



Newsletter – February 2013



Hello everyone

Well here we are already in February! So much to do and never enough time to do it all! I trust that you are all settled into the New Year routines and your children have settled in too. In New Zealand the primary and high schools only go back in the first week of February, so we have been enjoying lower numbers at school. February is of course Valentines month of love. I have a Pinterest board for Valentines activities and ideas so please visit the board <http://pinterest.com/kstedall/valentines-school/>. The Colour red theme book is full of ideas too. For more ideas and activities please visit <http://pinterest.com/kstedall/colour-red/>

New themes

Thank you to everyone who sent me theme titles. I have added them to the to-do list. I am almost finished the theme on Sports and Balls. I will notify you all when it is available.

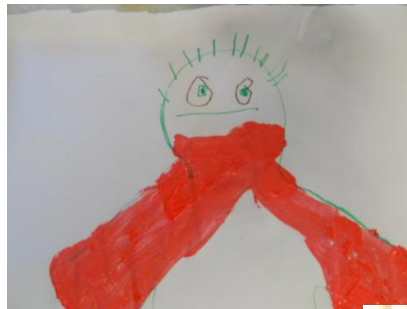
Some activities for you

My body – trace, paint and cut out whole body outlines



This activity was done with the 3/12 – 5 year olds. I do think it's better suited to the older age group unless you have a small group or a classroom assistant to help you. It also needs a fair amount of space – to lie down and be traced, to paint, to dry and then to display.

The children lay down on a large sheet of paper (end rolls of newsprint) and the teacher drew around the child's body. The child then painted and collaged the body. Once dry, the teacher cut out the bodies and they were displayed hanging from a line of string. You may want to try and let the children cut out their own bodies but it's quite tricky to handle such a large sheet of paper. This activity was done over a few days to accommodate the space issue and the painted bodies were dried outside. Unfortunately I did not get a photo of the child being traced. I think it was an awesome activity with a great end product.



Finger painting



Most teachers shy away from the idea of finger painting simply because it is messy and I must admit I am guilty of that too. But you can do finger painting using the ready mixed paints that come in a bottle. They are thicker and behave differently to powder paints. In the picture below the children spread paint onto their paper with paint brushes and then used their fingers to draw faces. A lot less messy than spreading the finger paint with their hands and getting



it everywhere. This was done with the 2-3 1/2 year olds. The child in this picture is 3 years old and is clearly able to draw a face. On the right hand picture she is adding in the hair.

Tip: It may help the children if you draw a big circle for them to create the face in.

Drawing – faces in wet sand (these photos are from the 2- 3/12 year olds but it's good for all ages)

The children drew faces in the damp sand using sticks and their fingers. First we had to flatten the sand (nice gross motor arm movements), then I drew a circle for them, and they drew their face features with eyes, lots of hair and a smiley mouth. Some added arms and legs (perfect head foot men!) Some of the younger children preferred to just draw with sticks (note the fist grip which is perfectly normal for this age group)

Tips: This can be done indoors on trays or in boxes. The sand should be damp. Perhaps you can place some newspaper or plastic on the table and floor to help with clean up. For variety add dry powder paint to the sand. Great sensory activity!



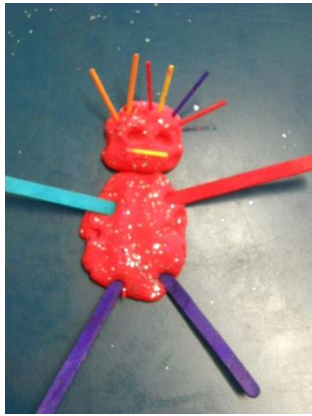
My body – using my hands and fingers and my skills – cutting paper strips (2-4 year olds)

This is an excellent way of helping children to gain the action needed for cutting paper. I cut the paper into strips about 1 cm wide so it only needs one cutting action to snip through the paper. Young children also love to collect things, so I set out some bowls for them to cut into. It was a great motivation to stay with the activity as they wanted to get their bowls filled up. If you look carefully in the one picture you will notice a blue pair of scissors with double holes for fingers. (Sorry never thought to take a close up). These are training scissors – teacher puts her fingers through one set of holes and the child through the other and together they cut. They are quite expensive but you only need a pair or two per class.



Play dough – me and my body.

This body was created by me to show you the activity. I used matches and coloured sucker sticks for the arms and legs. You can substitute with sticks or toilet rolls cut into strips. The birthday cake (I am special) was made by a child and of course we had to sing Happy Birthday at the play dough table and pretend to blow out the candles. This extended to making play dough numbers and the children copying the one that matched their age.



My home – Decorating cut out paper houses

I cut the houses for the learners (older children can easily create their own house after you have demonstrated the method of folding and cutting the windows and doors out leaving one side attached so they can open and close)

The children then used the cut up pieces of paper to collage the house. This little girl decided that she needed cellophane in the windows and a door knob.



My home – using pre-cut paper and material shapes (and colour red theme too)



Paint tape pictures. The children create homes using strips of painter's masking tape. They paint over the whole picture and remove the strips once they are dry and the house outline will appear in the paint.



Blocks and block play



Every classroom should have a full set of educational blocks. While these are a costly purchase the blocks will last for many years, many children can play with them at one time, they can be played with in different play areas and of course they develop an endless amount of skills and thinking. Blocks can be used as part of your theme discussion and at times in games and movement activities. I have provided a link below for where you can purchase the blocks. They may be able to supply you with half a set to start off with which you can add to over time. These



blocks can be made by a parent but they need to be sanded and safe to play with. There are also set dimensions for the size of the blocks and the blocks all work together i.e. two smaller blocks make one bigger block. Blocks are best stored on a low shelf but if space does not permit this, then in crates or boxes. Packing the blocks away according to size is a great learning opportunity in itself. Here are some photographs of children using the blocks in their play.

Purchasing blocks: <http://www.edutoys.co.za/products/view/71> Cost R1470.00

Tel Educational Toys Pretoria in Lynwood at the Gift Acres centre

Information

tel. (012) 361 9253 (012) 361 9253

fax. (012) 361 9230

email. sales@edutoys.co.za



If you can't afford to purchase a set of blocks then try and get some natural blocks made from tree off cuts and wood offcuts. They are great to have anyway and nice to keep for outdoor play. Many factories and building suppliers will give you off cuts for free.



Baking and cooking with pre-schoolers

In the next newsletter I will be sharing some baking and cooking ideas to use in your classroom. If you do any baking or cooking with your children at preschool, please share some of your ideas, tips and hints, photos and recipes that really work. I will be sharing some useful recipes too.

Preschool newsletter

Lee Blignaut has started a preschool newsletter which has lots of useful attachments to read through and to use. If you would like to subscribe to her newsletter please drop her e mail with your e mail. This is an independent newsletter from preschool themes. Lee Blignaut lee.blignaut@yahoo.com

Flannel board rhyme for 'My home' and 'Colour red'



<http://loonsandquines.blogspot.co.uk/2012/07/flannel-friday-red-ted-said.html> for the template to make this resource.

<p>There were five in the bed, and Red Ted said, "Roll over, roll over". So, they all rolled over and yellow fell out.</p> <p>There were four in the bed, and Red Ted said, "Roll over, roll over". So, they all rolled over and brown fell out.</p> <p>There were three in the bed, and Red Ted said, "Roll over, roll over". So, they all rolled over and green fell out.</p> <p>There were two in the bed, and Red Ted said, "Roll over, roll over". So, they all rolled over and blue fell out.</p> <p>There was one in the bed, and Red Ted said, "I'm lonely, so lonely". [Ahhh!]</p>	<p>[but then comes the group activity ... give each learner a coloured bear</p> <p>If you've got a brown bear, then put it on the bed. "Come over, come over"</p> <p>If you've got a yellow bear, then put it on the bed. "Come over, come over"</p> <p>If you've got a green bear, then put it on the bed. "Come over, come over"</p> <p>If you've got a blue bear, then put it on the bed. "Come over, come over"</p> <p>If you've got a red bear, then put it on the bed. "Come over, come over"</p> <p>[Now ...] "We're crowded, so crowded!"</p>
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Fun and super easy Valentine's Day project for the kids - just bend a toilet roll into a heart shape, and secure it with sticky tape, then dip the end in paint and stamp away to make your own cards and wrapping paper!

I leave you with this thought....

The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives. [Robert M. Hutchins](#)

Happy teaching Regards Karin