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Preschool Theme Newsletter – June 2013

Hello everyone,

I trust you are all keeping well and enjoying your teaching. I have been at school quite frequently this past month and more so in the preschool group which is 3 1/2 to 5 year olds although that isn't technically your preschool age. In this newsletter I have included some important information about postage and courier costs so please take the time to note them. The Air transport theme is now available and the next theme I am writing is on the beach and the sea. Enjoy the many creative activities and the hot air balloons which are relevant to the Air transport theme.

Father's Day Ideas – June 16th

Happy Father's day to all the amazing and wonderful dads! I hope you have a special day. You all deserve one. Don't forget to look at the Pinterest board for father's day ideas and activities. Check back often as I constantly add new ideas to the boards. <http://pinterest.com/kstedall/fathers-day/>
 There is a tie template in the my family theme manual which makes a very nice 'gift and card'

New theme manual - Air transport

At last the air transport theme manual is available. This is a very broad theme so I did have to limit it for the scope of the manual but it could easily be continued for two weeks. It also links well to the theme on Space and Opposites (up and down, big and small). The next theme manual is the beach and the sea. It's also a very big theme so I am still undecided as to whether I should split the theme into the beach and The Sea? If you have a strong feeling about this drop me an e mail please rodandkarin@xtra.co.nz.



The book can be ordered from Ilette Strydom Epos: epos@groep7.co.za
 Faks: 086 514 1051 Cell: 082 4490 574 or via the web site on line order form or fax order form.

Postage costs

As you know we have been having some issues with using the postal service for delivery of the theme books you order. Ilette has negotiated a courier fee which is outlined below. I am not clear on what constitutes a regional area. Please note that FREE POSTAGE AND A FREE PLASTIC CONTAINER IS NOW FOR **35 BOOKS** OR MORE.

Kg	Cities	regional
2kg	R60	R125
5kg	R80	R150
8kg	R95	R165 (full set)

Quantity of books	Postage	Cost	Weight
1 book	Envelope, no tracking, insurance	10.00	
1 - 4 Books	Tracking & insurance	45.00	<1 kg
5 - 12 Books	Tracking & insurance	50.00	1 - 2 kg
13 - 19 Books	Tracking & insurance	60.00	2 - 3 kg
20 - 26 Books	Tracking & insurance	70.00	3 - 4 kg
27 - 35 or more Books	Tracking & insurance	80.00	4 - 5 kg
35 or more	Free postage and plastic container		

NELDS – National Early Learning Development Standards for children 0-4 years

Thank you to everyone who responded to my request for help on registering the preschool theme programme. I received some very useful information and I appreciate you all sharing your information with me. In essence the education department is developing a curriculum for the 0-4 year which should be completed by the end of the year. So until that is completed I will not be adding in the NELDS outcomes in the theme books and the toddler book has been put on hold until I get more clarity on what is required.
 It also appears that I cannot get my preschool theme manuals registered but only approved which I will not be doing as there does not appear to be any benefit to go through the tedious process. I did look at the document which you are required to complete for school registration and my theme manuals meet the requirements, so it should be relatively simple for you to complete the table according to which themes you choose to use and when in the year you do them. I have attached the document I received which you may find useful.

Creative activities

Salad spinner art

I have put this in previous newsletters but it's such a fun activity that I wanted to show others who have recently come on board. I sourced a whole lot of salad spinners from the charity shops and friends who no longer use theirs. The children put a piece of paper into the spinner, drop blobs of fairly runny paint onto the A5 paper, replace the lid, turn the handle to spin the paint and open the spinner for the stunning end result.

Tips:

- Some children wanted to 'paint' the paper instead of dropping blobs.
- Some salad spinners have a string you pull to make it spin. They could not manage it with ease and needed a lot of my help.
- Encourage the children who have had a turn to show the others how to do it.
- You can do one colour at a time if you have a small group.
- The finished painting can be cut into many shapes.
- The under three's really struggle to get the spinner started but loved doing it with help.
- I wanted to try it with an autumn leaf in the spinner but it had been raining so the leaves were all wet.
- Since the bottom of the spinner is open, protect your tables with something.
- Excellent for gross motor and co-ordination skills.



Balloon printing



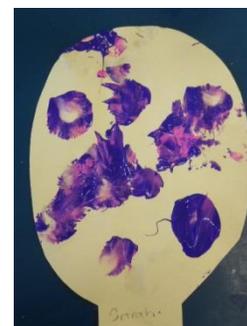
I managed to get a huge packet of balloons for very cheap from a charity shop but you can buy little balloons and I think even the 'water bomb' balloons will work well for this activity. You only need 6-8 for the activity and they can even be shared between groups.

Fill the deflated balloon with water and then blow up the balloon and secure the end. Don't make the balloons too big as little hands have to hold them. You do need the water to weight them down so they don't float off the table. Sand or flour can be used instead of water but it's a lot more difficult to get it into the balloon.

The children dip the balloon into the paint and bounce it onto the paper to create prints. If this is done correctly the prints are really effective but not all the children did it as suggested.

Tips:

- Some of the children turned this into a very messy activity enjoying the sensation of the smooth balloon and the paint together. They were far more focussed on the process rather than the end product!!
- Have a bucket of water to wash hands unless you want your bathroom covered in paint!!
- Expect the paint colours to get mixed so choose colours that blend to make new colours.
- Some children ended up 'painting' with the balloons instead of printing which is fine.
- The end painting can be cut into shapes or shaped paper can be used as I did for the hot air balloon.
- Attach the baskets ahead of time to the balloon printed shapes to save time later.



Hot air balloons: The preschool group made their hot air balloon by cutting out two pages together to create the balloon part, stapled them together leaving an opening, stuffed them with crumpled magazine pages, closed the opening and then painted the balloons. A basket was attached to the balloon with wool. We used some plastic packaging for the basket sections. The very last hot air balloon photo is a bit different. He gave up on trying to cut his balloon shape, was too impatient to wait for me so he 'created' his own version. 10/10 for creativity. He is a lot younger than most of the pre-schoolers!



The balloon printed painting was used to make hot air balloons (we had recently had a big hot air balloon show in the community). The balloon printed hot air balloons were done by the toddlers and the other by preschool.

Balloon printing for fun with the pre-schoolers



The pre-schoolers were far better at creating prints with the balloons. The desired (please note I did not say correct!) effect is in the last picture, but I especially included the one above it to show you how messy some of the children were with the activity. I generally discourage this kind of behaviour at the creative table. As you can see from the two end products they are quite different and this is to be expected. Some teachers tend to be very worried about the art work being neat and 'correct' but we do need to let the children experience the media as part of the art process and not always be focussed on the end product. Again lots of great large muscle development happening here as the children stood at the table. The children were quite fascinated with what was in the balloon and how I got the water inside. None of them attempted to pop the balloons which was good.

Autumn leaves using coloured flour



I mixed some flour with dry yellow and orange powder paint. I set out spoons; glue and autumn leaves and the toddlers painted the leaves with glue, sprinkled the dry flour onto the leaf and tipped off the excess. Some children tried to 'paint' the flour with the glue brushes. You can add some glitter at the end or into the dry flour.

Pegging pegs for fine motor development

Pegging coloured pegs to a cardboard box with the toddlers. This is an excellent fine motor and eye hand co-ordination activity which kept many children busy for some time. It was very interesting to watch how they opened the pegs, pegged them to the edge of the box and persevered till they got it right. Of course I had some who made it their mission to break all the pegs apart!! Removing the pegs was as much fun as placing them onto the edge of the box. Some of the pegs needed to be opened and some just slid over the edge which was a lot easier.



Process baking with preschool children

Does this sound like a conversation from your baking experience with the children? You are not alone.

The first group of children came to the table quickly, and this is how it went:

Sue said, "I'm not done."

I said, "We all want a turn."

Latasha said, "I want to do the eggs."

I said, "We only have two."

Richard said, "Why can't I stir more?"

I said, "We have to share."

Richard said, "I don't want to share."

I said, "You need to cooperate."

Richard said, "I didn't want to do this anyway," and left the table.

And so it went.

Process baking eliminates this scenario.

I included some info about baking with the children in a previous newsletter but at that time I had not experienced baking with the children in the classroom setting. The preschool group at our school offer something called 'process cooking'. The children are directly involved in the whole process of cooking. This method can only really work well where you have a classroom assistant (if you don't see if you can ask a parent to come in and help out) as the groups need to be small and supervised for maximum learning.



In New Zealand we have several teachers in a group working different areas of the programme so one person is assigned to do process cooking on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. There is a printed list of which children do their cooking on which day. They have a counter top oven which is available from places such as Dion's or Pick n Pay.

The recipe is on cards and is in diagrams. The cards are sequenced in the correct order. I like the wooden plank to stand the cards up for the children to easily see. The children measure their own

ingredients, mix them up and bake the cookie or make the product. They get to eat their cookie with afternoon snack time or they can take theirs home. Washing up should be a part of the process.

Here are some useful web links for more information about process cooking.

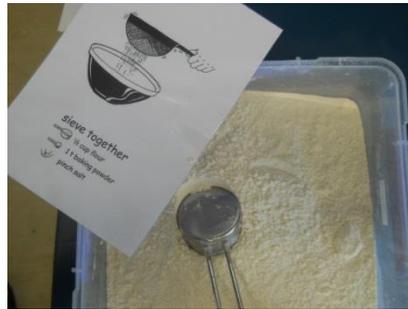
<http://www.processcooking.co.nz/>

<http://www.processcooking.co.nz/gallery>

http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=140

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=182FkYFrTC0&feature=player_embedded#! This video really outlines all the learning that takes place when process cooking is done effectively.

Here are some photos of the children making scones. Sorry that I did not get a photo of the baked scones. I particularly want you to note the 'mess' which is part of the process.



If any of you are interested in the process cooking recipe cards please send me an e mail.

I have added many more ideas to the Pinterest boards. Please ignore my personal boards and find the preschool ones between them. There are so many fantastic ideas on the boards.

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

Happy Father's Day to all our amazing and caring dads!

Happy teaching
Regards Karin