guide

Everything you need, one page per day.

Week 35 • Summer

7-11 June 2027 • 13 minutes a day • ages 2.5-6

端午节 the Dragon Boat Festival falls on Wednesday 9 June — 芝种 was Saturday 6 June

summer • hot • sun • swim • ice

WEEK OVERVIEW



Print • laminate • ring-bind • hold this all week

Summer is hot — so we drink, we shade, we swim, and we eat something cold. Three sun rules said out loud every single day, in the same order: **hat • water • shade**. This is the last full teaching week; next week is graduation. Every script here is word-for-word the same as the teachers' page.

FIVE WORDS THEY'LL OWN BY FRIDAY

summer hot sun swim ice

Littles (2.5–3) — one word + a gesture is a win: “Hot!” (fan your face, blow out), “Sun!” (both arms make a big circle overhead), “Swim!” (two big front-crawl strokes).

Bigs (4–6) — sentence frames: “It is hot in summer.” • “I wear a hat in the sun.” • “I can swim in the water.” • “The ice is melting.”

Never ask a little for a sentence. They will get there by watching the bigs.

THE 13-MINUTE FLOW, EVERY DAY

- 2 MIN** Magic Box hook — chant, shake, sniff, dramatic peek, the day's real object.
- 4 MIN** Teach — the day's word dramatised with that object. Get it wrong once on purpose.
- 3 MIN** Song — chorus → today's new verse → chorus.
- 3 MIN** Game — one named game, tied to the day's word.
- 1 MIN** Close — whisper → normal → SHOUT.

IN THE MAGIC BOX, DAY BY DAY

Mon a sun hat and a pair of sunglasses — put them on the teacher, all wrong • **Tue** a bowl of ice cubes straight from the freezer, passed round fast before they go • **Wed** a 粽子, a bundle of 艾草 and a little dragon boat • **Thu** swimming goggles, a water bottle and a paper fan • **Fri** a whole watermelon 西瓜, cut and shared, plus every prop from the week.

THE WEEK'S CLOSE

Everyone: “Hot... sun... **SWIM! Hello, SUMMER!**” (*fan your face • big sun circle • two front-crawl strokes • both arms thrown wide on the shout*)

THEME SHELF • FOUR TRAYS

- 1 • Hot / cold sorting** — a red tray, a blue tray, the two signs and twelve picture cards. *Control:* a red or blue dot on the back of each card, added by the class after the first sort.
- 2 • The melting tray** — three identical ice cubes in three dishes, a sand timer and a recording card with three boxes to tick. Which one goes first? *Control:* the ice itself — the answer arrives on its own and nobody can argue with it.
- 3 • 包粽子 wrapping a 粽子** — bamboo leaves soaked soft, a bowl of rice, a spoon and string. Fold, fill, tie. *Control:* lift it by the string — a badly tied one comes apart, and everybody can see it.
- 4 • Sun-safety sequencing** — four cards: hat on • sun cream • drink water • find the shade, with the real objects beside them. *Control:* numbers on the card backs.

CHINESE ANGLE

One 汉字 card a day: 夏 • 热 • 太阳 • 水 • 粽. 端午节 on Wednesday 9 June — 吃粽子, 赛龙舟, 挂艾草, and the story of 屈原 told simply: a poet who loved his country, and the people who rowed out fast and threw rice into the river for him. 芝种 was Saturday 6 June — 芝种忙种, the farmer's busiest planting week. 夏至 (21 June) is the longest day of them all, and after it the daylight starts getting shorter again. 儿歌: 《端午节》 — 五月五, 是端阳。

FRIDAY'S DARK PHONICS SOUND

ll • ff • ss • zz — the double letters at the end of a short word: hill, off, grass, and the summer bee that goes buzz. One sound, two letters, right at the end. “Buzz off, fuzzy bee!”

MONDAY · DAY 1

Summer Is Here

Today's words: **summer**

Grab: a **sun hat** and a pair of **sunglasses** in the Magic Box; two baskets, one red one blue, and a pile of real clothes — T-shirts, shorts, a woolly hat, a scarf, mittens, a swimming costume, a winter coat; the 夏 card; the sun-safety cards from print pack page 14.

2 MIN MAGIC BOX HOOK

Today the box is light and it rattles softly, like something plastic sliding about. Hold it up. Whole class chants:

Everyone: "What's in the box? What's in the box?"

Shake it — a soft slither. Lift the lid a crack and **sniff**: nothing. Sniff again, harder. Peek in, and let your whole face light up.

Teacher: "Ooooh. There is something in here for a **very, very HOT day**." (*pull out the sun hat first, then the sunglasses, one at a time, very slowly*)

Put them both on and turn round once so everybody can see. Big sun circle overhead with both arms: **"Summer!"**

4 MIN TEACH · SUMMER

Everybody stands up. We do the whole summer with our bodies, twice — small and slow, then big:

The **sun** comes up — it's **SUMMER!** (*both arms make a big circle overhead*)

Off with my **coat**, (*peel off an imaginary coat and throw it down*)

On with my **hat**, (*both hands press a hat onto your head*)

And **out** we go to play! (*run on the spot, faster and faster*)

Now the three sun rules, in this order, every day this week — say them, do them, and make them say them back: **hat** (*hands on head*) · **water** (*drink from a bottle*) · **shade** (*both hands up over your eyes*).

Littles do the big sun circle and say **"Summer!"** Bigs take the frame: **"It is summer." "It is hot in summer."**

Teacher fails: put the sun hat on and then pull on the **woolly scarf and the mittens** as well, shivering, complaining that you are freezing. "Brrr. What a cold day." Hold it. Wait. Let them undress you.

Chinese moment: lay the 夏 card where everyone can see it and say 夏天来了! once, all together. Leave it there; the row grows by one card a day. 芒种 was on Saturday — 芒种忙种, the busiest planting week the farmers have.

3 MIN GAME · SUMMER OR WINTER?

"One, two, three — eyes on me!" The pile of clothes goes in the middle of the mat, the red basket at one end of the room and the blue basket at the other.

Teacher: "Take **one** thing... is it for a **hot** day or a **cold** day? ... RUN it to the right basket!" (*red = hot, blue = cold — point at both before anybody moves*)

One child at a time, then two at a time as they get the idea. Littles just run it and say the one word — **"Hot!" "Cold!"** Bigs owe you the sentence as they drop it in: **"I wear a hat in the summer."**

At the end, tip the red basket out and hold each thing up: this is what we wear **now**. Everything in the blue basket is going away until winter.

Put the swimming costume in the pile on purpose. It causes an argument, the argument is the language, and it sets up Thursday.

1 MIN CLOSE

Standing, hats on, ready to run. Whisper → normal → shout:

Everyone: "Hot... sun... SWIM! Hello, SUMMER!" (*fan your face · big sun circle · two front-crawl strokes · both arms thrown wide on the shout*)

Got 3 spare minutes? *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Eric Carle) read again, out in the sun this time — they know every page, so let **them** tell it to you and just turn the pages.

3 MIN · Today's song moment — chorus → Monday's verse → chorus, standing with the hats on.

Monday's verse: Off with my coat and on with my hat, (*peel the coat off, press the hat on*)

Summer is here — how about that! (*both arms thrown wide*)

TUESDAY · DAY 2

Hot, Hot, Hot

Today's words: **hot** (*summer comes back every day*)

Grab: a bowl of **ice cubes straight from the freezer** in the Magic Box — carry it fast; three identical saucers with one ice cube each; a sand timer; a paper fan; a cup of warm water; the 热 card.

2 MIN MAGIC BOX HOOK

Today you come in **running** with the box, because what is inside will not wait. Whole class chants while you jog on the spot:

Everyone: “What’s in the box? What’s in the box?”

Shake it — a hard clatter. Lift the lid, look in, and pull your hand back as if it hurt.

Teacher: “Ow! It’s **COLD**. It’s so cold it feels **HOT**.” (*lift out the bowl and pass one cube along the whole circle, fast — it is going to disappear*)

Every child holds one cube for two seconds and passes it on. Fan your face: **“Hot!”**

4 MIN TEACH · HOT

Everybody sits. We say it twice, and the second time they do the actions with you:

Hot, hot, hot — I **fan** my face, (*flap a flat hand in front of your face*)

Puff! Puff! (*blow out, cheeks full*)

I **drink** my water, (*long drink from a bottle, head right back*)

And find a **shady** place! (*both hands up over your eyes, then flop down in the shade*)

Then the two cups, side by side: warm water in one, an ice cube in the other. Every child touches both with one finger and tells you which is which — **hot** and **cold** are the two ends, and everything else lives in between.

Littles fan and say **“Hot!”** Bigs owe you the sentence: **“It is hot in summer.” “The water is cold.”**

Teacher fails: fan yourself furiously with the fan held **backwards**, blowing air at the wall, and complain loudly that it is not working at all. Wait. Somebody will turn your hand round for you.

Chinese moment: the 热 card joins 夏 — 天气很热, said with the fan going. Ask them what people drink at home when it is this hot: 凉茶? 绿豆汤? Let three children answer; there is no wrong one.

3 MIN GAME · MELT THE ICE

“One, two, three — eyes on me!” Three identical saucers, one ice cube in each, held up so everybody sees they are the same.

Teacher: “This one goes in the **shade**. This one goes in the **sun**. And this one goes in **warm water**. Which one wins?” (*vote with hands up — count the votes out loud and write the numbers on the board*)

Place all three, then walk away. Come back at snack time, at lunch and at home time. Littles say **“Gone!”** and point. Bigs give you the whole thing: **“The ice is melting.” “The sun one won.”**

This is the real science of the week and its control of error is the ice itself — the answer arrives on its own and nobody can argue with it, including you. Do not tell them which will win. Let the water do it.

1 MIN CLOSE

Standing, fanning. Whisper → normal → shout:

Everyone: “Hot... sun... **SWIM!** Hello, **SUMMER!**” (*fan your face · big sun circle · two front-crawl strokes · both arms thrown wide on the shout*)

Got 3 spare minutes? Lie on the floor in the coolest corner of the room with the lights off and the fan on, and just breathe together for two minutes. Then ask them, quietly, what the hottest thing they have ever touched was.

3 MIN · Today’s song moment — chorus → Tuesday’s verse → chorus — everybody really drinks on “drink my water”.

Tuesday’s verse: Hot, hot, hot — I fan my face, (*flat hand flapping*)

Find me a cool, shady place! (*hands over your eyes, then flop into the shade*)

WEDNESDAY · DAY 3

The Sun and the Dragon Boat · 端午节

Today's words: **sun** (summer · hot come back)

Grab: a 粽子, a bundle of 艾草 and a little **dragon boat** in the Magic Box; a hand drum and a beater; the 太阳 card; the wrapping tray (soaked bamboo leaves, cooked rice, a spoon, string) ready on the shelf; a big clear space down the length of the room.

2 MIN MAGIC BOX HOOK

Today the box **smells**, and it smells of something they have all met before at home. Chant, then hold the closed box under one child's nose.

Everyone: "What's in the box? What's in the box?"

Lift the lid a crack and **sniff** long and slow, eyes shut. Then take the 艾草 out and walk it right round the circle so **every single child** gets a sniff of it — this is the smell of 端午节 and it is the whole hook.

Teacher: "Today is 端午节." (lift out the 粽子 in two hands, then the dragon boat, and hold the boat up over your head so it sails)

Big sun circle overhead with both arms: **"Sun!"**

4 MIN TEACH · SUN

Everybody stands. Say it twice; the second time they do it with you:

Up comes the **sun**, (rise slowly from a crouch, arms opening into a big circle overhead)

Big and round and **HOT**, (hold the circle, then fan your face)

It shines on the **river**, (both hands ripple out in front of you)

And the boats go **ROW ROW ROW!** (sit down and row, both arms together)

Now the story of 屈原, told plainly and short: a poet who loved his country, and who was so sad that he went into the river. The people who loved him **rowed out fast** to look for him, and threw rice into the water so the fishes would eat that and not him. **That is why the boats race, and that is why the rice is wrapped.** Hold up the dragon boat on "rowed out fast", and the 粽子 on "wrapped".

Littles make the sun circle and say **"Sun!"** Bigs owe you the sentence: **"The sun is hot." "I wear a hat in the sun."**

Teacher fails: try to eat the 粽子 **with the leaves still on**, chewing hard, saying how tough it is. Hold it. Wait. They will unwrap you.

Chinese moment: the 太阳 card joins 夏 · 热 — 太阳出来了. Then the whole class, twice: 端午节吃粽子, 赛龙舟. And 挂艾草 — hang the bundle over the classroom door and leave it there until Friday.

3 MIN GAME · DRAGON-BOAT ROW

"One, two, three — eyes on me!" Everybody sits in **one long line** down the room, legs apart, each child behind the one in front. You sit at the back. One child sits at the front with the drum.

Teacher: "Hands on your oars... and we row **all together** — 一、二! 一、二! " (the drummer keeps the beat; nobody rows faster than the drum)

Row slowly, then faster, then **freeze** on one drum hit. Chant 一、二! 一、二! the whole way. Littles just row and shout the numbers; Bigs count in both languages and call the changes.

Swap the drummer twice, so three different children hold the beat.

Everybody rows together or the boat goes nowhere — say that out loud, once, and then let the game prove it. A boat where one child races ahead is the best teaching moment you will get all week.

1 MIN CLOSE

Still in the boat, oars up. Whisper → normal → shout:

Everyone: "Hot... sun... SWIM! Hello, SUMMER!" (fan your face · big sun circle · two front-crawl strokes · both arms thrown wide on the shout)

Got 3 spare minutes? 《赛龙舟》 — any picture-book version, or just the pictures with your own words over the top. Then 儿歌《端午节》: 五月五, 是端阳。

3 MIN · Today's song moment — chorus → Wednesday's verse → chorus, sitting in one long line as if in a boat, one child on the drum.

Wednesday's verse: Row, row, row — the drum goes BOOM, (row together on every "row", and one big drum hit on BOOM) A dragon boat in the hot sun's room! (row faster, then the big sun circle overhead)

THURSDAY • DAY 4

Splash! I Can Swim

Today's words: **swim** (*summer · hot · sun come back*)

Grab: swimming goggles, a water bottle and a paper fan in the Magic Box; a long blue cloth or sheet; music you can start and stop; the 水 card; the action cards from print pack page 15.

2 MIN MAGIC BOX HOOK

Today the box has three things in it and they all belong to the same hot afternoon. Chant, then shake — one soft slosh from the bottle.

Everyone: “What’s in the box? What’s in the box?”

Out comes the water bottle: **drink**. Out comes the fan: **shade and air**. And last, held up in two hands and put straight onto your own face, the **goggles**.

Teacher: (*goggles on, looking round the circle through them, very seriously*) “I can see... **underwater**.”

Two big front-crawl strokes: **“Swim!”**

4 MIN TEACH • SWIM

The blue cloth goes down the middle of the mat and two children hold each end and make it ripple. Say it twice, the second time everybody joins in:

Splash goes the water, (*both hands slap the floor*)

Kick go my feet, (*lie back and kick, or kick sitting down*)

Arms go **round and round**, (*two big front-crawl strokes*)

Swimming is **SWEET!** (*both arms thrown wide*)

Then the water rules, said as plainly as the sun rules and just as often: **never** go near water without a grown-up, and in the sun you keep your **hat on and your T-shirt on**, even at the pool. Say it once, clearly, then get straight back to the kicking.

Littles do the two strokes and say **“Swim!”** Bigs owe you the frame: **“I can swim in the water.” “I can kick my feet.”**

Teacher fails: put the goggles on **over your ears**, or upside down over your mouth, and announce that you are ready. Hold it. Wait. Somebody will fix your face for you.

Chinese moment: the 水 card joins 夏 · 热 · 太阳 — **我会游泳!** shouted once, all together, with the strokes. Then 多喝水 — and everybody really does take a drink.

3 MIN GAME • SWIM ON THE MAT

“One, two, three — eyes on me!” Everybody lies on their front at one end of the room. The blue cloth is the water and it goes the whole way across.

Teacher: “Music on — **SWIM!** Music stops — **freeze like a starfish.**” (*front crawl on your tummy all the way across; on the stop, arms and legs out wide and completely still*)

Three or four crossings. Change the stroke each time: front crawl, then back stroke on your back, then the slowest swim in the world. Littles just wriggle and freeze; Bigs call out the stroke before each crossing.

The **starfish freeze** is the whole game — it is a stop signal disguised as fun, and you will use it in the corridor, in the playground and on Friday with a slice of watermelon in every hand.

1 MIN CLOSE

Standing, dripping, goggles pushed up. Whisper → normal → shout:

Everyone: “Hot... sun... **SWIM!** Hello, **SUMMER!**” (*fan your face · big sun circle · two front-crawl strokes · both arms thrown wide on the shout*)

Got 3 spare minutes? *Froggy Learns to Swim* (Jonathan London) — Froggy is frightened of the water and does it anyway. Let them do all the “Frrrooggyy!” shouts for you.

3 MIN • Today’s song moment — chorus → Thursday’s verse → chorus, everybody on their backs with their feet kicking.

Thursday’s verse: Splash goes the water, kick my feet, (*slap the floor, then kick*)

Swimming, swimming — cool and sweet! (*front-crawl strokes, then a long “aaah”*)

FRIDAY • DAY 5

Ice, Watermelon + Big Review

Today's words: **ice** — and **summer** • **hot** • **sun** • **swim**, the whole week

Grab: a whole **watermelon** 西瓜, a knife and a big plate (cut it out of sight, bring it in whole); one **ice cube** per child in a bowl; every prop from the week packed into the box; the awards (print pack page 17); the 粽 card. **Next week is graduation** — say so at the end.

2 MIN MAGIC BOX HOOK

The box comes out bulging and will not quite shut, and something on top of it is a great deal too big for it: the whole watermelon.

Teacher: "Today the box is **FULL** — it's got our whole **WEEK** inside it!"

Pull each thing out and hold it up in complete silence. They will supply the word before you can.

The sun hat → "**Summer!**" The fan → "**Hot!**" The dragon boat → "**Sun!**" The goggles → "**Swim!**"

Last of all, one small thing left in the bottom of the bowl, already half gone. Hold it up so the light comes through it. "**ICE!**"

4 MIN TEACH • ICE, THEN THE WHOLE WEEK

Every child gets **one ice cube in their own hand** and closes their fist round it. Nobody puts it down. We say the whole week with our bodies, twice — slow, then fast:

It's **summer!** (*big sun circle overhead*)

It's **hot**, (*fan your face*)

Here comes the **sun**, (*both arms rise into the circle again*)

I **swim** and I **splash**, (*two strokes, then slap the floor*)

And my **ice** is... all **GONE!** (*open your fist and show the empty wet hand*)

Open every hand together and look: the ice has **melted**, and the water is still there. Nothing was lost; it only changed. Then the three ice cubes from Tuesday's dishes get their verdict, out loud, from the children.

Littles do the five gestures and shout the five words. Bigs owe you a whole sentence each: "**It is hot in summer.**" "**I can swim in the water.**" "**The ice is melting.**"

Teacher fails: on "my ice is all gone", hunt for it on the floor, under the mat, behind a child, insisting somebody has taken it. Let them explain melting to you. That explanation, in their words, is the assessment.

Chinese moment: the 粽 card joins the row — 夏 · 热 · 太阳 · 水 · 粽, the whole week on the mat. Then 冰化了, said with the open wet hand. And tell them about 夏至 on the 21st: the longest day of the whole year — and after that day the daylight starts getting *shorter* again. Watch their faces.

3 MIN GAME • WATERMELON SHARE

"One, two, three — eyes on me!" The watermelon comes in whole. Hold it up, let three children feel how heavy it is, and knock on it so they hear it is hollow. Then it goes out and comes back cut, on the big plate.

Teacher: "Everybody gets one slice... and **nobody eats** until **everybody** has one." (*say it twice, and say it again while you hand them out*)

Hand a slice to every child, two hands, looking at them: "**Here you are.**" and they answer "**Thank you!**" Then count round the circle out loud to check nobody has been missed — the counting is what makes the waiting bearable.

On three, everybody bites at once. Littles say "**Cold!**" Bigs tell you: "**The watermelon is cold and sweet.**"

The waiting is the lesson, exactly as it was in December. Twenty children holding a slice of watermelon and not eating it is a harder and better piece of work than anything on a shelf.

1 MIN CLOSE + AWARDS

Every child gets a "You are a **STAR!**" award to take home. Then, standing, sticky, all five gestures:

Everyone: "Hot... sun... **SWIM!** Hello, **SUMMER!**" (*fan your face · big sun circle · two front-crawl strokes · both arms thrown wide on the shout*)

Got 3 spare minutes? Sing the whole song one more time outside, in the shade, with the 艾草 bundle from Wednesday passed round for one last sniff. Then tell them what next week is: **graduation**.

3 MIN • Today's song moment — Friday's verse, then the **WHOLE** song, top to bottom, with the watermelon on the mat and nobody eating until the last chord.

Friday's verse: A little bit of ice in my hand so tight, (*fist closed hard*)

Look! It's gone — melted out of sight! (*open your hand and show it, palm up*)

SONGBOOK

★ “Summer, Summer, Sunny Day”

C (0003) F (2010) G7 (0212) Am (2000) · Strum: Down · Down · Down-Up (“sum — mer — sun-ny”)

Bright and easy, like walking to the pool, and a proper **rest** before “ice-cold lemonade” so the shiver lands. **Am appears exactly twice** — at the end of the chorus’s third line and at the start of Wednesday’s dragon-boat verse — and it is the easiest shape of the four: **one finger**, second fret of the G string. C is one finger, Am is one, F is two, G7 is three; learn them in that order. Chant the song without the uke first; add the chords once they know the actions.

CHORUS — EVERY SINGLE DAY

- C Summer, summer, F sunny C day, (*big sun circle overhead*)
F Hat on my C head and G7 off to C play! (*hat on, then run on the spot*)
C Drink my water, F find the Am shade, (*drink, then hands up over your eyes*)
F Then eat the C ice-cold G7 lemon C ade! (*a big shiver, then “aaaah”*)

MONDAY · SUMMER

- C Off with my coat and on with my hat, (*peel the coat off, press the hat on*)
G7 Summer is here — C how about that! (*both arms thrown wide*)

TUESDAY · HOT

- C Hot, hot, hot — I fan my face, (*flat hand flapping*)
G7 Find me a cool, C shady place! (*hands over your eyes, then flop into the shade*)

WEDNESDAY · SUN

- Am Row, row, row — the drum goes BOOM, (*row together, one big drum hit on BOOM*)
G7 A dragon boat C in the hot sun’s room! (*row faster, then the big sun circle*)

THURSDAY · SWIM

- C Splash goes the water, kick my feet, (*slap the floor, then kick*)
G7 Swimming, swimming — C cool and sweet! (*front-crawl strokes, then a long “aaah”*)

FRIDAY · ICE

- C A little bit of ice in my hand so tight, (*fist closed hard*)
G7 Look! It’s gone — C melted out of sight! (*open your hand, palm up*)

Each day: chorus → today’s verse → chorus. Friday: the whole song top to bottom with the watermelon on the mat and nobody allowed a slice until the last chord — that run-through **is** the review of the week. If your fingers get stuck, put the uke down, give one child the paper fan and do the finger-play instead; the actions carry the meaning either way.