

Preschool Theme Newsletter – April 2014

Hello Everyone,

Welcome back to the 2nd term. The first term is a long and hot term, so term 2 should be a lot easier and of course cooler. I hope you all have a great term and have come back refreshed from the break.



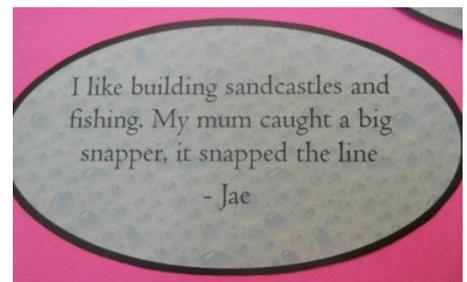
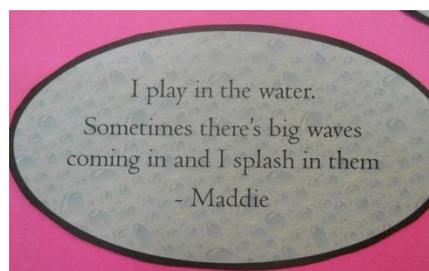
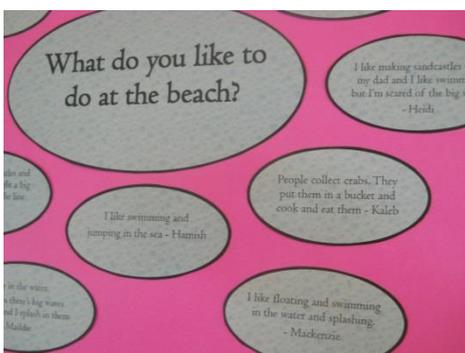
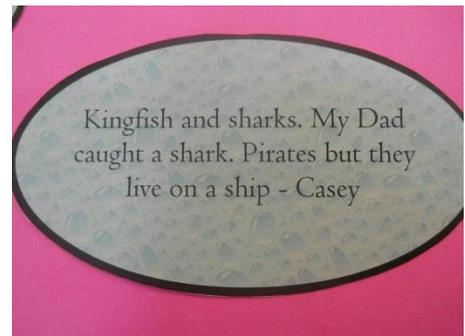
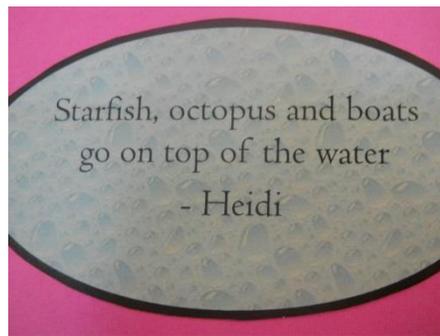
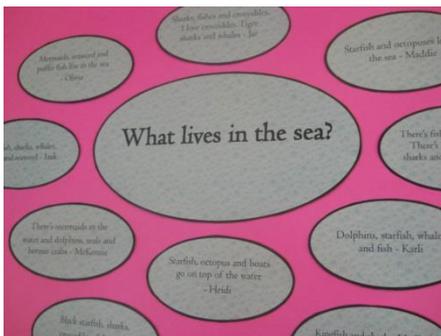
Autumn and Easter are both fast approaching. For both the themes there are plenty of ideas on the Pinterest boards so take a look and start collecting and planning for what you need. I have sent a separate mail with some Easter ideas I used at school.



Theme/topic planning

Have you ever considered involving the planning of your theme or topic with your children? I have seen it done in New Zealand and I think it's a great idea as part of their thinking and language development. Here are some examples of planning a theme around the sea.

Start off by asking the children a leading question such as "what lives in the sea?" Record their answers on a paper and then create a concept web from that. If the children are a bit older such as the Grade R group, then record what the children tell you directly onto individual papers for each child's response so they can see you writing what they say. This teaches them that the print has meaning. Once written, show it to the children and point to the words as you read it out together. You don't have to type it up on a computer as they have done in these pictures. Just use a koki pen and good print. Remember to add who gave you the information at the end of the comment. Display these where the children can see them and 'read' them again. Write the comments as close as possible to how the children relayed them to you. You won't be able to ask all the children, but try to include as many children as you can over the planning days. Doing this shows you what the children already know about the sea and the beach.



Extend this activity to "what would you like to learn about the sea and the beach?"

Some creative activities

Collage with cardboard shapes. Extending a simple art activity to become a more complex one with more learning opportunities

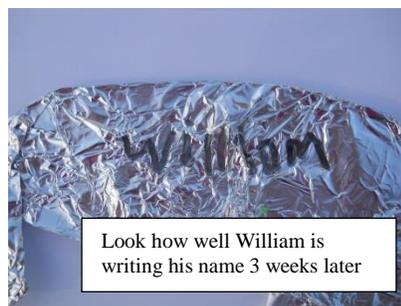
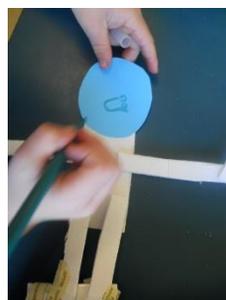
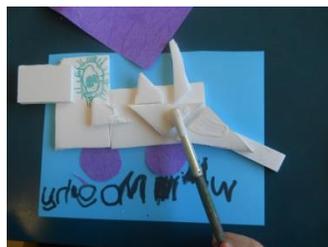


We often get given some firm cardboard like 'stuff' which is used in the building industry. You can substitute this with cut up polystyrene trays (we almost never get polystyrene trays in New Zealand?) or cardboard or paper shapes.



I cut the cardboard into a variety of shapes and encouraged the children to create. William (4 1/2) began to paste the shapes and soon he decided it was a truck and needed wheels. I cut some circles from paper as cutting the thick cardboard into neat circles was a bit difficult. As he created, I added components to extend the activity and the learning.

I suggested he draw the driver and put something in the back of the truck. William is "obsessed" with wanting to use the teacher's koki pen and he always insists on writing his own name. If I don't rescue my pen he will draw endlessly, which is not a bad thing apart from the fact that I need my pen to write names on other children's art works! And yes there are koki pens freely available but he always wants my pen. He wrote his name which you can see has only some resemblance to his actual name, (reversed w, l, D, y, e all placed in a random order) but this is a great start and what we call emergent writing. It shows he is ready for and interested in learning to write. He then asked me to write his surname which he also 'copied' and then I suggested we cut out his name and paste it onto his truck. He thought this was a cool idea and so his truck was named. He also decided to make a person.



Look how well William is writing his name 3 weeks later

Painting with cardboard rollers/tubes



I had collected several nice firm cardboard rolls from the inside of foil, Glad wrap etc. I decided to use them for a painting activity. I set out paint in flat plates (needs to be nice and thick so ready mixed works the best), large sheets of paper (we had A2 posters we were donated so it was slightly glossy which was great), teaspoons and I added glitter glue/paint to the activity but it's not essential.

Choose your paint colours carefully so they blend to make a pleasing effect. If you don't do this, you just end up with a messy brown blur. I used blue, green and white.

I had learnt my lesson from a previous lesson where I had put paint brushes out to dab the paint and they all ended up painting with brushes instead of with the rollers, so I put out teaspoons to dispense the paint and it was great. The children dabbed different colours of paint on the paper and then rolled the paint together to create an interesting and textured end product. I dropped blobs of glitter paint onto the paper to add sparkle.

The sheets of paper make great backgrounds for sea pictures or gardens. One of the teachers cut the paper into seaweed shapes and added them to the group display board. These sheets of paper can also be cut up and used as collage paper to create other pictures.

Note: Some children love the sensation of paint on their hands and will spend a long time rolling the rollers and adding more and more paint. Make sure you have a bucket of water nearby to



clean up.

I loved the end product and the children loved creating the paintings. This is a great opportunity for gross motor and small muscle development especially when standing and a good sensory activity.



Drawing with the 2-3 year olds

This age group has a really short attention span. I find they will draw for a short time, move away and then come back and draw some more. Often we cover the table with paper so they can draw freely over a period of time.

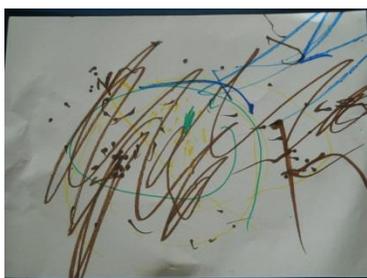
I drew some circles for the children and they created faces. Some of the older children wanted to try and trace around the round bowl themselves so we had a few attempts at that.

Young children need to have an opportunity to draw everyday so they can go through the developmental stages of drawing just as they go through the stages of rolling, sitting, crawling etc. If they do not have this opportunity, they may still be in the scribble stage when they are older!

NOTE: The children do draw on the floor and themselves which is frustrating but it's all part of the learning process and consistent and close supervision teaches them acceptable behaviour and pays off in the end.



Picture 1 and 2 Uncontrolled scribbling moving towards controlled scribbling and the start of circles being formed



Easter ideas

There are some more ideas on my blog (see address below) and also in the gallery on the web site. Archived editions of the newsletter on the web site will have some Easter ideas in the Feb, March or April editions depending on where Easter fell that year. And of course my Pinterest boards have plenty of ideas.

<http://www.pinterest.com/kstedall/easter/> for adult and personal ideas

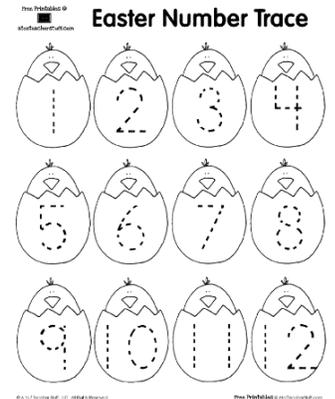
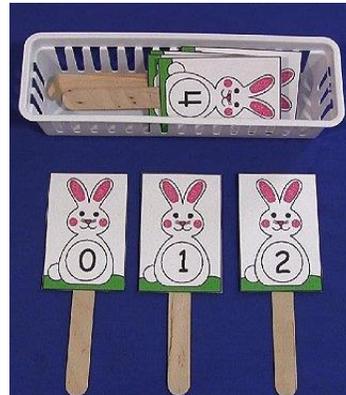
<http://www.pinterest.com/kstedall/easter-school/>

Web site: www.preschoolthemes.co.za

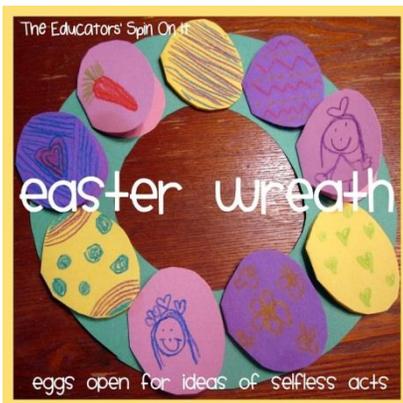
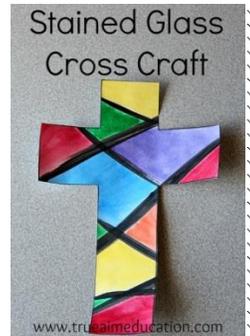
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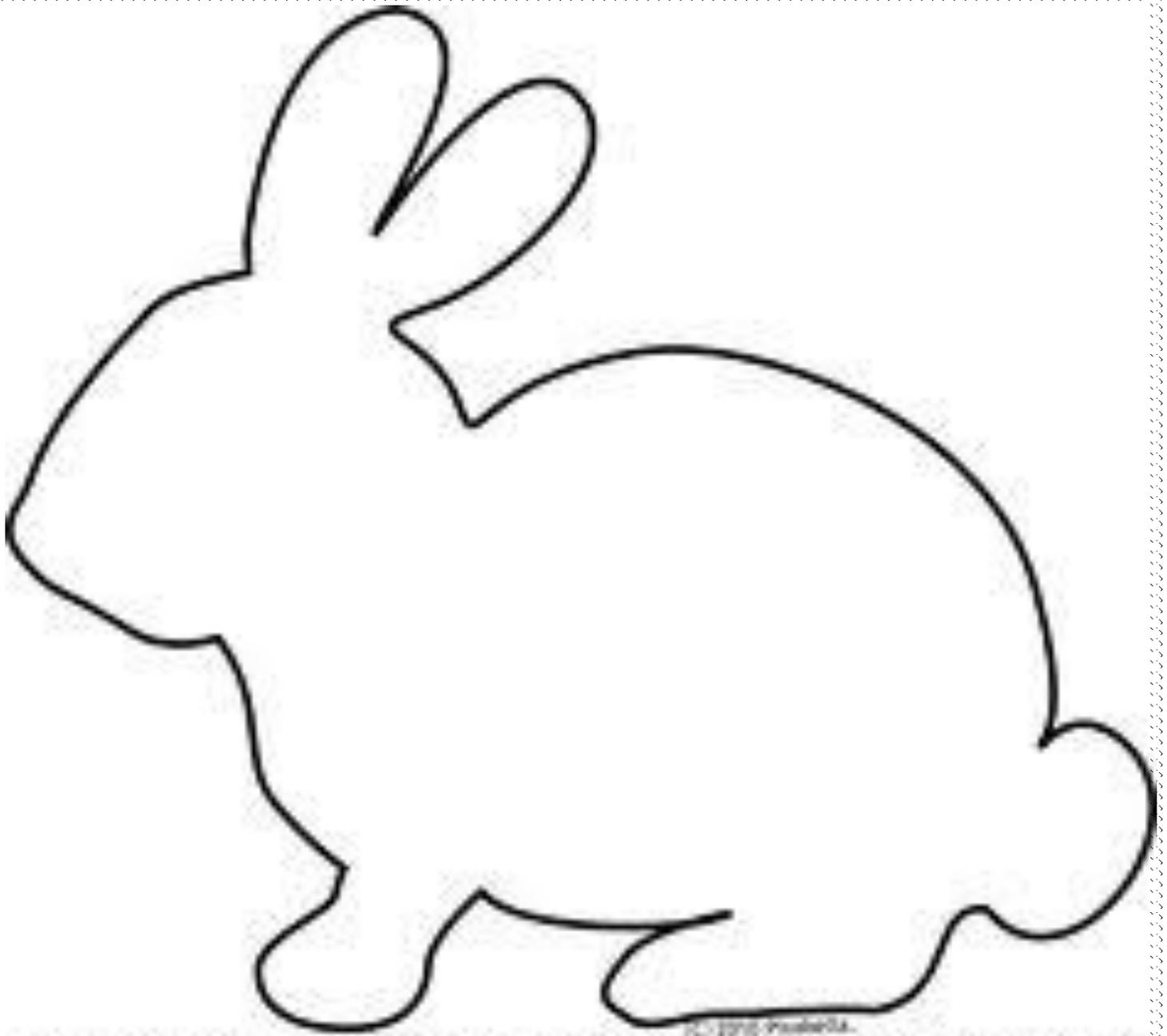
Blog: <http://preschoolthemeideas.wordpress.com/>

Pinterest: <http://pinterest.com/kstedall/>



Q-Tip Painted Easter Eggs





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A clever idea for all the random items and puzzle pieces that get lost



Have a Happy Easter and happy teaching.

Regards Karin