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April 2012 Newsletter



Welcome to the April edition of the preschool theme newsletter. I decided to send the April newsletter early this month so you have it before the school holidays. I am sure you are all in need of a break and I wish you all a Happy Easter and a break full of 'personal time'!

Facebook competition



follow us on
facebook

Thank you to everyone who has joined the Facebook page. I

encourage and invite you all to join and start contributing ideas and thoughts.

www.facebook.com/preschoolthemes and click on the like button.

Alternatively you can use the direct link at the top of the Home page on the web site www.preschoolthemes.co.za

Join Facebook and win 5 Theme books!

Everyone who clicks the like button on the preschool Facebook page between now and the end of April will all go into a draw for 2 people to each win 5 theme books of their choice. This includes everyone who has joined to date. Tell your friends too.

Supplementary theme ideas and activities

I often see new ideas and activities for the existing themes you have or I do or see an activity at school which I want to share with you all. I had planned to write a book with all the ideas, but after some deliberation it was decided that a blog would be the best way to communicate these ideas to you all. So I am very excited to share my new blog with you. Best of all you can access these ideas free of charge.

The blog is linked to the web site or you can follow the blog independently.

<http://preschoolthemeideas.wordpress.com/>

(Click on the link and it should take you directly to the blog)

The ideas and activities are under several categories as one idea can often be applied to several themes.

The Easter chick is a good example of

this as it can be done for the themes: birds, Easter, colour yellow, and shape- oval.



There is a search block at the top of the blog to help you find what you need.

The blog activities are linked to the Facebook group too.

CAPS outcomes

The updated CAPS outcomes for the existing themes can be downloaded free of charge from the web site under the tab CAPS outcomes. The file should open as a PDF file which you can print out. I set them out in the same format as the existing ones and you should be able to cut them out and paste them over the old ones. Alternatively staple the few pages to the inside cover of the theme book.

To date I have only done 3: Autumn, Big school and Birds. New ones will be added as I do them. If you urgently need the outcomes of a particular theme, send me an e mail and I will do it for you.

The existing outcomes are correct – they just need to be reworded to align with the wording of the new curriculum. If you have trouble opening the PDF file e mail and I can try and send it to you in a different format (rodandkarin@xtra.co.nz)

Free poison chart to download

It is very important to know what to do when a child swallows or eats something poisonous at school. You can download a free chart from this web site. <http://schoolme.co.za/>

Baby/Toddler fun

While working in the toddler area one of the teachers set out this sand painting activity. While it was rather messy and the children ended up covered in food colouring including their feet, it was a great sensory activity and they all enjoyed it.

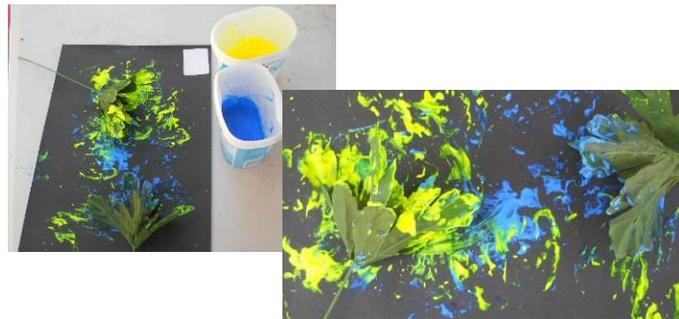
We placed sandpit sand on an outdoor table and sprinkled food colouring onto the sand. The children mixed the colour into the sand. Once this was done, we gave them glue and black paper. They spread the glue and sprinkled the coloured sand onto the glue. As you can see from the picture some preferred to eat the glue on the brushes. Although we don't encourage it, it's okay as long as the materials are non-toxic.

Coloured sand collage



Painting with plastic leaves

This activity was enjoyed by all the ages. I was given some artificial plastic leaves. The children dipped them into paint and 'hit' the paper with the leaves. Some tried to paint with them. When working with two colours of paint always try and select colours that mix well to make a new colour and not just a mushy brown if they get mixed. For this activity I used blue and yellow which mixed to become green.



Painting

Bubble wrap painting gloves

I was given some small 'packets' of bubble wrap which had been packaging for some delicate ornaments. You can make the packets too.



The children placed their hand into the packet and patted the paper using the bubble wrap glove. The older children understood the concept of patting so the dots were printed, but the younger children preferred to use the glove as a paint brush and smear the paint over the paper. Once again for this age group we allow the children to use the materials in their own creative way as long as the materials are being handled in a safe manner. Then again, some of the learners could not get past popping the bubbles. The only way I could get him to paint was to promise him a clean piece of the end of the activity to pop!!



Painting with pipe cleaners



Sensory or messy play

It must be an age thing but I am not very keen on setting out sensory or messy play activities. I guess I think of all the mess which is not what you are supposed to do as a teacher!!

So to improve on this aspect of my teaching I am setting out more messy play activities.

Flour and water

This activity actually did not start out as a messy play activity but it wasn't long before it became one.



We have a big round outdoor table which is perfect for messy play and is near to the hose pipe. I set out dry flour on the table with spoons, feathers and plastic milk lids. The children played with this for a while. I then added some dry powder paint and they enjoyed mixing it in. Then I thought I would just dribble a bit of water onto the flour and they could mix it and make a sticky mess. All was going well. Then they needed to wash their sticky hands so I fetched a bucket of water. Soon there was a lot of water on the table being spread into the green flour mixture.



Since it was a warm day, I left the children to enjoy the sticky mixture and we all washed off with the hose at the end. The children really enjoyed the activity and after all it's only flour and water! I had many keen helpers to wash the table with soap and cloths.



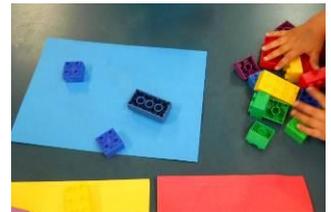
Colour sorting using Lego blocks



With resources being so expensive you need to try and be creative and use the resources you have in different ways.

I set out pages of coloured paper

which matched the colour of the Lego blocks we have. Each child received a pile of Lego blocks and was encouraged to sort them to match the paper to the colour of the Lego block. Most children in the 2 – 3 1/2 y group understood this, but some just wanted to play with the blocks as they did on the mat. This did cause a bit of frustration for the children who were sorting as the others kept taking their blocks. If you can, have a few blocks nearby which you can redirect them to play with.



Daisy wheels/construction set



I have a set of coloured daisy wheels which are so versatile. The discs have small and large holes so all ages can thread them and they are great for colour

sorting while improving eye hand coordination and small muscles.

My kind husband made me this sorting block using cup hooks and a block of wood and the children love to hook the discs onto the hooks.



I also have this sorting board which is effective too.



That's all for April. I hope you feel inspired to try a few of these activities after your break.

Don't forget to join the Facebook group and be in the competition to win 5 theme books. Tell your friends too.

Regards Karin