

Preschool Themes Newsletter – August 2017

Hello Everyone,

It feels like it was just the other day I sent out a newsletter (which was late) but I want to get back on track so here is the August newsletter on time.

I am having a major headache with sending out the newsletters. Because the newsletter appears to be spam to some email servers, my computer is being blacklisted and the newsletters are not being delivered. This is especially so for the m web addresses. Please bear with me while I try and sort out a solution.

The newsletters can be found on the web site under the tab of newsletter.
www.preschoolthemes.co.za



If you don't receive a newsletter please let me know at rodandkarin@xtra.co.nz. Currently I don't have an unsubscribe option on my newsletters so if you would prefer to no longer receive the newsletter send me a mail and I will remove you promptly.

Since it's been so snowy and cold this past month we have been doing some winter art activities which I have shared in this newsletter. There is a Pinterest board for winter with lots of other special ideas and activities for you to use. <https://nz.pinterest.com/kstedall/winter/?eq=winter&etslf=7371>

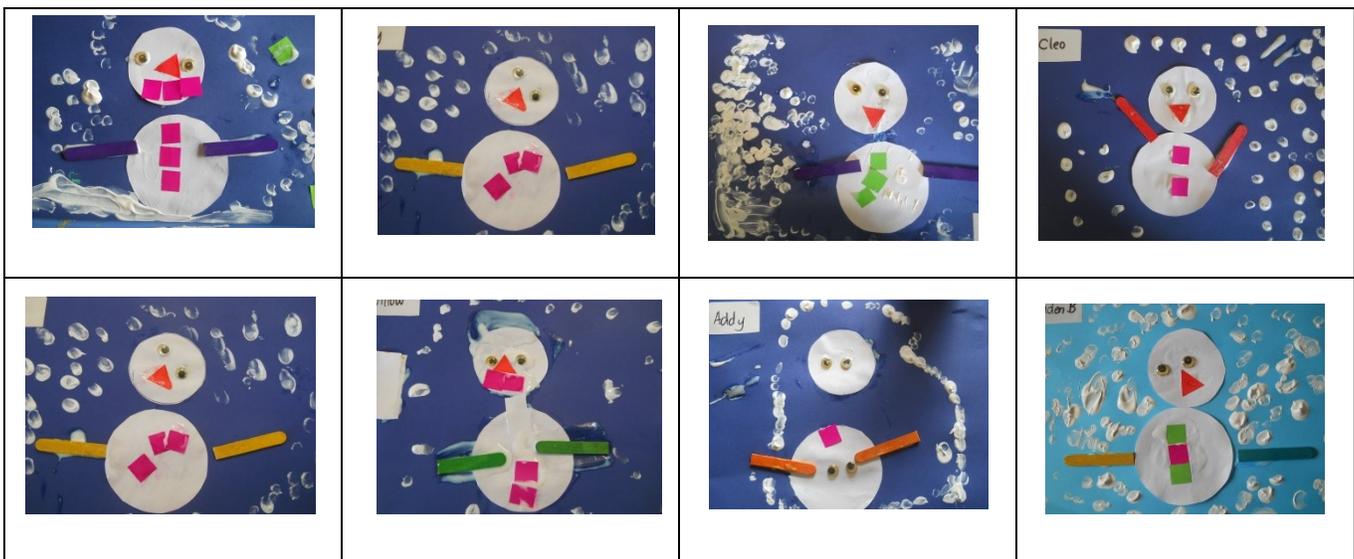
(There are boards for each season too)

Winter creative activities

Snowman – collage and finger painting

With all the snow and frost around I thought this activity would be relevant and fun to do. Some people argue that you should not be doing snow activities if the area you are in does not get snow. I don't entirely agree with that especially since the children see snow on the TV and the news and many have experienced snow in other areas.

I loved these happy snowmen so much that I am sharing several of them with you. These were made by 3 and a half year olds to almost 5 year olds.



Themes: Winter, weather, circles

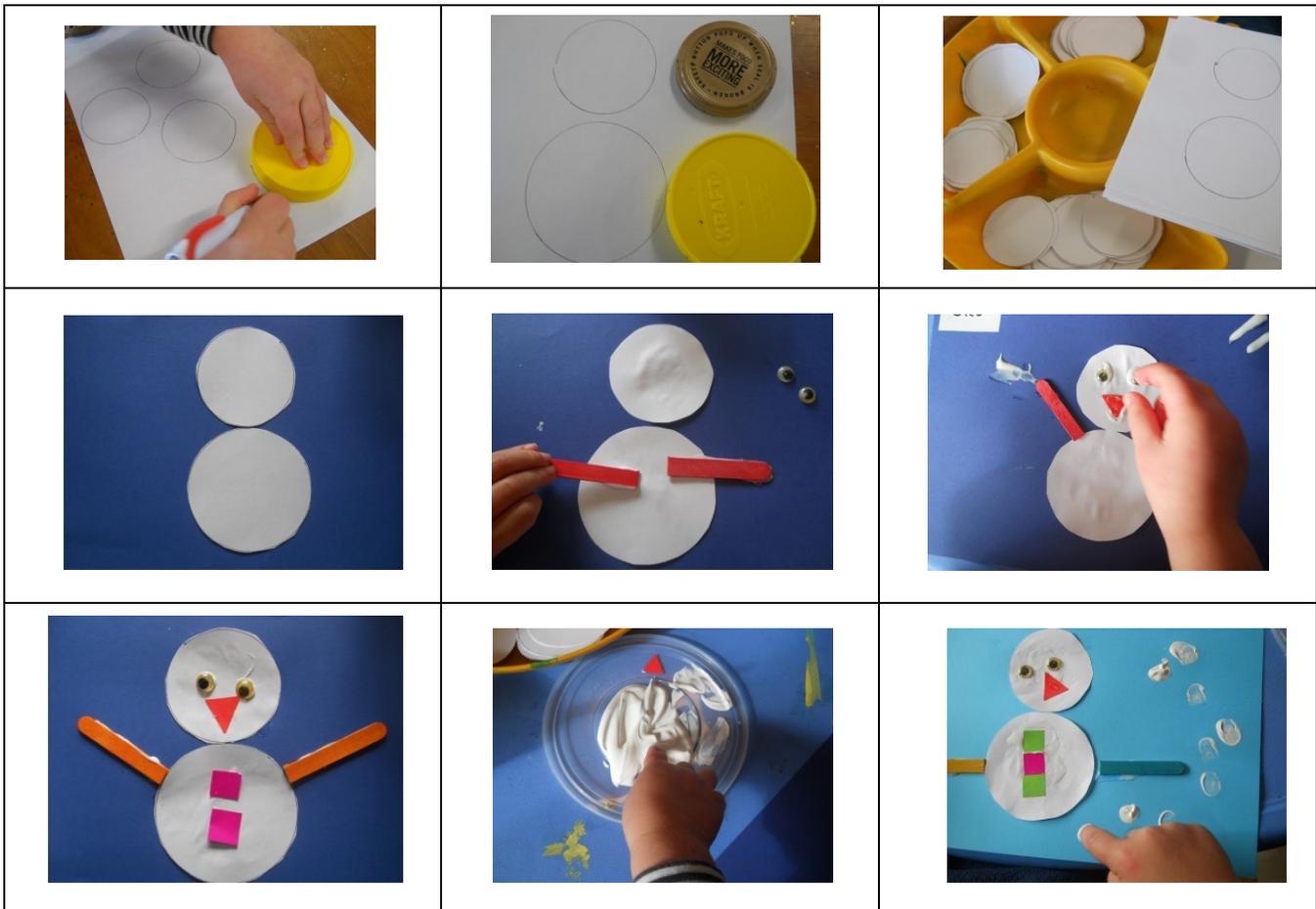
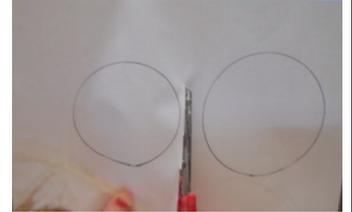
You will need:

- White paper
- Blue paper
- White paint and flat lids
- Glue and glue brushes
- Googly eyes, wooden sucker sticks or cut toilet roll strips
- Coloured paper to cut triangle noses and buttons
- Two lids for tracing – one body and one head
- Optional: Scissors



Method:

The older children cut out their own circles which were pre drawn for them. For the younger children I cut out the circles ahead of time. The children placed the head and body circle on the blue paper. They added arms, eyes, a nose and buttons to complete the snowman. Once the snowman was complete, they use their fingers and white paint to finger print snow around the snowman.



Notes:

- Some children struggled to position the snowman. This art work was done by a 3 year old who only just turned 3.
- The younger children will enjoy creating a collage; perhaps set out white collage material and encourage them to finger print between the collage materials.
- I decided not to use buttons for eyes etc as they do not stick well with glue
- If you don't have blue paper, colour-wash some or let the children do it the day before. It needs to be dry for this activity
- Young children struggle to trace around a lid. If they do manage I encourage them to try.
- Encourage the children to put the glue on the collage pieces instead of on the base paper.
- I cut the wooden sucker sticks in half with a pair of scissors and gave each



- child a pair of arms and eyes each instead of placing them on the table.
- Discourage the children from pasting the paper squares all over the paper. They are intended for buttons and face features.
- No googly eyes – draw eyes or use paper circles

Assessment opportunity

When children are being creative it's a good time to observe the children and make observation notes on their skills. This picture is a good example of the need to observe the **process** and not only the end product.

While this picture appears to be correctly orientated on the page, the child actually created the whole snowman sideways. He has several developmental issues. If the process had not been observed the end product would appear to be fine.



Just looking at this picture on the left I would be concerned that this child has problems crossing their midline as all the snow prints are on one side of the snowman. If I had observed the process I would have been surer of this observation. I would note my concern in my observations and provide further opportunities for mid line crossing for me to confirm my observation.

Winter tree collages with snow paint

To continue the theme of winter and snow I found this snow paint recipe on Pinterest.

To make snow paint you need to mix shaving cream and white wood glue. I used $\frac{3}{4}$ cup shaving cream squirted from the shaken tin and a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of wood glue (white school glue).

Mix together preferably not too far ahead of time – same day you are going to use it or it will lose the puff.



Since we don't work with themes in NZ and there was no language discussion about what a winter tree looks like I got some interesting trees, but I loved their creations.

I had many children join the table and some made several art works. The ages ranged from 3 to nearly 5.

Themes: Winter, trees, seasons

You will need:

- Brown paper
- Blue background paper
- Glue and glue brushes
- Snow paint
- Optional: White glitter or salt



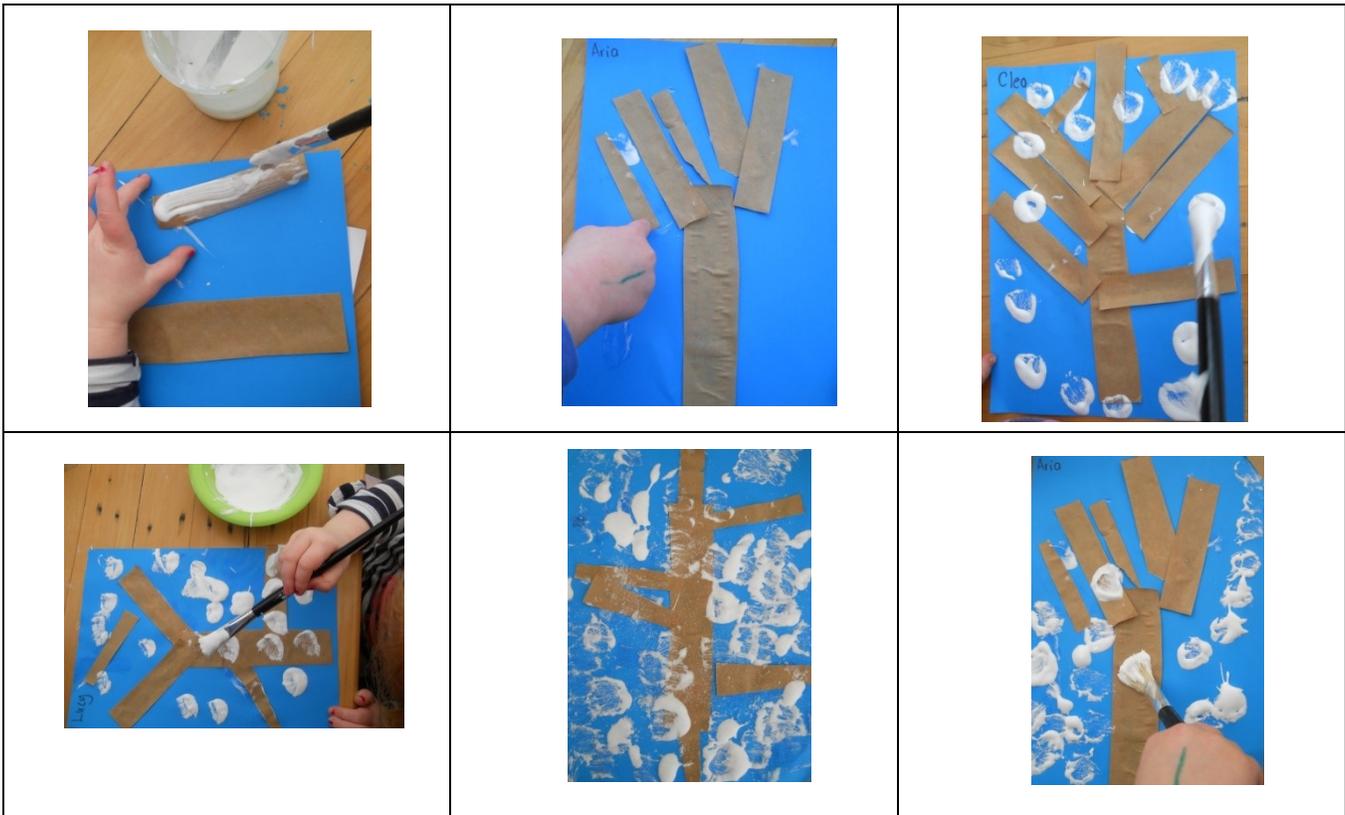
Teacher:

Cut the brown paper into tree trunks and thinner pieces for the branches. Make the snow paint.

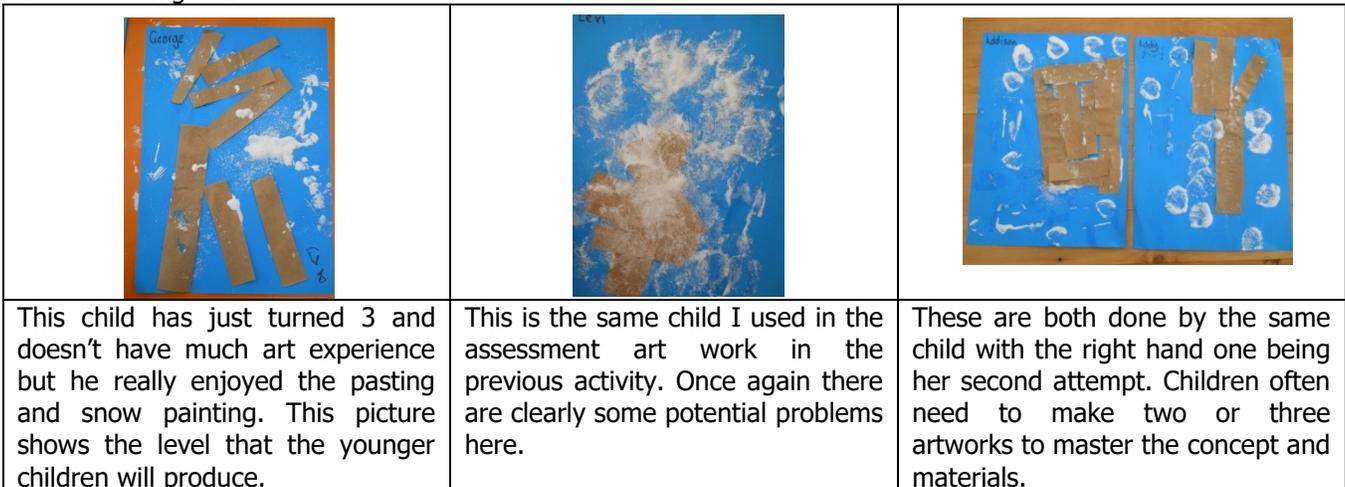
Method:



The children put glue on the tree trunk and pasted it to the bottom of a vertical page of blue paper. They selected a few branches and pasted them to the top of the tree trunk. The children 'painted' blobs of snow paint on and around the winter tree outline. I let the children sprinkle salt on their picture to make the snow shiny. White glitter will look lovely too but both the glitter and salt are optional.



Please note that these pictures have been created exactly as the children chose. Do not interfere and correct the trees to look good!



Notes:

- Some children used a lot of glue. Encourage the children to glue the brown paper and not the background paper
- Help the children to identify which pieces are the tree trunks and which are the branches
- Only place a bit of snow paint in a dish for each child and only give it to them once the pasting is complete
- I let the children sprinkle on the salt using their fingers
- Encourage the children to paint blobs of snow paint instead of splats of snow as seen in this example above where I have painted both to show you the difference
- The younger children can collage branches and enjoy painting snow on them.
- These art works take a while to dry.



Sparkly snowflakes

For these snowflakes we used Epsom salts to create the sparkle and ice effect. I debated whether the children would manage to cut their own snowflakes. Since I have such a big age range in the group I decided to cut the snowflake shapes myself, but several children requested to cut their own as their second attempt and most of the older children managed really well.



You will need:

- A4 white paper cut into a square, folded and pieces cut out to make a snowflake
- Another piece of paper to place under the painted snowflake
- Paint – white, light blue and mauve
- Epsom salts
- White glue



Note: I added the glue to the paint so the Epsom salts would stick but it resulted in the whole snowflake sticking to the base paper which was not a good idea. I would rather have the children add glue to their painting and then sprinkle the Epsom salts on the snowflake. Remove the under paper before the snowflake dries otherwise they will stick together. This is not very easy to do so I ended up with the base paper stuck.

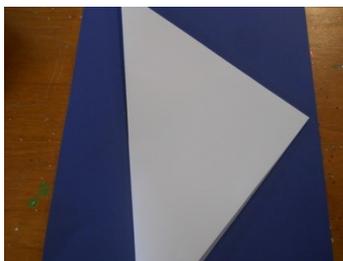


Epsom salts: You should be able to buy Epsom salts at the supermarket or pharmacy.

Cutting the snowflakes:

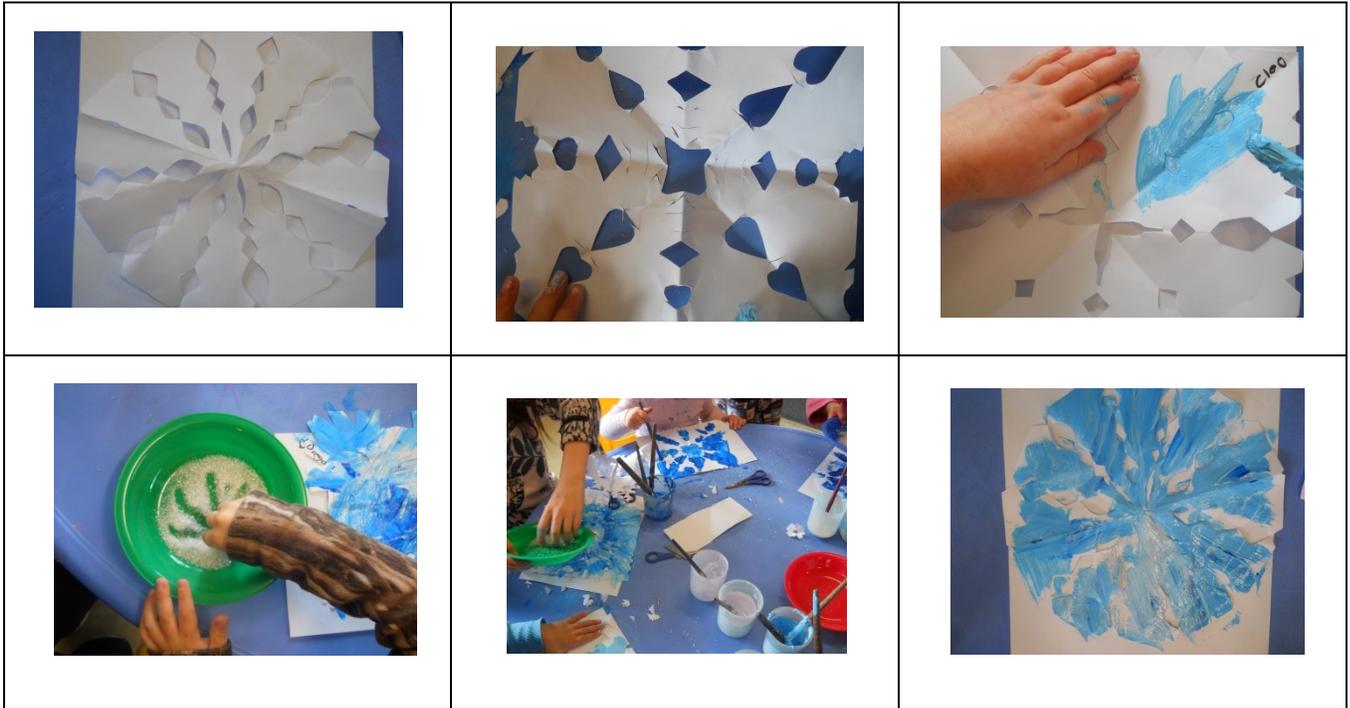
For patterns to cut out snowflakes look on Pinterest for many ideas.

I kept it simple. Start with a square and fold it into half diagonally and then again so you have a small triangle. Cut out shapes along the edges to the folded triangle, unfold and you have a snowflake.



Method:

The children placed the snowflake on the paper. They painted the snowflake using the different colours of paint. Once painted, the children sprinkled on Epsom salts to create the sparkle.



Fine motor skills

If you have your own children you will know how much they love anything to do with stickers. I wanted some of the boys to participate in a fine motor activity so I set out some stickers for them and I was pleased to have several boys join the activity.

Purchasing stickers even the cheap coloured dots are still expensive. I was given a box of sheets of rectangle labels so I decided they would serve my need.

I cut the labels into smaller pieces and gave the children strips of labels to pull off and stick along some lines I had drawn on the page. I was surprised at how well they managed and persevered till the end.

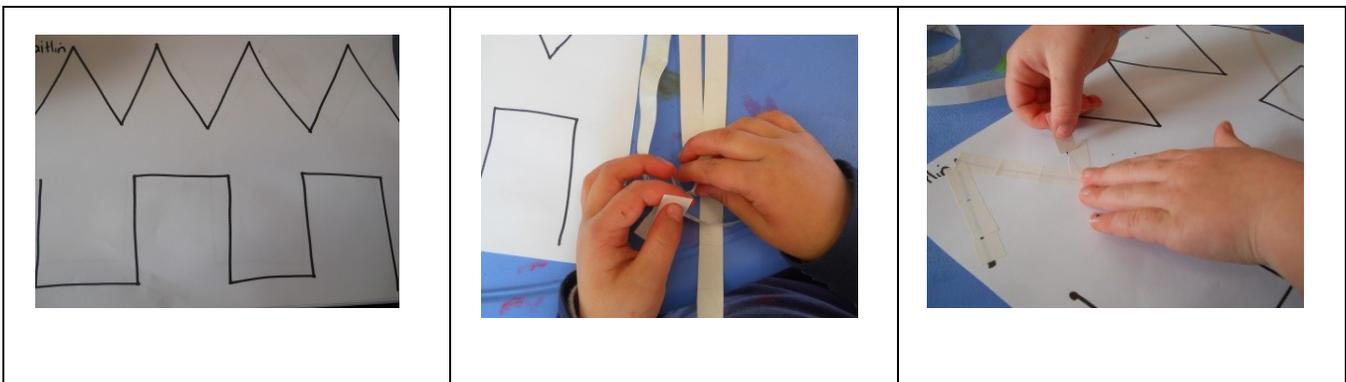
You will need:

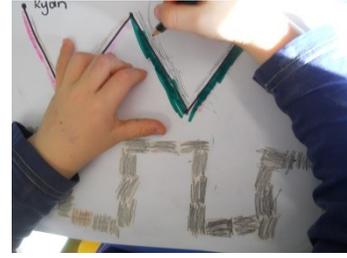
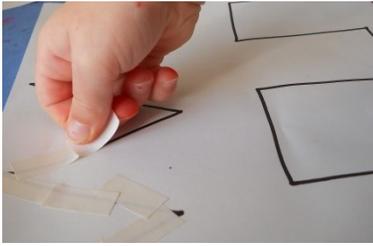
- Paper with lines drawn on them
- Crayons or koki pens
- Stickers or sheets of labels cut into strips – see middle pic below



Method:

The children carefully pulled off the stickers and placed them on the lines. The starting point was indicated with a large dot so they went from left to right in the correct direction. Once the lines were covered with stickers the children coloured the stickers using crayons or koki pens.



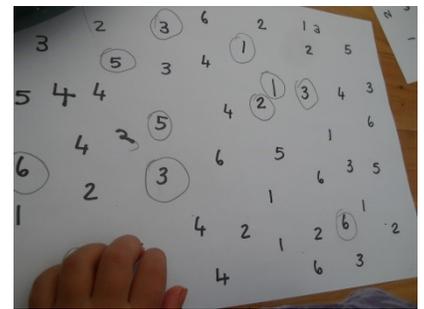


Notes:

- This activity was enjoyed by the 4 to 5 year olds. The younger children will be happy just sticking the stickers on a page and will exercise their fine motor skills too
- I initially drew curved lines on the paper, but it worked best if you use the pattern I did in the picture using straight lines unless you have round stickers
- The children chose their own way of decorating the stuck pieces of labels.

Number recognition game

This is a number game we play with the children. I write numbers 1- 6 (or up to 10 depending on the age of the children) on small squares of paper and I place all the papers face down on a tray. You can use a dice in place of this method but I find the kids muck around with a dice and unless you have one of the special dice that goes to 12 you will need to only use 1-6. Each child gets a page with numbers written all over the page repeating the numbers.



The game works as follows. A child turns over a paper, calls the number and the other children all have to find the number on their page and circle it (only one number per time). I leave the numbers facing upwards until they have all been turned over. This ensures all the numbers get called.

The next child has a turn. Continue until all the numbers on the page have been circled. Several children can participate at one time. This can also be done as a maths mat time or a child can play it individually. If you can it's a good idea to create a master page that you can photo copy when you need it as this is a good game to play often especially on rainy days.



Happy teaching

Regards

Karin

"We are not
"JUST"
TEACHERS.
We are the
managers of the
world's greatest
resource:
CHILDREN!"

Robert John Meehan