



Preschool Themes Newsletter – June 2017

Hello Everyone,

Oh my goodness here we are half way through the year already. Scary thought! I hope you are managing to avoid the colds and flu and staying warm. We are having some chilly mornings and later afternoons so the children are coming to school with several layers of clothing. Remind children to remove some of the layers as the day progresses and to put their jerseys and shoes on when playing outdoors.

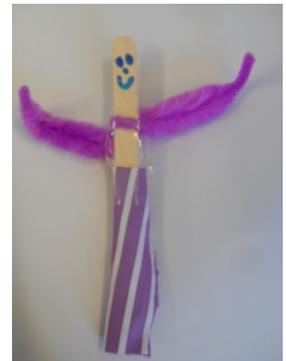
June is also Father's day so I have included an attachment with some ideas for you to use. I hope you get to spoil the men in your lives.



Integrated Please visit the Pinterest board for more ideas
<https://nz.pinterest.com/kstedall/fathers-day/>

Integration and extension of activities

Whenever I plan activities at school I like to think about how this activity can be integrated into other subjects and learning and play areas. I also look to see how the activity could be extended either as the same activity or into another similar activity. I have included some of these activities in this newsletter and discussed the way it can be extended and integrated. A great example of this concept is the activity below where we made handbags in the art area using drawing, which linked to the language learning area (writing). We then added 'writing' letters to place in the handbag. The handbags were used in the fantasy play area. This activity could be extended even further by adding in some paper money or creating shopping lists instead of writing letters. Setting up a shop area in the fantasy play area would encourage the children to use the bags to go shopping. A further extension of this activity would be to place a 'letter box' in the writing area to extend and encourage more letter writing. Another activity similar to this are puppets. When making puppets this activity extends to a puppet show and a great opportunity for drama from the arts learning area. Often a story can lead into an art activity. We read the story of the Rainbow fish to the children and then created a rainbow fish in the art area as an individual activity and as a group collage.



Creative activities

Handbags – using paper plates and drawing

I have done this activity once before where we painted the handbags, but that was a problem as the children wanted to wear and play with the bags and they were wet. Many children took their handbag and put it over their shoulder and got paint all over their clothes! So this time I switched to decorating the handbags by drawing with koki pens.

I did think we could decorate the bags with glue and foam shapes but I made the mistake of colouring the glue, so the children thought it was paint! I soon realised my error, and removed it as the children were painting their whole bag instead of spots of glue. We had some special stickers so each child got one to put onto their bag.

With the letter writing I showed the children how to make an x for a kiss. One child wanted to know what symbol you did to show cuddle which I thought was rather sweet.



TIP: It is best to have the bags ready before you begin this activity. Fold a small or large paper plate in half, cut in half and staple the two pieces together with the white side outwards. Add some ribbon for a handle.

You will need:

- Paper plates –large or small
- Koki pens or wax crayons
- Ribbon for handles
- Stapler



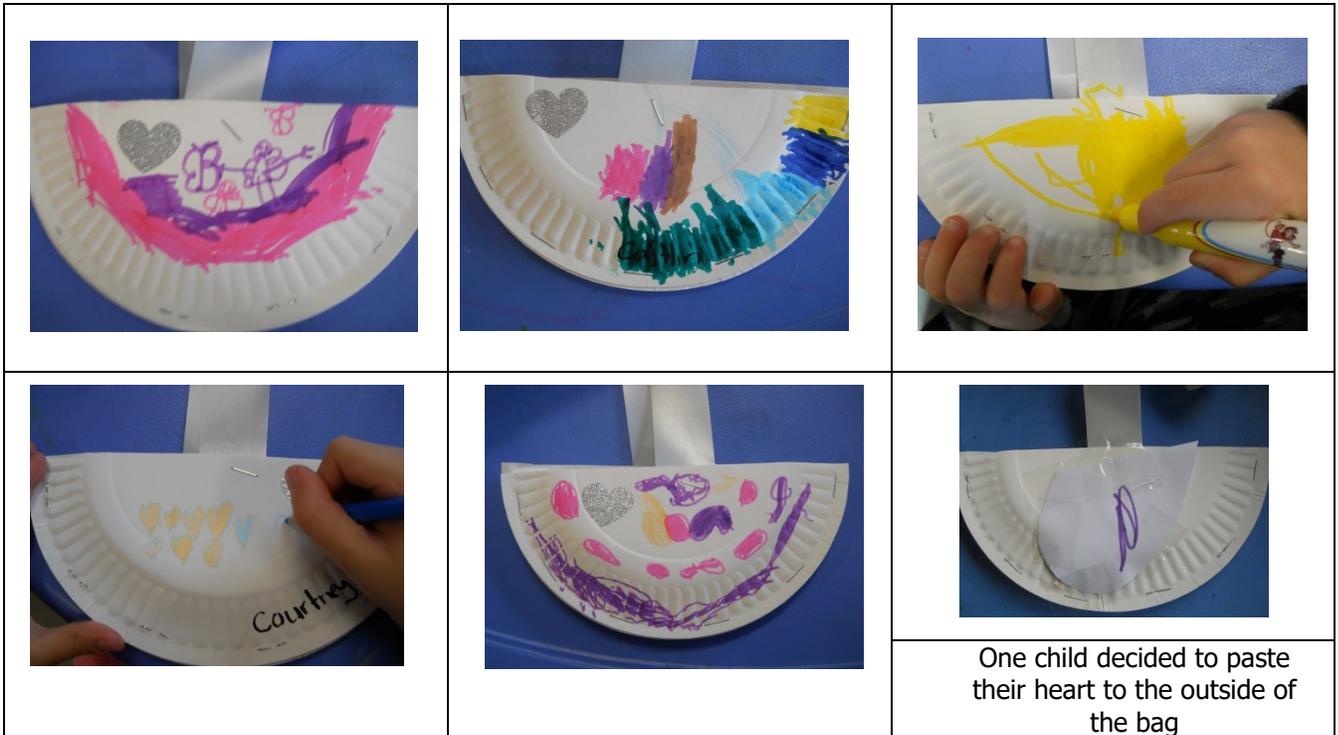
Extension activity: heart shaped paper for letters.

Method:

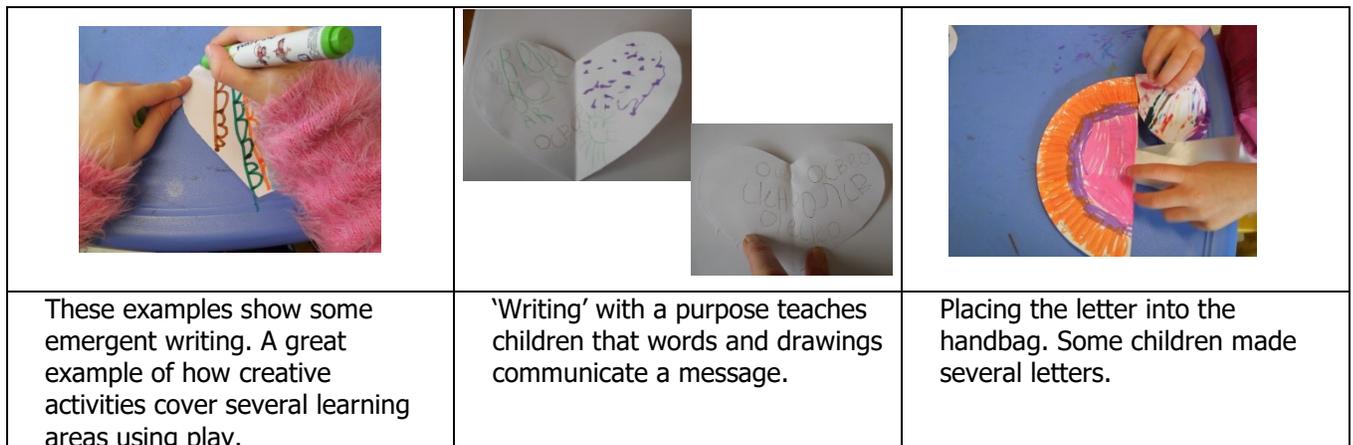
The child colours and draws pictures and patterns on the handbag. Once complete, the child writes a note and draws pictures on the heart shaped letters to place in the handbag. The children used their bags to extend their fantasy play.

Notes:

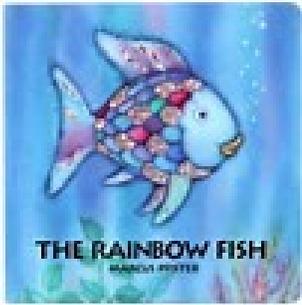
- This activity was enjoyed by the 4 to 5 year olds. The younger children will love the activity too but don't expect a picture.
- The boys were happy to make a bag for their mom.
- Make your heart cards small enough to fit into the bag.
- Some children drew pictures while others coloured and 'scribbled'



Extension activity – Emergent writing heart shaped letters to put into the handbag



Fish – printing with corks and collage with glitter



I was given some pre-cut coloured fish shapes which had been used for decorations for a beach party. While I don't overly like using pre-cut shapes I felt it was a waste not to use them. Since the fish were on coloured paper and were a bit flimsy I taped (can be stapled) the fish to another paper. To link this activity to the language learning area we read the story of the rainbow fish to the children. In the story the fish has no friends because he won't share one of his sparkly scales.



Eventually he did and all the fish had sparkly fins and were all friends. We created the sparkly fish scales.

You will need:

- Fish shapes on coloured paper or cardboard
- Corks
- Paint in flat paint trays or on ice cream lids
- Glue and glitter or sparkly collage materials



Method:

The children printed the scales on the fish using the corks. The children used the glue to add the collage materials and added the glitter, stars and sparkly discs.

Notes:

- Some children tried to paint with the corks instead of printing with the corks. This is not a big issue but do encourage them to try and be more controlled by printing. The younger children tend to paint with the corks.
- The paint should be in or on a flat container otherwise the corks get too messy.
- Don't be too fussy with this activity. Let the children be creative.
- The younger children will enjoy this activity but don't expect too much order. Let them enjoy the painting and collage
- I limited the number of paint colours.
- If using powder paint mix them to a thick creamy consistency.
- Older children should be able to cut out their own fish shape.



Extension activity

Group fish with scales (good activity for the younger children)

The children each decorated a cut out scale and the teacher pasted the scales to a large fish outline. Unfortunately I did not get any photos of the process.



Balloon printing/painting

You will need:

- Balloons and water in a jug or water bottle
- Paper
- Cardboard shapes and Presstick – you will need several and preferably geometric in shape



Teacher

The teacher fills the balloon with water and then blows them up keeping them small enough for a young child's hand to grip. The water prevents the balloons from blowing away. Discuss the different cardboard shapes to integrate the activity to the mathematics learning area.



Method

The child selects the shapes they wish to use and Pressticks them to the page. The child dips the balloon into the paint, which should be in a flat container, and prints/paints using the balloons. Encourage the children to paint around the edge of the shapes and cover the whole page. Remove the shapes to reveal the outlines.



In my photos we used black paper but it was not a good choice. It did not lie flat and at times the edges curled up. It needs to be cardboard.

Show the children how to hold the balloon in their hand and not at the top as in image three below.



Notes

- Water bomb little balloons also work well.
- Discourage the children from squeezing or biting the balloons. It's messy when they burst!
- The black paper curled when we painted over it, so I recommend using cereal box cardboard shapes.
- The activity works more effectively if the teacher puts a piece of Presstick onto each shape ahead of time.
- The painted cardboard shapes can't be reused so make sure you have sufficient
- Leave out the shapes for the younger children. They really enjoyed just painting with the balloons
- For Grade R children encourage them to cut their own shapes. Perhaps use lighter weight cardboard if the children are cutting as the cereal box cardboard is too tricky to cut with school scissors.

Puppets – using packets and happy and sad faces

We have been discussing emotions with the children so we created a hand puppet using a sandwich bag or brown paper packet. I bought the sandwich bags at the supermarket.

The children were asked to make a happy face on the one side and a sad face on the other side. The children used their puppets to present a puppet show later in the day. In ring time they each chose which face to show and to tell the other children why they felt happy or sad and the group was asked to suggest ways that the sad faces could be made happy.

This was a great activity for integration across the language and arts area. Grade R learners could make up a story to tell the group using the puppets.

You can also offer a scenario to the group and then the children choose if they should show you a happy or a sad face e.g. my ice cream fell on the floor, I got a present.



You will need:

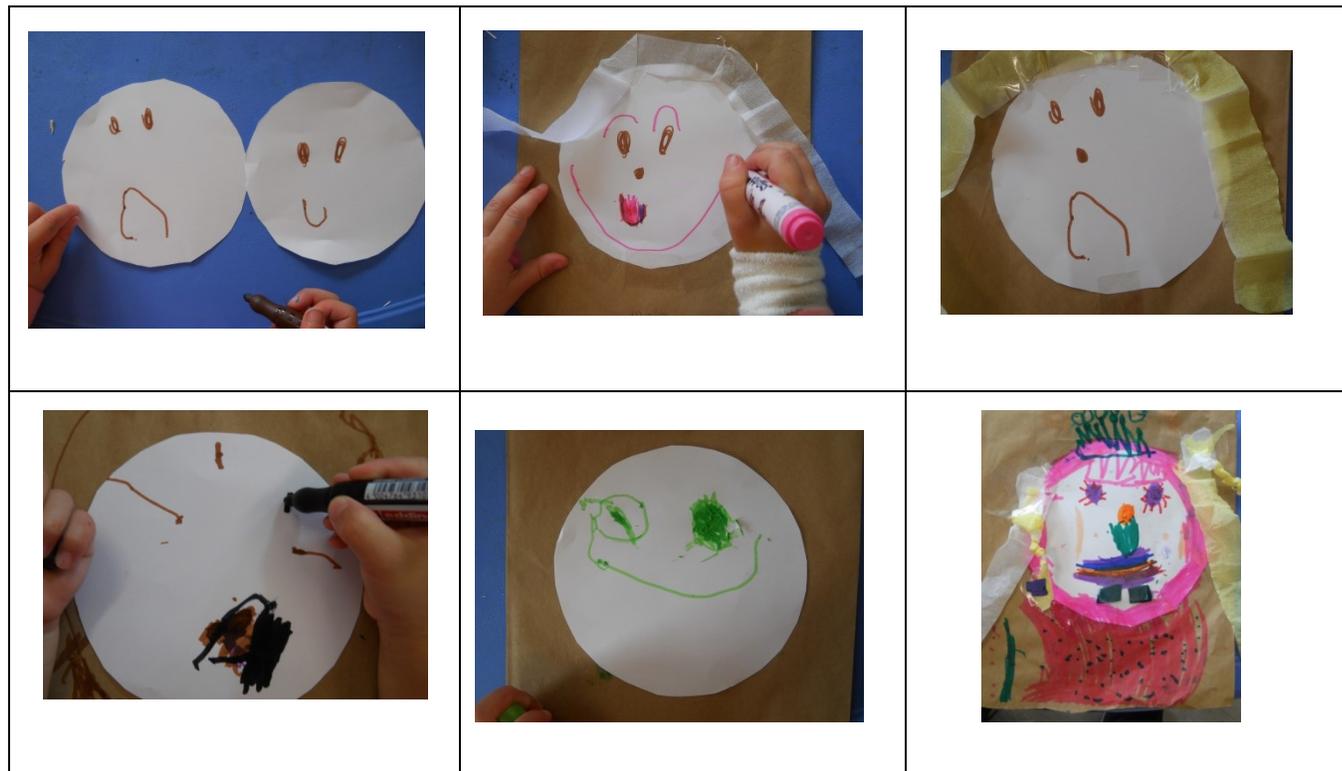
- Packets – bought or made by pasting paper together with an open edge for the hand
- Circles of white paper
- Crayons or koki pens
- Glue and glue brushes
- Something for hair – strips of crinkle paper or wool
- Scissors
- Something to trace around such as a small plate or lid



Method

I find the children struggle to see the face on the paper plate so I traced a circle onto paper and the children who were able to cut out their circles, and I cut for those who could not. (We have a mixed age group in my class) The circles were pasted to the paper packet and face features were added with hair. One side was a happy face and one a sad face. One child decided to cover the sad face in chicken pox spots! (see above photo) A good reason to be sad...



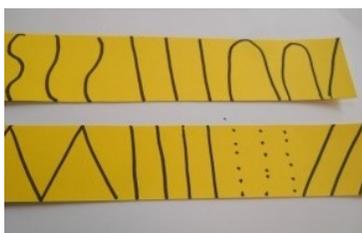


As you can see from the above examples the drawing ability and body image varies greatly. A great opportunity to do some assessment as is the cutting activity below.

Cutting activity

Many children need practice with using scissors and cutting on a line. I set out this cutting and fine motor activity to provide this practice. It was a very popular activity with both the boys and girls. This activity is not suitable for the younger children. Some of the children could not cut accurately on the lines but enjoyed cutting the cardboard strip into smaller pieces.

To prevent all the pieces from falling on the floor I gave each child an ice cream lid to cut onto so it would be easy to discard the pieces. Make several strips as many children wanted to cut several. It was a good opportunity to help the



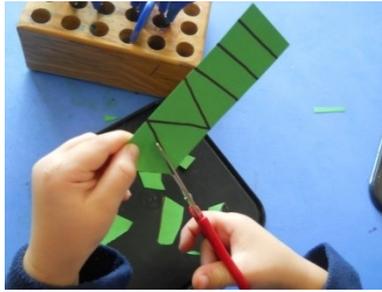
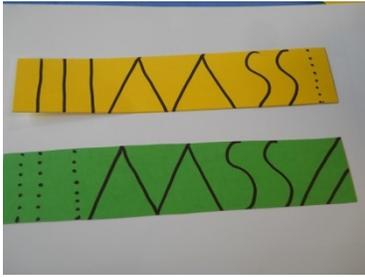
children who were struggling to hold the scissors correctly and also to hold the paper in the other hand. For this reason it is better to use light weight card rather than paper but paper will be fine if you don't have cardboard. Keep the strips no more than 2 cm wide.

The children struggled with the circular lines so I suggest you keep the cutting lines straight. Remember to provide left handed scissors for your left handed children. It is very frustrating trying to cut with right handed scissors if you are a lefty!



Training scissors are helpful for children who are struggling to master the cutting action with one hand as the teacher places her own fingers into the extra set of holes and helps with the snipping action.





Painting outside

I was given a large sheet of felt like fabric which I tied to the fence outside and set out paints for a free group painting activity. It is a good activity for all ages and in particular the younger children as long as it is well supervised. This activity offers a great opportunity to paint on a vertical surface and to use the large muscles. It is best to place your paint pots in a safe paint container so they do not get tipped over. This linked outdoor play to a creative activity. Large sheets of paper such as paper from the end of the printing rolls is also great or an old sheet will work really well too.

The children were free to choose what they wanted to paint so some children did pictures while others just enjoyed the painting experience.

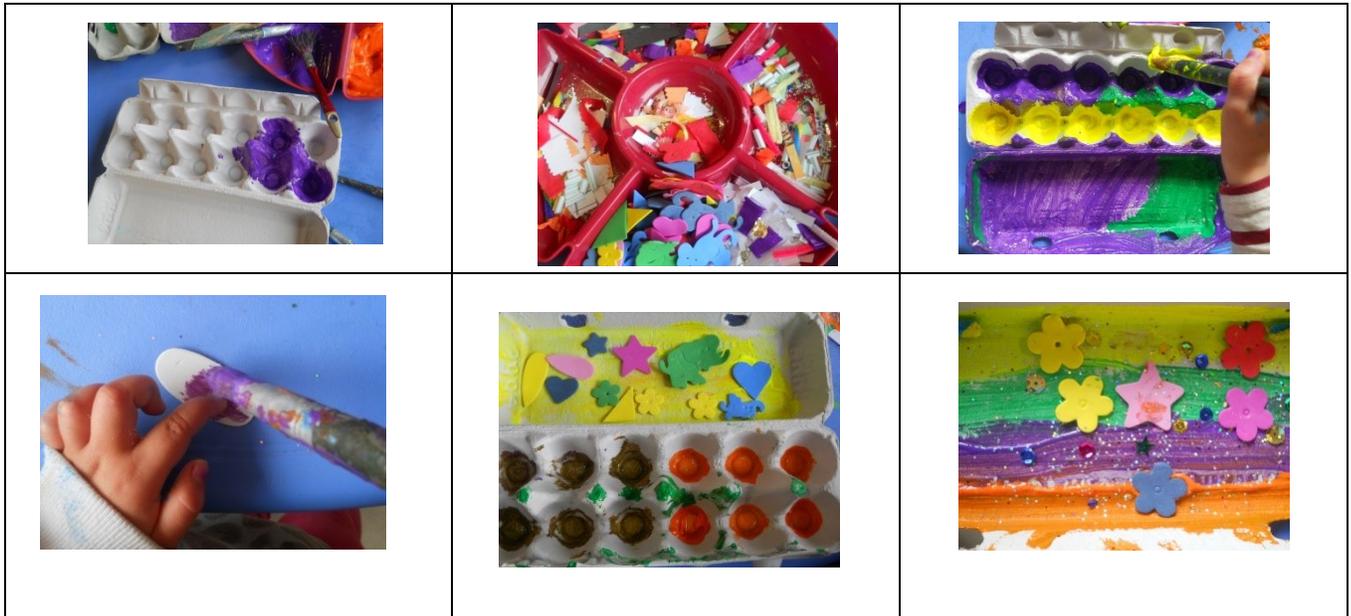
Note: Some of the paint does mess so set this out where it's okay for a bit of a paint mess.



Painting egg boxes and collage with foam shapes

Sometimes the children just enjoy painting for the pleasure of using paint. I set out egg boxes and put glue into the paint so the collage materials would adhere. We use the foam shapes often at school but anything can be pasted into the egg boxes. One child enjoyed painting a rainbow. This is a great activity for the younger children. Encourage the children to put the glue on the collage material as it develops fine motor skills.

Note: Don't think it's a good idea to make your paint thinner; the egg box gets really soggy with very watery paint!



Threading beads

Threading beads is an excellent fine motor and eye hand co-ordination activity.

The children threaded beads onto thin wire which was great for threading but later in the day several broke. Shirring elastic is better for durability but not so easy to thread. If the children just do threading without taking them home wire is ideal. I placed a blanket on the table to prevent the beads from rolling off and to make it easier to pick up the beads. Boys and the girls loved this activity. Remember to secure a bead so they don't slip off.



Paper flowers or the lunch table



The teachers made these paper flowers to put on the tables where the children eat their food. I think they look great.



Happy teaching
Regards Karin