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Preschool Themes Newsletter – June 2021

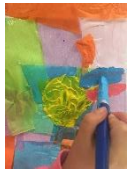
Hello Everyone

I can hardly believe we are at the end of May already and its time for a new newsletter. We are well into winter in NZ with some very chilly frosty early mornings but lovely mild days. The beautiful Autumn coloured leaves have all fallen off the trees and been replaced with the bare stark trees of winter. We are having some beautiful sunsets so we did a lovely art activity to celebrate these changes which I have included in this newsletter.

June also brings Father's Day so please visit my Pinterest board <https://www.pinterest.nz/kstedall/fathers-day/> for lots of great ideas and ways to celebrate the dads and men. In NZ we celebrate Father's Day in September so I don't have any lessons we have done for Father's Day.

The art book, A theme-based approach to art activities for the three- to-six-year-olds, which I have been writing will be going to the printer mid-June which is super exciting and a real thrill for me to see it completed.

I have included a few of the lessons from the book in this newsletter for a peek preview for you. These lessons are in the same format as the book with a visual representation of the lesson included with each lesson. These photographs are taken in an authentic classroom setting using my phone camera while I conduct the lesson so they are not perfect photos in terms of lighting or backgrounds so please bear that in mind when you look at them. The art activities in the art book are not the same as the art activities in the theme manuals but are useful supplement to the lessons and themes in the preschool themes manuals or they can be used by anyone working with children aged 3 – 6 years old in a variety of settings.

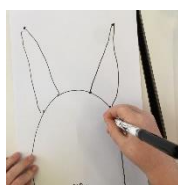


Black koki pens – my new favourite art material

Have you ever noticed how much children love using the "teachers" black koki pen or marking pen as it is called in NZ? These pens are usually quite expensive and reserved for the teacher to use to write the children's names etc. Children can be sneaky and ask for the pen to write their names on their pictures and when you next look, they have been happily colouring in large areas of blackand the pens don't last too long after that.

I have also noticed that using a black koki pen in many of my art activities gives a great result and I get good involvement in the art activities from the children when the lesson includes these pens. So I went in search of a cheaper version of these pens and found some at a dollar store which is like the excitement store in SA. Even some of the supermarkets etc may sell these pens in bulk. They are so worth the money spent but do keep them for the special activities so the children don't ruin them using them for free drawing. Our children seldom put the lids on the koki pens (sigh, sigh!) despite many a discussion about the need to put the lids on to prevent the pens from drying out.

I have also discovered that using a permanent black koki pen to draw with shows through the paint and school dyes and being permanent they don't run when wet. We used them in the sunset paintings in the next activity and painted over them. I loved the result. Here are a few other examples of when I have incorporated the black pen in the art.



Creative activities

Theme: Winter

Winter sunsets with bare winter trees

Other themes: Day and night, Colour red, Shape – circle

Ages: 4 - 6-year-olds

Skills: Small and large muscles, eye hand co-ordination

Materials:

- Paper – A3 white
- Paint – yellow, red, orange and blue
- Paint brushes
- Koki pens – black permanent
- Circle template made from a paper plate – see picture

Teachers note: Trace two circles on the A3 paper.

Method:

Demonstrate to the children how to draw a winter tree. The children draw three winter trees using the black koki pens. Encourage the children to draw the trees in the large circle. The children paint the smaller inner circle with yellow paint and then continue painting around the small circle in different tones of sunset colours – red, orange, pink and yellow. Encourage the children to paint the circles close together with no white space and even overlapping so the colours blend. Once the outer large circle is filled with colour the children paint the surrounds with blue paint.



Notes:

- Some children did not paint enough circles of colour to create the sunsets
- Some children struggled to draw the trees in the circles
- A few children struggled to draw a winter tree. Draw the tree trunk for them to add the branches



Theme: Big School

Writing patterns in alphabet letter outlines

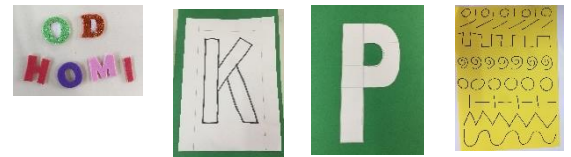
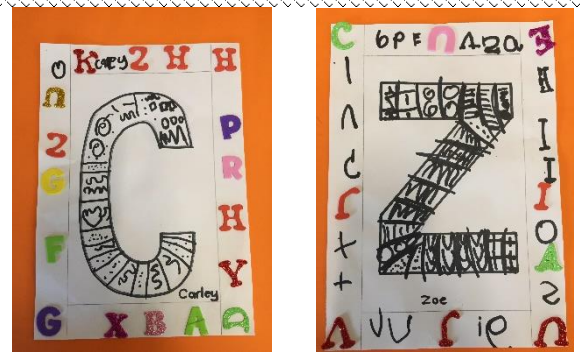
Other themes: Myself (my name). Books, Letters

Ages: 4 - 6-year-olds

Skills: Small and large muscles, eye hand co-ordination

Materials:

- Paper – A4 white
- Alphabet letters – foam sticky backed
- Koki pens – preferably black or any other colour but only 1 colour

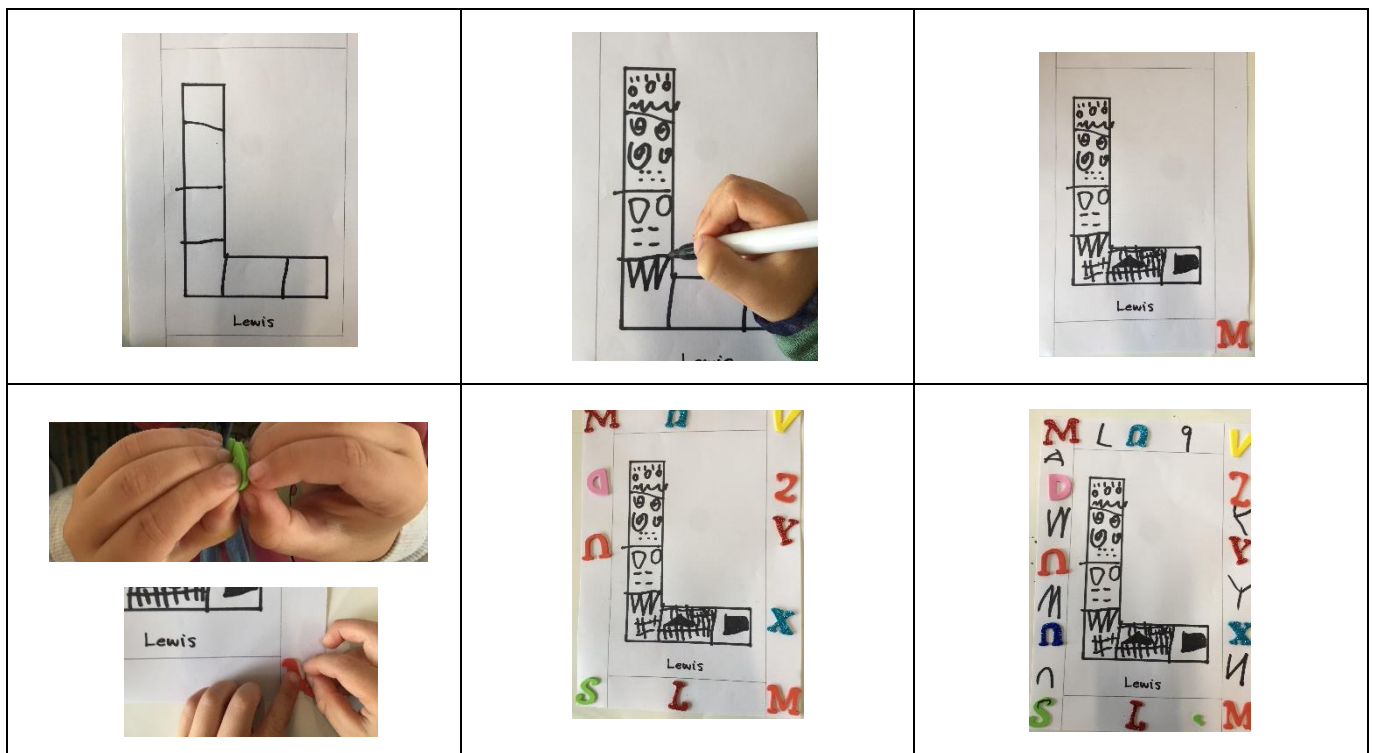


Teachers note: Draw a border around the paper using a ruler for the width. Create a letter outline for each child using the first letter of their name. Create a demonstration sheet of a variety of different writing patterns the children can refer to for inspiration.

Method:

Using the black koki pens, the children draw lines across their letter to create blocks. The children fill in the spaces with drawing patterns. Encourage them to use a variety of patterns and discourage picture drawing and colouring in. The children remove the backing paper from the sticky backed foam letters and secure them in the border around the letter. Encourage the children to write some alphabet letters in the border. The letters do not need to be pasted the correct way up. Its more about early literacy, letter recognition and fine motor skills.

If you do not have access to sticky backed foam letters use any other letters you have or let the children write the letters.



Notes:

- The pen doesn't need to be a permanent pen but should be free flowing and not dry
- Some children added numbers around their letter which is fine and part of early literacy
- Some children added numbers around their letter which is fine and part of early literacy



Theme: Big school

Writing patterns in paint

Other themes: Hands, Colour – blue, Books

Ages: 3 - 6-year-olds

Skills: Small and large muscles, eye hand co-ordination

Materials:

- Paper – A3 preferably cardboard or wallpaper
- Paint – one colour and thick
- Paint brushes
- Earbuds or fingers

Teachers note: No preparation is needed but if using wallpaper then cut to size

Method:

The children paint the paper from left to right in stripes covering the whole page. The paper needs to be covered in a good layer of paint before commencing with the drawing. The children draw rows of writing patterns in the paint using an earbud or their fingers. The younger children scribbled which is age appropriate. Some children drew pictures.



Notes:

- The paper gets heavy with all the paint so lightweight cardboard is better
- Wooden sucker sticks can be used for drawing
- The children need to cover the whole page with paint before drawing



Theme: Garden visitors

Crazy bug construction with collage

Other themes: Bugs, Creepy crawlies, Recycling

Ages: 4 – 6-year-olds

Skills: Small and large muscles, eye hand co-ordination, follow instructions

Materials:

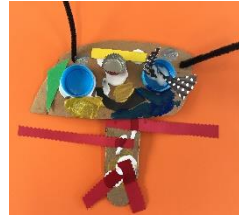
- Cardboard – packaging is best and cut into body and head shapes
- Glue and glue brushes
- Paint
- Scissors
- Collage materials: milk lids, googly eyes, buttons, paper and foil cupcake cases, cardboard strips, circles and triangles, bubble wrap pieces, tissue paper, pipe cleaners and anything else you have available.

Teachers note:

Cut a variety of body and head shapes using the cardboard. By cutting each one differently the children's bugs will all be unique. Cut the coloured cardboard into strips for legs, cut some circles for eyes and triangles. Cut the bubble wrap and tissue paper into smaller pieces. Use something sharp to poke holes in the cardboard to secure the pipe cleaners for feelers. Cellotape is not a good idea as all the children will want something taped.! Glue does not hold the pipe cleaners in place.

Method:

At the beginning of the activity show the children what materials are available and offer them some ideas of how and where the materials can be used. The children select a body and head shape and paste them together. The children use the collage materials to add faces, legs, body texture and wings of their choice. Allow the children to choose as they please as these are crazy bugs so anything goes. Remind the children to use sufficient glue. Once all the collage materials are pasted the children paint their creations.



Notes:

- Although it looks like the children pasted the bugs to a background paper they were free standing
- Use strong white glue and dry the creations flat



Theme: Garden visitors

Bees on a hive with flowers

Other themes: Bees and honey, Insects, Gardens

Ages: 4 – 6-year-olds

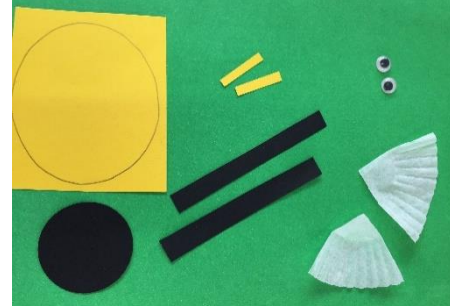
Skills: Small and large muscles, eye hand co-ordination



Materials:

- Cardboard – yellow and black
- Cardboard black circles – face
- Glue and glue brushes
- Scissors
- Cupcake cases – white cut into quarters
- Pencils or crayons
- White crayons

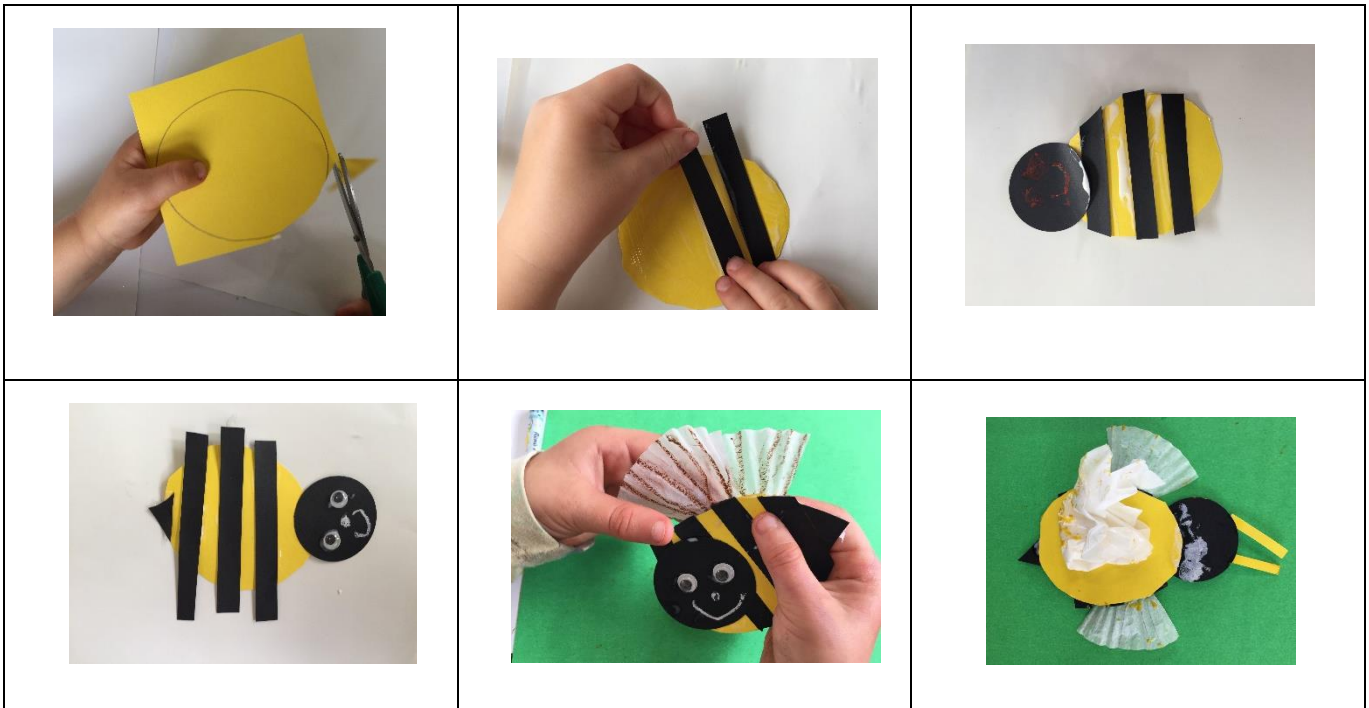
Optional: googly eyes



Teachers note: Trace an oval shape (use a cardboard template) onto the yellow cardboard for each child. Cut some black stripes of cardboard and head circles. Cut some yellow antenna strips. Cut the paper cupcake cases into quarters.

Method:

The children cut out the oval shaped body and using this body, the black circles and the stripes the children create their bees. The children add antenna, eyes and face features using the crayons. The children draw veins on the wings and paste the wings to the body. The children cut off the excess cardboard stripes. The children cut a sting and paste it to their bee. The children crumple a tissue and paste it behind the bee in readiness for attaching the bee to the hexagon beehive (next lesson) Optional: the children can use googly eyes for their eyes.



Notes:

- Remind the children to place the glue on the paper pieces and not the body
- Place a scrap piece of paper at each child's place to work on so the bee doesn't stick to the table



Theme: Garden visitors

Bees on a hive with flowers

Other themes: Bees and honey, Insects, Gardens

Ages: 4 – 6-year-olds

Skills: Small and large muscles, eye hand co-ordination

Materials:

- Paper – A3 white
- Firm cardboard or wallpaper paper for the hexagon
- Glue and glue brushes
- Pastels or wax crayons
- School dye or food colouring – diluted
- Bubble wrap and
- Paint – honey coloured
- Paint brushes



Teachers note:

Cut a large hexagon shape from cardboard or firm paper. Google how to draw an accurate hexagon. 30 cm height is a good measurement. Paste or staple the hexagon to the A3 white paper background. Cut the bubble wrap into pieces approximately 10 cm x10cm. Mix yellow and brown paint to create a honey colour. Dilute the food colouring and check it on some pastel drawing.

Method:

The children paint the bubble side of the bubble wrap and place it on the hexagon shape giving it a gentle rub. Lift the bubble wrap and make another print before adding paint again and repeating the process until the hexagon is covered in prints. The children paste the bee to the hexagon. The tissue behind the bee will give it some depth. Using the pastels, the children draw flowers and leaves around the hexagon. The children paint the white background with the blue diluted food colouring covering all the white space.



Notes:

- Some children smeared the paint instead of printing
- Wax crayons can be used instead of pastels but pencil crayons are not effective
- All the flower and leaf drawings must be completed before colour washing

Happy teaching Regards Karin

